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MISSIONS AND SOCIAL IDENTITIES
IN THE LOWER ORANGE RIVER BASIN, 1760-1998

By

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ABSTRACT

The broad theoretical concern of the thesis is to examine an ambivalent dimension in the formation of social identities in which similarities in attributes and symbolic representations can become the source of conflict when they appear to have been appropriated and alienated. In studies of the role of ethnicity in the creation and reinforcement of social identity there is very often the assumption that social cohesion arises from similarity and that actual or perceived differences lead people to identify one another as members of opposing ethnic groups. I have suggested, however, that differentiation arises from the claims that are made to this distinctiveness, and that disputes over cultural commonalities or shared ethnic symbolism actually serve to sustain ethnic boundaries in situations where powerful external forces are at work in promoting integration. I have used Tambiah's theoretical model for the investigation of ethnic identity to structure a series of case studies drawn from a community study of Pella, a communal area with a Roman Catholic mission station, and studies of other former Coloured and Nama Reserves associated with Christian missions in the Lower Orange River Basin of Namaqualand. A distinctive historical feature of this region is a general trend towards social integration as opposed to the separation found in other parts of southern Africa. In the case studies that make up the body of the thesis I have presented the sociality of the community at Pella from three perspectives, socio-political, religious and material cultural, to show the complex ways in which ethnicity has operated over time in the formation of social identities. Setting the colonial and post-colonial encounters in Gramsci's notion of hegemony as involving asymmetrical class relations and cultural imperialism, I argue that the ongoing role of the universalist Christian churches in shaping patterns of identity has to be understood in terms of their commitment to what has come to be called "inculturation" as a way of indigenizing their versions of Christianity in Africa and throughout the world. In addressing the questions of coercion and resistance, hegemony and accommodation, localization and revitalization, and the role of missions in identity politics, I contend that the concept of "inculturation" is vital to an

understanding of oppositional responses to globalization, as these are expressed in cultural and ethnic terms at local level through a politics of similarity as a form of everyday resistance to the coercive and hegemonic forces of globalization. The thesis is thus a contribution to a wider debate in anthropology on role of ethnicity in cultural transformation and continuity in the context of the gathering crisis of the nation-state and the ongoing revolutionary reconstruction of the contemporary world order.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The "politics of difference" (Wilmsen & McAllister 1996) prompts one to think that there may also be a "politics of similarity". In modern discourses of ethnicity and nationalism, assertions of cultural difference almost universally play a large part in ethnic and religious conflicts. On the other hand, in the literature one rarely comes across accounts of conflicts in which those involved claim themselves to be politically and socially incompatible because they are too much alike (Cohen 1994; Horowitz 1985). Antagonists may assert that "inherent" differences are the source of their conflict, even when outsiders may see that those involved are similar and contesting similar symbols, as a rationalization for denying self-evident similarities. This thesis provides an example of one such case where people who are apparently of the same or very similar backgrounds construct boundaries that symbolically mark them off as different from one another, in order thereby to contest rights over resources held in common.

There have recently been many anthropological studies that have focused on ethnicity and related issues as a feature of the social and political struggles involving minority groups in various parts of the world. Highly visible ethnic-based actions such as these have led to a concentration on ethnic struggles as the principal expression of ethnicity, with particular attention being given to organizational aspects, and the varying political, social and economic contexts in which they were located (Ghai 2000; Maybury-Lewis 2002). Following Barth (1969) the formation of ethnic groups has been seen as a function of the political, economic or ideological domination of one group over another, and of the ongoing affirmation of apparent cultural differences between social groups. This emphasis on the overt expressions of ethnicity has, however, diverted attention away from the majority of ethnic groups in the world, which are not involved in direct political conflict but which are often in unequal relationships

with dominant groups. How to relate to others forms an important element in the formation of ethnic identity, but this can be expressed in discrete domains. In current approaches to ethnicity there is an initial assumption that an ethnic group exists only in so far as it is a factor in the thoughts and behaviour of group members and outsiders (Taylor 1991), so that ethnicity could be examined by following the model of ethnic Self and Otherness held by members of the ethnic group itself. This approach leads to a certain essentialism in explaining an ethnic configuration (Fischer 1999; Gil-White 2001; Mahmood & Armstrong 1992), but an increasing amount of work is taking into account the ethno-theoretical model in understanding the processes involved in the elaboration of ethnic identity (Field 1994; Jenkins 1997). Following this approach one would not exclude a constructivist analysis of distinct external parameters in order to understand the elaboration of a specific ethnic identity, but one does emphasise the way in which one ethnic group re-elaborates or re-semanticizes its specific social configuration according to its own cultural logic and on the basis of its own autochthonous heritage, and why members of these groups should actually do so.

As a concept of relations ethnicity is widely accepted as being about perceptions or ascriptions of 'otherness', whereby minorities are marginalized on the basis of dissimilarity by majorities describing themselves in terms of common values and background, cultural commonalities and allegiance to the same symbols. It is assumed from this that values held in common, shared background and acceptance of the same symbols produce social cohesion. Contrary to this, however, is another view among some social theorists that the most violent antagonisms seem to occur between those who have the most in common and the closest relationships (Simmel 1955: 42-43), with groups having much in common experiencing these commonalities as threats to the maintenance of their separate identities. These are, however, questionable assumptions. In this thesis I shall be arguing that despite perceptions that shared cultural attributes and agreed symbols can lead to social cohesion, they can also give rise to competition over ownership and use, with conflict over the appropriation of these symbols providing a framework for the delineation of ethnic boundaries that may also be linked to social class. Such conflict can also lead to

divisions within apparently homogenous groups, creating fissures that can occur along class lines, and that can divide ethnic groups into separate sections that may over time become ethnic groups in their own right. There are examples in Melanesia of struggles over the right to appropriate "kastom" between traditionalists, who constructed sets of symbols to resist colonial domination, and nationalists, who later sought to use these symbols to unify their 'nations' (Keesing 1989: 19-22).

Ethnicity and ethnic identity can be described as "... a self-conscious and vocalized identity that substantializes and naturalizes one or more attributes - the usual ones being skin colour, language, religion, and territory - and attaches them to collectivities as their innate possession and mytho-historical legacy ..." (Tambiah 1996:138). Central to this description are notions of ancestry, place or territory of origin, inheritance and shared kinship, which may be used singly or in combination to make claims according to context and estimation of possible advantages. Notwithstanding the values attached to these attributes, ethnic identities are permeable, for ethnic groups incorporate and assimilate outsiders, and can change the criteria of identity of membership according to context and circumstances over time. There are thus two interlinked processes that can be seen to constitute ethnicity: one is the identification and realization of attributes as enduring collective characteristics, given substance by mythical historical narratives or charters and claims of common descent and race; the other complementary process is the establishment of boundaries, always flexible in differentiation, and capable of expanding and contracting according to historical circumstances and political-economic opportunities, with the result that most people have multiple identities which they can claim or reject or manipulate according to context (Tambiah 1996: 139).

Social theorists have used two approaches to interpret ethnic identity and ethnic consciousness, primordialist and instrumentalist. Social and cultural anthropologists, in mapping out interpersonal relations and subjective attitudes in community life, may bridge the divide between an instinctive primordialist perspective and a utilitarian manipulative perspective, by highlighting the structures of feeling and experience

produced and reproduced through the social practices of everyday life in the local worlds of family, gender, kinship, peer group, neighbourhood and workplace in which everyone participates as peasant or urban-dweller, as white- or blue-collar worker. This involves two simultaneous investigations. The first is the tracking of how ethnic claims and sentiments and ethnic stereotypes are not only constructed but also naturalized and essentialized and, through socialization and participation, are inscribed and imprinted simultaneously in our minds and bodies as patterns of ideas and sentiments (Tambiah 1996: 140). These inscriptions of boundaries occur through the practices of ordinary daily life as well as calendrical festivals and rituals of life and death. They take effect through the practices, preferences, and aesthetic valuations related to naming systems and kin terms, cuisine, costume, commensality and food sharing, gender relations, courtship customs and marriage preferences, life cycle stages such as initiations, puberty ceremonies, marriages, and funerals as public events, as well as house styles, the ordering of domestic space, and furnishings (Tambiah 1996: 140-141). The second investigation, based on the first, tracks how people who experience these ethnic and other sentiments through social practices are mobilized into collectivities through a variety of social and semiotic processes, in the field of mass politics, whether these are political elections, protests and demonstrations, or rebellions or resistance movements. A great range of elements in public culture and popular religion can be taken and used in mass participatory politics to activate and intensify the very stereotypes caricaturing us and them that arise from everyday social practices and business transactions. These stereotypes articulate social exclusiveness and differences as well as social exchange and symbiosis (Tambiah 1996: 141).

These two investigations, which link and articulate, may provide us with a useful answer as to why and how ethnic-based appeals are so powerful: the appeals made to race and purity of descent; to territory as fatherland or motherland; to language as a common heritage expressing common memories and myths; to religion as the exclusive affiliation to, and covenants made with, special deities and ancestral founders who promise salvation. In Tambiah's words, "... participation in ethnonationalism transforms and translates analogical and metaphorical

comparisons and metonymical or contiguity relations into a sense of identity relations, which fuses and essentializes people and their causes into amalgams. It is through these participatory processes which inscribe relations of identity that one's sense of continuity with others through time and space is generated and shared. Ethnic communities are not merely imagined communities; more vitally, many are participatory communities" (Tambiah 1996: 142). Mythical continuities through descent and marriage and claims of links to territory from ancient times are lived through everyday and ritualized cultural and social practices in local contexts that produce these sensibilities. From an anthropological perspective traditions are invented, genealogies and histories are constructed and manipulated, ethnic nationalism can be imagined, and religious conversions are common (Keesing 1989), but these processes are integral to a dynamic, contingent, opened-ended human existence. For informants in the field, however, who have been socialized into these claims of eternal verities of connectedness through time and space, through heirlooms and possessions both cultural and material, and through special relationships to their transcendent saviours, take as real these links inscribed in their bodies and souls and serving as the compass to their lives (Tambiah 1996: 142). Resolving these tensions and contextualizing these understandings in relation to cultural revitalization has to be mediated through the structures of sentiment and experience that arise from and are informed by fieldwork, often seen as the *sine qua non* of all good anthropology.

The focus of this thesis is on the community of Pella, a former 'Coloured Reserve' in north-eastern Namaqualand, South Africa, but I also carried out research in the other neighbouring former Coloured and Nama Reserves and different types of associated settlements situated in the Lower Orange River Basin (Map 1) (Appendix I). There are significant differences in scale and structure among the communities of the former Reserves in South Africa and southern Namibia, but they are linked by factors such as common environment, similar administrative organisation, their origin as mission stations accommodating the remnants of the indigenous Nama population and disparate elements of immigrant settlers and frontiersmen, and the development of distinctive ways of relating to outsiders. The arid western region of southern

Africa has attracted little anthropological and historical interest relative to that shown in the densely populated and fertile southern and eastern regions. This has been inevitable, since processes and events in the latter regions have always been decisive in shaping the course of history of the South African state. There is, however, much of anthropological interest in the former region. Namaqualand is not unique in relation to the rest of the country, despite a considerable degree of isolation in the 19th century. The story of its component parts reflects much of what has gone on elsewhere in southern Africa. Its most characteristic historical feature, however, is a general trend towards social integration as opposed to the separation that is found in other parts of southern Africa. The Reserve communities in Namaqualand (like those in the Western Cape) represent an extreme development of the form of closed, corporative villages which emerged in Europe as a result of pietist movements in the 18th and 19th centuries. As such they are of anthropological interest for the insights that they can offer into the acculturative and assimilationist effects on the formation of local social identity by this very specifically European implantation in an African context.

This thesis is the outcome of a series of projects which I have undertaken on various aspects of the socio-cultural organisation of the population in Namaqualand and southern Namibia, and forms part of a long-term study of the region and its inhabitants (I discuss my fieldwork and other methods of data collection in Appendix I). Previous research by anthropologists in the Reserve communities of Namaqualand and southern Namibia has centred on the analysis of internal social organization within the wider context of the social structure of South African society (amongst others: Boonzaier 1980; Budack 1965; Carstens 1961, 1966, 2001; Du Pisani 1976; Tucker 1913, Hoernlé 1918, 1923a, 1923b, 1925; Klinghardt 1978, 1982; Luyt 1981; and Sharp 1977). These studies have covered a broad range of anthropological interests, and have both advanced and hampered an understanding of the region. By and large there have been few sustained studies of specific aspects of the Reserve communities, though Sharp's work on citizenship in Komaggas and Concordia and Boonzaier's study of the Richtersveld are notable exceptions in this regard. In addition to a few historical studies on specific topics (e.g. Smalberger 1975), some ethno-archaeological

studies have also been carried out in the area (e.g. Webley 1984), but these have been orientated towards the distant precolonial past and have tended indirectly to support the notion of the survival of a 'traditional' way of life in the Reserves, a notion which had been shown to be an illusion as long ago as 1912 by Hoernlé (Carstens, Klinghardt and West 1987). From the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s there was an upsurge of general interest from various academic perspectives (e.g. Dunne 1986, Robins 1997) in the region as a result of the attempted imposition of individual tenure systems in the Reserves by the apartheid-era Ministry of Housing and Lands in the House of Representatives (Sharp 1990), but these lines of inquiry were aimed at fairly short-term problem solving and do not appear to have been continued. The most striking feature of these studies, however, has been the almost complete absence of any consideration of the contemporary role of the church (Elphick 1995) in the "politics of identity" in the various Reserves. Just as remarkable, and related to this point, is the way in which these recent studies have dismissed cultural processes of great complexity, particularly the revolution in modes of expression that was a consequence of the evangelisation campaigns of the early missionaries, and the "modernity" of the communities that emerged from the Christianisation of imagination through indoctrination and liturgical repetition.

In contrast, Trigger's work on aboriginal responses to colonial domination in northern Australia (Trigger 1992) does not miss these aspects in examining the attitudes and behaviour of both 'White' Australians and Aborigines towards "half-castes". Trigger showed that 'White' Australians and Aborigines in general, and the missionaries in his study area of the mission reserve of Doomadgee in particular, had long held the view that half-castes were more amenable to civilisation than "full-descent" Aborigines. The overall goal of native policy in Australia has been the assimilation of all Aborigines, and half-castes were seen as a natural starting place for this endeavour. Thus, in northern Queensland, the early Aborigine Protectors often took it upon themselves simply to remove half-caste children from Aboriginal bands and commit them to institutional care, as it was not thought proper for such children to grow up amongst full-blood Aborigines. Half-castes were also consistently favoured in the labour market, and Trigger

showed that, whatever might be said about equal treatment for all in the Doomadgee Reserve, half-castes experienced less unemployment and were disproportionately represented in the best class of housing in the Aboriginal settlement. The 'White' Australian, and missionary, view of half-castes was fundamentally racist: they were thought to be morally superior, more responsible and more open to positive influence from the wider society because they were part-'White' or part-Chinese and only part Aborigine. Half-castes were seen as a particular category of the population, and in fact as a separate racial group.

The important question is how the Aborigines responded to this. Those in Doomadgee Reserve were in an institutional setting in which they were subjected to a strict system of administrative authoritarianism, as well as to a system of religious and secular instruction which was intended to inculcate an acceptance and internalisation of the values and practices of the wider society. In considering how far they internalised these values, the whole issue of "race", and identity, is a critical area in which to assess the extent of the very powerful hegemonic influences that have impinged on Aborigines on reserves. Trigger noted that Aborigines had their own colloquial term to refer to half-castes, calling them Yellafellas, as distinct from Blackfellas or Whitefellas. They also accepted that Yellafellas were more advanced than they were and they showed some hostility towards half-castes, who tended to live in a separate spatial domain within the Aboriginal settlement on the Reserve. Trigger argued, however, that the Aborigines were not racist in the way they constructed the Yellafella category, since Yellafella status was a social rather than simply a racial one. This was partly because many people were related to Yellafellas, and also because half-castes who did not put on airs were often regarded as "real Blackfellas, just like us". Furthermore, Aborigines explained the material and social advantages of half-castes as a consequence of the treatment they had received from 'Whites' rather than as an outcome of their racial background.

In this critical sphere Aboriginal behaviour and attitudes certainly showed the imprint of the hegemonic ideology of the wider society. Their worldview included a recognition of a conceptually separate Yellafella category, the members of which could be more or less "like

us". They were often suspicious of the motives of Yellafellas, and this was particularly evident in their response to Aboriginal activists from beyond the Reserve. The activists, who were often themselves Yellafellas, urged the Aborigines to confront the missionaries over issues of racism, domination and dependency, and the mission Aborigines often responded by defending the missionaries' presence and dominant role in the Reserve, giving voice to opinions which (situationally at least) indicated the extent to which they had adopted the dominant worldview of themselves. The Aborigines nevertheless also pointed out that these Yellafella activists had only recently discovered that they were Aborigines, and would accuse them of opportunism, of assuming an Aboriginal identity only when changes in the policies of the state had made it materially advantageous for them to do so.

Thus, although Aborigines were influenced by the hegemonic, racial ideology of Australian society, they had not simply fallen under its sway. This is true, indeed, of all aspects of the dominant ideology. The people whom Trigger studied were in a Reserve setting where they could not possibly escape or ignore this ideology. There were innumerable ways in which their social lives and their ways of thinking were constituted by the institutions and practices associated with this ideology. Hegemony can never be complete, however, and there was an ongoing struggle around the definition of meanings. The struggle took place within a set of highly unequal power relations, making it exceptionally difficult for Aborigines to transform their position. Indeed, according to Trigger, their goal was not to "transform" but to "survive within", and in order to survive within the power structures and the ideological "correctness" of the wider society they had to maintain a domain of self-separation, of "Aboriginality", that was grounded not in "tradition" (although it appealed rhetorically to tradition), but in contemporary, everyday opposition to the arbitrary use of power and to the smugness of assumed moral superiority.

There was spatial segregation within Doomadgee Reserve: the Aborigine settlement was downstream from that of the 'White' missionaries (so that the latter would not have to draw water that had been polluted by passing through a Blackfella village). The 'Whites' imposed and maintained this segregation, but they also claimed for themselves the

right to breach the separation in any manner they chose in the course of their "great task" of civilising the natives. They would drive slowly into the Aboriginal village to "check the place out", to watch for drunkenness or fighting, or to show off their charges to visitors. Spotting the vehicles, the Aborigines would respond with a warning, spread from person to person: "Whitefella comin'". Fights stopped, drunks disappeared, and people engaged in exaggerated routines of normality: "What does he want here?" they would ask. "Whitefella comin'" captures the ambiguity of the Aboriginal response: it was a warning of intrusion and to conform in the interests of peace; at the same time, it was a warning to draw down the blinds on the outsider's gaze and to make the sphere of Aboriginality impenetrable to the 'Whites'.

How is this relevant to thinking about the "politics of similarity" in Namaqualand? The Reserve at Doomadgee is of course very different from the Namaqualand Reserves, since the contexts are so different. Doomadgee was established in the 1930s (the Namaqualand Reserves date back to the mid-1800s), and there have been few major changes in the way in which it has been administered since then. This is one of Trigger's problems, for nothing stands out as a signal transformation of relationships between 'Whites' and Blacks in this relatively short period, and virtually all of the Aborigines' behaviour has been both accommodation and resistance (cf. Walker 1998). On the other hand, both situations involve Reserves that were established to provide missionaries with the opportunity to protect "others" and lead them to a Christian, civilised existence. In both cases the missionaries were given secular authority by the colonial state and used this in attempts to foster a sense of community "from above". In both cases, I would suggest, an important outcome of their endeavours was to stimulate an oppositional sense of community "from below". The issues of ambiguity of response and of identity, are common to both: people in Queensland and Namaqualand, like those in British Columbia (Carstens 1991) were constituted in the image of colonial ideology and, at the same time, given a reason and the means to question the definitions of meaning that were imposed. In dealing with Namaqualand there is, with respect to Trigger, the advantage of a longer time period in which there have

been significant developments in both the internal organisation and the external context of the Namaqualand Reserves.

With the historical resources available we can consider: (i) why the Namaqualand Reserves were created and maintained, and what the goals were of the various categories of people who were party to the Reserve endeavour; (ii) how one can best describe the way in which the inhabitants of the Reserves were influenced, indeed constituted as social beings, by the system of administrative authoritarianism, as well as by the hegemonic ideas of the colonial society concerning such issues as race and identity, civilisation, work, and gender relationships; (iii) how the project of coercive and hegemonic domination stimulated attempts to maintain a domain of the "self", an oppositional culture, on the part of the subordinate people, and how this process of imposition, on the one hand, and ambiguous response, on the other, has lead up to what we witness in the Reserves at present.

BACKGROUND TO PELLA

Before going on to address the issues raised above, it is useful to give some background information on the Pella Reserve as it was at the time of my fieldwork. Pella is situated about thirty kilometres north-west of the town of Pofadder (Map 2). The Reserve, which was a Roman Catholic Mission Farm until 1973, is some 48 000 ha in extent, two-thirds of which comprise semi-desert plains to the south and the rest mountainlands above the valley of the Orange River in the north (Map 3). In 1985 the population was some 2 000 (comprising 455 households, all Afrikaans-speaking), with about 1 700 people living in the village of Pella itself, the ecological centre of dominance in the Reserve, and some 300 in hamlets on the plains and along the south bank of the Orange River. Though there was a large core of permanent residents, the overall population has tended to increase and decrease through time in response to environmental factors which have influenced the viability of stock-holdings, and to economic considerations, notably fluctuations in employment opportunities in nearby mining operations. Pella village contained the Reserve's main service institutions - the local government office, postal agency, school, clinic, shops and

recreational facilities. The focus of the village was the Roman Catholic mission, with its fine cathedral which was the seat of the Bishop of the Diocese of Keimoes-Upington. The mission grounds were some 20 hectares in extent, comprising land in the centre of the village and a separate small irrigation farm on the south bank of the Orange River that were excised from the Mission Farm when it became a 'Coloured' Reserve in 1974. A substantial proportion of the income of the mission was derived from the cultivation of dates on its property in the village, and from hiring out the irrigation farmland to local farmers and mining companies.

During the period of my fieldwork during the 1980s and 1990s only a small proportion (12%) of the population was engaged in full-time stock-farming in the Reserve, though many households kept a small number of goats or sheep on the commonage for domestic purposes. The cultivation of grains, vegetables and fruit, a significant economic activity in the 19th and early-20th centuries, had almost ceased, and only a few households were dependent for an income on stock-farming, based for the most part on the production of karakul pelts and low-grade wool. For a livelihood, the great majority of households were dependent on income from non-farming activities and sources both inside and outside the Reserve: from employment for wages from commuter labour to a sillimanite quarry which opened in the Reserve in 1952; from migrant labour to the copper, lead, zinc and diamond mines elsewhere in Namaqualand (especially the Black Mountain Mine at Aggeneys, which is close enough for weekly commuting); and from government funds, in the form of wages, salaries and pensions. Through this involvement in employment outside of the Reserve and oscillation between the Reserve and regional urban areas the inhabitants thus formed part of the wider class structure of Namaqualand. Living in rural surroundings and following codes of behaviour usually associated with the peasant farm-family ethos, the inhabitants of Pella were nevertheless part of an industrial economy with whose cultural forms and social differentiation they had to be familiar and accept in order to gain a livelihood.

As a territorial unit, Pella was the smallest (8% of both land area and population) of the six former 'Rural Coloured Areas', or Reserves, in Namaqualand that were set apart for occupation on a communal basis

exclusively by people who were classified as 'Coloured' under the now-defunct Population Registration Act. Historically, Pella differs from the other Reserves in Namaqualand in that the Rhenish Mission Society, having failed to obtain a recognized grant of land for its converts from the Cape Government, abandoned its mission work there at the time of the first Koranna War in 1868, and the mission station was taken over by the Roman Catholic Church in 1874 (Klinghardt 1982). The Catholic Church succeeded in securing an exclusive title to the land and established a Mission Farm with recognized boundaries. This enabled missionaries of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, a French missionary order based at Troyes (with German, Austrian, Italian, Dutch and American provinces that have provided additional personnel) to develop the community in ways best suited to the extension of the Faith, rather than merely grafting themselves onto an established community as happened elsewhere in Namaqualand (Simon 1959). Through its missionaries, and by encouraging 'White' settlement at Pella, the Church both introduced an established religion and consolidated the general forms of western European culture among the inhabitants of the area, and it has been the arbiter in nearly everything from education and morals to dress and social affairs during the past 130 years. Owing to such factors as the secular authority of the Church, the office of confession and control of education, the local priests exerted great influence in the local community while Pella was a Mission Farm, and they have continued to do in more muted form up to the time of writing despite the loss of their secular power in 1974.

Pella has been controlled by a secular local authority since 1974, when the Mission Farm was transferred to the then Administration of Coloured Affairs. After 1948, the National Party government sought to convert the Mission Farm into a 'Coloured' Reserve as part of its policy of rooting out all forms of multiracial and nonracial communities in South Africa. The aims of the central government enjoyed the support of many of the local people, as they coincided with their own utopian ideas of a future free of 'White' control. As I shall show in Chapter 4, despite a long period of resistance by the Church to the imposition of the apartheid policy on Pella, ethnic and class cleavages in the community were exploited successfully by the Government to further its ends, with the result that most of those inhabitants classified as 'White' were

eventually compelled to leave in 1973, and Pella became a 'Rural Coloured Area' in 1974. The Catholic Church was recognized as the established church in the Reserve, however, and it retained ownership of the Mission grounds and a small farm at the Orange River. The form of local government was initially an Advisory Board drawn from among the politically-active inhabitants to assist the Reserve Superintendent, an appointed government official who was an outsider. The limited powers of this body were a cause of considerable dissatisfaction in the community, and in 1987 it was upgraded to a Management Board, consisting of a committee elected by the registered occupiers and headed by a local chairman. After 1994 Pella became a communal area with a transitional local council under the Namaqualand District Council.

Membership of a spatially-isolated administrative unit such as this - first in the form of a Mission Farm, then of a Reserve, and then of a communal area - with precise spatial boundaries within which all residents have clearly defined rights and duties, privileges and obligations, engendered strong in-group sentiments and a sense of community based on common citizenship in so far as dealings with outside authorities have been at issue. As in the other Namaqualand Reserves (Chapter 2) this resulted in the development of an overarching sense of local identity, under which people spoke of themselves as *Pellanaars*, and which included ways of admitting newcomers (*inkommers*) to the community, though the emphasis on locally based identity has varied through time according to changes as to who comprised the socially dominant groups in the community. Within the Reserve, however, the community has, since its beginnings in the 19th century, been divided by networks of neighbourhood, class and ethnic relations which created internal boundaries in multiple dimensions (Klinghardt 1982).

The population of Pella was diverse in origin, with the principal groupings comprising the descendants of people ranging from indigenous Khoisan people to immigrant 'Basters', 'Whites' (Dutch, British and German) and Damaras. Pella has been inhabited in various proportions through time by aboriginal Khoisan people, comprising hunter-gatherers ('Bushmen', said by my informants to have called themselves

'Tahamanannin') and Nama (/Hobesen) and Einiqua herders, as well as immigrant Baster and 'White' stock-keepers, and Damaras (a heterogenous grouping of people of Herero, Dama and Xhosa descent) (Klinghardt 1978, 1982). Historical records show that by the mid-nineteenth century Baster settlers had displaced the aboriginal hunter-gatherers and pastoralists in the area. The hunter-gatherers were for the most part wiped out in small-scale conflicts, while the indigenous pastoralists were forced to withdraw to the north across the Orange River after Basters had taken possession of their pasture lands and water supplies by drawing on the support of missionaries and the colonial government (Carstens 1966, Klinghardt 1982, Marais 1939, Sharp 1977). These early Baster colonists, however, were scattered during the first Koranna War of 1868 (some going to Concordia and others to Mier and Rehoboth, where their descendants still live), and were replaced in turn by 'White' settlers and other Basters from eastern Bushmanland in the 1870s and 1880s. The 'White' inhabitants were numerically dominant in Pella, constituting some 70% of the population until the end of the South African War in 1902, after which they were increasingly overshadowed in numbers by the rapid growth through natural increase and immigration of the other inhabitants there; they nevertheless retained their politically and socially dominant position in the community until 1973. Herero and Dama refugees from wars in Great Namaqualand and Damaraland began entering northern Bushmanland in the 1860s, some to seek work at the copper mines, others to establish themselves in the Orange River basin with their livestock, and further waves followed after the collapse of indigenous resistance to German rule in South West Africa in 1906. Some of these people subsequently mingled with the remnants of a group of Xhosa people who had settled along the lower reaches of the Orange River in the early twentieth century, after migrating northwards from the Karee Mountains in the northern Karoo where they had been deprived of land granted to them in 1839 (Marais 1939, Strassberger 1969). Though the leading 'Damara' families in contemporary Pella are of Herero origin, their long association with Nama people north and south of the Orange River has led to the incorporation of some Nama cultural traits in the pattern of 'Damara' identity. Though members of various Nama groups have lived at Pella in varying numbers during its history, the people of Nama origin still there were mainly descendants

of Bondelzwarts refugees who entered the Mission Farm after the end of the German-Nama war in South West Africa in 1906.

This summary hardly does justice to the complex centripetal and centrifugal socio-political forces which have been at work in shaping the present community. With both historical and present links through the class structure of the Reserve, the groupings formed by the descendants of all these immigrants may be considered as forming a continuum in the local population, though in local eyes these groupings have tended to be regarded as mutually exclusive, partly owing to perceived differences in racial, cultural and linguistic origins and partly due to an emphasis on kinship as a determinant of membership (Klinghardt 1982).

During the time of fieldwork, Basters comprised about 60% of the population, Damaras 25%, Nama 14.7% and 'Whites' about 0.3%. The first three groupings were officially classified as 'Coloured' and the last as 'White', but few of my informants accorded legitimacy to the official racial classification system of that time (Table 2.1). Each of these groupings included people whose forebears had come from a range of racial and cultural backgrounds but, in their contemporary definitions, my informants regarded the groupings as being based on a notion of common origins that ignored the heterogeneity of their backgrounds, treating kinship and family history as the deciding factors in determining membership. The absence of any emphasis on more ancient links in this form of ethnicity at Pella can be ascribed to the fact that, as shown in genealogies and local parish records, no families could trace their ancestry to the original 19th century inhabitants of Pella, and few had a continuity of more than four generations in the area. Although a high rate of marriage between the many offspring of the families within the boundaries of the various groupings had produced a profusion of kinship bonds among the population, informal and formal restrictions on marriages among members of different groupings nevertheless produced patterns of marriage that tended to reinforce the existing ethnic and social boundaries in the community as apparently immutable in the eyes of the members of all these groupings (see Chapter 4).

Strong sentiments of belonging together were shown in relation to two types of informal territorial grouping: the small neighbourhood in the village, a social grouping based on shared residence in a 'natural' area; and the larger districts, or wards, of the Reserve which were distinguished and given names by the inhabitants. My informants named the neighbourhoods and 'natural' areas in Pella village according to some distinctive geographical feature, such as a ridge, vegetation type or water source, or a distinctive material feature, such as a style of architecture, or a distinctive socio-cultural feature reflecting their assumption of class or ethnic homogeneity within the area and distinctiveness from its surroundings. In Pella village there were five principal natural areas, divided into seventeen neighbourhoods. The inhabitants of the oldest areas tended to be viewed as homogenous in terms of ethnic origin and cultural expression - people considered 'Basters' in two areas and 'Damaras' in one. Those neighbourhoods which developed after 1952, when the local sillimanite mines opened and attracted people from outside the Mission Farm to live in Pella, were more heterogenous ethnically and culturally, reflecting class differences based on wealth and occupation rather than kin and regional origin, as in the former. The five informally-defined wards in the Reserve were similar in composition to the old neighbourhoods in the central village, the three on the plains being dominated by Baster farmers and the two which took in the mountainlands and the Orange River valley by Damara and Nama stockkeepers respectively.

Perceptions of differences among the residents of these areas have played a major role in generating the internal political process in Pella over the past century, though their significance has varied over time according to the issues at stake. After 1974 their importance declined concomitantly with the growth of shared community resistance to attempts by the central Government to change the system of communal land tenure in the Reserve through the subdivision of the land into economically-viable farms to which only recognised farmers would have had access (see Chapter 5). Owing to a combination of local resistance and changes in government policy, this scheme was subsequently abandoned in favour of one in which stock-owners would rotate their stock among five camps, of which one would be closed each year to allow the recovery of the pasturage. After this success, and with the end of

apartheid, the community was faced with a growing spread of populist ideologies in the wider society that stressed interests and identities beyond those of the local community. As I show in Chapter 5, the inhabitants responded by re-emphasizing internal social and cultural boundaries within the community as a way of defending themselves against these hegemonic forces that they perceived to be a threat to community control of the land in the Reserve.

Religion in Pella revolved around the Roman Catholic Church and the formalized practices and beliefs associated with it. In the 1980s and 1990s about 95% of the population was Catholic, a most distinctive feature which sets Pella apart from the other Namaqualand Reserves in which the populations have always been Protestant. I noticed during surveys and interviews with my informants that the degree of devoutness varied greatly, however, with men being rather less concerned with religious matters than women, and that there was among some people a lively belief in sorcery, while many retained a range of folk beliefs and practices derived from a variety of sources that occasionally emerged in the circumstances of everyday life. The Catholics formed a single congregation in the Reserve, but the resident priest also served a satellite congregation, composed mainly of people from Pella, in the mining town at Aggeneys. He also regularly visited small settlements elsewhere in northern Bushmanland that formed part of the parish of Pella, though the Catholic inhabitants of these places were considered part of the Pella congregation. Of the 150 or so Protestant residents, most were descendants of relatively recent newcomers to the Reserve and were mainly Damaras, though there were also a few Basters who had resisted conversion but had been tolerated by the former mission authorities on account of their close kinship links with converts. The Protestants at Pella were nearly all members of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and were considered part of the Pofadder congregation. Some attended Catholic religious services, though the Pofadder minister visited Pella regularly to conduct services. For the majority of inhabitants, however, residence in Pella implied membership of the Roman Catholic Church (the established church) and attendance - in common with members of the wider community - at religious services and at recreational events in the village hall. Central to the organized ceremonials of the community were church rituals and ceremonies,

including the Mass, confession, baptism, confirmation and marriage, which followed the conventional Catholic lines and were wholly under the direction of the local priest. Other groups or community events were organized by lay societies associated with the Church, such as the Legion of Mary which was dedicated to parish service, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul which gave charitable assistance to families and individuals in time of need, and youth groups. Only sports clubs and political groupings were quite independent of the Church.

The outstanding feature in the social history of Pella has been the steady absorption of the community into the economic, politico-legal and social structure of Namaqualand within the agrarian-industrial complex of South Africa. In the sphere of cultural expression there has been a massive assimilation of the aboriginal population into the surrounding colonial society. Indigenous cultural traits (primarily those of Nama and Damara herders) were merged in those of European and Baster colonists in the course of the processes which have produced the present cultural pattern of Pella. Many traditional cultural practices, extant until little more than a generation ago and associated with nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralism (which in the case of Baster people were already a synthetic combination of Nama and European traits, and in that of Damara people between Herero and Nama traits), have since disappeared or were only rarely observed during the period of fieldwork. While the origins of many traits in the cultural inventory of the inhabitants of Pella can be readily identified (Klinghardt 1990), particularly in cases of items of material culture such as dwellings, clothing, utensils and farming equipment, it was often difficult or impossible to determine with certainty the origins of other components, such as elements of folklore and magical beliefs, in which a complex combination of European and Nama elements had produced an entirely new synthetic form. It is only in the persistence of certain ritual observances that direct cultural connections could be found between the present inhabitants and their forbears and the indigenous population that preceded them, yet the resemblances seem superficial when set against the essential europeanisation of the entire population which had occurred under the influence of missions, government, traders, farmers and military in the nineteenth century. As I show in Chapter 3, of the ritual practices connected with the life

cycle, none contain more deeply-rooted 'traditional' elements than those associated with mortuary rituals.

PLAN OF THE THESIS

Having given this brief background to certain aspects of Pella, I propose to set out the topics to be considered in subsequent chapters.

Chapters 2 and 3 are closely related and constitute an investigation, following Tambiah's model (see above), into the inscription of ethnic identities. In Chapter 2 I begin the investigation by examining the issues of the relationships between the Namaqualand Reserves and their context, the colonial and postcolonial worlds, the question of contested identities and the formation of the community at Pella in the 19th century, giving particular attention to the relationship between people and their land as expressed through the creation of boundaries.

In Chapter 3 I pursue my investigation into the inscription of ethnic identities by examining the forces for cohesion in the community of Pella through an ethnographic account of the beliefs and rituals surrounding death and burial practices, but showing also how long-term practices of commemoration are used to reinforce perceived ethnic differences. The analysis sets out the major features of the social organization of Pella, the different types of solidarity to be found there, and the main foci of differentiation such as kinship, age and sex, religious and ethnic affiliations, but it shows also that neither political affiliations nor the structures of clique alliances and of informal associations were represented in symbolic form in the mortuary rituals. It also draws attention to the extremely small number of remaining traits of indigenous Nama provenience, indicating that in cultural terms the community at Pella, in common with those formed by Reserve-dwellers elsewhere in Namaqualand, can be regarded as part of a wider synthetic cultural system brought into being by the historical processes which have given form to the current shape of South African society.

Chapters 4 and 5 form the second investigation in Tambiah's model, that of examining historical processes of collective mobilization. Chapter 4 is a case study of the socio-political development of Pella during the period of missionary control, and focuses on divisive political processes through showing how the residents responded to their situation of subordination in the 20th century. Baster resistance to missionary control saw the emergence of a utopian ideal of self-government that was expressed in practical terms by attempts to gain control of the land in the Reserve by removing it from the hold of the Church and to secure the removal of the 'White' and Damara inhabitants from the Reserve. This coincided with significant changes in Government policy towards the Reserves in Namaqualand, in line with the evolution of segregation and the advancement of Afrikaner interests in the broader society.

Chapter 5 situates Pella in the wider political and religious processes operating in the Lower Orange River Basin, examining the responses of Basters, Damaras and the Church to the emergence of mass politics in the last quarter of the 20th century, and looking at the circumstances and forces that will shape the form of the community, like those of the other Reserves in Namaqualand, into the 21st century. It shows how the residents of Pella coped with the consequences of their adoption of a 'Coloured identity' and the transformation of Pella into a 'Rural Coloured Area' in 1974. They resisted a Government-sponsored development programme, which would have imposed a radically different form of land tenure, and in so doing strengthened political factions among the Basters that had emerged during the contest with the Church, and hardened the Basters' oppositional notion of identity towards the Damara inhabitants. A case study of the changing significance of the classic Nama mat-house, a polar-centred vernacular dwelling formerly used by Khoekhoe pastoralists but now claimed as a heritage symbol by all the ethnic groupings in Pella, as elsewhere in Namaqualand, points to the inadequacy of instrumentalist and "recuperation of memory" approaches in dealing with problems of cultural persistence and discontinuity in the context of inculturation.

The conclusion in Chapter 6 returns to the questions of coercion and resistance, hegemony and accommodation, localization and

revitalization, and the role of missions in identity politics. It is argued that inculturation in its present form is vital to an understanding of patterns of resistance to globalization, as these are expressed in cultural and ethnic terms at local level through a politics of similarity that may appear to be indeterminant.

CHAPTER 2

MISSIONS AND THE INSCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES IN PELLA

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I begin the first of the two parallel investigations of ethnicity, as suggested by Tambiah (1996: 140), by focusing on the creation of boundaries and the construction of social identities over time in Pella, set in the context of the historical development of the other Namaqualand Reserves. My aim is to draw together aspects of the history of Pella and the Reserves around three issues: first, the struggle waged by members of the Reserve communities and the missionaries to obtain security of tenure and definite boundaries to the land on which they lived; second, the influence which the missionaries had upon the form of these communities; and, third, the effects of the establishment of a mining industry in the region after 1850. Of particular interest is the way in which these influences - government, church and industry - affected the relationship of people to their land, for much of the observable community form rests on that relationship. Why, for example, should the communities in the Reserves, or 'Rural Coloured Areas', in 20th-century Namaqualand have continued to exist, given a long-term demographic trend in the Reserve populations towards out-migration despite political coercion to compel local conformity to the official doctrine of 'apartheid' before 1994?

In contrast to the African Reserves in the eastern parts of South Africa, relatively little has been written about the historical and social significance of the Reserves set aside in western South Africa for people classified as 'Coloured' under the former National Party Government's 'apartheid' policy. While it may be argued, as in the case of the African Reserves that became 'Bantustans' or 'Homelands' from the 1950s onwards, that maintaining and developing 'Coloured' Reserves was part of a scheme of 'divide and rule' devised by National Party strategists to protect the interests of the ruling classes, I would contend that, when viewed from a longer historical perspective, the inhabitants of the Namaqualand Reserves can be shown to have maintained

a notion that their situation differed from that of other people formerly classified as 'Coloured' in South Africa and that this led to the failure of the National Party's policies aimed at producing subservient and politically pliable communities in the region. This notion was based specifically on a continuity of social and cultural identity for over a hundred years, and that distinguished the Reserve communities in Namaqualand from the African Reserves. For members of these communities it was their access to the land and other resources of their communities and the ways in which they met the need to regulate access by outsiders to these resources which formed the basis of their social identity. Moreover, at the local level, this enabled a consistent rejection of the fundamental principles of the policy of 'apartheid'. It can be argued that the existence of a strong sense of local identity in the 'Coloured' Reserves, and specifically those in Namaqualand, calls into question the validity of macro-level analytical models which have been applied across the board to communally-held territories in South Africa, and which have provided a basis for policies on their incorporation into the South African state without taking into account the specificities of local circumstances and the desires of the people most directly affected by those changes.

THE RESERVES IN NAMAQUALAND

There are six communal areas (called Reserves up to 1963, then 'Rural Coloured Areas' until 1994, and now 'Communal Areas', but still popularly spoken of as 'Reserves') located in the magisterial district of Namaqualand in the Northern Cape (until 1994 part of the former Cape Province). Namaqualand is a sparsely-populated semi-desert area of some 4 800 000 ha (18 518 square miles), bounded in the north by the Orange River, in the west by the Atlantic Ocean, in the east by the eastern half of Great Bushmanland cut off by the boundary of the Kenhardt district, and in the south by an equally arbitrary line just north of Bitterfontein. The environment of Namaqualand has always exerted a profound influence on settlement patterns and economic activities. Most of the population (55 318 in 1970; 63 323 in 1980) and five of the Reserves were in the winter rainfall regions of the mountain-belt and coastal plain where the rainfall is not as low and the watersources not

as unreliable as in the summer rainfall region of Bushmanland, an area of immense plains descending to a desert mountainland around the Orange River. Economic activities in Namaqualand are primarily concerned with stock-farming and mining, though coastal fishing is also important. The lack of a well-developed infrastructure has inhibited the establishment of industrial undertakings, other than those connected with these activities. Throughout the twentieth century Namaqualand was insignificant in terms of the national economy, contributing less than 0,7% to the Gross National Product, and about 90% of this amount was produced by the mining industry (National Physical Development Plan, 1972; Dunne 1986).

The permanent population of Namaqualand can be classified in terms of place of residence and livelihood, though the content of these categories has not remained constant through time. This is because a significant number of people formed a floating population dependent on fluctuating employment opportunities in the mines and local industries.

The largest category comprised those who lived in the villages of the region, in segregated suburbs for 'Whites' and 'Coloureds'. While most 'White' families owned the property on which they lived, most of those classified 'Coloured' rented 'sub-economic' dwelling units from White-controlled municipalities, the Divisional Council, or mining companies. Employment patterns also differed between the legal categories; 'Whites' controlled the skilled posts of the civil service, local commercial undertakings and industries, while most 'Coloureds' worked as semi-skilled and unskilled labourers. The pattern of employment at the time of my fieldwork represented a historically significant change, in that formerly considerable numbers of 'Whites' were also to be found in the ranks of the unskilled and semi-skilled.

The second category consisted of people resident on farms in the region. From the 1970s onwards, owing to decreases in the numbers of 'White' farmers and the consolidation of land holdings by the remainder, and changes in the practice of extensive stock-farming (such as the introduction of the use of camps to control pasturage), relatively few labourers were required for conducting farming operations. Since then the number of farm labourers has also been low

(two to three families per farm), and despite poor working conditions farmers have had little difficulty in obtaining sufficient labour when required. A significant change within this category has been the demise since the 1960s of the 'co-resident' (Afr.: *bywoner*) system which had both advantages (of readily available extra labour) and disadvantages (extra loading of livestock) for the land-owners. There were greater concentrations of people in the irrigation settlements along the Orange River owing to labour-intensive methods of vegetable and fruit cultivation. Nonetheless, in many instances plots were owned and operated by farmers resident elsewhere in Namaqualand.

The final category comprised the inhabitants of the Reserves, or Rural Coloured Areas. Of these there were six (Concordia, Komaggas, Leliefontein, Pella, Richtersveld, and Steinkopf), with a total area of approximately 1,2 million ha, about 26% of the land in Namaqualand.

There were twenty-three Reserves, or Rural Coloured Areas, in South Africa at the time of the field studies for this thesis. In terms of the Rural Coloured Areas Act (No. 24 of 1963) and subsequent legislation these areas were set aside for the exclusive occupation of people legally defined as 'Coloured' under the now-defunct Population Registration Act, though a sprinkling of people classified as White was also resident in certain of them for the purposes of mining, trading and mission work.

The amount of land in the six Namaqualand Reserves amounted to approximately 70% of all the land set aside as 'Rural Coloured Areas' in South Africa during the 1980s. Together these six Reserves comprised some 1 210 000 hectares, about 26% of the land in the district. The rest of Namaqualand was divided up into 'White'-owned farms, apart from land held by the State, mining companies, and town and village allotment areas. In 1980 the total population of the six Reserves was 31 243, some 40% of the population resident in all the 'Rural Coloured Areas'. In Namaqualand this represented 65,4% of the 'Coloured' population and 49,3% of the total population. These statistics reveal that the 'Rural Coloured Areas' occupied an important position in the political, social and economic structure of the district in both contemporary and historic periods, though they were insignificant in

the South African context if compared with the various 'Black National States' and other 'self-governing' territories in the more easterly parts of South Africa at that time.

Each Reserve was a territorial administrative unit, with local government during much of the twentieth century being effected by a Management Board, a council elected by the registered occupiers, and appointed officials accountable to the central government ministry responsible for controlling affairs related to the legally-defined 'Coloured population group'. The system of land tenure was nominally communal in character, though individuals pursued their economic activities privately using communally-held resources such as pasturage and water. For the inhabitants, membership of a spatially-isolated administrative unit such as this, with clearly defined rights and obligations, engendered strong in-group sentiments and a sense of community insofar as dealings with outside authorities were concerned, and they all to a greater or lesser extent developed specific rules of exclusion of their own and created structured ways of admitting outsiders to local citizenship (Afr.: *burgherskap*) (Sharp 1977). Within each Reserve, however, the community was criss-crossed by networks of neighbourhood, class and ethnic relations which created internal boundaries in multiple dimensions (Klinghardt 1982). As already noted, the populations of the Reserves were not homogenous, and various mutually exclusive social and ethnic groupings existed. The inhabitants tended to marry within the boundaries of the various groupings, and the resultant profusion of kinship bonds reinforced the perpetuation of locally perceived immutable ethnic boundaries.

It is noteworthy in regard to these issues that owing to their isolated position, and with no major resettlement programmes having taken place in Namaqualand, there has been little immigration of permanent settlers to the Reserves since the mid-twentieth century; rather, emigration has long been a significant feature in securing population stability. This can be demonstrated for relatively secure communities such as Pella and Steinkopf, where the apparent stability of their populations in the 20th century appears to have been largely due to migration to urban areas elsewhere in the Northern Cape, Western Cape and Namibia, and

there are strong indications that this is also true of the other Reserves.

The six Reserves in Namaqualand originated as mission stations on Crown Land in the nineteenth century (Sharp 1980: 10) when Protestant missionaries, from the London Missionary Society, the Rhenish Mission Society and the Wesleyan Church, created more or less autonomous farming communities by settling nomadic and semi-nomadic Baster and 'White' stock-farmers and the remnants of the aboriginal Nama pastoralists of Namaqualand on defined territories that were recognised and in some instances granted by the Cape Government. The reasons for the granting of land as Reserves were complex. Komaggas and Leliefontein were established when Rhenish and Wesleyan missionaries obtained grants of land from the Cape governor to establish stations for "Aborigines and Bastards of Aboriginal descent", while in the cases of Steinkopf and Concordia which were also under the Rhenish Mission Society there was a significant delay before a grant was finally approved. Richtersveld remained Crown Land until 1957, but the inhabitants were not disturbed in their occupation. In the case of Pella a revocable grant was issued directly to a Roman Catholic missionary order after the Rhenish Missionary Society had given up its claims to that part of its lands which had formerly been part of Steinkopf.

The so-called Bastards (or "Basters") were a class of frontiersmen, mostly but not necessarily of mixed Dutch-Khoekhoe origins, who pursued a precarious existence between the advancing colonists and the indigenous inhabitants along the Cape frontier. In the 19th century the term was variously applied not only to people of mixed origin but also to poorer colonists and assimilated Khoekhoe, who were unable to compete with wealthier colonists in obtaining individual titles to land after Cradock's land reforms. Only when such people could enter into an alliance with missionaries could they maintain a relatively independent existence on land held on a communal basis. During the latter part of the 19th century colonists made several attempts to have the so-called "Grant Lands" opened for individual tenure, but the mission stations survived as Reserves largely owing to the influence of reformist pressure groups on the governments at the Cape and in London and the

fact that the location and environment of Namaqualand did not favour intensive stock-farming orientated to distant markets. More significant than these factors, however, was the fact that the Tickets of Occupation were granted during a time of growing interest in the copper deposits of Namaqualand. In granting communal tenure to "a few wandering tribes of unsettled and thriftless nomads", as the Basters and Khoekhoe of the region were described by one official (C2-'88), the Cape Government specifically excluded control of mineral rights, which meant that the Government retained an advantage in the eventual disposal of rights which would have been lost if the land had passed to individual freehold tenure under White farmers.

A further equally significant fact is that the Reserves served as points of concentration of potential labourers for the copper mines which opened after 1850. The Rhenish Mission Society attempted to establish communities which were self-supporting through farming in wheat and livestock supplemented by small-scale craft manufactures, but the available evidence indicates that the communities in Namaqualand were never self-sufficient even though grain was cultivated on individually-held plots which had been informally set aside from the pasturage; members of the communities were employed in numbers on the mines and in lucrative transport-riding virtually from the time that the mission stations were established (Strassberger 1969).

From the start the Namaqualand Reserves were set up to become increasingly under-developed; insufficient land was granted for successful farming in the local environment, and the inhabitants were never able to take advantage of the markets that undoubtedly existed in the villages which developed around the mines in central Namaqualand. Instead, in both the 19th and 20th centuries, they became dependent on wages earned outside their communities in the mining and other industries. There is abundant evidence to show that there was no direct parallel to other parts of South Africa where there was, in the 19th century, an initial period of prosperity in regions of peasant production followed only later by the symptoms of agrarian decay and underdevelopment. The creation of the Reserves was an integral part of a rapid regional transition from the pastoral subsistence of the Nama to a capitalist mining/industrial development, in which the Reserve-

dwellers were, from the start, a rural proletariat (Luyt 1981; Dunne 1986).

The inhabitants of the Reserves, especially those closest to the mines such as Concordia and Komaggas, underwent much the same experiences of dependence on the fluctuating fortunes of the mining industry as did those of White, African and mixed origin in the villages which grew up around the mines. A similar situation prevailed at the time of fieldwork, though the urban working class then consisted for the most part of people formerly classified 'Coloured', the former National Party Government having prohibited 'Blacks' from settling in Namaqualand and having assisted most (though not all) local 'Whites' to enter semi-skilled and skilled occupations. However, notwithstanding a structural continuity between the urban working class and the Reserve-dwellers, the latter appear always to have maintained a notion that their situation differed from that of 'Coloured' workers in the villages, specifically a perception of a continuity of social identity for over a hundred years which has distinguished the Reserve communities from those elsewhere. For members of these communities it was their access to the land and other resources of their communities, and the ways in which they have regulated access by outsiders to these resources, which formed the basis of their social identity. In the wider framework of Namaqualand, it has been the opportunities for farming activities which both objectively and subjectively distinguished the inhabitants of the Reserves from the workers resident in the villages and on the farms.

None of the Reserve communities has ever been self-sufficient. The great majority of households in the Reserves were dependent on income from non-farming activities and sources both inside and outside the Reserve: from employment for wages from commuter labour; from migrant labour to the copper, lead, zinc and diamond mines elsewhere in Namaqualand; and from government funds, in the form of wages, salaries and pensions. Earnings of migrants were sent back to the home communities, mostly in support of families but also sometimes to maintain a herd of livestock, and eventually the migrants' return to live there permanently. A noteworthy feature of migratory and commuter labour patterns in the Reserves in the region has been that, seemingly

paradoxically, they have served to encourage the maintenance of ties with the home village by enabling larger numbers of people to participate in the general life of the village than could actually have been permanently accommodated there. For these reasons migratory labour was often encouraged by church ministers who had weighed the advantages of boosting the local economy against the undoubted disadvantages in social and moral terms.

Though there were very few full-time farmers in the Reserves, many families depended on farming for income for short periods when their breadwinners were temporarily out of wage employment. At certain times in the household developmental cycle farming activities took on a greater significance than at others, for instance at about the age of retirement of a household head who still had dependent children in his domestic group. Participation in farming activities was also a means whereby migrants' children could maintain a bond of common interest with their parents and effect the redistribution of part of their income to supplement the state old-age pensions received by their elders. The implication of this is that, though there may have been few farmers, rights to grazing and to garden-lands had an importance to members of the communities out of all proportion to the actual returns from farming activities.

At the time of my fieldwork, only a minority of the population, for the most part living in hamlets and farmsteads on the commonage, took an active part in agricultural activities. Cultivation (mainly of grain), significant through much of the 20th century after having been introduced by missionaries in the 19th century, had almost ceased by the time of my fieldwork, but most inhabitants of the Reserves kept small flocks of goats on the commonage of the ward to which they belonged. In only in a few households did farming activities provide the sole source of income. The economy of the Reserves thus cannot be regarded as 'peasant' in character, for the residents, though living in rural surroundings and according to codes of behaviour usually associated with the farm-family ethos, were part of an agrarian-industrial economy with whose cultural framework they had to be familiar in order to gain a livelihood.

Though wage labour was the most important source of income, the mixed economy served to validate the communities' ideological claim that they were rural agricultural/pastoral in character. As in other aspects of community life, this claim coincided with the interests of the central government before 1994 and led to an obsessive preoccupation with the agricultural potential and agricultural problems of the Reserves (not infrequently to the detriment of the wider community), on the part of both the government structures charged with administering these Reserves and those who for ideological/political reasons opposed the policies of the central and/or local governments (Sharp 1990; Westaway 1994; Robins 1997). Key issues were those of land tenure, development programmes and conservation of natural resources, and problems of over-population (Sharp 1990), and these continue to concern many local people.

The Reserves provided areas of social refuge which guaranteed protection to the inhabitants provided the rules of the established church and the local and central governments were adhered to by members of the communities. The communities were able to survive into the twentieth century for several reasons, the most important of which included support from the missionaries for their territorial integrity, and their perceived value as labour pools for the mining industry in the region. The development of distinctive forms of local identity, arising from the need to regulate the distribution of internal rights to land for subsistence farming activities, also contributed significantly to the continued existence of the communities by inhibiting the inhabitants from identifying with the situation of the working class in the mining towns and on farms elsewhere in Namaqualand (Sharp 1977, 1980). The future of the Reserves as communal territories in the post-'apartheid' period was still uncertain at the time of writing, when far-reaching changes in local government were being made through the establishment of new municipalities that would include the Reserves within their boundaries.

Though the Reserves were by no means comparable with the 'Black Homelands' in terms of national importance, they played a critical role in the regional context of social organisation and group mobilization. The Reserve populations have constituted communities in the strictest

sense, for over time definite rules of inclusion and exclusion on community membership have emerged, which have to some extent been incorporated into the official legislation governing the Reserves. Though local rules of community membership cut across the 'racial' classification of the population in Namaqualand, the emphasis on a sense of community differed from Reserve to Reserve, and at the local level created a tendency towards regionalist separatism in the structures of all these communities.

One of the features of the social organisation of the Reserves which has emerged in all the available material (Tucker 1913; Carstens 1966; Sharp 1977; Boonzaier 1980; Klinghardt 1982; Carstens, Klinghardt and West 1987) is the sense of 'community' evinced by the inhabitants, a notion of local identity which has fundamental implications not only with respect to Namaqualand, but also in the wider context of national politics relating to the matter of a single 'Coloured' identity. Sharp, for instance, considers that the Reserves '... represent an extreme expression of the sense of community manifested in certain urban localities, because, unlike the inhabitants of the latter, the Reserve-dwellers possess a formal, communal title to the land they occupy, formal institutions of local government and a notion of local citizenship (*burgerskap*) which implies that there are jural restrictions upon membership of the Reserve communities' (1977:4). The emphasis on this notion of citizenship (*burgerskap*) has been found to vary from Reserve to Reserve, ranging from the sophisticated 'corporation' of Komaggas (Sharp 1977) to the regionalism of Richtersveld (Boonzaier 1980), and its importance has shifted through time in relation to changing political conditions (Klinghardt 1982), as recognized subsequently by Sharp (1997).

The nature of this notion of citizenship can be illustrated by examining the criteria which outsiders have had to meet in order to gain acceptance in the communities. Despite the existence of limitations on full membership of the communities, outsiders have never been prevented from living on the Reserves and obtaining certain privileges concerning the use of the communal resources. Such people included traders, teachers, farmers hiring pasturage and shepherds, all of whom have been of varied 'racial' origins, cultural backgrounds,

nationalities and faiths. In admitting these outsiders the citizens (*burgers*) of the Reserves appear to have taken less account of these ascribed characteristics than of the fact that these people did not conform in all respects to the localised principles of community membership. Chief among these has been the relationship of patrification, whereby the offspring of full community members are themselves entitled to membership by right of birth. The means of entry for outsiders has been through marriage to daughters of 'burgers', as many have done over the past century. The admission of such outsiders has had much to do with issues of local power and politics, in which dominant families have sought to consolidate their control of the allocation of resources in the Reserves by granting applications from those perceived as being able to make a useful contribution to the life of the community on their terms. This indicates that community boundaries have clearly not been defined in 'racial' or cultural terms, for the members of the communities have constantly recognised that outsiders of different backgrounds can acquire the characteristics of their hosts (Sharp 1977).

Understanding the significance of cultural differences within jurally-defined community boundaries serves to place the Reserves in the regional and historical context of Namaqualand. The fact of an early cultural and racial diversity cannot be used to explain the separatist tendencies in the Reserves, for the conditions of existence of the whole category of working people in Namaqualand has been determined since 1850 by the state of the mining and other local industries. Rather, it is that members of the Reserve communities have seen themselves as people different from outsiders by virtue of their possession of rights of access to land and their need to regulate access by outsiders to the resources of the Reserves. The heterogeneity of their racial and cultural origins has often led community members to represent themselves in ethnic idioms to outsiders, but this is far from being the "primordial" ethnicity so often used in engineering manageable socio-political entities in South Africa. From this it can be concluded that the groupings particularly significant in the social structure of Namaqualand have not in fact been ethnic groups, and that the use of ethnicity provided merely one way of achieving group mobilization. Such a conclusion can be applied to all the Reserves in

Namaqualand, despite local differences in historical and social experience. This can be seen even in the example of Pella in eastern Namaqualand where the community established by Catholic missionaries in the 19th century was practically destroyed by conflict over the resources of the Reserve (Chapter 4).

It may be argued that this form of group mobilization resulted from the nature of the involvement of the various Reserve populations with the mining industry after the 1850s. Since the environmental conditions of the region are such that an extensive development of local industry has been stifled for lack of water and infrastructure, the formation of large urban settlements and the forging of wider social identities among the inhabitants have, to a large extent, been prevented. The working population, other than those who moved permanently out of the Reserves, has thus rotated between its place of residence and the mining and industrial centres according to the laws of supply and demand without being substantially affected 'on a day-to-day basis by ideas and attitudes arising in a large-scale urban, or metropolitan, area' (Sharp 1977:6). In consequence the inhabitants of the Reserves focussed on themselves as members of communities based on residence within defined areas rather than on membership of wider groupings such as classes or official ethnic agglomerations.

A further result of this was that the Reserves have been perceived as holding more advantages as political, social and residential loci than the villages and other settlements elsewhere in Namaqualand. The reason for this perception lay in the security of tenure gained by the inhabitants through the legal recognition of their rights of occupation. This has ensured that, even though the Reserves had become part of the wider structure of 'apartheid' in Namaqualand, the residents did not have to face the disadvantages of being exposed to the insecurities of residence and social immersion in White areas. The foreseeable permanence of the 'Rural Coloured Areas' also ensured that they would have a place to which they could retire or where they were able to subsist if they were unable to obtain employment.

In the context of 20th century South African society, in which the majority of South Africans were disenfranchised and experienced

discrimination as a result of the National Party government's policy of apartheid, the mission communities of Namaqualand, like those of the Western Cape, have a cultural and historical continuity that is unique. In contrast to other settlements and the urban areas occupied by people formerly classified as 'Coloured', the mission communities were left unscathed by social dislocations caused by forced removals under the Group Areas Act and similar legislation. While they were appropriated by the Government and incorporated as integral parts of its policy of creating a *Volk-in-wording* (nation or people coming into being) among the people it had arbitrarily classified as 'Coloured' and placed in segregated settlements, the mission communities were nevertheless able to maintain an uninterrupted social and cultural history. In this process, with ecclesiastical and educational guidance, they developed particularistic forms of local identity, characterised by cultural continuity and social cohesion. This sense of identity as a community with a long historical tradition has contributed to the maintenance of the Reserves in that the inhabitants have had little sense of interests held in common with other people classified 'Coloured' residing elsewhere in Namaqualand, other than perhaps the feeling of being '...discriminated against in a particular sort of way' (Whisson 1972: vi). At the local level this also led to a negation of Government policy that aimed at the formation of a single 'Coloured Nation'. 'Black' people who were forced to retain links - for example, those of citizenship based on artificially-created 'ethnic' entities - with the former 'Black National States' were at the same time forced to give recognition and support to the official policy of apartheid, whereas those people in Namaqualand who chose to remain residents of the Reserves may be seen as having called in question the notion of a single 'Coloured' or 'Black' identity by making an affirmative assertion of enduring identities which lay outside the then current racist and populist discourses.

MISSIONS AND RIGHTS TO LAND, 1812-1874

In this section I shall briefly examine the early mission work in northern Bushmanland up to 1874, showing that the absence of descendants of the aboriginal 'Nama' in the contemporary community at

Pella and the replacement of a Protestant mission by the Roman Catholic Church are direct consequences of events that preceded the First Koranna War of 1868-69. Rather than merely summarising the early history of the Bushmanland, I wish to highlight those aspects which show the circumstances under which Pella followed a rather different course of development from that of the other mission stations and reserves in Namaqualand.

Previous authors have argued that "the existence of an identifiable 'Baster' society was made possible only by their possession of land under a form of communal tenure" (Sharp 1977: 21), and that the people called Basters achieved their political aspirations by cultivating their political identity through setting themselves up in largely autonomous political communities (Carstens 1983: 1). The Basters of northern Bushmanland lost their independence, however, and, in line with the general process of conquest elsewhere in Southern Africa, were subjected to White colonial domination.

The known history of Pella and northern Bushmanland stretches back to about 1750, when the expansion of Dutch settlers from the south-western Cape was first beginning to affect the Nama and Einiqua pastoralists and 'San' hunter-gatherers then living in Namaqualand and Bushmanland. Even before this time the movement of Dutch colonists had caused numbers of dispossessed and displaced Cape Khoekhoe to form the vanguard of a wave of people whose arrival in Namaqualand brought about the dissolution of the Nama groups living there. The incursions of these people and the Dutch colonists were closely interrelated and complex in their effects on Namaqualand, but, in summary, the 'Orlams (the name given to the emigrant Cape Khoekhoe) were able to take advantage of the disorganised state of the Nama clans, which had been seriously reduced in number by smallpox (Mossop 1947), to establish a hegemony over them. This was easily achieved because of the weak social organisation of the Nama and the lack of centralised authority, as well as the poverty to which the surviving Nama had been reduced through the loss of much of their livestock (Elphick 1985).

According to oral tradition at Pella, which is confirmed in broad detail by Vedder (1985: 445-6), one such Orlams leader, Gamab /Hobesen

(or Witbooi), obtained permission from the Nama chief †Huiseb to settle in the vicinity of the springs at Kamas, as Pella was known until 1812 (Mossop 1935), which was at that time occupied by the //Khauan clan. Gamab was said to have been wealthy and was able to bring many other people under him through the establishment of patron-client relationships. When †Huiseb died Gamab had built up a group (*stam*) equivalent in size to that of the //Khauan. When †Huiseb's wife U-eis married Gamab, the tribal councils agreed that the two groups (*stamme*) should unite into one and that the son of this marriage should be the new principal chief (*hoofkaptein*). This was Kido Witbooi, born at Pella in about 1780, and when he came of age the chieftaincy was transferred to him from the council. As the //Khauan were the senior clan in Namaqualand, Kido could thus claim most of Little Namaqualand and Bushmanland as his territory, but it seems that he delegated authority to protect his interests to other Orlams heads in Namaqualand, Abraham Vigilant at Steinkopf and Paul Links I in the Richtersveld, while he himself resided in northern Bushmanland (Carstens 1966: 18). The Nama groups were not settled, but roamed freely throughout Namaqualand in search of pasturage, merely regarding certain springs as theirs because of "habitual exploitation" (Schapera 1930: 12). While Kamas with its eight perennial springs might have been regarded as the "capital" of the Witboois, the constituent clans and extended families were scattered all over northern Bushmanland wherever there was pasturage and water.

Nomadism and a lack of real centralised authority meant that there was no concerted resistance on the part of the Orlams-led Nama to other settlers and colonists entering Namaqualand and the Bushmanland towards the beginning of the nineteenth century. Travellers' journals and missionary records reveal not only the influence exerted by climatic conditions on patterns of settlement by the Basters and Whites, but also the numerical sparsity and poverty of these emigrants. As has been remarked of the entry of Afrikaner trekboers into the Kalahari, they came not as conquerors to exploit the local population, but as just another group of pastoralists (Russell & Russell 1979: 620), and their economy was local rather than orientated to distant centres of colonial settlement. Even the partially settled farmers of the Kamiesberg region seem to have been more concerned with subsistence - hunting, erratic

agriculture, transhumant pastoralism, and exchange trading - than with breeding and dispatching their livestock on the long and dangerous haul to the Cape. Thus at the beginning of the nineteenth century one finds an amalgam of named groups of people living together in Namaqualand, all concerned with obtaining a share of the scarce natural resources of the region - indigenous Khoisan (Nama, Einiqua and 'San'), Orlams Khoekhoe (which included other groups such as the Griqua and Koranna), Baster and 'White' colonists of mostly Dutch descent. During the following hundred years the two latter groups would succeed in securing these resources from the others, and the Basters themselves would eventually be subordinated because of the White colonists' control of governmental processes.

Carstens (1966:18) has observed that:

"During the first two decades of the 19th century two important events took place in Little Namaqualand, events which were responsible for remoulding the former pattern of social relationships. The first was the northerly migration of Baster families who had hitherto lived mainly in the southern half of the north-western Cape Colony. The Basters were the descendants of Dutch colonists and frontiersmen fathers, and Namaqua and Cape Khoi Khoin mothers. Their culture was neither Khoi Khoin nor Dutch but is best described as a synthesis of the two traditions. They considered themselves superior to their maternal ancestors and tended to marry amongst themselves, although some did marry Khoi Khoin women while others again were absorbed into the ranks of the Dutch. These Basters, who were the Voortrekkers of Little Namaqualand, were largely responsible for defeating and driving out the Bushmen, and in certain communities they also usurped the power of the Khoi Khoin".

Due to unfavourable climatic conditions Baster penetration east of Little Namaqualand was limited to seasonal movements in search of pasturage after summer rains had made it possible for livestock to cross the Koa Depression into Great Bushmanland. Few settled there permanently but in 1864 the Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand found that the Baster *kaptein* ('chief') at Pella, Jacob van Neel, and his son, Dirk, who was the Assistant Field Cornet, had been living at Pella since about 1824 and that about forty-one out of sixty-five families had been at Pella since before the extension of the Cape boundary to the Orange River in 1847 (1/SBK, 5/1/3. Judge to the Colonial

Secretary, 24/3/1864). This represented virtually the entire population of northern Bushmanland. Witbooi objected to the entry of Basters into his territory, but could do little as his people did not possess firearms (Carstens 1966: 107). Until about 1830 Pella remained firmly in the hands of the /Hobesen, but in about 1835 they moved north of the Orange River as the number of Baster and White settlers and graziers in Bushmanland increased and made it difficult to obtain adequate pasturage (Heywood & Maasdorp 1989: 37).

The second event to which Carstens refers was the entry of missionaries to the Northern Cape from about 1806 onwards. The mission station at Pella was founded in 1812 by missionaries of the London Missionary Society who had been forced to vacate Warmbad after it had been sacked by Jager Afrikaner, a bandit who preyed on both the indigenous and immigrant inhabitants of the area (Campbell 1815: 376; Thompson 1827, Vol. II: 65, 68-9). The missionaries built a small chapel and laid out gardens, but they were unable to induce local people to settle permanently in one place due to the difficulties in obtaining sufficient water and pasturage, and they were thus compelled to move about with them. The London Missionary Society did not remain at Pella long, for in 1825 the station was abandoned and left deserted, though missionaries from stations in Namaqualand continued to visit the area sporadically (London Missionary Society Missionary Registers: 1826, 1827, 1828; Le Cordeur & Saunders 1976: 51-3).

When the Rhenish Mission Society took over from the London Missionary Society in 1840 (Strassberger 1969: 63), the first concerted efforts were made to form a settled community, but these met with limited success. The first Rhenish missionary to be appointed permanently to Pella was Rev. J. Schröder, who arrived there in 1849 (Guedes & Reiner 1992: 435). He endeavoured to create a settled community according to the general principles laid down by the programme of the Rhenish Mission Society for mission work, which emphasised self-sufficiency (Von Rohden 1871: 194-199). He encouraged the inhabitants of Pella to engage in the cultivation of various crops, including dates, but he found that there was insufficient arable land at Pella itself or at the neighbouring spring, Klein Pella, where he had laid out gardens for himself and his family, to support a large community (1/SBK, 5/1/3.

Judge to Colonial Secretary, 24/3/1864). Accordingly certain lands at Brandkloof near the Rhenish mission station at Concordia in Namaqualand were made available for the use of the people at Pella. This reduced their random movements in search pasturage to seasonal migrations between northern Bushmanland and Namaqualand and encouraged the development of semi-permanent settlements. There was never sufficient land for all, however, and even that available was steadily being whittled away by the increasing numbers of White settlers and graziers who began entering the Bushmanland from the 1840s onwards (Van der Merwe 1945: 207).

The penetration of the Northern Cape by 'White' colonists took place at the same time as that of the Basters, though it was at first not as determined in dislodging the Nama (Carstens 1966: 15-16, 231-234). Graziers had obtained grazing licences to "Kamasfontein" as early as 1776, though it lay beyond the then boundaries of the Cape Colony and the licences were obtained by exploiting official ignorance of the geography of the area (Alexander 1838, Vol. I: 35; Smalberger 1975: 53). Various hunters and traders, who dealt in, amongst other things, livestock, liquor and fire-arms, passed through the area from time to time, and occasionally outcasts, such as one Stephanas who had married a 'black' woman and was unacceptable in 'White' society (Campbell 1815: 377), also settled there, but their numerical inferiority prevented any serious conflict. As the numbers of graziers increased during the nineteenth century, however, so it became more difficult for the other inhabitants to maintain their position. Favoured by the colonial government, the White graziers were able to secure grazing licences and to establish themselves at certain of the important springs, such as Aggeneys and T'Gams near Pella, even though these were within territory claimed by the Rhenish Mission Society for Steinkopf and Pella on behalf of the Baster inhabitants, while some settled at the mission stations themselves. By the time the colonial boundary was extended to the Orange River, the combined pressure of the White and Baster graziers and settlers on the pasturage and water of Bushmanland was such that the 'weaker' farmers and Nama inhabitants were forced to go elsewhere in search of land, the last group of /Hobesen (Witboois) finally leaving after 1856 (G.1-'58: 7).

Survival of the Baster communities in Namaqualand could only be assured once they had achieved some form of recognition from the Government of their rights to the lands they had occupied. Since the people had accepted British citizenship when the boundary of the Cape Colony was extended to the Orange River in December 1847, the Government seems thereafter to have taken the view that the rights of the indigenous people had become irrelevant (Sharp 1977: 37) and would be recognised only insofar as Government policy allowed. Though the land north of the old boundary had thus been laid open for occupation and use by any British subject who cared to move there, the Cape Government nevertheless did make it clear that it "would not tolerate any encroachment on the part of farmers and others on the land occupied by the people of these institutions" (G. 60-'90: 4). At the same time it left the onus of making a substantiated claim to and application for survey of a piece of land on those people who considered themselves to be "aboriginal inhabitants". If the missionaries had not been prepared to take up the cause of the Baster communities there can be no doubt that White settlers would have been able to secure the rights to the land and swiftly bring about the complete subjection of the local population (Sharp 1977: 33, 40).

With increasing numbers of 'White' and other Baster graziers entering Bushmanland from the 1850s onwards, the question of land tenure in that area became increasingly acute. The people residing on the Pella lands found themselves having to compete for pasturage and water with White graziers, some of whom established themselves permanently at the southernmost springs and refused to leave when so ordered by the Assistant Field Cornet, the local representative of the Civil Commissioner for the district. Rev. F. Brecher of Steinkopf mission applied in 1859 for the lands of Steinkopf and Pella to be surveyed and given out, and in reply the Government stated its readiness to recognise the lands "to which the communities had just claim, namely, individual titles to arable lands, with commonage under certain regulations" (G. 60-'90: 4). The Surveyor-General subsequently recommended to the Government that a Ticket of Occupation should be issued for Pella and Steinkopf as a temporary measure to prevent further 'trespassing', this to be followed in due course by the survey of individual allotments. Some two years later, after the Civil

Commissioner had emphasised an urgent necessity for settling all the land questions up to the Orange River in order to avoid clashes between colonists and disaffected Khoisan (principally the Koranna), the Surveyor-General was instructed "to prepare tickets of occupation, vesting all the lands of Pella and Steinkopf, within the undisputed boundaries, in the Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand and the Rhenish Missionaries, in trust for the natives" (G. 60-'90: 4). Nonetheless, nothing further was done.

In April 1863 the Civil Commissioner responded to complaints from the Assistant Field Cornet at Pella, a Baster named Dirk van Neel, that the inhabitants were being harassed by farmers intruding in 'their' pasturage. He issued a notice in which he clearly defined the boundaries within which he was prepared to recognise the rights of the people at Pella (1/SBK, 5/1/2. E. Judge to Field Cornet, Pella, 25/4/1863). The notice was intended only a temporary measure which did not form a precedent for the future (1/SBK, 5/1/2. E. Judge to Surveyor General, 29/4/1863), because, without clear borders, he had "always had a difficulty in keeping faith on the part of the Government with the natives" (1/SBK, 5/1/2. E. Judge to Surveyor-General, 29/4/1863). The Civil Commissioner's concern, however, was with White settlers rather than "natives". Rev. Kupferberger, the Rhenish missionary then in charge of Pella (though the Rev. J. Schröder was still working there), demanded the immediate departure of those farmers who had settled at springs on the borders of the Pella lands, but the Civil Commissioner refused to allow this, accepting the claims of the farmers that they had already been living at these springs for many years (1/SBK, 5/1/2. E. Judge to J. Hayes, 6/5/1863).

The first move towards recognising the rights of the inhabitants was made in December 1863, when the Civil Commissioner was sent to Pella to investigate their claims. In order to determine who should be regarded as possessing a right to the land, he used as criteria residence at Pella at the time of the extension of the Cape boundary to the Orange River in 1847 without having demonstrated any intention of abandoning the claim by moving away, and/or special services performed during the "Kafir Wars". The Commissioner accepted the credentials of forty-one of sixty-five "Bastards" applicants, but rejected those of the local

"Bushmen", "Damaras" and "Hottentots", because they led only nomadic lives in the vicinity of Pella and made no sizeable contribution to the economic well-being of the community at the mission station. The Civil Commissioner proposed to reduce the amount of land for the community to about 500 square miles (12 949.9 hectares), because the claimed amount of 1,066 square miles (27 609.1 hectares) included all the water sources in northern Bushmanland, enabling the occupants to command the pasturage for almost the same area again outside the boundary. The people at Pella claimed that they had been accustomed to make use of these springs by means of seasonal movements, but, as he remarked, they had chosen their boundaries with such care that they would thereby be able to exclude anybody else from northern Bushmanland (1/SBK, 5/1/3. E. Judge to Colonial Secretary, 24/3/1864). At the beginning of 1866 the Cape Executive Council decided in favour of disposing of the "lands of the Missionary Stations of Pella, Steinkopf, Komaggas and Leliefontein ... by giving individual titles in favour of heads of families, and of the missionaries, to agricultural and pastoral lots, or farms and building lots near the church" (G. 60-'90: 5). Nothing further came of this, however, and the matter of rights to the Pella lands remained unresolved, apart from the temporary reservation granted by the Civil Commissioner in 1863.

From 1865 the numbers of 'White' and Baster graziers making use of the pasturage in northern Bushmanland continued to increase steadily (Talbot 1961: 306). Large numbers of Basters from the Karee Mountains in the south of Bushmanland began moving in from the south-east, concentrating around a spring known as De Tuin where a Rhenish mission station was established under Rev. J. Heidmann. The Basters, who had been forced off the Rhenish mission lands at Amandelboom and Schietfontein by 'White' settlers, were themselves closely followed by White settlers who pushed the frontier of settlement up to the Orange River along the entire north-east edge of Bushmanland (Strauss 1979: 23-25). This northward expansion exerted increasing pressure on the scarce resources of water and pasturage in that area, which was claimed by the various Koranna clans living along the Orange River banks. The Koranna found themselves being compressed from all sides and unable to retreat to vacant lands - "... for to the north of them was the Kalahari Desert, to the east and north-east ... Griqua, Tswana and

Whites, and to the west Afrikaners (Orlams) and Namaqua" (Strauss 1979: 26). The flocks of the colonists were a tempting target for those unable to continue to maintain an independent pastoral existence, and by the end of 1868 stock-raiding by bands of Koranna had reached such a scale that the "Koranna had taken the place of the Bushmen as 'the enemy' on the northern frontier" (Marais 1939: 91).

The situation deteriorated rapidly between 1867 and 1868 as tension rose between the graziers (both 'White' and Baster) and the Koranna, while to the west in Namaqualand the colonists were disturbed by the presence of a large number of well-armed Dama and Herero refugees who had moved into the area from Great Namaqualand, fleeing from the wars north of the Orange River and in search of work at the copper mines. The Civil Commissioner considered mounting an expedition to expel them, but nothing came of this and they settled along the Orange River in northern Bushmanland (1/SBK, 5/1/4. E. Judge to the Colonial Secretary, 21/5/1867; 1/6/1867; 8/6/1867; 22/6/1867; 13/7/1867). They were later joined by a second wave following the disastrous 1904 Herero uprising against German occupation of South West Africa. The graziers began withdrawing to the south and west, while the Basters at De Tuin moved to Pella, before crossing into Great Namaqualand.

In September 1868 the continuing Koranna raiding and settler reprisals finally erupted into a short but bloody war, now known as the First Koranna War (Broodryk 1992). Many inhabitants of the area around Pella were killed and their livestock driven off, and wagon trains between Pella and Namaqualand were ambushed. After the Assistant Field Cornet, Dirk van Neel, and Carl Schröder, the son of Rev. J. Schröder, had been killed in clashes with the Koranna (1/SBK, 5/1/4. Civil Commissioner to the Colonial Secretary, 18/2/1869; Strassberger 1969: 77), Pella was attacked and the mission destroyed (Dunn 1872: 61). The inhabitants were scattered. Some moved to Great Namaqualand and eventually settled at Rehoboth. Others fled to Concordia and Steinkopf where they were given shelter by Rev. Brecher. A few went to Mier in the Kalahari (Nienaber 1989). Fighting between Koranna bands, local commandos (including one from Pella) and the police continued in the Pella area until 1871, when the last of the bands was trapped and wiped out at the T'Gamsberg.

In April 1869, the Civil Commissioner informed the Government that Pella had been abandoned (1/SBK, 5/1/4. Civil Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 29/4/1869). As continued instability in Bushmanland coupled with a severe drought made it impossible for the surviving inhabitants of Pella to return, Rev. Brecher approached the Government in December 1872 for a grant of land for use by the refugees (G. 60-'90: 5). The Rhenish Mission Society agreed to give over all its rights to Pella to the Government in exchange for a Ticket of Occupation for a portion of land near Steinkopf (G. 60-'90: 5). While this represented a significant step in Brecher's attempts to secure a full Ticket of Occupation for the whole of Steinkopf, it also meant that the lands in Bushmanland were lost to the former inhabitants of Pella, and the Government could dispose of the rights as it saw fit.

After the end of the Koranna War, the Government began offering thirty-two lots for lease in northern and western Bushmanland. The lands formerly claimed by the Basters and the Rhenish Mission Society at Pella were divided into sixteen lots, varying in size from 5 000 to 10 000 morgen (4 268.5 to 8 537 hectares), each centred on one of the springs or other watering places. Rights of outspanning and searching for minerals were reserved to the Government, and no compensation would be given for improvements made on them (1/SBK, 5/1/5. Civil Commissioner's Notice, 24/9/1872). With the scattering of the Baster population of northern Bushmanland, the defeat of the Koranna, and the relinquishing of its rights to Pella by the Rhenish Mission Society, the 'White' graziers and settlers were thus able to take over the lands and springs at Pella, and the Roman Catholic Church could establish itself permanently on Pella.

By the time the lands at Pella were offered for lease, the Roman Catholic Church had already been working sporadically in Namaqualand for some ten years. The Roman Catholic Church had established itself in the Cape Colony only some time after the second British occupation in 1806, and at first restricted its activities to ministering to its adherents in the western and eastern Cape. Occasionally a priest was sent out to contact Catholics living to the north, but it was only after the opening of the copper mines in Namaqualand in the 1850s and

the succession of an energetic bishop in Cape Town, Bishop Grimley, in 1861 who believed in contacting Catholics no matter what it cost the priests in physical and financial difficulty (Brown 1960: 78), that priests began visiting Namaqualand regularly in order to contact those of their flock working in the copper mines and their associated convict settlements, or living as traders and farmers. In 1865 Bishop Grimley himself went to Namaqualand on a "visitation" and after some negotiation persuaded the mining company at Springbokfontein to grant him a plot for a chapel and to assist him "on commercial principles" with the support of a priest there. Thereafter the Bishop was a regular visitor to Namaqualand, and his journals contain vivid accounts of his experiences as a "poverty-stricken" traveller in 1865, 1867 and 1869 (Brown 1960: 120-130). Shortly before the outbreak of the First Koranna War he contacted the Government surveyor in Namaqualand "on the most important business of finding out an eligible site in Bushmanland for a Catholic missionary institution" (Brown 1960: 122). Both agreed on Pella as the most suitable site, because it not only had a permanent supply of water but was also in a strategic position from which the Church could expand its activities into Great Namaqualand as well as elsewhere in the northern part of the Cape Colony. Pella was at that time still under the control of the Rhenish Mission, but the outbreak of the Koranna War prevented Bishop Grimley from attempting to wrest Pella from the Rhenish Mission Society and in 1873 his successor, Bishop J. Leonard, dispatched a Jesuit-trained priest, Fr. Gaudeul, of the Society for African Missions of Lyons, to start a mission at Springbok.

Shortly after the priest's arrival in Springbok, however, the mine there was closed and the village became virtually deserted (Simon 1959: 29; Smalberger 1975: 73). A Catholic English-speaking farmer, John Hayes, then informed the priest that Pella was no longer the property of the Rhenish Mission Society and that it was now open to the Roman Catholic Church. Fr. Gaudeul visited Pella with the farmer (who appears to have had the lease to it for 1874), and on behalf of the Catholic settlers in the Bushmanland drew up a Memorial to be presented to the Government, "praying His Excellency the Governor for the grant of certain land in and about 'Great Pella', Namaqualand, with the view of establishing there a Roman Catholic missionary station, together with a

Petition from farmers and others residing in those parts in support of the Memorial referred to." (RCMP/1. Commissioner of Crown Lands to Bishop Leonard, 31/3/1874). The plan for the new mission received the approval of the Administrator of the Central Prefecture of the Cape of Good Hope, Fr. Gaudeul's Superior, and the Bishop in Cape Town began making the necessary arrangements with the Government.

The Roman Catholic Church had distinct advantages over the Rhenish Mission Society when it came to negotiating for land with the Government. Not only did the Cape authorities appreciate the need of the Roman Catholic Church to minister to its distant adherents, but they were also well aware of the reputation of the Church for orderly and disciplined mission work. Furthermore, the Church applied for the land at Pella for itself only, rather than acting on behalf of the local inhabitants as was the strategy of the Rhenish Mission Society, so that the application did not attempt to force the Government to grant a defined tract of land to "wandering tribes of unsettled and thriftless nomads" (Commissioner of Crown Lands to Brecher, 25/4/1877, cited by Sharp 1977: 39) whose claims were no longer regarded as relevant after the annexation of 1847. In addition, despite the tensions between Church and State in most 19th century European states, the Bishop in Cape Town, as an Ordinary of an established church which was also a significant secular power, could deal with the Cape Government with an authority which could not be matched by the Rev. Brecher, representing a foreign missionary society dependent on the favour of the Government for continued permission to carry out its work. These factors, coupled with the desire to stabilise the northern frontier with settled communities, allowed the Government to regard the application from the Catholic Church for land at Pella with more favour than in the case of the Rhenish Mission Society.

The Certificate of Occupation of 1874 (Appendix A) was nevertheless an unsatisfactory document to the Church, even though it represented a step away from the policy of the Cape Government of only giving out tracts of land on lease. This caused the tenure of an occupant to be quite precarious, since the occupant had to compete for the lease against other contenders at an annual auction. The Church had in fact received merely temporary permission to locate missionaries at Pella

until such time as the land had been surveyed when it could then be purchased (RCMP/1. Fr. Devernoille to Bishop Leonard, 10/5/1874). While this was acceptable, Fr. Devernoille, the Administrator of the Central Prefecture, observed to Bishop Leonard that "... I do not consider it a very advantageous one. However, since it is the best one, we must accept it and only be thankful to get it" (RCMP/1. Fr. Devernoille to Bishop Leonard, 10/5/1874). His main objection concerned the costs that would be involved - "At the rate fixed under Act No. 19 of 1862, and Act No. 5 of 1870, the leasing and purchasing of the place will fetch something like 1 000 pounds ... so that establishing a good ground for a mission ... will be no small expense" (RCMP/1. Fr. Devernoille to Bishop Leonard, 27/8/1874). The Certificate was subsequently transferred from Bishop Leonard to the Society for African Missions of Lyons to prevent any difficulties if the question of compensation ever needed to be raised, in view of the fact that it was the money of the Society that was to be used to found the station, not that of Bishop Leonard. After this had been done, Fr. Devernoille joined Fr. Gaudeul in Namaqualand before going to Pella to open the station there.

The amount of land granted for the proposed mission - some 10 000 morgen (8 537 hectares) - was a problem from the start. No sooner had the missionaries arrived at Pella in December 1874 than they realized the severe difficulties that they faced on account of the small extent of land, for the nature of the land and climate was such that the families who had settled with the missionaries at Pella were forced to spend a certain portion of the year on trek in search of pasturage, making the establishment of a stable community almost impossible, while the missionaries required more land for laying out gardens (RCMP/1. Fr. Devernoille to Commissioner of Crown Lands, 9/1/1875). Requests for the neighbouring lands of Klein Pella and Pofadder to be included with Pella were turned down, but the priests at Pella later took to leasing Klein Pella annually from the Government, and there they re-established the gardens laid out by the Rhenish missionaries as a way of supplementing the irrigated land under cultivation in Pella itself.

Further requests for the extension or enlargement of Pella made by Fr. Devernoille and Fr. Gaudeul over the following two years were all turned down, but the land question was resolved in May 1881, when Pella

was surveyed and the boundaries clearly defined. Fr. Gaudeul undertook to set out the boundaries he desired for Pella, and obtained the incorporation of five neighbouring farms then under lease to Catholic farmers associated with the Mission. The area of land granted to the Pella Mission was increased 56 340 morgen (48 097 hectares), adding an immense tract of semi-desert plains (which are covered in grass after rain) and near-desert mountainland. A month later a new Certificate of Occupation (usually referred to in the correspondence as a 'Ticket') was issued incorporating the new boundaries, still revocable but retaining the original conditions for occupation by the Roman Catholic Church (Appendix B).

After the transfer in 1882 of Pella from the Society for African Missions to the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, a French missionary order based in Troyes, another request was made by the missionaries for the extension of Pella to include the farms 'Eytes' and 'Namies' (RCMP/1. Bishop Leonard to Commissioner of Crown Lands, 14/8/1884) but this too was declined, although the option of recourse to the Cape Parliament was left open (RCMP/1. Commissioner of Crown Lands to Bishop Leonard, 16/12/1884). Bishop Leonard and Fr. Simon (Fr. Gaudeul's successor at Pella) decided not to pursue the issue, however, as they did not expect to receive a sympathetic hearing if the matter came before the Protestant-dominated Parliament.

Once the matter of the boundaries to Pella had been settled, the Catholic Church was firmly entrenched at Pella, for not only had it succeeded in replacing the Rhenish Mission Society as the dominant missionary institution in Bushmanland (an attempt by the Rhenish Mission Society to open a new station at Pofadder in 1875 failed), but it had also managed to secure the rights to the land at Pella for itself. In neither the Certificate of 1874 nor that of 1881 was any mention made of the land being held in trust for indigenous people, and no recognition was given to any prior rights of the Baster settlers to the land; the term 'followers' was intended to refer to the missionaries' successors in office, though this interpretation was to be bitterly contested from the 1940s onwards (see Chapter 4). This reduced the Baster occupants to a position of economic dependence and social and political inferiority, since the natural resources vital to

their survival had passed into the hands of the Catholic missionaries and 'White' settlers. The missionaries, however, were now able to set about creating a new community according to their own vision of the civilising mission of the Church, an undertaking in which they had the support of the White settlers at Pella, whose dominant position there thus became virtually unassailable for the next hundred years.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNITY AT PELLA, AND GROUP IDENTITIES AFTER 1874

Throughout Africa, missionary influence has played an important part in the integration of isolated communities into the wider society, to the extent that it has been a revolutionary force initiating a process of peasantization through the provision of new services and institutions such as education, medical services and the fostering of new economic skills, all under the umbrella of religious instruction and conversion as a means of obtaining ideological domination for the missionaries over the communities under their control (Bauer 1994; Hastings 1994). In the endeavours of the Cape Government to stabilize northern Bushmanland by providing a framework for the legal conquest of the region by 'White' settlers, the grant of Pella to the Roman Catholic Church emphasized the recognition by the Government of the integral part played by the missionaries in the process of conquest. In contrast to Namaqualand, where the Rhenish missionaries advocated the rights of the self-styled 'aboriginal' inhabitants and thereby retarded the process, I shall show that the Catholic missionaries in Bushmanland can be seen instead to have facilitated it through the introduction of a new political and social order in which they favoured the forces of colonialism rather than the indigenous people in achieving their aim of the progressive extension of civilization.

The community that developed at Pella after 1874 was one almost entirely dominated by 'White' settlers. When the Catholic Church began its work in Bushmanland its immediate concern was with its adherents, then comprising about twelve families in the vicinity (RCMP/1. Devernoille to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, 9/1/1875), rather than with converts, who were regarded as the fruit of a long-term project

that could begin only when the mission station was firmly established. Consequently there was a tendency on the part of the missionaries of the Society for African Missions of Lyons and the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales (which took over the station in 1882) to favour the entry of 'Whites' and people of European descent who were either Catholics or who showed signs of willingness to be converted. When those 'White' families who had originally asked the Church to take over Pella were all settled at Pella, the missionaries extended their evangelisation to include non-Catholic people living in the region, either travelling out on journeys to contact them or else encouraging them to settle at Pella on condition that they join the Catholic Church and place their children in the school (Simon 1959: 66; C.2-'88: 14-15).

Previous authors have emphasized the degree of social and cultural integration among the various groupings of people resident in Namaqualand, the fusion between the indigenous Khoekhoe inhabitants and the incoming 'White' settlers resulting in the emergence of the Bastards and the distinctive Reserve communities (Carstens 1966; Sharp 1977; Boonzaier 1980). Evidence of the extent to which this occurred and the resultant close relationship between the groupings of people can be seen in contemporary documents. In 1913, for example, the Superintendent of the Namaqualand Reserves wrote: "The relationship which exists between the European farmer and the Coloured population ... requires to be observed to be believed and which has resulted in a total absence of respect the one for the other and a familiarity between the races which is often disgusting. In some cases the European has sunk lower than the average Hottentot, with less education, lower morals and living the life of a Hottentot with the Hottentot - and often acknowledging without shame that he is living on the charity of the Coloured man. It is sometimes difficult to tell the one from the other - except that if he offers you his hand he considers himself a European and if he does not you may take him to be a Hottentot" (1/SBK, 5/6/1. Superintendent of Reserves to the Magistrate, Springbok, 5/2/1913). Such a degree of generalization, however, cannot be made about all 'White' people resident in the Reserves (or Namaqualand), for there is much evidence for the existence of distinctive classes cross-cutting ethnic and cultural boundaries.

At Pella the development of a class structure was directly related to the missionaries' attempts to settle their congregation about the mission station, which was not so much for the support of the missionaries themselves as it was for achieving a degree of ideological control in order to prevent apostasy. As with the Rhenish Mission Society, the Catholic missionaries under the leadership of Fr. Simon (from 1898 Bishop Simon) faced the problem of nomadism caused by the need to search for pasturage during the dry months; this caused Pella to be practically abandoned by its inhabitants for at least six months of every year (RCMP/1. Bishop Leonard to the Commissioner of Public Works, 14/8/1884).

The position of the Church at Pella was quite secure, as it received extensive financial support from sources in Europe. In addition to money received from the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales in Troyes and the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome, substantial amounts came from donations sent by other religious Orders, Catholic organizations and private persons. These contributions varied in size over the years, but were important sources of income for the missionaries until they had managed to achieve a degree of independence with the development of agricultural and other enterprises at the mission station. The Roman Catholic Church in Namaqualand has never been dependent on support from its local adherents, and missionaries in the contemporary period pointed out that it would be impossible for the Church to continue its work if it had to depend on its congregations for support. The financial support received from abroad enabled the missionaries to provide various services to the local population and to launch a determined effort to settle people about the mission. This was done through the medium of education, for not only was literacy a necessary part of the process of conversion but it also encouraged settlement by having parents remain in the neighbourhood of the Mission in order to care for their children. This in turn meant that the flocks of livestock had to be given over to shepherds, providing employment opportunities for men whose families would then also be able to establish themselves in the village. At the same time the missionaries created further employment opportunities by undertaking extensive agricultural enterprises through the construction of irrigation systems

that enabled increasing amounts of land to be bought under cultivation, both in Pella village and along the banks of the Orange River. The largest of these was at Rooipad at the Orange River, where a pump-station and a dam were erected to bring eight morgen (6.8 ha) under cultivation in 1908, although small patches of land had been in use since 1890. A priest was permanently stationed at Rooipad until 1933 and, in addition to supervising the farm, it was his task to convert the Herero and other Damara people living along the riverbanks, for which purpose his house also served as a school and chapel. The missionaries also allowed the inhabitants to exploit deposits of limestone at several places on the Mission Farm for the production of lime, which was sold to the copper companies and farmers in Namaqualand, as a supplement or even as an alternative to agriculture (Simon 1959: 55; Klinghardt 1986).

To the services offered by the Church, such as education, a smithy and medical service, were added in due course trading stores, a postal service and agencies of the civil service under the divisional administration of Namaqualand (a field cornetcy and police post) and, after 1902, also a military post. With these developments Pella became the administrative centre of Bushmanland and it was superseded in this respect by the neighbouring settlement at Pofadder only in the 1920s. Some measure of the growth of Pella can be gained from three quotations. In 1889, Pella was described as (apart from the Mission itself) little more than "a small centre for a pastoral people at certain seasons of the year" (G.41-'89: 9); while in 1899: "Pella has a Bishop and therefore ranks [sic] among the mission stations. It is a central field cornetcy, has a police station, merchants with large business ... and is surrounded by several important farms, all occupied by intelligent people" (RCMP/2. Bishop Simon to the Civil Commissioner, Springbok, 24/8/1899). By 1913 it was reported that "Pella has grown into a substantial village this last decade. There is the mission station, two schools, stores and a police station. In the gardens are grown every description of fruit and vegetable, and our farm at the River is flourishing especially, where we also have a sawmill" (RCMP/1. Bishop Simon to the Magistrate, Springbok 10/3/1913). By 1955 the mission station was valued at £11 960 and the farm at £35 900, giving a total value of £47 860 due to the Church alone for its improvements if

the Government was minded to take over the control of the Mission Farm (RCMP/4. Fr. Archambaud to the Secretary, Divisional Council of Namaqualand, 16/11/1955).

The population of Pella diversified as rapidly as it grew. From an initial fifteen families in 1874 the number of inhabitants increased slowly until about 1890 when there were about 300 individuals (see Table 2.1), but after the surveying and granting of farms began reducing the amount of Crown Land open to graziers and with an increasingly wider range of services offered by the Mission, more people began settling on the Mission Farm, particularly those who had already been converted during the priests' proselytizing journeys through Bushmanland (Simon 1959: 70; Anon. 1979: 6). Numerically the 'Whites' (usually referred to as 'Europeans' or 'Blankes' (Afr. Whites) in the documentation) predominated until after the Anglo-Boer War (Table 2.1), and their relative wealth not only enabled them to establish themselves firmly at Pella by making improvements such as building houses, opening wells and laying out gardens for cultivation, but also to ride out severe droughts and stock losses without being reduced to poverty. Bishop Simon granted permission to the 'White' settlers to make these improvements on behalf of the Church, and assured them that the Church would compensate them or their descendants if they ever had to abandon Pella. Under the provisions of the Ticket of Occupation private persons could not make such improvements or receive compensation, but Bishop Simon did this to encourage settlement around the mission station (RCMP/1. Bishop J. Simon to Bishop J. Leonard, 10/8/1903). These assurances were given in writing, and the matter of compensation for the 'White' residents was to be one of the major stumbling blocks in the way of attempts by the Government to take over Pella in the 1950s and 1960s because claims in this regard could not be legally recognized. Between 1883 and 1944 fifteen substantial houses, which were valued at £10 000 in 1955, were erected by White residents, the remainder living in 'portable dwellings' (mat-huts, tents and wagons). Few substantial dwellings worthy of valuation were erected by the 'Coloured' inhabitants until after 1945, but by 1955 the list of permanent dwellings occupied by 'Coloured' people comprised thirty-seven houses valued at a total of £1 475 (RCMP/4. Fr. Archambaud to the Secretary, Divisional Council of Namaqualand, 16/11/1955). In

comparison with the 'White' inhabitants, the Basters who settled at Pella were with few exceptions poor and far more susceptible to economic pressures, for the numbers of livestock that they possessed were so small that losses in time of drought compelled them to enter employment, either locally with 'Whites' or the Mission, or temporarily at the copper mines in Namaqualand, until such time as they had accumulated sufficient capital to re-establish their independent economic activities. Bishop Simon played an active role in ensuring that none of his converts remained idle: 'I don't know of any able-bodied man here who does not earn his living. I make it my duty to send them to work at O'okiep or other places, whenever I see work and they need it.' (RCMP/2. Bishop Simon to the Civil Commissioner, Springbok, 6/4/1899).

Economic differentiation within the community was further reinforced by the system of land tenure developed by the missionaries. Fr. Simon gave unofficial recognition to an informal division of the Mission Farm into six districts based on the boundaries of the area granted to the Roman Catholic Church in 1874 and the portions of land leased as farms to 'White' settlers that were incorporated with the Mission Land in 1881. The 'White' farmers in these districts were permitted to enjoy precedence in the use of water and pasturage, and were also allowed to limit the number of other people living in them through being given the right to decide whom they would accept in their respective areas. Although the missionaries retained the power to take a final decision in such matters, the effect was to limit the number of Basters who could take up stock-farming without the necessity of periodically leaving in search of pasturage. This practice and the introduction of extensive cultivation amongst Basters settled in Pella village itself led to the emergence of Baster farmers practising a mix of agricultural activities, and in time some of these farmers became wealthier than some of those among the 'White' residents who depended solely on their livestock for a living.

TABLE 2.1 Population of Pella, 1813-2000

Year	'Whites'	%	'Coloureds'	%	Total
1813	-	-	-	-	636
1824	-	-	-	-	400
1828	-	-	-	-	250
1850	-	-	-	-	400
1860	-	-	-	-	420
1864	-	-	-	-	321
1869	-	-	-	-	600
1872	-	-	-	-	-
1875	-	-	-	-	71
1880	56	56.0	44	44.0	100
1885	155	62.0	95	38.0	250
1890	200	66.7	100	33.3	300
1895	257	65.9	133	34.1	390
1900	125	46.8	142	53.2	267
1905	268	41.6	375	58.4	643
1910	210	42.0	290	58.0	500
1915	157	33.3	314	66.7	471
1920	196	36.4	341	63.6	537
1925	250	39.3	386	60.7	636
1930	180	36.7	310	63.3	490
1935	60	15.0	340	85.0	400
1940	40	11.2	315	88.8	355
1945	50	9.0	500	91.0	550
1950	126	17.9	575	82.1	701
1955	83	7.9	955	92.1	1 038
1960	120	10.4	1 033	89.6	1 153
1965	75	4.5	1 586	95.5	1 661
1970	40	2.4	1 600	97.6	1 640
1975	14	0.5	2 537	99.5	2 551
1980	8	0.3	2 220	99.7	2 228
1985	15	0.7	2 030	99.3	2 045
1990	10	0.4	2 341	99.6	2 351
1995	8	0.2	2 668	99.8	2 676
2000	16	0.5	2 695	99.5	2 711

These statistics reflect the actual, rather than the potential, population by year. The figures show significant fluctuations due to the involvement of some families in transhumant stock-farming, and the necessity for established stock farmers to move off the Mission Farm to hired grazing or onto Crown Lands in times of drought.

Sources: 1813 - Campbell 1815; 1824 - Thompson 1827; 1828 - London Missionary Society; 1850, 1860 & 1869 - Annual Reports of the Rhenish Mission Society; 1864 - 1/SBK, 5/1/3. Judge to Colonial Secretary, 24th March 1864; 1872 - Dunn 1978; 1875-1935 - *Prospectus Status Missionis*, RCMP/1; 1940-2000 - Annual Statistical Reports, RCMP/16).

By 1914 there is sufficient evidence in the documentation to show that a definite class structure had emerged in the community. There was an elite consisting of fairly prosperous farmers, teachers and traders,

who were able to wield some influence with the missionaries through their religious conformity and their control of local civil administrative positions, and a lower class consisting of subsistence farmers dependent on pastoralism, cultivation and casual labour. Associated with the latter were numbers of semi-nomadic and nomadic Baster and 'White' trekboers, who were Catholic but who spent most of their time on the move with their livestock in Bushmanland and only made periodical visits to the Mission. Although one can see a structural unity in the community on the basis of economic differentiation, the struggles which later emerged over local resources in Pella were, as I shall show, nevertheless conducted in terms of ethnicity. The potency of a struggle cast in these terms prevented any identification of common interests among those of similar class, for the very elements of economic interest and the ability to control resources solely on the basis of class were divisive and the cause of conflict due to ideological considerations of cultural and racial superiority or inferiority.

In considering the role of ethnicity in the political history of Pella one is confronted with a situation different to that in the other Reserves in Namaqualand. The scale of settlement of 'Whites' in these other Reserves was comparatively limited and the people themselves remained marginal to the communities, though there are instances where they were absorbed through marriage. The entry of those 'Whites' was related to difficulties in obtaining land on account of the poverty and in some cases it was also due to the reluctance of established Afrikaner inhabitants of Namaqualand to accept them as equal members due to a dubious background or other factors, as for instance among the people living around Bosluis and Kliprand (Boonzaier 1980). Some of these 'Whites' were eventually absorbed into the communities through marriage and their descendants were classified as 'Coloured' in terms of the now defunct Population Registration Act. After 1950 those 'Whites' who were using the Reserves for their own farming began leaving, and those occupying official positions were gradually replaced by people classified as 'Coloured'. At Pella, however, the 'White' inhabitants dominated the community, and it is quite likely that if Pofadder had not been established nearby, Pella may have remained the principal village in Bushmanland. The 'White' inhabitants regarded

themselves as permanent residents and viewed Pella as their home. Their attitude was supported by the missionaries, who also shared their ideas as to the proper relationship between 'civilised' 'White' and other local inhabitants requiring advancement. This set the course of the political history of Pella as the record of a struggle for control of scarce resources within the Mission Farm that paralleled that which occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries outside the Reserves in the wider population of the Northern Cape.

In dealing with ethnicity in a diachronic context one faces a distinct conflict between objective and subjective ('etic' and 'emic') perceptions of the development of ethnic groups and groupings through time. An outsider's view of the history of Pella reveals that a class struggle was cast in terms of ethnic identity, but the subjective views of my informants from these groupings, and the views expressed by past members through the medium of documents preserved in the records, are that, for them, ethnic identity, rather than awareness of class, was imperative in determining social relations both in the past and present. Barth's line of thought is particularly relevant here: 'ethnic groups are formed to the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorise themselves and others for purposes of interaction' (Barth 1969: 13-14), so that ethnicity is a relational process constructed through social action (Eriksen 1993). Cohen (1969: 26, 29) argued that any social group (ethnic group, class, power elite) is, in the final analysis, a political interest group, and can be transformed according to circumstances. The important point that has to be made here is that one should see ethnicity as a form of social organisation involving the invocation of symbols of common origin as agents for the articulation of perceived common interests (Sharp 1980: 16), as only one form of group mobilization amongst others, and the importance of which varies according to circumstances (Mach 1993).

The major groupings (or aggregates) of people which appear throughout the historical records of Pella are those of the 'Whites' (who usually referred to themselves as 'Europeans'), Basters and Damaras, with a minor grouping, that of the Nama, only rarely featuring. The principal opposition was between the 'Whites' and the latter three groupings, collectively referred to as 'Coloureds' (the term 'Coloured' first

appeared in late nineteenth century documents) and, following the politicization of these social categories in the 1920s, the first three named were the most important as bases for political interaction in Pella.

Central to any consideration of ethnic identity at Pella is the concept of '*Pellanaarskap*', which can be understood as a notion of citizenship similar to those found in the other Reserves in Namaqualand. The emphasis given to this concept varies from Reserve to Reserve, ranging from the sophisticated 'corporation' of Komaggas (Sharp 1977) to the regional particularism of Richtersveld (Boonzaier 1980), and its relative importance may also be related to changing political circumstances through time. Carstens (1983: 52) also refers to this concept in his discussion of the rise of so-called Baster 'nations' (*nasies*) in the Reserves of the Cape and South West Africa, where the formation of moral community sentiments (*die volk*) led to the transformation of Baster ethnic identity into one of 'nation'. Rehoboth can be regarded as the only such community to have reached so advanced a stage because the others, south of the Orange River, were under stronger missionary and government control. In its broadest sense the term '*Pellanaar*' referred simply to a person born at Pella and who had spent his or her life there, regarding the place as his or her home. When linked to an awareness of ethnic identity, however, it was more tightly defined to become an instrument of exclusivity of varying severity according to its usage by the members of different ethnic groupings and political entities. The earliest reference to the identity '*Pellanaar*' is given in 1857 in a report on Pella to the Rhenish Mission Society by Superintendent Zahn, in which he used the term to refer to all living at Pella (including a French settler) (Zahn 1857). By 1869 the Basters from Pella who had fled to Steinkopf and Concordia during the Koranna War had already developed the idea to the point where they could maintain themselves as a distinct unit in those Reserves (especially Concordia) and later use this identity in attempts to secure a privileged position in these Reserves in the twentieth century (As can be seen in 1/SBK, 5/6/1: Civil Commissioner, Springbok, to Secretary of Native Affairs, 24/9/1912, 25/5/1913, 19/12/1913; Sharp 1977: 93). The entry of 'White' settlers to Pella and their subsequent domination over the community caused both Basters and 'Whites' to

develop the notion of 'Pellanaarskap' further to the point where it became the focus for their disputes over rights to reside at Pella and therefore a practical expression of the class struggle.

The 'White' families who settled at Pella were of diverse origins. The first to settle were mainly 'South African Dutch' (as Bishop Simon called the Afrikaans-speakers or 'Boers') and Irish, the latter having drifted into the Northern Cape during the 1820s and 1830s after the failure of a plantation of first-generation 1820 settlers from Ireland at Clanwilliam (Dickason 1973: 55). These were the families Hollenbach, Thuynsma, Van Reenen, Van den Heever, and Van der Poll (Afrikaans), and Hayes (Irish), all of whom were semi-nomadic stock-farmers. Apart from the Hayes family, other English-speaking families who settled later at Pella included the Herridges, Dixons, Barnwells, and O'Connells, some of whom were connected with the civil service and military whereas others were dependent on farming, although the founding family heads of the Herridge and Dixon families were wealthy traders who had benefited from lucrative trading operations in Great Namaqualand and Damaraland (Simon 1959). A few German families settled at Pella after 1890, notably the Thünemanns, Voskules and Schrönens, who were all traders. The general dealership established at Pella by Anton Thünemann continued under his descendants until the late 1990s, and put this family into a position of considerable power in the community during the 20th century (see Chapters 3 and 4). Under the protection of the Catholic Church, the Thünemann's effective business monopoly over the Mission Farm prevented Jewish traders from operating in Pella, unlike in the other Namaqualand reserves where local commerce was largely in the hands of Jewish merchants until the 1960s (Jowell & Folb 2004: 147). The descendants of certain of the English and German families later became involved in teaching in the local school, and a few (mainly women) were recruited by the O.S.F.S.

Since most of these families were comparatively recent arrivals in Namaqualand they possessed little awareness of factors held in common with other people living in the area and the relationship of superior/inferior was accentuated towards Baster, Nama and Damara people, in contrast to the well-documented trend towards social integration in the rural areas (as opposed to the villages) elsewhere

in Namaqualand. Contact with the wider society in the northern Cape Colony and South West Africa and the encouragement of the missionaries prevented any similar trend from developing at Pella. This can be seen, for instance, in their marriage patterns, as revealed in the registers at Pella. Consistently 'White' people at Pella took their partners from either the other 'White' families at Pella or elsewhere in the vicinity, while in the case of two of the German families young women were sent out from their hometowns in Hanover and Prussia. There has only been one recorded instance of a formal marriage between a 'White' and a Baster - that between a woman of an impoverished branch of the Hayes family with a farmer from the Diergaardt family in 1927. From all accounts she was ostracized from the White community, although she and her family continued to live in Pella and she was classified 'White' in 1951. Although there were numerous cases where children of Baster women had been fathered by 'Whites', there appear to have been no difficulties over race classification in the 1950s, as the political and social situation at Pella had long before demanded unequivocal identification one way or the other under the categories then in use (see below). This was reinforced through the local educational system, which conformed to national requirements after 1911 with 'European' and 'Coloured' children being taught in separate classes, and then from 1917 through the establishment of two separate primary schools for 'White' and 'Coloured' children (RCMP/24. Class Schedules 1905-1958). Over time the 'White' inhabitants came to regard Pella as their home, the more so as under the protection of the Church their presence had caused Pella to develop into a substantial village (by Namaqualand standards), and their descendants argued in the 1940s and 1950s that their position was no different to that of the 'White' communities in other villages in the Northern Cape. In a letter to the Minister of Lands (that was referred to the Department of Social Welfare) in 1945, for example, A. J. Hollenbach pointed out that his parents had been given permission by the Church to establish themselves at Pella, that they were buried there, and that he himself had been born at Pella and had taken over the property of his parents, and that this gave him the right to regard himself as a permanent citizen of Pella (RCMU/7. A. J. Hollenbach to the Minister of Lands, 5/2/1945).

The Basters at Pella never conceded the legitimacy of these claims. In the 1930s some were prepared to admit that 'White' people had indeed been the first to settle at Pella under the Roman Catholic Church, but by 1945 they took the view that the Basters had managed to preserve a continuity through occupation with the Baster 'Pellanaars' who had lived at Pella under the Rhenish Mission Society, that had survived the ravages of the Koranna War. This view was held especially strongly by the descendants of the families Waterboer, Diergaardt, Raman and Magerman, who claimed to have been the first to 'return' to Pella and be converted to Catholicism as a necessary adaptation for resuming their occupation of Pella. These four families regarded (and still regard) themselves as a core group whose claims to rights of residence on Pella were founded on the beliefs that their forebears had been the first to arrive at Pella and open up the wells abandoned by the /Hobesen under Witbooi, and that they had then 'allowed' other Baster families (Swartz and Visagie) to join them. They claimed that Pella was 'empty' on their arrival, the indigenous Nama having already left (although this was in fact not the case). The Basters recognized no Khoisan groupings as having any ongoing historical claims to Pella, for in their historical mythology the 'Bushmen' were simply vermin fit only to be destroyed, the term being used indiscriminately to cover the 'San' and Koranna. The notion of 'Pellanaar' was thus given a much more exclusive meaning than that accorded it by the 'White' residents, whose inclusive view of the community (as long as the inferior 'Coloureds' knew their place) was called into question by the Basters in the 1920s (see Chapter 4). Around this core group was a large number of other Baster families who moved into Pella when it became increasingly difficult for them to follow a semi-nomadic existence in Bushmanland. The integration of these people was hastened by marriage with members of the core group, and while they were called 'Inkommers' (immigrants, as opposed to 'Inboorlinge' (locally-born) or 'Pellanaars') until about 1965, their general acceptance into the community was never seriously contested by members of the core group. During the time of my fieldwork, the term 'Inkommer' had come to be reserved for those people whose origins lay outside the Reserve and who had not been granted 'Registered Occupier' status by the Advisory or Management Boards of Pella, particularly those who did not conform to expected standards of behaviour. During fieldwork undertaken after 1983, I found that claims

to social dominance by the politically-involved members of the core group were being contested by a numerically small sub-section of the core group who asserted that their kinship links with the former 'Pellanaars' living in Steinkopf and Concordia actually gave them pre-eminence but, as they refused to involve themselves in the political process in Pella, they remained politically powerless.

The Basters of Pella, the dominant grouping there throughout the time of my fieldwork, constituted roughly 57 per cent of the population in 1980, the remainder comprising Damaras and Nama people. In addition to such obvious factors as physical appearance and a divergence in cultural components that have marked the Basters apart from the Whites and Damaras at Pella, a notion of descent was important for them in defining their boundaries with these other groups. This was particularly true of the core-group, where members of these families claimed to adhere to certain principles in the choice of partners in marriage for the purpose of preventing outsiders from usurping their claimed rights to Pella, to the disadvantage of the descendants of others of the core group. Such a concept has received attention from previous authors with regard to its importance in the social structures of the Reserves in Namaqualand, but it is difficult to go as far as Carstens (1966) did in defining these Baster family groupings as 'lineages', any more than one would for similarly significant families (such as Thünemann and Herridge, prominent in political affairs) among the 'Whites' at Pella. Though these kin-based groupings did have a distinct patrilineal bias, the family was seldom internally structured on the principle of seniority. Attempts by Bishop H. Thünemann to encourage such a corporate system in both 'Whites' and 'Coloureds' at Pella as part of his programme for the imposition of 'Regenerationism' as a socio-political strategy in the 1940s and 1950s did not succeed in formalizing this to any great extent, other than creating a deeper awareness of the significance of descent (see below). Similarly, and directly related to this, the family groupings did not act as a 'single legal personality' in the external politico-jural domain, although this should be qualified by drawing attention to the fact that in the political field the four main families in the core group did view one another as units, especially in regard to possession of portions of the land in the Reserve and they likewise presented themselves on these

terms in discussions of matters such as marriage and inheritance with me.

Table 2.2 below sets out some statistical data on marriage patterns within the Baster grouping, focusing on those families who regarded themselves as archetypal 'Pellanaars' (the specified families). The sample is drawn from the marriage registers at Pella, which contain a total of 897 marriages covering the period 1884 to 1999, 329 of which concern the specified families (36.6 per cent). The most significant feature of this Table is the decline in adherence to the principle of endogamous marriage within the core group (if it could ever be called a principle in this sense), notably during the last decade, but it does nevertheless show that some recognition was given to the principle in practice, although the extent varies among the family groupings.

TABLE 2.2 Marriage patterns in the Baster families Diergaardt, Magerman, Raman, Swartz, Visagie and Waterboer, 1885-1999, contrasting the numbers of marriages in which both partners were drawn from these specified families against those in which one partner came from other families in Pella.

Period	All Marriages	Specified Families	%	Others	%	Total
1885-89	12	-	-	-	-	-
1890-99	37	1	16.6	5	83.4	6
1900-09	31	3	42.8	4	57.2	7
1910-19	78	3	16.6	15	83.4	18
1920-29	52	7	46.6	8	53.4	15
1930-39	35	6	35.2	11	64.8	17
1940-49	43	6	40.0	9	60.0	15
1950-59	100	17	38.6	27	61.4	44
1960-69	126	7	15.9	37	84.1	44
1970-79	133	9	15.2	50	84.8	59
1980-89	130	12	20.6	46	79.4	58
1990-99	120	6	13.0	40	87.0	46
TOTAL	897	77	23.4	252	76.6	329

In 1978, 43% of the population of Pella consisted of Damaras, a proportion even more favourable to them as a group than had been the case before the 'White' residents had had to leave Pella in 1973. 'Damara' is itself an expression of an over-arching identity beneath which lie several more exclusive identities based on cultural origins, namely Herero, Dama (also called Damara) and Xhosa. During the nineteenth century several groups of Dama and Xhosa had made their way into the northern Cape Colony, generally seeking refuge from disturbances in their areas of origin or in search of work at the mines. The Xhosa had first settled in the Kareeberge, from where they were dispersed into Gordonia and Bushmanland after they had lost their land (Marais 1939). In the 1860s, Dama (or Damara) and Herero people settled around the mining centres in Namaqualand and at several places, such as Witbank and Garganab, on the banks of the Orange River. They were later followed by waves of Herero refugees after the 1904 war with the Germans. The descendants of virtually all these people were classified 'Coloured' during the 'apartheid' era, a classification that masked the extent of their presence in Namaqualand, where their relatively small numbers allowed a process of integration into the local communities to take place on an individual basis (Carstens 1966; Sharp 1977; Boonzaier 1980).

Such a process of integration did not occur at Pella for two interrelated reasons. The numerical scale of settlement by Damara and Herero people in northern Bushmanland was much greater than in Namaqualand and this allowed the newly arrived Damaras and Herero to establish themselves on an organized basis on unoccupied land. Furthermore, the recognition accorded the 'Damaras' by the 'White' (including the missionaries) and Baster inhabitants of Pella, from their perception of them as a separate racial and cultural entity, encouraged the formation of a sense of identity based on their own positive values of origin, language and physical appearance, combined with a negative input of discrimination from those around them. A distinction has always been drawn between Herero and Damara (sometimes colloquially called 'Swart Damaras' and 'Rooi Damaras' respectively) and, although both groupings have lost nearly all overt signs of cultural difference, this division has been of particular significance in the political field.

The political organization of the Damaras at Pella was developed independently of the missionaries during the first two decades of the 20th century. The Damara and Herero who had arrived earlier at first lived in loosely bound kin groups with each household more or less independent of the others (Simon 1959: 44-45), but this changed after the arrival of the Herero refugees, who brought their cattle with them and endeavoured to re-establish themselves south of the Orange River in the same way as they had lived before their defeat by the Germans. Bishop Simon noted this process with some alarm, as the Herero settlers took over lands along the Orange River that were being used by the Damaras (RCMP/1. Bishop Simon to Fr. Wolff, 13/2/1907), but he nevertheless attempted to accommodate them in spite of objections from the 'White' inhabitants. A mission post with a chapel dedicated to St. Joseph was built at Rooipad at the Orange River, and a priest, Fr. Giraudet, was stationed there to convert the newcomers to Catholicism. After the First World War Maherero, then in exile in Bechuanaland, sent messengers (*bode*) to visit all the scattered remnants of Herero people in and outside South West Africa in an attempt to encourage them to return to their homes. This movement was part of the resurgence of Herero nationalism in the territory after 1917, when there was a possibility that land confiscated by the Germans would be returned to Herero people by the newly established South African Administration. Among those who chose to remain where they were, the messengers set up systems of control consisting of '*kapteins*' and headmen, evidently in an attempt to preserve some semblance of unity among the people they regarded as part of the Herero diaspora. At Pella they appointed one Franz Hinkarrie (later called Basson) as '*kaptein*', the position passing patrilineally to his descendants, and lit an ancestral fire for him at the hamlet of Mik, where he was living at the time. His function was to settle internal disputes and deal with outside authorities, and under him were a series of minor headmen at other places in northern Bushmanland. This office was carefully kept separate from that of the Damara headman, whose incumbent was descended from the foremost family (Steenkamp) among Damaras who had been living at Pella since before the arrival of the Herero refugees. In 1961, however, the then Herero '*kaptein*', succeeded in marshalling sufficient support in the Damara community to oust the then Damara headman, for allegedly unscrupulous

dealings in settling disputes and practicing dangerous sorcery. The two positions were then combined in the Herero 'kaptein', although during the period of my fieldwork they were still regarded as conceptually distinct.

Initially the Herero arrivals were treated warily by the White and Baster inhabitants, who were not prepared to consider them as anything more than temporary sojourners at Pella. With increasing political activity among the inhabitants of Pella in the 1920s (see Chapter 4) the Basters' demands for the expulsion of the 'White' and Damara groupings caused an understanding for common action to develop between these two groups; during my fieldwork in the 1980s and 1990s members of the Herero families Basson, Paulus and Fredericks recalled the good relations that had then developed with the previously aloof White residents. The descendants of both Herero and Damara refugees regarded themselves as 'Pellanaars', although this was not conceded by the Basters, who pointed to the Herero claim that they intended returning to South West Africa/Namibia some day and to the perceived danger of intermarriage as reasons for their refusal to countenance the permanence of Herero and Damara people at Pella. The exclusivity of the Herero in their attitudes to other people is reflected in the fact that, until the 1980s, there had been no marriages between Herero and Baster people, although there had been considerable intermarriage between the Herero and the Damaras and, to a lesser extent, with Nama people. During the time of my fieldwork, the few Nama people in Pella, mostly the descendants of Bondelswarts refugees who entered the Mission Farm after the German-Nama war in German South West Africa in 1906, formed a peripheral political and social grouping in the Reserve, and their networks of relationships were orientated towards Steinkopf and southern Namibia.

The inscription of the boundaries of these groupings and interaction among them fuelled the political process in the local government of Pella throughout the late 19th and the 20th centuries. In the next chapter I continue this investigation by examining how these boundaries, claims and sentiments were naturalized through participation in daily life and community rituals.

CHAPTER 3

FUNERARY RITUALS AND THE INSCRIPTION OF SOCIAL BOUNDARIES IN PELLA

INTRODUCTION

In the Namaqualand Reserves, the naturalization of mission Christianity (Bredekamp & Ross 1995: 5-6) and its rituals of life and death have inscribed patterns of ideas and sentiments concerning community and identity in successive generations since the 19th century. Conversion to Christianity and continuation in the Church have always been acts of faith and could not be imposed on an unwilling population, as they involved individual decisions and the realization that Christianity was appropriate to the conditions of life of the converts and their descendants (Bredekamp & Ross 1995: 4). In this chapter, the start of the second part of my investigation into the inscription of ethnicity, I examine patterns in the ritual content of the events and activities that are associated with the death of a community member in the Pella Reserve, in order to show the ways in which these rites through time symbolically express and reinforce social relations and values by drawing people together for re-enactments of mutual sentiments about one another and about their view of life and death, yet also serve to reinforce perceptions of ethnic differences.

The experience of death is common to all people, but individuals and groups differ widely both in their practical treatment of it and in their understanding of what it means (Matousek 1990). Some see death as complete annihilation, while others regard it as merely one stage in a continuing cycle of existence. Beliefs about the dead are generally a mixture of conceptual oppositions to and projections of the living. On the one hand, the dead may be set apart by certain characteristics which oppose them to the living, while on the other they may also share or reflect certain features of the social and cultural organization of the living. The analysis of beliefs and conceptual schemata about death and the dead may therefore reveal features of the socio-cultural system both directly, as a projection of the world of the living, and by

opposition or indirectly, as a transformation of the world of the living.

Culturally the significance accorded death influences the attitudes and rituals which surround the burial of the dead. As Huntington & Metcalf (1979:2) have pointed out, '[in] all societies ... the issue of death throws into relief the most important cultural values by which people live their lives and evaluate their experiences'. Human groups possess a social organization of the experience of death, both as a personal and family crisis and as a crisis of social structure and role replacement. While in an ultimate sense every person dies alone, particularly if that person is considered as a complete individual, in most societies around the world death is also a social occasion, a time when family and neighbourhood obligations are taken very seriously. The immediate crisis is met by mortuary rites and social practices, while the long-term problem of transmission of property and position is met by rules of inheritance and succession. Though some mortuary rites may themselves be occasions for disposing of the possessions of the deceased, significant property involved is commonly transmitted later, through equally complex rituals.

The study of mortuary rites has always been of great importance in anthropology, and the effects of death in socio-cultural terms and its ritual management in 'traditional' societies have long been of interest to anthropologists. Ritual connected with death takes a wide variety of forms, but it may be seen as providing the structure for the reaffirmation of social values and ties and for the transition of the deceased from one social order to another. Rites and practices relating to death in general should be seen as a special form of relation between people and nature, for in ending life and resisting all forms of social control, death represents the greatest possible menace to both the individual and society. In the process of transition, funerary ritual brings to the fore symbols of reintegration and continuity, serving as a reaffirmation of life in the face of all-negating death.

Contemporary analyses of mortuary ritual have been strongly influenced by the work of Hertz, Van Gennep and Turner. In his attempts to relate the type of rites to the type of social organization, Hertz (1909) drew

attention to a theme later stressed by such other writers as Van Gennep (1909) and Radcliffe-Brown (1952): how society coped with the disruption caused by the disorganizing effect of the death of one of its members. Functionalists such as Malinowski (1922:490) asserted that 'death ... causes a great and permanent disturbance in the equilibrium of tribal life', while structure-functionalists such as Radcliffe-Brown (1948:285) observed that 'death constitutes a partial destruction of the social cohesion, the normal social life is disorganized, the social equilibrium is disturbed. After the death, the society has to organize itself anew and reach a new condition of equilibrium'. Hertz (1909:76) showed how the division of the funeral obsequies into parts enabled people to mourn the disruption of society, but later to re-establish its order, and he also pointed out that differentials in the forms of rituals varied according to the status of the deceased. In this way he was able to draw attention to the striking similarities between mortuary and initiation rites. This is a theme that has been echoed ever since in both the theoretical and the ethnographic literature on many areas of the world.

In his outline of rites of passage, Van Gennep (1909) divided the ritual process into three stages: separation from one state or status, a transitional or liminal period, and reincorporation into a new state or status. According to Turner (1984:22), the liminal phase is the critical stage in the process, and is often associated with special behaviour, symbols and objects; 'Liminality itself is a complex phase or condition, it is often the scene and time for the emergence of a society's deepest values in the form of sacred dramas and objects ...'. In some societies death itself may also be regarded as a rite of passage in which the experience of death is wrested from chaos and the dying person is initiated into a cosmos of sacred meaning (Goa 1986) through the process of becoming an ancestor who will continue to have a social personality. In other societies the dead are completely removed from the sphere of social life among the living, though the recently dead may often be seen as continuing to influence or manifest themselves in the world of the living, as there may be a period of transition in which they are not fully separated from it. Components of the mortuary rites and their associated activities may be directed

towards attempts to influence or control the powers of the dead during this period in order to protect the living.

Social ceremonies consist of complex structures with communicative functions (Hoppál 1983). Funerals, like weddings and similar social occasions, are among the most routinized acts of microcommunication and represent nonverbal forms of social behaviour developed and passed down through the generations in a given community (Szecskö 1971), offering some of the most profound insights into the social and psychological structure of cultural groups, past and present. At the same time, they provide opportunities for the expression of individual meanings in gestures and acts, or the lack of them, through the transformation of a person into a discursive object. This has implications for the theoretical determination of historical and contemporary forms of cultural identity at both the local level and in a wider context.

I have presented the principal activities connected with death in Pella along the lines given above, and offer an interpretation in the discussion that follows. I have given a fairly detailed account of the objects and usages associated with death, together with a few observations on the wider historical and contemporary distribution of burial and mourning practices in Namaqualand. The published anthropological material concerning usages associated with death in this region consists mainly of information relating to graves with little or no reference to the accompanying social practices, and it reflects Protestant (Lutheran, Dutch Reformed and Methodist) usages (e.g. Hoernlé, 1918, Laidler 1929, Carstens 1961, 1966). Hoernlé, was seeking to reconstruct the precolonial 'traditions' of the Nama and presented her field observations accordingly, while admitting that even at the time of her fieldwork 'the series of rites connected with death have perhaps undergone more disintegration than any of the others described. They have been telescoped, as it were, into one another, so that often enough as many of them as remain are all carried out on the same day, after the burial is over' (Hoernlé, 1918: 79). Carstens (1961, 1966) addressed issues relating to death in Namaqualand in some detail, but his account reflects Protestant beliefs and practices as they were in the Steinkopf Reserve in the 1950s.

I have based my account on analyses of eleven Catholic funerals which I observed during periods of fieldwork in Pella between 1978 and 1989, though I make particular reference to a sample of six funerals and their accompanying activities studied in 1978 and 1979. As many of my older informants have died during the past decade, I have been able to obtain additional information through discussions of their funerals and the related activities with members of their families, and on my last visit to Pella in March 2002 I observed preparations for a funeral. The graves of my former informants also provided valuable information on familial continuity in commemorative practices.

There was little obvious variation in the way in which these funerals and their related activities were enacted, despite the spread of observations over more than two decades, and it is thus possible for me to make some broad generalizations about the ritual patterns followed and their significance for the local community. Despite the long history of missionary endeavour at Pella, dating back to 1812, there is surprisingly little information on folk beliefs and practices connected with death to be found in the extensive documentation preserved in the local mission archives, and the material available also relates mostly to places of burial and grave forms. In the absence of material which could give a substantial time depth to the study, and with no previous anthropological work having been carried out in Pella prior to my own, I have had to present this material in the form of an ethnographic account of a past present (the period of fieldwork) that is situated within the wider context of ongoing socio-historical processes, following Sanjek (1991), in order to provide a baseline for future comparative studies in Pella and in other Reserve communities in Namaqualand, particularly Steinkopf.

BELIEFS ABOUT DEATH

In social terms it was difficult to determine the beginning of the phase of dying. As individuals aged, falling prey to illness and debilitation, and withdrew increasingly from work and active participation in community life, so they moved closer to the sacred sphere. Their time was increasingly taken up by attending religious

services and solitary prayer and meditation. People discussed quite openly with relatives and friends the possibilities of living beyond significant points in time, such as the beginning of summer (when the first thunder-rains fall), religious festivals such as Easter and Christmas, or even lambing-time. Aged persons endured their fate with resignation and would even console distressed visitors, reminding them that everyone has to die, or that they had lived long and well and were now tired. It was considered normal for people to die with their families, relatives and neighbours around them; many elderly informants spoke of their fear of dying in a hospital or an old-age home, far removed from the familiar surroundings of their homes in Pella. As will be shown below, it was considered vitally important that certain expiatory rituals, which were seen as forming part of the process of dying, had to be carried out to prevent undue distress to both the living and the nearly deceased.

Ideas about death and the after-life were essentially Catholic in form and content, and bore testimony to the effectiveness of missionary endeavour at Pella since 1874. Indeed, as early as 1932 Bishop J.-M. Simon was able to review this work with some satisfaction, commenting on "... the thousands [of] souls we have gained to the true Faith of Christ, who show in their struggle with the world and especially when they have to meet Death, how deep the Religion has penetrated in their hearts ..." (Roman Catholic Mission Pella 1932). Death was believed to have entered the world through sin, and bodily death, from which people would have been immune had it not been for the commission of the original sin as shown in the biblical Creation and Fall, would be overcome only when the wholeness lost through the fault of humanity is restored by Christ. The common assumption, in accordance with Catholic doctrine, was that at death, in order to make satisfaction even for sins which had been forgiven, the soul of the departed entered a state of Purgatory where a period of expiation, which could not be measured in earthly time, would have to be undergone before it could pass on to Heaven. As all on earth were considered to commit venial and daily sins, all would need the mercy of God to free them from sin and its consequences, which could only be achieved through the sorrows and trials of life on earth or in the next life by purifying fire and torments, and making them fit for eternal life. Small children who

died, however, were believed to go directly to Heaven. It was not believed that a soul went directly to Hell, no matter how wicked a life an individual might have led on earth according to community morality.

From an early age Catholics at Pella learned to include pleas for a good dying (*goeie sterwe*) in their prayers. A good dying meant that the soul became an ordinary spirit (*gewone gees*) able to enter the sacred sphere. The most important criterion of a good dying was the presence of the priest to administer the sacrament of extreme unction (more properly called 'Anointing of the Sick') in the course of terminal illness and the last rites during the final moments. The absence of pain and the presence of loved ones at the bedside were also important, but it was said that these were of little consequence compared with the last rites, because it was individual confession and absolution given by the priest which constituted the sole ordinary means by which a member of the faithful who was conscious of grave sin could be reconciled with God and the Church (Catholic Church 1983:174) and might thus prevent the departing soul from eventually descending into Hell. Other important rituals in the process of taking leave of the world included making peace with enemies and asking forgiveness for wrongs done to friends and relatives.

In general the dead were not particularly feared, nor was it believed that they would return under ordinary circumstances. As was also recorded by Carstens (1966) for Steinkopf in the late 1950s, the nature of a person's death could, however, under certain conditions cause his or her soul to return to disturb the living even after the burial of his or her earthly remains. If a person died without receiving the last rites, or had failed to carry out the other expiatory procedures to release interpersonal tensions, had died suddenly as a result of an accident or had been murdered, or had committed suicide, he or she was considered to have made a bad end and his or her soul was believed to become a *swart gees* (black or evil spirit, or lost soul) which would appear to the living as a ghost (*spook*) intent on frightening or harming them. A person could also become a *swart gees* if he or she was not given a proper funeral and burial, for this neglect caused the soul to be angry with his or her relatives and because of this malice could not proceed further into the sacred sphere. In such cases close kin

would offer prayers for forgiveness of the soul, and in certain circumstances would seek the help of the priest in alleviating the effects of the ghost, or even have recourse to a sorcerer or herbalist depending on the severity of the case. However, if a person dreamed frequently of a dead relative it was believed that the deceased individual had returned for a member of his or her family and that one of the household would certainly die. There was no remedy possible for such a situation.

Although souls were supposed to go directly to Purgatory after death, not a few people nevertheless entertained somewhat hazy beliefs in the persistence of the soul in the neighbourhood of its home and family until after the funeral. When dogs barked inexplicably in the night after a death, this was taken as a sign that the soul had returned to its former habitation. Preventive measures against possible harm included the constant provision of light in the death house, and, among Damara and Nama people, the sprinkling of cold water on relatives and visitors and the mounting of white flags around the dwelling (see below).

At the critical stage when it was clear that death might occur at any time, the immediate family in the household acted by notifying the priest and summoning close relatives. Members of the family - parents, grandparents, children, brothers and sisters, grandchildren, and first cousins would all come to take farewell of the person on his or her deathbed, and would visit at least twice a day, remaining for up to an hour at a time, until the death. Special friends among the neighbours would also look in several times daily and help the members of the household. Second cousins and more distant relatives would not visit as frequently, perhaps once every two or three days, while remote relatives of the third fourth and fifth degrees would pay only one call, at which they said their final farewell. Those who honoured the person, a group which would have included old comrades, fellow-workers and people of standing in the village, would also pay a final visit. Owing to the belief in the need for a proper leave-taking to ensure that the soul would depart from the world in peace, a failure to visit the dying was regarded as a serious social and moral lapse which could have serious consequences for both the living and the dead. If a

religious service took place while it was known that a member of the community was dying, the priest asked his congregation to offer prayers for an easy passage into the next world for that person. Nuns too frequently visited the household to assist the family and offer spiritual comfort to all concerned. There were always one or two people present to assist the dying person. No desire of the dying person could be refused, and people went to great lengths and expense to obtain some favoured food or drink which might have been requested.

When death was near, the priest was summoned and attended at the bedside to receive confession and give absolution. The priest was obliged to ensure that the faithful close to death made their confession and received holy communion while they were still in possession of their faculties. Communion given in this way as Viaticum was a special sign of participation in the mystery celebrated in the Mass, the mystery of Jesus and his passage to Heaven. Strengthened by it, the dying person was understood to be endowed with the pledge of resurrection in his passing from this life (Flannery 1975:124). The closest relatives of a dying person were also present if possible - spouse, children, siblings or parents - as well as friends. Other relatives or friends might call in regularly for information, or send a child. Consequently, immediately after a death had occurred there was already a nucleus of relatives and friends ready to deal with the crisis. A constant vigil was kept, during which prayers were said outside the hearing of the dying person, prayers which asked for the spiritual calm of the dying person and for God to be a merciful judge of him, but excessive weeping and other expressions of grief had to be avoided until after the death had actually occurred, as it was believed that premature mourning would hinder the passage of the soul to the hereafter.

RITUALS BETWEEN DEATH AND BURIAL

Between Death and the Wake

Once a person had died a number of things had to be done immediately, and relatives of the deceased gathered at the house to assist the

immediate family in the various funeral tasks. News of a death in the community spread rapidly, carried by relatives and neighbours of the deceased to other relatives and friends in the village and Reserve. Until the 1950s the death of a member of the community was announced by the tolling of the cathedral bell for about an hour, but during the period of my fieldwork this was done only for prominent persons. Close relatives outside the Reserve were notified and informed of the date of the funeral by telephone, telegram or letter, or through mobile members of the community including lorry and taxi drivers, commuter workers, traders and farmers visiting the village. News of the demise of a prominent member of the community was extremely rapid in reaching every household in the community since in such an event special efforts were made to spread the report.

The Afrikaans phrase *bo die grond* (above the ground) denoted the period from the moment of death to the time of burial. During this time only members of the household and immediate family were expected to observe any prohibitions, such as abstaining from work and not attending dances, film shows or parties, but these were not rigid requirements. In households actively engaged in farming operations certain routine tasks had to be carried out for the well-being of livestock. There was no general abstinence expected of people in the neighbourhood, though parents kept their children from playing near the house of mourning and social functions planned nearby in the area might be postponed. Formerly, when the village was small and under direct control of the missionaries, a general abstinence from non-economic activities was required on the death of a prominent member of the community. While the entire community would have been affected in some way by a death, except perhaps in the case of a young child, not all sections and categories of the population were affected in the same way, and certain forms of particularly restricted behaviour were expected only of close relatives and those people living in the vicinity of the house of death.

The major share of responsibility for dealing with the crisis of death almost always lay with the closest adult male relative of the deceased, who could be referred to as the chief mourner. In the last two decades this role has been filled increasingly by the principal survivor,

mostly the widow or widower, for the spouse was considered to be closer to the deceased than the latter's parents, siblings or children. It was the duty of this person to see that the relevant authorities were informed of the death and to obtain a burial certificate, and to notify the deceased's burial society or obtain the services of an undertaker or otherwise ensure that a coffin was obtained. This person, usually in conjunction with other relatives, also had to ensure that supplies of food, beverages and liquor were purchased or procured for the initial tide of visitors and for the wake. Liquor was purchased on a general shopping trip to Pofadder or Aggeneys, or from illegal local sources. It was also the responsibility of the chief mourner to arrange for preparation of the grave. The chief mourner inspected the site in the cemetery and requested three or four male relatives to dig the grave.

The costs involved in the arrangements for the wake and the funeral were considerable. A coffin had to be bought, vehicles hired, and the transport costs of relatives met. To cover these costs there were three possible avenues. While a few people (mainly teachers) would have made provision for funeral costs in their life insurances, most would have taken out a policy with one of the burial societies (*doodsvernootskappe*), usually referred to colloquially as the *doodsklub* or *society*, represented in Pella. A person made a regular contribution to a communal fund, and when a death occurred the association met the costs involved, or at least that of the coffin. A third possibility was through a collection taken up by the chief mourner among the people of the neighbourhood or area, which might be enough to cover costs.

Unlike in Steinkopf where the burial societies were reportedly local organizations associated with the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (Carstens 1966), the two burial societies at Pella came from outside the Reserve and operated independently of the Roman Catholic Church. One worked through a local agent (a relative of a prominent Baster member of the local authority in the Reserve), while the other sent an agent based at Pofadder to collect monthly payments. Both societies co-operated in using a small building (owned by the locally-resident agent of one of them) in the village to store coffins until they were required. Membership (one member per family, usually the breadwinner) entitled everyone in a family to a full burial. The types of

subscriptions available varied; policies could be taken out to cover all the arrangements for the funeral or for only the supply of a coffin (which differed in the quality of the wood and fittings according to the amount paid by the member). While some might prefer an elaborate funeral and more expensive coffin and were prepared to pay the extra costs, others were content with just supply of a coffin. Expenses for a wake were not covered by these policies.

Before the introduction of these societies close relatives of the deceased often had to collect money from other relatives and friends so that the costs could be met. As in Europe, the burial societies active in Namaqualand had their origins among the poorer classes in the mining towns, who attached great importance to having a 'decent burial' - a pauper's grave was the final humiliation of poverty. The locally-based societies in the urban areas and the Reserves appear to have started out as savings co-operatives specifically aimed at providing their members with funds for this purpose. It was said that in Pella until the mid-1960s only 'White' families had belonged to such societies and that few other people had made use of them, allegedly because they did not understand how they worked or what was entailed in taking out a policy, but mostly because they were unable to afford the membership fees. Only one of the societies was willing to assist non-members with making funeral arrangements. In one case, where the deceased person was not a member of a burial society, his personal savings were sufficient to cover the costs of his funeral, most of which involved the purchase of a coffin and goats for slaughter and liquor for the wake, and his family did not have to ask for assistance from others or a burial society.

In the village as well as in the hamlets in the Reserve there were elderly women who regularly undertook to lay out the bodies of those who died in their neighbourhoods. After death, the female relatives present closed the eyes and mouth, and after a suitable interval (but while the body was still warm) male relatives carried the body into a back room of the house and laid it on a wooden table on its back, either dressed or wrapped in a blanket, with its feet together and the arms crossed over the chest. It was then washed with water and soap and dressed by these women after the men had left the room. There was no

special term for these women, and their role in death was not connected with any other specialist roles they might have had in the community. As many as three or four might carry out the washing and dressing in a single case. They were given food and refreshments at the house of the death, but they ate separately from the rest of the household.

The remains were usually dressed in the deceased's best clothes (*kispak*), in nightclothes, or wound in a sheet. It was taken for granted that a corpse should be clothed; informants stated that to bury a person uncovered would be considered scandalous and was never done. The garments were prepared by the nearest relatives, and could be either purchased or locally-made items. Older people from conservative Baster and 'White' families have been known to insist that they be buried in locally-made clothes. This was explained as being a way of maintaining, even after death, a symbolic continuity with the values cherished by their pioneer or *trekboer* forebears whose way of life (in which they might themselves have grown up) was characterised by a strong sense of individual identity and values of self-sufficiency and independence. One elderly informant recalled that his grandmother had been placed in her coffin fully dressed with bonnet and white stockings and with two pennies on her eyes so that the lids would not open (cf. Botha 1925). The latter practice does not seem to have been widespread, though not uncommon in Namaqualand, and is no longer done. Though grave goods are not part of a Christian burial, some small item of jewellery might sometimes be left on the corpse, especially in the case of women. Once dressed the remains were covered with a white shroud (*doodsmus*) supplied by the deceased's family and then placed reverently in the coffin to the accompaniment of prayers led by the chief mourner. According to Christian custom the deceased was laid supine and, in most cases, with the arms stretched along the sides or sometimes slightly bent at the elbows so that the hands rested on the thighs. The coffin was then moved into either the front room of the house or the bedroom, and placed on a stand composed of chairs in the centre of the room. If a coffin was not yet available, the body was placed on a similarly positioned bed, called the 'cold bed' (*koue bed*), until a coffin arrived.

At the time of fieldwork the coffin (*kis* or *doodskis*) was usually supplied by the burial society. Formerly, a coffin was either purchased beforehand and stored ready in the house, or it was constructed by a local carpenter when required. When on trek with their livestock in Bushmanland, stockfarmers usually had some wooden boards slung underneath the wagon for a coffin, and if a death occurred the person was buried in the veld. It was said that during the nineteenth century few of the dead among the poorer people away from the Mission were laid in coffins and that most were dressed in shrouding garments and buried in a side-chamber grave (*grondkis*), consisting of a circular or rectangular shaft with a niche cut into the wall at the base, into which the corpse was placed. This type of grave was extensively used by Khoekhoe people (Inskeep 1986: 224), as well as in Europe (Kunt 1983:34). Examples of side-chamber graves excavated at Henkries near the Orange River (Drury n.d.) and Vredendal (Michael Wilson pers. comm.) suggest that they were used mainly for adult burials. Their continued use by 19th-century Christian converts can be seen as both a means of meeting a practical need and reflecting the notion, still current, that a coffin was desirable but not compulsory.

The body was seldom kept in the house for more than two days. Normally, after a day and a night and the day and night of the wake, it was removed to the cathedral where it remained unattended until the funeral service. In cases where the obsequies had to be delayed the body was removed to the mortuary facilities in Pofadder. In the past, preserving the body until the time of the funeral often constituted a serious problem, especially in the great heat of summer, and to overcome this wet cloths were placed over and around the body and kept moist so that the corpse was cooled by the evaporation.

The house of death itself was made ready for the major social occasion that followed a death by means of symbolic re-arrangements of its furnishings and ornaments. The curtains might be drawn on either all the windows or, more commonly, only on those of the death room. In some houses all the pictures, except religious ones, in the death room were either removed or turned to the walls, and mirrors covered or removed. It was said that the latter practices had been introduced by an Irish family which settled at Pella in the late-nineteenth century. A bowl of

holy water was placed beside the coffin; Catholic mourners dipped the fingers of the right hand in this and made the sign of the cross before kneeling to pray. A set of rosary beads might be placed on the chest of the corpse or entwined in the hands. A candle or lamp was placed beside the coffin, usually on a chair or small table on the northern or left-hand side, and was kept alight while the body was in the house. Among Damaras, on the morning after a death white flags were hung on the house and in a rough circle on bushes around it as sign of mourning. This created a spatial zone of exclusion around the outer perimeter of the death house, and I noted that people who came to visit and to participate in the wake generally remained inside the circle of flags. All these arrangements served to situate the remains of the deceased as the focal point of the mourning process, which would reach its climax in the wake held on the eve of the funeral and burial.

While the body was in the house of death a permanent vigil was kept. Most day-time visitors were women and children; for practical reasons of work demands men usually came in the evenings and night-time. Group prayers were said at intervals, closing with the request that God assure 'the repose of this soul and the souls of all the faithful departed', whom the deceased was presumed to have joined. Relatives up to the third degree of consanguinity and affines of the deceased were expected to make special efforts to pay their respects before the wake, as were all close friends of the deceased, neighbours and the deceased's elementary family. The degrees of relationship cited here were determined by the number of generations separating given individuals in the same line of descent or separating them from a common ancestor. Parents and children were related in the first degree, as were siblings; grandparents and grandchildren were in the second degree, along with first cousins; individuals sharing a common great-grandparent (second cousins) were in the third degree, and so on.

Invitations to visit were not issued (cf. Botha 1925), and visitors mostly came in family groups. Among Damaras, people entering the house of death, or approaching where the body was lying, were purified by being sprinkled with water when they arrived, informally and often jokingly. Close relatives and other visitors arriving from outside the Reserve, however, were sprinkled in a serious fashion to 'cool' them

when they reached the outer perimeter of the dwelling, the gate or the line of stones surrounding the swept area around the building or hut, and this was accompanied by a prayer for protection from evil, a practice that can be traced back to Nama origins (Hoernlé, 1918, 1923b). During the day prayers and the Rosary were said, but there was no singing. It was expected that visitors would bring food and refreshment to supplement the household stocks, but this was not a strict duty. In the instances that I observed, most visitors did bring something with them: a goat, flour or bread, coffee, tea or sugar. In one case a bereaved Damara family put out a tin for donations to cover the costs of providing refreshments.

The Wake

Wakes (*lykwaak*) were generally held on a Friday night and funerals followed on the Saturday afternoon. This timing at a weekend was important as it enabled migrant members of the community to attend a funeral and its associated activities (and then to go to confession) without interfering with the solemnity of Sunday observances. Wakes were usually held in the house of the deceased person but, in the past, if a person died in a hamlet in the Reserve, the corpse was brought into the village and the wake was held at a relative's house if the burial was not to take place at the hamlet.

As part of a rite of transition bridging life and death the wake had two purposes. It was regarded as an obligation on the part of the surviving relatives to pay public homage to the deceased in order to appease the spirit so that it would become a *gewone gees* (see above) which would not return to disturb the living. Secondly, it served as an institutionalised gathering where the bereaved could publicly express their feelings of loss, be comforted by their relatives and friends, and so overcome their grief. My informants in Pella stated that, as a mourning practice, the wake was considered more important for the living than for the dead, and that it would be held whether the body and coffin were present or not - it had to be seen to be done. In the case of an important person's death, a vigil would be held for several

consecutive nights even without the presence of the body, but always before the burial.

Wakes began at sunset on the evening before the funeral and continued through the night until dawn. Though the wakes I observed all conformed to a general pattern, certain significant differences between those of Basters and Damaras were noted. I could not observe a 'White' wake since, in the case of the one 'White' funeral that took place during my fieldwork, the death occurred in Cape Town and the wake was held there; there was only a formal tea after the funeral in Pella. Contrary to popular opinions expressed by urban-dwellers in Namaqualand, wakes took place in an orderly fashion and, though frequently animated, did not degenerate into drinking parties even with the occasional presence of intoxicated individuals.

In wakes held by Basters the body was 'watched' by male relatives and friends and the closest adult female relatives throughout the night. Anyone could attend a wake, but generally only relatives and close friends would be present throughout the night. At least one of these people, almost always male but not necessarily the chief mourner, maintained a vigil by the side of the coffin, while the others sat in the living room or the cooking shelter, or outside around fires built for warmth during the night. Visitors came and went at various times during the course of the evening, and it was not unusual for them to arrive carrying bottles of wine or beer to supplement the supply of liquor already procured by the chief mourner. Some less pious visitors would also bring strong drink with them which they consumed in secret, going away from the firelight into the darkness to have a swig from time to time. Other refreshments included tea, meat, bread and cakes. The men sat at the fires on the area around the house discussing work, farming (goats and sheep) and local affairs and cracking jokes, taking turns in sitting beside the deceased's remains for spells of a quarter-hour or so. The women were usually busy preparing food and beverages, serving the men and cleaning up in and around the cooking shelter and fires, and they too conversed on a wide range of topics. On several occasions during the night, all moved to the death room for prayers, Rosary recitations and hymns. The Catholics knelt and prayed aloud, but on such occasions Protestants stood silently, with bowed heads, behind

the kneeling group. No particular person was responsible for deciding when these periods of prayer should take place, but it was always a close relative of the deceased, usually the chief mourner, who led the praying, except on the rare occasions when a priest happened to be present.

Although Damara and Nama wakes followed a similar pattern, they tended to be more formal with a greater emphasis on religious activities. At the beginning of a wake the coffin was taken out of the death house and placed outside on a stand composed of chairs, orientated with its head to the west, with a lamp standing on a chair on the northern side at the head. Thus positioned, the deceased became a focal point within the circle of light cast by the cooking fires lit around the death house and inside the ring of white flags that marked the death house, and was accorded an integral place in the communal gathering of family and friends. The chief mourner spent most of the wake seated on a chair by the southern side of the coffin, speaking with and being consoled by relatives and friends. Close relatives and friends were informally grouped by families, and sat in small groups around fires outside the house for much of the time. Outside of this clustering were several informal groups of less closely related old and young people, gathered around the outermost fires which were being used to cook meat and boil water.

Relatively few people were present when a Damara or Nama wake started at sunset, but the numbers increased as the evening wore on and towards midnight many people would arrive after the end of evening entertainments in the village hall, some of them drunk. Throughout the night, under the direction of one or more of the Damara leaders or prominent members of local lay organizations, prayers were said and hymns read at intervals. All knelt during prayers and when the Rosary was recited. From time to time all gathered around the coffin to pray, the immediate family taking the lead and forming a circle while the rest gathered around them. The coffin was opened (the lid would not be fastened until the coffin was made ready to be transferred to the cathedral the next morning) and the lamp on the chair next to the coffin was raised and held to the face. After the prayers had been said, each family member in turn placed a hand on the forehead of the

deceased, manifestations of grief being strongly marked at this point. In contrast to Baster wakes where food and drinks were freely available throughout the night, refreshments were served by the women at particular intervals between the religious activities; coffee and bread were served at about nine o'clock and three o'clock, meat and tea or coffee at midnight and again at about four o'clock in the morning.

The most significant feature which distinguished Damara from Baster wakes was the performance of protective rites of purification using blood from the goats slaughtered to provide food to mark those attending the wake. The meal at a wake was no ordinary meal, and was understood, under certain circumstances, to be dangerous to the participants. These rites of purification can be traced to Nama funerary practices (Hoernlé 1918:80), but my informants were unable to explain their origins, claiming only that they were old 'Damara' usages. When the goats were slaughtered, the blood was collected and soot, scraped from a cooking pot, mixed with it. Those attending the wake were marked on their arrival with this blood by an elderly female member (i.e. one beyond the age of child-bearing) of the deceased's immediate family. This was known colloquially known as *streep* or *streeptrek* (striping, or marking with a line), or, to those who spoke Nama, as *mâi-!nab* or *mâi-//ôab* (*mâi* refers to putting right; *!nab* to the stomach; *//ôab* to the arm) (Rust 1969). On women and girls a cross (*bloedkruis*) was drawn, by the old woman with her right forefinger, on the stomach, a vertical line from above to below the navel and a horizontal line above the navel, with the words, "*'n Goeie maag!*" ("A good belly!"). In the case of men and boys she drew the cross on the inner side of the right forearm, with the words "*'n Goeie arm!*" ("A good arm!"), although at one wake there was a variation in that boys received only a line (*bloedlyn*) drawn down the inside of the right forearm on the grounds that they were not yet mature. With this marking in place one had nothing to fear from the meal, but nobody (including myself) was allowed to eat or drink before having been marked in this way. The words were the same in form for both males and females, but it was clear from informants' statements on the meaning of this practice that an absence of protection would have had different effects on men and women. In the case of women the effects were directly physical, for without the blood cross, I was told, a woman would experience extreme

hunger during the wake and afterwards suffer stomach pains and diarrhoea. In the case of men, however, the effects would have had to do with his livelihood and thus the well-being of his family or household dependent on him. For a man, it was said, eating of the wake meal without having been striped would have resulted in misfortune in his work; he might lose his job, or it might become increasingly difficult to obtain money in whatever way. Striping of men was often accompanied by joking references to the generosity or otherwise of the guest's contribution to the refreshments, and even in the case of boys, who would not have brought anything, the elderly woman advised them, as she drew the stripe, not be stingy when they were grown up and had become rich. Striping of children was said to prevent sickness resulting from being in proximity to death. My Baster informants cited their reluctance to submit to this kind of cultural practice as their reason for generally not attending Damara wakes.

Between the Wake and the Funeral

Wakes ended at dawn, either with the appearance of the morning star or at sunrise, and the participants dispersed to their homes to prepare for the funeral in the afternoon. In the course of the morning a number of close relatives and friends gathered at the house of death to assist in the transfer of the coffin to the cathedral. This was spoken of as the 'raising' (*opligting*) of the coffin.

When the time came to prepare to move the coffin, the lid was opened and those present filed around it, each in turn touching the face or hands of the deceased as a farewell. The priest, or the chief mourner in his absence, led the group in prayer as the coffin lid was closed over the body, placing particular emphasis on the imminent departure of the deceased from the house. At this point manifestations of grief, especially among the women, reached a height only to be exceeded at the burial.

After the lid had been screwed down, the coffin was lifted by six men and carried out to a light truck or van in which it was to be conveyed to the cathedral. Until the 1950s a wagon drawn by horses (never, I was

told, donkeys or oxen) was used for this purpose; it was said that only in the early days of the 1880s and 1890s when there were few people at Pella and all lived close to the mission station did bearers carry the coffin to the cathedral on foot in a silent procession. The chief mourner, the bearers and a varying number of others then proceeded to the cathedral, the truck leading and the others following in cars or light trucks. These processions took a round-about route to the cathedral, even when the distance was very short, and avoided passing in sight of the cemetery; this was, as it were, an offering of a final view of scenes familiar in the deceased person's life. Non-participant bystanders were expected to stop and bow their heads as the cortege went by, to honour the procession. I noted that old women and children turned their backs to the passing coffin and crossed themselves, but I could obtain no definite explanation as to why this was done.

On arrival at the cathedral the procession was met by the priest, or nuns in the absence of the priest. The men removed their hats as the coffin was blessed at the door. Then all entered the cathedral led by the chief mourner behind the coffin, which was placed on a stand in front of the high altar. After the coffin had been given benediction the mourners departed, leaving it alone in the cathedral until the funeral service in the afternoon. The coffin was placed directly in the grave only when death had been due to disease or if the corpse had reached an advanced stage of decomposition. In such a case the coffin received benediction at the door of the cathedral and the procession then proceeded to the cemetery. For the purposes of the funeral service in such instances, an imitation coffin, made of wood and painted black with a white cross on the lid, was put in front of the high altar.

Funeral and Burial

Funerals proper began with a service in the cathedral. When the local priest was not available for a funeral, he appointed someone to conduct it in his place, usually a member of the Parish Council who was also the leader of a church-based community organization. In the past when a priest could not be present at some remote hamlet or other place in the Reserve a locally respected person filled this role. In the nineteenth

century people were frequently buried on unconsecrated ground, on the land where they had lived or wherever they might have died, with a stone at the head and foot of the grave. According to Sr. Therese-Bernard Thünemann (an elderly nun of the OSFS who had spent her early life in Pella), when a priest in due course came that way, the stones were pulled up, holy water was poured down the holes left by the stones and sprinkled over the mound, and a service was read over the grave. As it was not considered good Christian usage to lay people down in unconsecrated ground with only a brief service of committal said over them, the Catholic missionaries insisted that their parishioners should bring their dead even over long distances to be buried in the only Christian burial place in the region and thus be laid to rest in consecrated ground in accordance with Canon Law No. 1180 (Catholic Church 1983:208) and, by the mid-twentieth century, this had become general practice.

In the funerals I observed, the process of taking leave of the community took place in the cathedral, the ideal being that all Christ's faithful who had died should be given a Church funeral. At the time of my fieldwork, the funeral Mass was conducted as a matter of course, though in the past, in cases of people dying in areas remote from Pella, it had been done only when it had been expressly desired. It was considered important that, even if the coffin had already been placed in the grave, prayers for the dead should be said in the cathedral as a communal farewell before the actual committal. For a proper burial the body of the deceased had to be borne to the cathedral, be present during the service and then be buried with the appropriate prayers read or sung over it by the priest.

Church funerals were conducted according to the ordinary norms of the Roman Catholic liturgy. In these funeral rites, through the union of all with each other in Christ, the Church prays for the spiritual support of the dead, it honours their bodies, and at the same time it brings to the living the comfort of hope (Catholic Church 1983:207). In the funerals I observed, the Funeral Mass was performed on the day of burial, and normally included a short homily designed by the priest to reach those who did not often come to Mass but might attend funerals. The emphasis in these homilies on the consolation of the living with

hope in the face of death was symbolised in the vestments of the priest. The colour of the chasuble and other vestments follows long-standing customs of expressing in a material way some aspect of the particular mystery of faith being celebrated in a Mass. Thus the use of black vestments for funeral services is indicative of sadness and mourning. The priests at Pella, however, making use of the greater freedom of interpretation granted clerics after the wide-ranging reforms in the Church initiated by the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s (Flannery 1975:198), sometimes wore vestments of white, which is the sum of all colours, to signify the themes of joy, purity of soul and hope in their homilies at funerals. They were in effect urging a transcendent view of death as the gateway to eternal life, in contrast with the torments of Purgatory emphasised by earlier missionaries at Pella.

It was considered fortunate when a person died on a Wednesday or Thursday, for there was then not a long interval before the burial. As already indicated, most funerals took place on a Saturday, but not on a Sunday as it was considered unseemly to have the wake with its attendant activities immediately before the first of the Sunday Masses. An instance of two funerals taking place on the same day was not observed, but informants stated that in such an event the families concerned each sought to have their dead buried first, as it was a traditional belief that the soul of the most recently buried person had to guard the cemetery and had no repose until the arrival of the next. My informants said that this was a very old Dutch or French belief.

Anyone was welcome to attend funerals, and people went without formal invitation. Funerals proper always attracted a large gathering, and the funeral of even the most undistinguished person might have large numbers of mourners, for it was understood that everyone acquainted with the deceased should participate unless there was good reason to be absent. At the funeral of a prominent person there might be more than four or five hundred people present, for on such an occasion the ideal was for every household in the Reserve to be represented by at least one member. In 1978 over six hundred people, of all classes and ethnic affiliations, attended the funeral of Julius Thünemann, the last

'White' mayor of Pella. For persons of less consequence perhaps 100 to 200 people would be present.

Funerals proper might thus be regarded as more of a total-community event than any of the preceding stages in the process of disposal which are mainly local and kinship activities. This was clearly evidenced in the general use of black clothing by mourners attending a funeral. Just as the burial clothing of the deceased expressed values of identity and incorporation, so too did that of participants in his funeral. The dress worn by people to the funeral was special to the occasion, not only as a mark of respect to the dead, but also symbolic in expressing solidarity in the face of disruption. People attending funerals in Pella were expected to be respectably dressed, if not wholly in black (which was desirable) then wearing at least one black item, and even the poorest people came dressed in their best dark-coloured clothes.

At the end of the funeral Mass or prayer service, the coffin was borne out of the cathedral and placed in a hearse or on a light truck while the mourners assembled outside, men and women in more or less discrete groups, conversing and exchanging greetings in subdued tones. The funeral procession then formed up and set out for the cemetery. The cathedral bell was tolled at funerals only when this had been requested (in the past, so I was told, the ringing of the bell was supposed to drive away the dead person's ghost and evil spirits).

The cemetery was less than two hundred metres north-west of the cathedral. Until about the 1960s it was customary for the procession to walk the entire distance from the cathedral to the graveyard, and the coffin was carried by bearers. By the time of my fieldwork, however, the coffin was conveyed in a hearse or on the back of a light truck. Sometimes better-off mourners travelled to the cemetery by car or light truck, occasionally as part of the procession with the rest following on foot or apart from the procession itself. In one case a poor chief mourner, knowing that some of the mourners at his father's funeral would go to the cemetery by car, went to the expense of hiring a car from a local taxi operator to convey himself and his immediate family in order not to lose face. In nearly all the funerals I observed,

however, the coffin was transported on a vehicle while the mourners covered the way on foot.

A definite pattern could be discerned in the processions observed. Immediately following the coffin, walked (or drove) the chief mourner, the closest female relative, and sometimes an official of the burial society to which the deceased had belonged. It was not unusual for two males to walk together, for example, two brothers behind a parent's coffin; or a father and son might walk behind the latter's dead brother. That a female could accompany or even be the chief mourner was said to have been a development of the late 1970s, for in the past the closest female relative had always walked behind the chief mourner, except in the case of parents following the coffin of their child. Behind the principal grouping of mourners, the rest walked three or four deep in informal ordering.

Apart from the precedence accorded to the chief mourner, no other differentiation was made among males in the procession. It was not considered remarkable, for example, that the school principal or a high-ranking teacher, or a government official, or a high-status Protestant newcomer (*inkommer*) to the Reserve, or even an outsider, should have walked behind or at the side of an unemployed labourer, a cousin of the deceased and a Catholic. Nor did it draw comment if Baster and Damara people walked together. Eyebrows would have been raised, however, if they had stood together at the graveside as this would have involved abandoning the tendency towards family clustering in this part of the funeral (see below). On the other hand, females tended to group themselves spontaneously according to nearness of kinship with the deceased, those who were most closely related walking nearest the coffin. In this way, women were grouped in elementary family units, e.g. mother walking with daughter, or sister with sister. Young children of both sexes walked with their mothers or other older female relatives, but older children followed their parent or older relatives of the same sex.

In the procession severe solemnity was observed only in the immediate vicinity of the coffin, among the chief mourner, bearers, close relatives, and the first rows of women, who might pray and sing. Beyond

this area people chatted quietly about current events, the funeral Mass or the weather as they walked along. Non-participant bystanders were expected to honour the procession by standing still and bowing their heads as it passed. Here again old women and children were seen to turn their backs and cross themselves, just as those observing the transfer of the coffin to the cathedral had done.

When the procession arrived at the entrance to the cemetery, it broke up in an orderly fashion. Cars and light trucks were parked at the gate and from there the entire procession resumed on foot. At the entrance to the burial ground the men at the head of the procession halted, faced inward towards one another and removed their hats. The coffin was lifted off the truck or hearse by the bearers and the cortege then passed between the lines of men into the cemetery. The coffin was brought to the northern longitudinal edge of the grave, around which the closest relatives and the priest with his assistant took up positions, the former usually at the western end. Around this group, relatives and friends tended to cluster by families and degree of acquaintanceship. In this way Basters and Damaras came to stand separately without any deliberate attempts to form groups consciously apart from one another, and this also produced a tendency to separate men from women as in the funeral procession.

The most extreme case of differentiation among mourners at the graveside that I saw occurred at the funeral of the last 'White' mayor of Pella in 1978. Those who attended included his relatives both from Pella and further afield, the Bishop of Keimoes, clerics and religious from the diocese, dignitaries from Pofadder and farmers from various parts of Bushmanland, as well as about 600 local inhabitants. The burial was at the family plot in an area of the cemetery which had been fenced and set aside for the exclusive use of 'White's in 1969 (see below), and, with the exception of the cathedral choir and old family servants, only people recognised as 'White' entered the fenced area with the family members, the Bishop and other clergy; the rest lined the fence to observe the proceedings, a position which emphasised the distinction which had come into being between 'White' and 'Coloured' inhabitants of Pella as a result of Government policy.

After the priest had read the prayers for the dead and sprinkled holy water on the coffin, other speakers might say a few fitting words emphasising the need for all to prepare for death, or indeed launch into lengthy eulogies, punctuated at intervals by the singing of hymns by the mourners or a choir. Eulogies and obituaries comprised brief life histories and accounts of how the person had died, including how he or she had prepared for death, details of illnesses suffered (if any), prayers offered and intercessions requested, how he or she had made peace with his relatives and friends, how he or she had made a final confession, and an uplifting peroration on his or her last words.

When the time for actual committal came, two male bearers descended into the grave to receive the coffin as the other bearers lowered it into the grave with its head to the west. After crossing themselves, they guided the coffin down until it reached the floor of the grave and then so positioned it that it rested equidistant on all sides from the walls. The bearers standing above gave directions in this regard to those in the grave. The bearers were then helped out with a hand offered from someone along the margin of the grave so as to avoid stepping on the coffin. Only at the funeral of the 'White' mayor, for which the arrangements had been made by a professional undertaker, was a mechanical lift used for the committal. At this point, after a final sprinkling of holy water and the completion of the absolution prayers, it was usual for the priest and his assistant to depart precipitately, leaving the people to complete the burial.

After further eulogies and farewells, male and female relatives within the first and second degrees of kinship started filling in the grave by throwing either handfuls or spadefuls of earth into the grave as a mark of respect for the deceased (cf. Botha 1925:549, Hoernlé 1923b:517), after which the bearers and male relatives shovelled in the remainder of the earth. At two of the funerals I observed hymns were sung while the grave was being filled. It was at this point that expressions of grief, equal to or surpassing those shown at the closing of the coffin, were always forthcoming. It was expected that female relatives should weep, but males should not. In instances noted where male relatives were unable to control their emotions they were assisted away from the grave to the fringes of the group.

When the grave had been filled in a mound was built over it with the surplus ground and the wreaths and other items (see below) were placed on it. Before each wreath was placed on the grave the accompanying tribute was read, an often time-consuming activity when lengthy biblical citations had to be quoted in full. The time taken up by the actual burial could be considerable, varying from one to three hours or even longer in the case of a prominent person, mainly owing to the drawn out process of eulogising and reading of tributes.

When the last wreath or tribute had been put in place the grave was considered closed. A temporary marker, in the form of a wooden cross, was placed on the grave only at the end of the period of full mourning (see below), after which it remained until the permanent tombstone or cross could be mounted and consecrated later. Before leaving the graveside it was usual for each person to pass by and throw one or three handfuls of ground or a few pebbles on the grave with the words *rus in vrede* (rest in peace) as a final farewell. With Damara and Nama people this *grondgooi* (casting of earth) was regarded as a special custom, but many Bastards were for the most part content to say a final silent prayer or a *requiem aeternam* on leaving the grave and did it only if attending the burial of a Damara or Nama person. When the burial was completed the mourners dispersed quietly, but before leaving the cemetery most people walked about viewing the graves of members of their families, sometimes kneeling in prayer before a fresh grave but more frequently sprinkling a handful of earth in greeting.

After visiting their relatives' graves, the mourners returned, either walking or by vehicle, to their homes. The immediate family and closest relatives of the deceased were joined at home by more distant relatives and perhaps some close friends. Those who had dug the grave were also included in this visit. It was usual for all kin within the third degree to pay this short 'comfort' visit (*troosbesoek*) after the funeral proper. The visitors were given refreshments, tea and liquor with biscuits and perhaps bread or cakes supplied by the immediate family (cf. Botha 1925:549), but before partaking everybody first washed their hands 'to get the dust off', using basins of water and towels placed ready for this purpose. This occasion formally ended the

funeral proceedings, and thereafter all dispersed to their normal occupations. Afterwards, when all the relatives had gone home, the members of the immediate family began to discuss the division of inheritance that would take place after the legal formalities had been concluded, unless previous arrangements had been made.

During this 'comfort' visit mementos of the deceased were usually distributed among the relatives present. Some of these items had considerable material value, e.g. watches, jewellery, and tools. Their passage generally followed the same lines as would be followed in the inheritance of livestock, house and household goods, that is, they were kept within the family of procreation of the deceased. Articles such as photographs, sacred medals, prayer books, etc., were distributed more widely, however, to relatives outside the elementary family such as cousins, nephews, and nieces. In some of the 'White' families, a few articles of the dead person's clothing were washed and stored in a drawer or chest kept in the front room. These garments would never be worn again, but were put away along with other souvenirs and would be brought out only on rare occasions to be shown to those who had been close to the deceased or to his descendants.

After the Funeral

Ritual actions to commemorate the dead in the period after the funeral varied considerably both in intensity and duration. Mourning, in the more prolonged sense, serves to stress the relationship between the living and the dead, but it also marks a transitional period during which the mourners are partially separated from society. As already noted, death was regarded as a normal event and mourning was mostly restrained. Considerable grief was shown when the deceased had been a still vigorous person or an older child who had not yet fulfilled his or her potential, while less was shown for an old person, who, having begun to lose his vigour, was often spoken of as *half-dood* (half dead), or for infants and young children who, owing to their age, were regarded as not yet fully alive in the sense of having reason and a conscious awareness of themselves as social beings in the world. For persons not regarded as fully part of the community of the living, no

great emotional response to their deaths could be expected, and the mourning observances differed accordingly.

This can be seen most directly expressed in the differences in the funeral practices for children and adults. In the case of a deceased child the godparents provided the burial clothing and it was usual for them to assist the mother's sisters in laying out the body. The godparents took no part in the funeral arrangements of a person over about 14 years of age. There was no formal wake, except in the case of youngsters past the age of puberty, but parents, relatives and godparents, kept vigil by the body on the eve of the funeral. In some cases the parents bore all the costs of the funeral, in others they were assisted by relatives or drew on their policy with a burial society. There was no service in the cathedral for children. The coffin was raised in the usual way and taken to the graveyard on the afternoon of the burial. Three or four male relatives prepared the grave, and there were often only close relatives present for the burial which was, nonetheless, conducted by the priest. The relatives filled the grave with earth. Sometimes some of the women sprinkled a handful of earth on the coffin in the form of a cross. There were no prayers or other ceremonies and the burial party left immediately after the grave had been filled. The apparent simplicity of these rituals can be ascribed to the different beliefs regarding the afterlife of the two age groups referred to above in our consideration of the period of preparation for death.

The period of full mourning in the immediate family varied from seven to nine days, though in the case of a spouse it could last several months in the course of which both widows and widowers were expected to retreat from social intercourse. During this time members of the family of the deceased would commonly visit the cathedral from time to time to pray for the dead, but the practice of burning a candle at the same time had fallen away at the time of fieldwork. Purificatory rites were slight and appeared to be restricted to the dwelling. It was said that in times past certain rites were performed among Damara and Nama people, but no specific particulars of these could be obtained. On the morning after the funeral there was a general cleaning of the house and its surroundings (*uitskudding en skoonmaak van die werf*). Furnishings,

mats, clothing and all household goods, including pictures and ornaments, were taken out and the floors thoroughly swept, especially in the corners, and the walls and ceilings (if any) dusted off. All items touched and used by the deceased were thoroughly cleaned. Afterwards all the rubbish on the area around the house (the *werf*, usually either fenced or marked with a line of stones) was taken away and dumped on the ash heap or buried and the ground carefully swept, particularly where the furnishings from the house had been piled, and lastly the surrounding border of fencing or stones was repaired. According to informants, this was done so that all might see that outwardly life had begun to return to normal.

On the final day of mourning, the immediate family usually offered a Mass in the cathedral, and those families who could afford it invited relatives and friends to a farewell meal for the soul of the dead, so that it would not bring illnesses or bad dreams to those still living. The timing of this meal to coincide with the service was not a strict requirement, but it was considered necessary to have it within a few months after the funeral. For Baster informants, this occasion would appear to have lost its significance in recent years and among many was no longer considered a requirement for a proper conclusion to the mourning period. Among Damara and Nama people, however, failure to hold the meal was believed likely to bring misfortune - livestock might be lost or cultivated lands might dry out. At this time too, a simple unpainted wooden cross was placed on the grave, though with little ceremony. In instances where, after the mourning period, the closest survivors, the parents or the surviving spouse, might remain unusually depressed, relatives would visit them frequently and speak of things which they think might give consolation. If this did not improve their condition, the priest or nuns would be approached for counselling, or a herbalist who was known to have suitable medicines against prolonged depression would be consulted.

Among Damara and Nama people, there was usually a minor occasion a few weeks after the funeral, when the skins of the livestock slaughtered for the wake were sold. Relatives and neighbours who had attended the funeral were invited to 'drink out' (*uitdrink*) the proceeds of the sale and any money left after the funeral expenses had been met. This took

the form of a simple meal consisting of tinned food and bread with tea or coffee, but no liquor. The intention was that there should be no gain to the family from the communal activity of the funeral.

Roudiens (mourning service, a term which should not be confused with the similar colloquial term for a Mass for the Dead) was performed by those relatives and friends who for some reason or another could not attend the funeral and who might come to Pella only some months afterwards. The bereaved family slaughtered a goat for a meal, to which neighbours and relatives in the Reserve were invited. Before the meal the visitors were taken by the chief mourner to the grave, so that they could greet the deceased. This was done by casting a handful of ground on the grave accompanied by a verbal greeting and a *requiem aeternam*. Among Damara and Nama families, on returning to the house the visitors had to stop at the edge of the 'werf' and be sprinkled with water to 'cool' them before entering the precinct of the dwelling, and they had to wash their hands before eating.

At the time of my fieldwork there were few long-term mourning customs. There was no avoidance of the dead person's name, but whenever it was mentioned it was almost always qualified by *oorlede* (late, e.g. late Piet Visagie, or my late mother). There were no rules on the use of mourning symbols, a custom which has practically disappeared, and the length of mourning periods. In the past, according to my 'White' informants, among the former 'White' inhabitants of Pella adult offspring of the deceased were not supposed to have attended dances and other public entertainment for some months to a year after the death. Upon the death of a close relative, the whole household had worn black clothes as a sign of full mourning. For a few weeks after the funeral first-degree male adult relatives had usually worn a black tie, and some had continued to wear the black tie or a black band on the jacket-sleeve for up to a year of half-mourning after the death. Some widows had worn black or dark garments for the rest of their lives ('like Queen Victoria', according to one informant), but most had laid aside mourning clothes a few months after their spouse's death. These customs no longer applied among the inhabitants of Pella at the time of my fieldwork, though some widows did deliberately avoid wearing brightly-coloured headwear.

The slightness of long-term mourning customs does not imply that the dead were quickly forgotten or that they no longer occupied a ritual status in the structure of the community. Apart from their annual general commemoration on All Souls Day, first-degree relatives of dead persons usually offered a Mass on their behalf on the anniversaries of their deaths. Each Sunday the priest announced the names of deceased members of the community on whose behalf Masses were to be offered during the coming week, or gave the names of the families who had offered the Masses. Even if not mentioned by name, a dead person was included in the general category of 'the faithful departed' for whom prayers were ordinarily said at every service. In these prayers, God was asked to have mercy on those souls still in Purgatory and to raise them into Heaven. According to my informants, in private prayers the deceased might be asked to intercede on behalf of the living. Although it was considered that the souls of some people were condemned to Hell and would thus be unable to make an intercession, the soul of a particular person was not automatically assumed to be in Hell, regardless of the conditions under which the individual lived and died. It was believed that any given individual would eventually be received into the highest of the sacred spheres, the most remote from earth, at which point the cycle was understood to have begun with birth would be completed.

COMMEMORATING DIFFERENCE

The cemetery, the focus of long-term commemoration of the dead, is situated to the north of the mission buildings and is surrounded by a low concrete wall supporting a wire fence, through which access is obtained by a single gateway ornamented with an arch topped by a cross and bearing the inscription *Rus in Vrede* (Rest in Peace). As with any form of demarcated territory, the cemetery has borders, as well as a clearly marked entrance, paths and markers. The focal point of the cemetery is provided by a large communal cross flanked by trees, a combination of the symbols of the Christian cross standing on Calvary, the midpoint of the earth that is also believed to have been occupied by the fatal tree of Eden, and the pagan European image of the tree at

the centre of the world. There are relatively few identifiable old graves in the cemetery, the oldest, dated 1876, being that of a pioneer 'White' colonist, though the form of a number of unmarked graves indicates that they date back to the period of Rhenish mission work at Pella. An examination of the death registers kept by the Catholic missionaries has also indicated that not all burials took place there, for, as noted above, only in the twentieth century were the dead brought over long distances to be buried in the only Christian burial place in the area and thus laid to rest in consecrated ground.

As a feature of the cultural landscape, the cemetery is itself a type of landscape which can be examined for its utilitarian, religious and aesthetic qualities (Tuan 1979:94). It is essentially an assemblage of personal memorials, which through time takes on a particular historical effect, evoked by the form and ornamentation of the graves and the nature of the grave markers (Lowenthal 1979:123). The forms of graves in the cemetery range from those which are little more than an unmarked mound of earth, sometimes covered with limestone pebbles, to those which are carefully constructed masonry tombs; some graves of Nama people are edged by a line of stones that echoes the ring of stones that demarcated the external domestic space around a mat-house (Mills 1995: 228). Grave markers range from a variety of forms of crosses, posts, foot-posts and tablets to tombstones in contemporary urban styles, along with a wide range of supplementary signs and decorations in the form of artificial flower tributes, ornaments and everyday items familiar to the deceased. Many graves are ornamented with religious objects such as old crucifixes and rosary beads, or with other objects which were used by the person while still alive, including crockery and, on the graves of infants, babies' bottles. Nama and Damara people sometimes decorated the graves of their dead with *Patella* shells; the reason for this was unknown, but one informant suggested that the shells symbolically held people down - from the grip of the limpet on the rock (cf. Carstens 1966:178). Although not intended either by those who designed the cemetery or those who buried their dead there, through the combination of all these features the cemetery has ultimately become both a relic and a landscape of the past and in this way adds to a general awareness of the past among the living.

This can be perceived most clearly in the spatial layout of the cemetery created by the distribution of the graves, which despite changes through time has been primarily shaped according to given patterns of social differentiation in Pella. The graves of former missionaries occupy a dominant position in the centre of the cemetery, constructed according to a uniform style and orientated along the line of the Cathedral in relation to three protective crosses on the surrounding mountains to the north (see below), and are thus surrounded by the graves of their converts and parishioners. Among the latter, however, death has never been seen as the great leveller. Originally the faithful departed were buried in chronological order within defined areas in the cemetery and, while this ordering has been distorted subsequently by the filling in of spaces among the earlier graves, two significant separations remain visible. The first is that the graves of 'White' colonists were always kept separate from those of other local people in the cemetery, even in the nineteenth century. The second, less obvious to a casual observer, is that while Protestants have always been buried beside Catholics as good Christians, the nineteenth-century graves of people called 'Bushmen', who were said by informants to have been regarded as irredeemable heathens and vermin by the other inhabitants of Pella, were sited outside the boundaries of the cemetery.

Most of the 'White' graves were clustered on the eastern side of the cemetery, the side which is conceptually closest to the Holy Land, while those of other local people lay in the west with the graves of missionaries between the two groupings. This clustering occurred owing to the fact that it was considered desirable that each conjugal or elementary 'White' family should have its own plot and be situated near other kin, and friends if possible. Ideally, parents and unmarried offspring were buried together, but each one's grave would have its own headstone or cross, however modest. A husband and wife should be laid to rest side by side. Their married sons should be buried in their own plots; their married daughters in the plots of their husbands. This arrangement has not always been realized in practice. There was a tendency among some families, said by informants to have been a survival from what were called the 'patriarchal' (*patriagale*) days, to gather deceased relatives into a patrilocal plot. At the time of my

fieldwork, however, allowing for a few exceptions of this nature, it was still the ideal that the elementary or conjugal family of parents and unmarried offspring should share a group of graves segregated from other elementary families, just as it is the ideal today among the living for household membership to be based on elementary family relationships. This has also had the effect of differentiating well-off from less well-off families.

A formal division of the cemetery into 'White' and 'Coloured' areas through the erection of walls and fences took place during renovations in 1962, largely on the initiative of the 'White' residents who themselves bore the costs and did much of the work. The irony of this acceptance of an officially imposed racial classification with all its implications of residential separation is that it was carried out with the aim of winning the sympathy of the central government for the claims of the 'White' inhabitants to the right to live in Pella, whereas, as already noted above, it was the 'White' inhabitants themselves who were eventually to be evicted under the application of the 'apartheid' policy to Pella in 1974. By 1989 the division had been abandoned, and recent burials of local people have been steadily using up the available space in the 'White' area since that time for, although the area of the cemetery was doubled in size in 1988, the local authority had decreed that all the existing spaces would have to be filled before the new section could be taken into use. By 2002, however, most burials were taking place in the new section, and there had been no new burials in vacant areas in the former 'White' area since 1998. The fences which divided the cemetery had not been removed, however, and thus, long after the departure of the last 'White' residents, the visible separation between the graves of those classified 'White' and those classified 'Coloured' remains as a reminder to the present inhabitants of the historical basis of their presently uncontested occupation of the Reserve.

Owing to a prevailing belief in ghosts, most people were reluctant to visit the cemetery informally, especially after dark, and they seldom visited graves once they had been constructed. Some aspects of beliefs about the dead have already been mentioned. The souls of the dead were believed to be dwelling or wandering in and around the cemetery, where

people walking at night might see them, though occasionally ghosts could be seen even in daylight. The appearance and actions of a ghost might terrify passersby and domestic animals, but sometimes it was not identified as an apparition as such until later (especially in the case of children before they had spoken to adults about what they had seen). Only over a period of several days before All Saints' and All Souls' Days, would volunteers from among the church cleaners and school children clear away weeds and windborne litter from the entire graveyard, and then some people would tidy the graves they were planning to visit during the formal ceremony marking All Souls' Day.

The major communal mourning ceremony was on All Souls' Day, the 2nd of November, following the festival of All Saints' Day on the 1st of November. The marking of All Souls' Day is based on the doctrine that souls which at death are not sufficiently purified to be fit for the Beatific Vision may be helped by the prayers of the faithful here on earth. Though known colloquially as *Voorvadersdag* (Forefathers' Day) and regarded as a day for the commemoration of all deceased, in reality the faithful departed whom the living invoked on this day were limited to dead relatives within the second and third ascending generations. It was considered a sacred time, when the living claimed to feel the presence of the deceased, though this was not expressed through material offerings or propitiations to the dead either in the cathedral or in the cemetery (practices which in Europe embody beliefs of pagan origin that are of great antiquity (Matousek 1990)). In the nine-day period of devotion carried out by the religious before All Saints' Day, people might go to the cathedral to pray for the dead and to say the Rosary. According to Catholic doctrine, devout recitation of the Rosary could obtain a remission, in whole or in part, of the temporal punishment due to sin. Such an indulgence, plenary or partial, was a means of lessening the satisfaction that would have to be made for sins, even after they have been forgiven, in the state of Purgatory. At this time in the liturgical calendar in particular, some of the indulgences gained in this way could be offered up for the souls in Purgatory, asking God to relieve their sufferings.

On the evening of All Saints' Day, November 1, a Mass for the Dead was celebrated in the cathedral, and another Mass was held in the morning

of the 2nd, after which, at about 11 a.m., the priest, attended by assistants bearing a crucifix and holy water, led an organized procession to the graveyard. If this was a weekday, only women, pensioners and children attended. After leading all in prayers and five decades of the rosary dedicated to the dead at the large communal cross (*doodskruis*) in the cemetery, the priest proceeded around the graveyard and, with one assistant, sprinkled graves at random with holy water, while the people remained grouped at the cross. After completing his circuit he left and the people moved apart to visit the graves of their dead. In most cases the graves were greeted with the casting of earth and a *requiem aeternam*. After this the family might sit or stand around and chat, with little evidence of sorrow though the day was said to be 'sad'. As at the funerals I observed, so on this occasion relatives and friends also formed clusters by families and degree of acquaintanceship in visiting the graves, thus creating several different groups of Basters and Damaras (no 'White's attended the All Souls' Day commemorations that I observed) as they went about the cemetery to visit various graves, though, unlike in the funeral procession, men and women were not separated. After perhaps an hour of visiting the various graves of family and friends, the people left informally; it was considered that with the Mass and this ceremony they had completed their annual obligation to the deceased.

This annual visit to the cemetery was, however, also important in reinforcing a sense of continuity among the living. For my informants, the inscriptions on the tombstones evoked a meaningful chronology, for a knowledge of many of the things which had happened during the years marked on the gravestones and representing lifetimes were known to them, having either heard others talk of them or having experienced some of them themselves. Similar feelings were aroused even among those whose relatives lay in unmarked graves, for knowledge of the identities of those buried without inscribed grave markers was passed on through the generations. While graves, especially those of parents, awoke an awareness of being alone, my informants were also strongly reminded there that, surrounded by the hills of home, they were both victors and victims of the past in the graves around them.

SOCIAL RELATIONS IN SYMBOLIC FORM

In analysing funerals and mourning practices, two important aspects of the relation between ritual and social organization have always been emphasised by anthropologists: the contribution of ritual activities to the maintenance of social relations; and the expression and regeneration of social relations and values in symbolic form. Both of these aspects will be treated here, and some attention will also be given to the part played by beliefs and practices associated with death in facilitating personal adjustment to the crisis of death, though my intention here is to pursue the cultural significance, rather than the purely psychological implications, of beliefs and practices associated with death for people living at Pella.

From discussions with my informants, it was clear that they did not regard death as simply a sudden, seemingly arbitrary banishment into a void, but rather as a major turning-point in the human cycle. This view of death was also implied in the ways in which the series of activities associated with a death were both enacted and phased. As already noted, the passage of a person from this world into the next began even before death itself happened. Except in cases where death was sudden and unexpected, individuals would have anticipated and prepared for their departure, drawing on the support of the priest, other religious, relatives, neighbours, and fellow-members of the congregation. The moment of death itself was not considered to indicate the complete separation of deceased people from their earthly milieu, for other well-defined stages had to be passed through before there was a final and complete fusion with the other world. In this aspect, mourning ritual at Pella can be seen to conform to the ideal type of *rites de passage* as formulated by Van Gennep (1909).

Three separate ritual stages can be distinguished. Firstly, there was the period of separation, between the time of death and the end of the wake while the body was at home and on display; then followed the period of liminality or transition, initiated by the closing of the coffin, during which the body lay unattended in the cathedral; and this was followed by the phase of reincorporation, after the funeral proper, during which the recently deceased person, now below the ground, was

commemorated, principally through being mentioned in Masses. At the completion of each stage, the dead person was removed a further step from this world, though a tenuous connection with the living was maintained, perhaps for generations, through prayer, the keeping of mementos, and visits by descendants to graves. Furthermore, in the course of the rites of transition the dead person was transformed from an 'actor' into an 'object' - the soul, symbolised in material terms by the grave mound - that enabled him or her to continue to occupy a ritual status in the social system of Pella. Thus in contemplating his or her own demise, a person was assured of ritual support both in preparation for death and in the passage from Purgatory into Heaven, and had the further assurance of an indefinite extension of his or her social identity on earth through the potential of the soul to be an active intercessor for the living and his or her descendants.

The stage of closing and raising the coffin, and then placing it as a kind of 'lesser altar' in front of the high altar in the cathedral, may be seen as a critical point in the liminal transformation of a deceased individual into a ritual object. Not only was the individual person lost to sight for ever on the closing of the coffin, but it was at this point that the coffin became the focal point of formal religious rituals performed on a series of profoundly significant spatial localities, first in the home, then inside the cathedral, and lastly in the cemetery, each instance marking the passage of the body deeper into darkness and of the soul further into eternal light. The ritual process of completing the removal of the individual from the profane to the sacred sphere was structured by the Ordinary of the Funeral Mass, of which the central feature was a contrasting of the immortality of God with the mortality that lay before the high altar. This containment of the temporal and worldly within the eternal was symbolised by the temporary placing of the coffin on the sacred axis of the cathedral at the sanctuary steps.

This axial point is the centre of the cruciform plan of the cathedral: a line runs from north to south from the high altar down the line of the nave to the door, while another runs from east to west between the altars in the two side chapels, dedicated respectively to the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. Dictated by the positions of the high altar and

the minor altars and marked at their extremities by stars of red and white stained glass set in round windows, these lines intersect on a spot directly in front of the sanctuary steps where the priest comes to recite prayers or to read the Gospels; this is also where the living receive communion, where the bride and bridegroom stand during the marriage ceremony, where children are confirmed, and where the banners of church-related lay groups are blessed. In the days when the Church controlled the secular administration of Pella this was where the Bishop or the priest stood to make announcements about the affairs of the Mission Farm and the village. In the past, before the installation of fluorescent lights on the walls, the importance of this point was emphasised by a lamp which hung suspended from the ceiling above it. This point is, furthermore, flanked by tombs. Three bishops and a priest are buried in the side chapels: the graves of the first, third and fourth bishops to have served the diocese (Bishops Simon, Thünemann and Esser) lie orientated from west to east on the heraldic right of the high altar in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, while the grave of the founding priest (Fr. Wolff) who built the cathedral is on the heraldic left of the high altar, and orientated from east to west in the chapel of St. Joseph. Thus buried in a holy place, they are said to be able to participate in all the services celebrated in the cathedral.

The axis of the cathedral is in turn the axial point for a series of conceptual crosses, clearly recognised and articulated by the missionaries and their parishioners, to guard the integrity of the mission, the cemetery, the village, and the Reserve against evil deriving from the Devil and sorcery. Constituted a sacred place in terms of Canon Law (Catholic Church 1983:213), the cathedral is a central place within the pattern of settlement in the village, itself practically in the centre of the Reserve territory, while the village and the Reserve are components of a wider landscape infused with symbolic significances represented on the ground by both visible and invisible boundaries which shape social relations. Boundaries are central to this idea of spatial integrity. The concept of territory involved here includes several elements: the village (a group of people who consider themselves established in a single living situation, and making use of a communal territory, i.e. the Reserve), the household (which includes the same elements) and the Reserve itself. The material

expression of the spiritual unit formed by each is symbolised by the Cross. In the home this is represented by the crucifix, which is present in all Catholic homes, to defend the domestic group, its livestock and property. For the village it is the position of the cathedral, edified and consecrated on a chosen site, which is at the centre of a conceptual cross, formed by three iron and wood crosses (symbolizing the crosses of Jesus and the two thieves) mounted on the summits of the surrounding mountains to the north of the mission, and rooted in the Annakop hill fifteen kilometres to the south of the mission. The cemetery shares this centrality with the cathedral in the broad figure of the cross in the landscape. These crosses installed on the mountain-tops protect the integrity of the territory, just as beacons raised on high points mark out the physical boundaries, and guard the various sources of water, especially the springs of running water, from ill-disposed spirits so that the living can obtain water. Another similar cross, also rooted at Annakop and centred on the cathedral, reaches north through the mission to the now-abandoned Pella-Orange Chapel at Rooipad (the irrigation farm belonging to the mission situated on the south bank of the Orange River), while its east-west axis links the T'Kouroes and Brakkie hamlets with the T'Nougab and Eenriet/Lelikpad complex of hamlets, all places in the Reserve which had formerly had substantial populations and at which the missionaries had regularly celebrated Masses.

My informants also conceived Pella itself to be at the centre or an integral part of greater crosses outside the Reserve territory. Pella is seen as the middle point of a cross rooted in St. Mary's Cathedral in Cape Town (from where the Namaqualand mission originated), with the south-north axis running from Cape Town to Heirachabis (the first Roman Catholic mission in Great Namaqualand) and west-east from Matjeskloof (the first site of Catholic missionary activity in Namaqualand) to Keimoes (the residence of the Bishop of the Diocese of Keimoes-Upington, formerly the Orange River), in this way linking clusterings of settlements significant in the history of Pella. The Cape is also seen as the root of a greater cross that runs through Rome to Aachen in Germany (marking the association with the Holy Roman Empire) and east-west from Troyes (the headquarters of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales) in France to Jerusalem (the Holy City). Lastly, this is part of

a global cross which links the four great continents, Africa and Europe, the Americas and Asia, and which is centred on Jerusalem.

Thus, by being placed on the axis of the cathedral, the coffin and its contents were located for a brief moment during the funeral at the centre of the symbolic universe of Pella, and on being buried in the cemetery could be assured of protection until the Day of Judgement, when the body and soul of the deceased would be re-united in the Resurrection, bringing an end to the ultimate liminality of this separation.

Turning now to the process of mourning, for the bereaved relatives this constituted a ritual which served to channel the emotions of all concerned into a pattern that enabled them to come to terms with the fact of death by passing through a clearly-defined series of public and semi-public rites that provided socially accepted ways of adjusting to a difficult situation. Writing in the fifth century A.D., St. Augustine (1984:21) reminded his readers that "... such things as a decent funeral and a proper burial, with its procession of mourners, are a consolation to the living rather than a help to the departed", or, as Firth (1951:63) expressed it, "... the funeral ritual gives a social backing to their [i.e. the relatives'] attempts at adjustment, provides them with a cathartic mechanism for a public display of grief, and sets a period to their mourning. In essence, the community says to the relatives: "... Wail for him in one final outburst, before us all. We expect it of you, and we demand it of you. Then tomorrow you will return to a normal social existence". This was expressed most clearly in the material and ritual support of a wide range of community members at the crucial time between the death and the funeral, and was symbolised most obviously in the wearing of black or dark clothing by all the mourners at the funeral service itself, even though not all people in the community suffered the same degree of grief. There was no suggestion of hypocrisy in this display, for by wearing black they were emphasizing their respect for the dead and showing their sympathy with the sufferings of the bereaved and their desire to share in their sorrow as fellow community members.

Mourning and burial rituals were among the most frequent occasions when members of the community were drawn together in a common forum where expression could be given to their sense of unity and a re-affirmation of the values upon which that unity is based could be made publicly despite differences in ethnic identity within the community. An adult resident of Pella might participate in ten to fifteen or more wakes and funerals in a year, and this undoubtedly contributed greatly to the attitude towards death as a familiar and inherent part of the whole round of life in Pella. This view of death as a 'normal' event is evident in the way sacred and secular elements were merged in the series of rituals. Mourning and burial comprised a sequence of 'religious' events: the priest was present and performed specific tasks during the dying moments, he might be present at the closing of the coffin, he received the body at the door of the cathedral, officiated at the funeral Mass and at the burial itself; the arrangements of the room where the body lay in the house of death were rich in religious connotations, while the mourners present spontaneously offered prayers and made other religious gestures. Amid these forms and acts of sanctity, however, the mourners spoke freely about everyday topics such as mining and sheep, gossiped and took care to ensure that there was an adequate supply of liquor and food. The incongruity of this is only superficial, for the rites which accompany a death are not intended simply to mirror inward emotions; they exist to express proper attitudes and to conduct the bereaved through a difficult time. Frequent attendance at these rites not only created a familiarity with death, but also strengthened an individual awareness of being part of the community through the medium of a shared emotional experience of a communal ritual and thus reinforced feelings of group loyalty. The fact that people were willing to contribute and participate uninvited (no invitations were expected or sent out to visit, attend wakes or funerals) in mourning activities, that relatives, neighbours and fellow-residents in the Reserve were prepared to give of their time and material goods and to abandon certain forms of work and play when one of their number died, indicates the existence of strong sentiments of unity and solidarity. Most significantly, however, this participation transcended factional divisions and friction in the community to produce a cultural unity despite the persistence of seemingly unchanging ethnic and class differences.

There is further evidence of communal solidarity in the smooth running and spontaneity with which the series of ritual and practical activities were executed, some of which involved at times several hundred people and needed a degree of co-ordination which could be achieved only through an ongoing consensus and shared understanding. Apart from the need for drawing on the financial support available from burial societies, there was no great dependence on a formal organization of individuals 'acting in office' to deal with death; only in the case of the funeral of the last 'White' mayor (whose remains had had to be brought to Pella after his death in 1979 in an urban area near Cape Town to which he had moved five years previously) was a professional undertaker hired to make the various arrangements and supply a high-quality coffin, a fashionable hearse and other equipment unavailable locally. With the exception of the priest, who acted in a formal sacred office, the process in the majority of cases was handled by individuals performing roles in an informal system of kinship and community relations.

While the contribution of mourning practices to the unity of the community is readily discernable, the ways in which the series of events connected with death described above reveal the basic alignments and patterns of differentiation within the community are less obvious. As already shown, not all members of the community were involved to the same extent in the activities associated with any given death. The 'specialized' roles performed by individuals, such as the priest and his assistant, those who laid out bodies, grave-diggers, etc. - will not be considered here, but only the observances expected of different groupings in the community.

The most intense involvement was expected of the members of those elementary families most closely related to the deceased: spouse, children, and their families; parents, own siblings, grandparents, parents' siblings and their families; spouse's parents and siblings and the families of the latter. These relatives were always the first to be notified of a death and the first to offer aid and be in constant attendance. Relatives descended from the siblings of grandparents and close friends of the deceased were also committed to more than just

visiting the deceased and the bereaved family, and adult males from these categories were expected to take an active part in the wake. Remoter relatives were regarded as more or less equivalent to neighbours: it was considered appropriate for them to visit during the 'above-ground' period between the death and the funeral proper, and to take part in the closing of the coffin and perhaps also the transfer of the body to the cathedral. Finally, all adults who were not indisposed and who were in the village at the time were considered to be under a social obligation to take part in the funeral, even though they might have had no special links with the deceased. It was this expectation, in which religious ties and macro-community obligations overrode factionalism, that made it possible for Bastards and Damaras to attend one another's funerals, though they infrequently attended one another's wakes as this would have reflected a degree of familiarity not achieved, or desired, in everyday life.

These varying degrees of commitment to render support and to active participation in the process of coping with a death, taking in all from the closest relatives to other inhabitants of the Reserve, were similar to the priority of commitment to mutual aid and sociability in other spheres of Reserve and village life. Care of the old and infirm, for example, rested first upon the family of procreation (offspring) and then upon that of orientation (siblings), but if an arrangement involving these was impossible, third-degree relatives were expected to take on this responsibility. If an old person lived alone without kin of these degrees, it was expected that neighbours and relatives even more remote than those mentioned should give assistance. It was only when none of these arrangements worked satisfactorily, that the 'community', represented by the priest, a local government officer, members of the local authority, or the district surgeon, would take steps to arrange for the old person to receive the necessary care, if necessary through removal to an old-age home. I observed similar patterns of commitment to mutual aid and sociability in farmwork, in attending and contributing to weddings, and in exchanges of visits at the New Year or Easter.

A further important aspect of Reserve society revealed in the mourning ritual is a clear differentiation according to gender, such as in the

performance of tasks, the positions taken up by participants in the funeral procession and at the graveside, etc. Of these, the aspect with the most far-reaching implications is the apparently random distribution of men in the funeral procession compared with the distribution of women, which tended to follow kinship alignments. This indicates that men had a wider range of interaction than women, and that the sexes were orientated themselves differently towards patterns of kinship. This is confirmed by examinations of other areas of interaction. In the case of women it was noted that their daily interaction was limited to their kinsfolk and immediate neighbours to a greater extent than among men. Informal visiting exchanges tended to occur most frequently between adult sisters, owing to proximities in residence created by selective marriage patterns among the relatively few large families of similar class and cultural backgrounds located in particular neighbourhoods in the village. Visiting among men, on the other hand, was undertaken on a broader scale and included both kinsfolk and those with whom they worked, though interaction with the latter was more strongly marked among those involved in the mines than among farmers. I noted that women tended to have a narrower circle of acquaintances than men, who had as boys grown up together in neighbourhood groups, while girls had remained around the home under the control of their parents. Evidence from domestic disputes and patterns of sociability also indicated that solidarity among sisters was stronger than among brothers. On the other hand, male solidarity in the community as a whole was stronger than female solidarity, as shown in the fact that it was not uncommon for men to associate with the husbands and brothers of women whom their own wives and sisters deliberately avoided.

Among other forms of differentiation expressed in mourning procedures is that based on religious affiliation. Catholics and Protestants paid respect to one another's dead by visiting and attending wakes and funerals, thus confirming the friendly nature of relations between the two groups, but there was some evidence of a social barrier between them to be found in the mutual avoidance of attending one another's religious services and in differing patterns of behaviour when praying in common at wakes and funerals. This barrier was not transferred into everyday life except in regard to marriage, where it was expected

either that one or other of the partners would join the faith of the spouse or that their children would be brought up in the faith selected by agreement between their parents until they were of an age to decide on their religious affiliation for themselves.

Class, as a principle ordering social relations in the community, played a comparatively minor part in the patterns of behaviour observed at funerals in Pella. There were distinctions in the community according to which social rank and standards were evaluated, such as those of teachers and well-off stock-farmers, and these can be regarded as signs of an internal positioning of all in the community within the structure of broader classes in relation to the population of Namaqualand, but there was no distinct structure of classes revealed during funeral ceremonies. For this reason too, class was unimportant in determining positioning in events and in the allocation of roles for the various ritual activities, though at funerals the type and cost of the coffin and its fittings, the supply of food and drink, the use of cars, etc., and afterwards the type of grave-markers, would be remarked on as being 'typical' of this or that class of person. Most Pella men espoused egalitarian attitudes towards community relations, though among women this was less often the case owing to the differences in upbringing and interaction in everyday life, and the fact that a teacher or official of the highest rank could be placed together with a labourer in bearing or following a coffin was often cited to support their view that their community was 'democratic', or was so as long as the accepted rules of exclusion of people defined as outsiders were followed, socially in the case of those living in the Reserve and legally in the case of strangers from outside the Reserve.

Where these rules of exclusion could be seen in operation was in relations between members of the various ethnic groups in Pella. The sharp differentiation between Bastards and Damaras on the grounds of origin and race (Klinghardt 1978, 1982) was particularly manifested in the absence of Bastards at Damara wakes, and *vice versa*, and in the formation of separate groups when they attended one another's funerals and came to stand around the grave. The performance of "striping" at wakes is an example of the cultural aspect of the ethnic divide being reinforced by a socially segregationist practice. As noted above,

separation at funerals came about in that the barrier between members of the different groups in the social structure of the Reserve has been maintained through the discouragement of intermarriage, thus preventing the potential development of kinship bonds between them and this was reflected unconsciously when the participants grouped themselves by families. The most striking example of ethnic exclusivity, however, was that afforded by the pattern of differentiation which occurred at the funeral of the last 'White' mayor of Pella. A multiplicity of historical factors (alluded to in various places above) was at work in shaping the way the people responded to the tension created by the funeral of this 'White' high-status former resident of Pella (whose power in the community had been based on both his official role - outranked only by the Bishop and resident priests - and his position as a merchant able to control the lives of his clients in the Reserve through credit facilities), but these responses were channelled according to mutually accepted rules of separation, rules through which all, directly and indirectly, were forced to give legitimacy to the official status and racial structure of South African society which had been intensified and legally-sanctioned after 1948.

While my analysis of mortuary rituals practised in the community of Pella has provided enough material to enable the setting out of the major characteristics of social structure and organization in Pella, the different types of solidarity to be found there, and the main foci of differentiation such as kinship, age and sex, religious and ethnic affiliations, it has given no indications as to political affiliations in the community, nor has it been possible to spell out in symbolic form the structures of clique alliances and of informal associations. Though it may be argued in theoretical terms that any series of rituals will provide an outside observer with insight into the sentiments and social organization of the group performing them, this aspect of my study has thus shown that not all facets of social organization will necessarily be symbolically represented in any given ritual.

This work has further revealed some points of considerable interest in the cultural formation of the community at Pella, on the basis of which Barnard's suggestion that the religious beliefs of 'Cape Coloured' people in Namaqualand reflect the culture of their Khoekhoe forebears

(Barnard 1992:198) can be tested. Perhaps the most striking of these is the essentially European origin of most of the cultural traits and forms observed in connection with formal religion and mortuary rites, and the extremely small number of traits of indigenous Nama provenience, the expression of the latter taking the form merely of details within a larger framework, as can be seen for example in the 'striping' of the participants in Damara and Nama wakes. A parallel situation exists regarding the material expression of culture (Klinghardt 1990); clothing, tools, most forms of dwellings, political and ceremonial organization all reflect European-type patterns, and this is also true of farming techniques, some of which may be based on indigenous patterns but which are known to have been formalised by Baster and 'White' farmers who were reliant on the skills of Nama shepherds. Despite the apparently European origins of these cultural elements, the cultural pattern is somewhat different from the contemporary European-orientated cultural patterns that predominate among the majority of people in South Africa who were formerly classified as 'Coloured' (Barnard 1992; Carstens 1966; Sharp 1977), but it should not be taken to represent a 'survival' of nineteenth-century conditions and practices in Namaqualand any more than that Pella should be regarded as representative of similarly-sized village communities in the region. The uniqueness of the cultural pattern lies in the reworking of its seemingly European ideas and materials together with those of indigenous origin. Despite the obvious influence of missionaries and the close proximity of 'White' colonists, this reworking is probably due as much to the patterning influence of indigenous ideas as to a spontaneous evolution during the partial isolation of the mission community in the late nineteenth century (see Chapter 4). The examination of cultural patterns has shown, however, that hegemonic processes have led to internalization of the values and practices of the dominant social ideology. These have proceeded so far that in cultural terms the community at Pella, in common with those formed by the inhabitants of the other Reserves in Namaqualand, can be recognised as being part of a wider synthetic cultural system brought into being by the historical processes which have given form to the current shape of South African society. This has implications for a consideration of cultural hybridity (Sharp 1997; Robins 1997; Ballinger 2004) as a means of understanding ethnicity and identity in the

Namaqualand Reserves, for these cultural patterns are coherent and totalizing, far from the ambivalence and fragmentation that characterize hybridity (Robins 1997: 26).

CHAPTER 4

MISSIONARY ADMINISTRATION AND ETHNIC MOBILIZATION IN PELLA

INTRODUCTION

The second investigation suggested by Tambiah (1996: 140) concerns how people who have and feel ethnic sentiments are mobilized into local collectivities through social and semiotic processes. In this chapter, and in Chapter 5, I focus on the participatory processes which inscribe relations of local identity and thereby also heighten a sense of continuity with particular others through space and time. In Pella, as in the other Namaqualand Reserves, rights of access to and control of land have been central to making local ethnic entities not merely imagined communities, but participatory communities.

Pella was the last of the Reserves to be proclaimed in Namaqualand, that having occurred at the beginning of 1974. In this chapter I show how the Basters of Pella responded to their situation of subordination in the first half of the 20th century and how their struggle to transform the system of missionary control saw the emergence of a utopian ideal of self-government that was expressed in practical terms by attempts to gain control of Pella from the Church and to secure the removal of the 'White' and Damara inhabitants. Of particular interest is the way in which the Basters at Pella began to identify themselves as 'Coloured' to gain the support of the apartheid Government in their contest with the Church and the 'White' inhabitants of Pella during the period of negotiations between the Church and the Government on the establishment of a Reserve, with its attendant problems of settling claims for compensation for the 'White' 'Pellanaars' who were being compelled to leave Pella, and of deciding the fate of the Damara inhabitants.

Historical records and my informants' accounts show that the major cleavages in the community at Pella centred on oppositions between local 'Whites', Basters, Damaras and Namas, the latter three being recognised as "Coloured" from the beginning of the 20th century. The

boundaries between these categories have been maintained through to the beginning of the 21st century, though their relative importance has varied according to the changing local socio-political situation. There has also been virtually no movement from one category to another, and interaction between people in these categories fuelled the political process in the community by exerting direct and indirect influence on the administrative structures established by the missionaries to control local affairs. With most of the population engaged in some form of agricultural activity, control over access to pasturage and water was the most important form of social domination and the goal of most local social struggle.

Carstens (1983, 1984) has shown how the custumals, or 'constitutions', of the Baster-dominated Reserve communities in Namaqualand not only represented a stage in the development of law and order in that region, but also pointed to a growing concern with social relations based on an increase in movable property and in local inequalities arising out of this increase, due to a growing emphasis on private property (Carstens 1983: 137). They were therefore drawn up in response to definite and specific local needs. In Pella, missionary control led to the emergence of a community in which wealth was concentrated in the hands of the 'White' inhabitants and a small minority of Baster farmers, leaving the rest of the inhabitants relatively poor, a division which was reinforced by the ethnic differentiation of the community. The formative period of the social groupings at Pella was directly influenced by the dominance of the missionaries in the system of local government. Their control of decision-making processes enabled them to maintain their dominance in political affairs by suppressing the efforts of local leaders among the inhabitants to influence the policies of the Bishops in their dealings with the central Government. As a result, the various bodies formed to articulate the interests of local groupings could not play a meaningful role in local decision-making processes and were unable to match the expectations of both the participants and their supporters, for they had all remained essentially advisory in character with the final power to propose and dispose resting with the priests and Bishops. The missionaries were, throughout, seeking to prevent the government from imposing a uniformity on their community which paralleled that in the Reserves in

Namaqualand, particularly after 1948 in regard to the separation and segregation of racial groupings under the 'apartheid' policy. In this respect, however, they failed, partly because of factors beyond their control but mostly on account of errors of judgment and misunderstandings of the real nature of Government policy towards the Reserves in Namaqualand, and indeed towards 'Black' people in South Africa as a whole. Consequently they had been unable to prevent the incorporation of the community into the wider socio-political system of 'apartheid' which developed in South Africa after 1948.

THE EARLY CUSTOMALS OF PELLA, 1874-1939

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries Bushmanland remained a rural region with most of the population engaged in some form of agriculture, mainly stock-farming, or in the provision of supporting services. In the early 1950s a few small quarries were opened to exploit the sillimanite deposits in and around Pella, while the only major mining operation in the region, the copper, lead and zinc mine at Aggeneys, commenced in the late 1970s. In Pella Reserve, control of access to the twin natural resources of pasturage and water has been the most important instrument of social domination, moulding the form of the community and conditioning its political life. That the missionaries at Pella exerted far greater influence over their community than was true of the Rhenish missionaries in the Reserves in Namaqualand can be directly ascribed to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church was recognised by the Cape Government as the sole occupier of the Pella area granted under Certificates of Occupation of 1874 and 1881.

In Namaqualand, land in the Reserves was legally to be held in trust for the benefit of the "aboriginal" inhabitants by the State and missionary societies. Official recognition was given to established structures of authority in the communities and the temporal authority of the Rhenish and Methodist missionaries was limited by sets of local regulations administered by elected councils in which the missionaries played a largely advisory role, influencing rather than directing the decision-making process in local affairs (Carstens 1983). The extent of missionary involvement varied from community to community. In Rehoboth,

for example, the missionary was valued for his role as adviser and mediator in local government, while in Steinkopf more direct involvement of the missionary was balanced by the authority of the Field Cornet and Corporals. This limitation in Government recognition of the missionaries' authority bound the Reserve communities firmly into the regional government system since an official such as the Civil Commissioner and Resident Magistrate at Springbok had the ultimate power to settle important matters affecting the communities. This was consistent with the nineteenth-century British conception of the role of the clergyman in his parish, in which the minister was part of the hierarchical structure established for the maintenance of law and order, with a degree of responsibility for all public affairs within his parish and having secular powers far wider than would nowadays be tolerated (Comaroff 1985: 30). In playing such a vital role in the affairs of the community the ministers were able to maintain the ideological influence of the church to a much greater extent than if they had been limited to exercising their spiritual authority alone, as is today the case. This may well have been one of the most important reasons for which the Cape Government did not discourage the Catholic Church from establishing the mission at Pella, because the influence of the missionaries would have assisted in settling the recently troubled northern frontier and so to complete the process of conquest initiated by the Basters earlier in the 19th century.

The Catholic and Protestant missionaries were viewed similarly by the Cape Government, but the Catholics at Pella were not hindered by the same kinds of legal constraints imposed on the Protestant missionaries and they were able to restructure the authority structure in the community at Pella much as they wanted. The traditional authority of the Nama chiefs had been abolished after the Orange River became the northern border of the Cape Colony in 1847 (Carstens 1966: 24), but those Nama people living in the vicinity of Pella still recognised an informal *kaptein* as late as 1882. When the incumbent, T'guob, died in 1883 without children, his followers approached Fr. (later Bishop) J. Simon for a decision on his successor. Fr. Simon made use of the opportunity to remove this focus of secular authority by promising to look after them in the hope that this would encourage them to settle near the Mission (RCMP/1. Fr. Simon to Bishop Leonard, 12/10/1883).

When the Baster population of Pella and northern Bushmanland fled during the First Koranna War of 1868-69, enabling the 'White' settlers to take possession of the district, the important civil office of Field Cornet passed into 'White' hands too, and local 'Whites' retained this as well as other civil offices, such as that of Justice of the Peace, through into the twentieth century.

During the first fifty-two years of the missionaries' hundred years of temporal control at Pella the administration of the community was under the direct control of the priests. Between 1874 and 1882 the mission was run by Jesuit-trained priests of the Society for African Missions in Lyons, with Fr. A. Gaudeul as priest-in-charge (Anon. 1975). When the Society began rationalizing its activities in the Cape Colony, it was replaced at Pella by the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, a missionary order founded in 1872 and based at Troyes in France. From 1882 until 1932 the mission was headed by Fr. J. Simon, who was consecrated Bishop of the Orange River in 1898, and whose personal qualities and abilities enabled him to command a charismatic form of authority which outweighed even his sweeping secular powers as *de facto* owner of the Pella Mission Farm. During this period the missionaries exercised a form of benevolent despotism consistent with their view that the local (other than 'White') inhabitants were "... but as children who must be guided and taught that they may improve themselves" (RCMP/1. Fr. Malinowski to Fr. Simon, 6/7/1886). One visitor, the perceptive magistrate of Namaqualand, W. Scully, commented that "... a community of that kind was as little fitted to govern itself as a reformatory ..." (Scully 1914: 145), yet at the same time pointed out that stagnation would follow from these conditions because the dependency of the inhabitants was increased through having them constantly subjected to tuition and supported by outside financial assistance.

During the period up to 1927 Bishop Simon personally administered all local affairs without assistance from any members of the community, other than those in official positions (such as the Field Cornet), and for the first five years also without formal local regulations. He took the view that the provisions of the Canon Law of the Church on the government of mission stations were adequate for his purposes. In 1887,

however, Bishop Simon introduced at least two sets of rules, one governing the use of liquor and another for the "moral benefit" of the community. From that time the Bishop also began referring to other regulations which had been formed by past precedents established through his desire to lay down a foundation for the most equitable distribution of the natural resources of the Reserve. These sets of rules and regulations are reproduced in Appendices C, D and E, and may be regarded as forming the first custumal of Pella. The two sets of Rules appear to have formed part of a larger whole, but the rest were missing from the files in the Mission Archives. In 1957 Bishop Esser assembled and reconstructed the scattered references to these other Regulations while replanning the system of local government in Pella in 1957, and presented them in a modified form (Appendix E). The Regulations contained in Appendices C and D remained in effect until 1973, but were largely ignored after 1955 (the reasons which moved Bishop H. Thünemann to add a further regulation to Bishop Simon's Rules for the Moral Benefit are given below). These rules and regulations demonstrate not only the authoritarian, personalised rule of the missionary in charge of the community, but also the commitment of the missionaries as a whole to a strict village morality, a consequence of the origin of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales being in the Catholic revivalist movement in France and the fact that the missionaries themselves were from small villages and were seeking to recreate a similar type of community to those with which they were familiar (Wright & Power 1988: 19-22). The effectiveness of the application of this first custumal can be gauged by the following piece of testimony given to a Select Committee of Parliament in 1896 by William Scully, the Resident Magistrate & Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand since 1883: "According to the ticket of occupation the missionary in charge has very large powers ... he can say to a man, if he has not conducted himself properly, "Go". I should not interfere with Pella in any way whatever" (A.7-'96: 23).

The authoritarian rule of the Catholic missionaries received favourable comments from Government officials and other visitors, particularly for the way in which the Basters at Pella, generally regarded as improvident and lazy, had been civilised and taught the dignity of labour (Marais, 1939: 79). Scully summarised the general features of

the Bishop's system in his inimitable style; "The Pella lands were held by the Mission on ownership tenure; consequently the Superintendent was an autocrat ... Like an Arab chief he ruled his clan of about two hundred subjects" (Scully 1914: 144-145). The official reports were at first cautious, but soon moved to enthusiastic approval. In 1888, for instance, members of a Parliamentary Select Committee evinced concern at the activities of the Roman Catholic Church in Namaqualand, particularly its tactics of using the bait of grazing rights and education for children as a means of inducing Protestants to settle at Pella and be converted (C.2-'88: 14-15), yet successive reports of later committees and commissions of enquiry ignored this aspect. Instead one finds officials praising the missionaries for their economic endeavours and the strictness of their control over the community. For example, in 1909 it was reported that "... there is a very competent person in charge, and there they [Basters] are compelled to work. Very strict control is necessary in order to do anything with these people ... the people have done excellent work" (A.2-'09: 209), and they "... are very much more advanced in civilization. It plainly shows that they must be under a despotic rule" (A.2-'09: 211).

The high regard for the secular aspect of the Roman Catholic missionary endeavour was necessarily based on the establishment of sound personal relationships between the Catholic missionaries and officials of the civil administration in Namaqualand, and correspondence between them reflects a mutual respect which was enhanced by the fact that both held similar paternalistic views on the people under their administrative control. The necessity and value for the mission of cultivating such good relations was demonstrated when these officials later testified in favour of the continued presence of the Church at Pella and its administrative control of the community. For instance, 1896 evidence placed before the Select Committee on Namaqualand Mission Lands and Reserves by certain of these officials was instrumental in preventing Pella from being subjected to legislation then being contemplated for the purpose of exercising tighter civil control over the secular affairs of the Reserves by introducing an uniform set of local regulations and holding out the possibility of individual tenure of property for the inhabitants. A former Magistrate of Namaqualand stated: "Fr. Simon and I agreed that it was unnecessary to extend the

application to Pella ... he said he did not wish to introduce any regulations at all ... He said it was unnecessary. In the first place there were very few people and things were going on all right ... he told me that he had the people under control. The machinery would have been too big for such a small community" (A.7-'96: 24). Similarly in 1909 and 1913, when there was a possibility that legislation (Act No. 29 of 1909) then being applied to the Namaqualand Reserves would be extended to include Pella, it was the Superintendent of these Reserves who argued against this, stating that: "It seems hardly necessary to discuss at this stage the ultimate disposal of this large Reserve. For the present the Society (sic) is doing splendid work there - work which is not only an object lesson but is also of material benefit both to the residents and to the surrounding farmers" (1/SBK, 5/6/1: 162. Giddy to Secretary for Native Affairs, 10/4/1913).

It was not until after the end of the First World War that the inhabitants of Pella began engaging in political activity that challenged the *status quo* within the Mission Farm. The numbers of 'White' settlers in the Bushmanland increased markedly after the establishment of Pofadder in 1918 and the beginning of large-scale surveying of central and southern Bushmanland (Talbot 1961: 315). As more and more farms were given out so the amount of undeveloped Crown Land open for the use of semi-nomadic pastoralists decreased, and the 'trekboers' either bought farms for themselves, or left the region, or were forced to enter the Reserves. With their greater wealth the 'White' 'trekboers' were more capable of purchasing farms than the Baster 'trekboers' (though there were some exceptions, such as certain Basters living in the vicinity of Bosluis (Boonzaier 1980; Klinghardt 1977) with the result that the Reserves in Namaqualand had to cope with an influx of new inhabitants. At Pella the Church was able to exercise a measure of discrimination in the admission of would-be settlers by stipulating, as in the past, that prospective residents had either to be Catholics or else show a sincere commitment to conversion in the near future before they could be granted the privilege of living at Pella. Combined with the increasing desertification of Bushmanland as a result of drought and over-exploitation (Acocks 1988), these factors led to greater pressure on the natural resources of the Reserve itself and caused the emergence of a struggle for control of its resources

along ethnic and class lines. This struggle manifested itself in the form of demands for a representative body which could settle disputes that arose over pasturage and water on the Mission Farm.

In the mid-1920s relationships between 'White' and Baster residents began to deteriorate rapidly as the former were increasingly subjected to attacks on their claims to rights of residence on Pella by members of the Baster families Waterboer and Raman, who claimed to be the original occupiers of Pella and therefore possessed prior rights to use of the land. The Damara residents were also attacked as recent arrivals whose presence had been tolerated only because their leaders had made it clear that they intended returning 'home' some day. When Bishop Simon attempted to quash the Basters' claims by pointing out that such rights as they may have possessed had automatically lapsed when the Church took control of Pella in 1874, it was a short step for the Basters at Pella to question the legitimacy of the Bishop's authority to administer Pella and the right of the Church to hold Pella as if the Mission Farm was its property. One prominent Baster farmer claimed to Bishop Simon that the Basters had "in fact" merely "helped" the missionaries by "lending" them the right to use the pasturage and springs in the Reserve (RCMP/6. Bishop Simon: Note in Pocketbook, 8/3/1925).

The attack on the position of the Church by local Basters arose from their view that, since Bishop Simon and the missionaries had firmly stated their belief that all people at Pella were entitled to the same rights, they were thereby assumed to be giving support to 'White' settlers in their attempts to dominate, if not to deny, the means of economic survival to the rest of the inhabitants. From this questioning of the Church's legitimate rights, the Baster farmers extended their demands to call for the separation of the missionaries' spiritual and secular powers, the latter to be invested in a council and, when the Bishop refused this, for the Government to intervene by applying Act No. 29 of 1909 to Pella.

The sudden upsurge of political interest at Pella was not entirely dependent on economic factors directly related to the situation there, but was also due to events in the Namaqualand Reserves, of which the

Basters were well aware through being related to certain of the residents of Steinkopf. In Steinkopf the application of Act No. 29 of 1909 had separated the powers of the Rhenish missionary from those of the community council, and had transferred the political status and power of the missionary to the Magistrate of Namaqualand who acted as chairman of the Management Board which had replaced the missionary's council. Basters there had come to believe that they had reached a position of such economic and political strength that they no longer had to depend on Church support to maintain their dominant position in the community and wished to secure the power of control over their destiny for themselves (Carstens 1966: 32). Willem Raman, whose father Jan Raman had been involved in political affairs at Pella in the 1920s, told me in 1978 that the attraction of these ideas for Basters at Pella had been in the possibility that the application of the Act to Pella, and the creation of a Reserve along the lines of Steinkopf would free them from political control by the missionary, economic domination by the 'White' farmers, and their perceived "racial" danger from the presence of Damara people.

A further factor, according to my informant, was the influence of the ideas of the leader of the Griqua Independent Church, the Rev. A. S. le Fleur, described by the Commission of Inquiry into the Bondelswarts Uprising as a "notorious Griqua agitator" (U.G. 16/1923: 26). The question of whether or not to accept the implementation of Act No. 29 of 1909 was at that time a serious political issue which had split all the Reserve communities. Its actual implementation regardless of their wishes had produced a reaction leading to a ready acceptance of Le Fleur's rather vague formulations of a return to a "Golden Age" as had supposedly prevailed before the Government's intervention, including amongst others the possibility of recovering land which had been expropriated (Carstens 1966: 34). According to Willem Raman, one of my informants at Pella, Le Fleur's utopian ideas, as interpreted by the inhabitants of Steinkopf, appealed to Basters at Pella too, for they suggested that at one stroke autocratic missionaries, overbearing 'Whites' and savage Damaras would disappear, leaving the Baster 'Pellanaars' to enjoy the fruits of a territory freed of excessive exploitation. This in turn served to channel resistance among Basters

to their incorporation in a subordinate role in the 'White'-dominated political economy of the Northern Cape.

At first Bishop Simon refused to entertain the idea of establishing any form of representative body for fear that it would endanger the position of the Church by creating a situation resembling that which had existed in the Namaqualand Reserves before the application in 1913 of Act No. 29 of 1909, and thus opening an invitation to the central Government to demand the extension of the Act to Pella as a way of meeting the supposed aspirations of the inhabitants. The Bishop was also mindful of the fact that, appearances to the contrary, his position was in reality even more precarious than that of the Rhenish missionaries in Namaqualand because the Certificate of Occupation was revocable on any technicality and he was thus open to official pressure if there was a suggestion that the Church was no longer able to fulfill its expected role in controlling the people living on the land nominally in its possession.

From about 1926, however, the Bishop began to reconsider his position after coming under pressure from the 'White' inhabitants of Pella to find some acceptable solution to the situation on the Mission Farm, because they feared being forced to leave Pella if the Government took control and established a Reserve along the lines of those in Namaqualand. In a petition to Bishop Simon they pointed out that the institution of a council would be a useful mechanism for regulating the use of the scarce resources of the Reserve, and that they hoped that the accompanying set of regulations would set out clearly the rights and privileges of all the people at Pella, thereby not only confirming their own position but also serving to preclude any further stock-farmers from settling at Pella.

In January 1927 Bishop Simon introduced a council of ten members "to assist the Head Missionary in the administration and control of the Pella farm", and a set of simple regulations (Appendices E and F) which may be regarded as the second custumal of Pella. In examining these regulations it is clear that they were inspired as much by the model provided by Act No. 29 of 1909 as by past precedent, and there are also some peculiarities not encountered in the systems of local government

in the Namaqualand Reserves. For instance, a significant feature is the recognition given to the division of Pella into six districts and the formulation of rules governing patterns of residence, including the movements of livestock. This seems to reflect the dominance of the ideas of the 'White' farmers of Pella on a limited form of individual tenure under the umbrella of the special position accorded them for having agreed to the incorporation of their farms with Pella in 1881 - it is no coincidence that the boundaries of these districts corresponded to those of their farms. There is the creation of a dual system of community administration through according legitimacy to the informal structures of authority in the community as a means of preventing them from becoming rallying points for resistance to the continued control of local affairs by the Church. The six foremen appointed by the Bishop assured him of automatic majority support on the council, for he invariably chose "men of recognised stature" in the community, such as traders and wealthy farmers, while the local Justice of the Peace held his seat without break until his death in 1940. Five of the six appointed foremen were invariably 'Whites', while the sixth was the Damara headman who presided as foreman over the district along the Orange River in which Damara and Herero refugees were located. The remaining four members elected by the inhabitants were usually prominent Baster spokesmen from the families Waterboer, Raman, Diergaardt and Magerman, who depended on the numerical strength of their families to place them in office.

The Bishop's concessions to the demands for a representative body merely increased conflict over the resources of the Mission Farm, rather than diminishing it, for the creation of this structure provided a focus for the lines of resistance in the community. Whereas the Certificate of Occupation recognised only the claim of the Church to the occupation of Pella, the granting of a measure of self-government to the inhabitants implicitly contained an admission of the justice of the Basters' claims to Pella by conceding that all had a right to live at Pella, albeit at the pleasure of the Church. The Basters were keenly aware of this, and the Bishop's original fears were realised when the council changed from being merely an arena for airing tension to a platform for the repeated articulation of Baster demands for more

concessions and more power, which served only to accentuate existing differences in the community.

As before 1927, the reasons for this were rooted in economic considerations. The 1930s decade was a period of great hardship for the inhabitants of Namaqualand and Bushmanland, not only because of the Depression and its effects on the mining industry, but also because it coincided with extremely serious droughts which reduced previously wealthy people to poverty through the loss of their livestock. Concentration of the population around the urban centres in the region was encouraged through the possibilities of relief available from the missionaries or the Government. Its later return to the land was inhibited, however, through the continuing programme of surveying and giving out of farms in Bushmanland (the last farms in the region were given out only in the period after the Second World War). This led to a change in the composition of the population at Pella as many of the 'White' families began moving away, either in search of work or else after purchasing a farm, after the loss of their livestock or the failure of their cultivated lands in the Reserve. When conditions improved towards the end of the 1930s the 'White' farmers remaining at Pella comprised a minority among the Baster and other 'Coloured' farmers attempting to build up their flocks. This resulted in demands for a more equitable distribution of the resources of Pella being made by Baster farmers who bolstered their claims with their arguments that they could not recognise the 'White' residents in Pella as legitimate occupiers of the territory and that the large numbers of livestock in the hands of these inhabitants prevented Baster farmers from re-establishing themselves. This demonstrated the gulf that existed between the two sets of inhabitants, a logical consequence of the situation which had resulted from administrative recognition being given by the Church to the informal social hierarchy in the community through formalising this hierarchy into a structure for the exercise of power based on status and relative wealth.

After Bishop Simon's death in 1932 his successor, Bishop O. Fages, chose to have his residence in the Mission Station at Keimoes, and control of the administrative structure at Pella passed temporarily to a priest, Fr. L. Wolff, who had been closely associated with Bishop

Simon as one of the first missionaries of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales to come to Pella. Neither Bishop Fages nor Fr. Wolf had much use for the Pella council, and the priest merely relied on the foremen to assist him in settling minor disputes. Despite the success of the inhabitants in forcing the Church authority to concede them a measure of representation in the local decision-making process, in practise the people had no real power and the position of the Church was still as strong as before, the missionaries still remaining determined to retain control of what they considered to be rightly their property granted to them by the Government.

THE LATER CUSTOMALS OF PELLA, 1940-1973

The period 1940 to 1973 is particularly important for an understanding of contemporary social relations and politics in Pella, for it was then that the Baster farmers' struggle for control of the territory culminated in the end of Church control there and thus, paradoxically, the destruction of their shield against final incorporation into the system of capitalist domination which had developed in the Northern Cape and elsewhere in South Africa. In this section I examine the progress of this struggle focusing on the missionaries' response to the ongoing challenge to their authority. The missionaries' response first took the form of endeavouring to accommodate the aspirations of the people at Pella in new administrative frameworks, and then, when this had failed, it became one of taking measures aimed at suppressing those aspirations.

The process of routinisation of missionary authority over the community gained momentum after the death of Bishop Simon in 1932, for his successor, Bishop O. Fages, had left the priests at Pella to deal with local affairs while he himself had resided at Keimoes Mission. With the institution of the council and its regulations, Bishop Simon's charismatic authority of Bishop Simon (in the Weberian sense) was converted into a rational-legal authority in which, at least theoretically, the securing of obedience rested on a belief in the legitimacy of a code of legal rules and regulations exercised by varying personnel within an established administrative structure

without the influence of a dominant personality enjoying the respect of all around him (Weber 1947). A consequence was, however, that the Church's control of the Mission Farm became even more vulnerable to attacks by the Baster farmers on its legitimacy.

By the mid-1930s the Mission was firmly established and dominated the community economically through collection of taxes and through exercising control over the exploitation of limestone deposits, the cultivation of crops, and the grazing areas on the farm. During the first four decades of the 20th century, the Church operated the Mission Farm as an economic enterprise to generate income and become self-supporting in certain foodstuffs. After World War II the emphasis shifted from general cultivation by the Mission on land in Pella village and at the Orange River to intensive cultivation of dates on its grounds in the village, and this in time became (and remains) an important source of income for financing the work of the Mission. The Basters of Pella claimed that the Church was doing little more than exploiting the land for its own benefit rather than assisting the people under its control, as was evidenced by the fact that the missionaries devoted more of their energies to activities for their own support than to the provision of facilities and services for the other inhabitants. The missionaries regarded such perceptions as unfounded because the Mission had progressed to the point where the romantic conception of missionary activity, involving extensive efforts at proselytisation, had ended with the conversion of the Herero in the 1920s. Apart from seeing that the necessary supporting activities for the mission station were carried out, they saw the principal duty of the personnel as having become that of ministering to an established congregation, part of which was in Pella and the rest of which was scattered across northern Bushmanland (at the beginning of the 1940s there were fourteen outstations, the most distant at Henkries in the Steinkopf Reserve). Faced with the economic hardships and uncertainties that prevailed in the first half of the 20th century, they had become obliged to seek ways to lessen their earlier dependence on support from 'White' sources so that they could continue with the work of the Church.

Bishop Fages died in 1939 and was succeeded in 1940 by Bishop H. J. Thünemann, who received the title of Bishop of Keimoes when the Vicariate was upgraded to a full Diocese at the time of his consecration. Bishop Thünemann was the son of a German-born trader at Pella, and the first (and so far the only) successful locally-born priest to have come from the Pella community. He had been ordained a priest in 1923 and was then sent to the Pofadder Mission to gain experience before returning to serve his native congregation. He made rapid progress through the hierarchy of the Church, for his Superiors were impressed by his fervent commitment to his vocation (RCMU/13. Memorandum, 13/6/1939) and there was an urgent need for the development of an "indigenous" clergy. Up to the end of my period of fieldwork, despite intensive efforts at recruitment, the Church had managed to produce only four other "indigenous" priests from the entire diocese, leaving the congregations dependent on missionaries from Europe and the United States of America. In explaining the difficulty of finding suitable local recruits for the priesthood to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome, Bishop J. Minder, the Bishop of Keimoes-Upington from 1967 to 2000, gave as reason for this that: "The Coloureds, who make up the bulk of our Catholics, have unfortunately imitated the evils of the Whites much better than their virtues. Blacks, with the foundations of their native cultures to build on, make better Christians than the Coloureds, but there are very few Blacks in our Diocese" (RCMU/5. Quinquennial Report for 1977).

Bishop Thünemann's succession was to have far-reaching consequences for Pella. From the evidence in his records and diaries (RCMP/41), he had followed events there with the keenest interest and he saw it as his task to find a solution to the problems facing the community. In his view, the poor relationship between the 'White' and 'Coloured' inhabitants and the Church stemmed from a deficient political structure assembled on an *ad hoc* basis in response to random pressures, without attempting to channel and utilize these forces for constructive purposes within a structure of local government. His underlying assumption appears to have been that the popularly-defined structure of the community - wealthy 'Whites' paternalistically guiding poor 'Coloureds' to some future prosperity - was sound and all that was

needed was a reform in local government to make for effective administration and sincere reconciliation between the factions.

With this in mind, the new Bishop sought to solve the temporal difficulties of the Church at Pella by applying the ideological principles of the doctrine of 'Regenerationism' (Carr 1980), which called for adherence to a fierce orthodoxy and Catholic puritanism as a means of combating spiritual and social decline by a renewal of faith. Bishop Thünemann's writings on this subject indicate that he had an enduring admiration for the synthesis between the theory of Fascism and the Regenerationist doctrine that had been achieved in Spain following the Civil War (Carr 1980). Regarding this synthesis, he wrote that - "It is nothing more than the construction of a new social order based specifically and directly on the policy of the Papal Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* - the most exciting thing in the history of Europe for many generations" (RCMP/41. Fr. Thünemann to Fr. Wolff, 15/6/1939). The Regenerationist doctrine was anti-political and contended essentially that freedom and justice for all were to be achieved by reducing centralization in local government to a minimum, and by organizing people according to their social functions in self-governing, self-regulating syndicates (or corporations) for corporate action. The resulting hierarchy of institutions was meant to be democratically representative of these functions and to obviate the necessity for political groups or factions (RCMP/41. Bishop Thünemann to Fr. Wolff, 24/3/1941).

At a public meeting in January 1941 Bishop Thünemann introduced the third custumal of Pella, formally abolishing Bishop Simon's system of dual district and electoral representation and announcing the formation of a new structure for the council. The council was now to be composed of directly elected councillors presided over by the Bishop himself, and it was to operate with a set of carefully formulated, more sophisticated regulations based on elements from Bishop Simon's Regulations of 1927 and the principles set out in Act No. 29 of 1909 (see Appendix G). The regulations of the early custumals were not withdrawn - those for the 'moral benefit' even received an addition - and technically remained in effect until the administration of Pella by the Church came to an end in 1973. Bishop Thünemann hoped that by

conceding and delegating some authority he could reach a compromise with the Baster residents of Pella on control of the decision-making process without offending the 'White' residents there, who had made it clear to him that they would accept the new system only insofar as it did not lead to a situation in which they could be forced to leave Pella. According to the Bishop's notes, the meeting ended with an acceptance of the new system by all the inhabitants with no objections raised (RCMP/4. Bishop Thünemann to Schröder, 29/5/1942).

No sooner had the council begun its regular meetings, however, than the clashes experienced earlier between Baster and 'White' farmers resumed. Nowhere in the Bishop's correspondence and writings (RCMP/4, RCMP/41, RCMU/7, RCMU/13) is there evidence that he recognised the possible validity of arguments against the legitimacy of Church control and of the presence of the 'White' inhabitants at Pella. Bishop Thünemann took it as self-evident that the grant by the Government had rendered obsolete any other claims to rights of occupation. His opinion was reinforced by the fact that he regarded himself as a 'Pellanaar' and that his family possessed documentary proof of their rights in Pella (a letter from Bishop Simon, dated 6/8/1898, granting trading rights and permission to build a house), while his kinship links with other major 'White' families at Pella also made it difficult for him to consider any alternative.

When it became clear that Bishop Thünemann was prepared to support the 'White' farmers of Pella, the Baster farmers began defying the regulations by disregarding the internal boundaries between districts and driving their livestock into the reserved pasturage. This developed into a significant crisis for the Bishop, for it became a test case of the legal basis of the regulations. When the resisters refused to obey the Bishop's demand that they leave Pella, he asked the police to intervene on the grounds that they were trespassing on the Mission Farm. When the case came to court at Pofadder in May 1942, however, the Prosecutor withdrew the summons on hearing that the persons concerned were inhabitants of Pella and therefore not trespassers in a strict legal sense (RCMP/4. Bishop Thünemann to Schröder 29/5/1942). Later the matter was put before the Attorney-General and it was then conclusively demonstrated that the Church could claim no legal recognition or force

for its regulations. The Bishop thus found himself in the same unenviable position of the Rhenish missionaries of the previous century in Namaqualand; "... our administration became more and more difficult. The occupiers as they now call themselves saw the hopeless position of the Mission authorities to enforce order and observation of our local regulations, and therefore openly acted as they liked, to the detriment of both the public [sic] and the Mission" (RCMP/4. Bishop Thünemann to the Department of Social Welfare, 6/7/1944).

By the end of 1942 Bishop Thünemann had realised that his attempt to accommodate the differing groups in the Pella community had failed. Unable to obtain legal recognition of the Regulations, he eventually decided in May 1943 to approach the Government on the matter, setting as a pre-condition that the occupation of the 'White' inhabitants should not be disturbed. As his application coincided with the transfer of control of the Coloured Reserves in South Africa from the Department of Lands to that of the Department of Social Welfare, there was a considerable delay before any serious steps were taken by the Government, as a departmental inquiry into the position of Mission Stations and Communal Reserves and the formulation of a general policy had first to be completed. The presence of a substantial number of 'White' residents in Pella posed a particular problem, because the proclamation of a Coloured Reserve in Pella would necessitate their removal since they could not be subjected to the same laws as the 'Coloured' population. As the application of Act No. 29 of 1909 could not be effected without the consent of all the parties concerned, the problem of compensation for the 'White' inhabitants who would be dispossessed had to be solved to everyone's satisfaction before the procedure of incorporation of Pella under Act No. 29 of 1909 could be initiated.

The first concrete steps by the Department of Social Welfare to apply Act No. 29 of 1909 to Pella in accordance with the procedure set out in Government Notice No. 897 of 1911 (RCMU/7. Department of Social Welfare to Bishop Thünemann, 6/8/1949) were taken between 1949 and 1950, six years after the Bishop's first approach, but shortly after the National Party government had come to power. The Church and the Department managed to reach a provisional agreement, including amongst other

conditions the granting of about eighty morgen (68.2 ha) of land to the Mission that was to be excised from the Reserve and given to the Church under absolute title and with rights to water and pasturage, as well as a compromise on the position of the 'White' inhabitants whereby all the families would be required to leave the hamlets and settle on the property of the Church in the village, remaining there until their deaths but without a right to pass on their rights of occupation to their descendants.

In 1950, when two consultative meetings were held with the inhabitants by officials acting on behalf of the Department of Social Welfare, none of the 'Coloured' inhabitants objected to the application of Act No. 29 of 1909 to Pella, and all the family heads signed a statement to the effect that their acceptance was voluntary (S.W. 458/10 Vol. I. Superintendent of Communal Reserves to the Department of Social Welfare, 8/1/1950). It has to be noted, though, that the list of signatures on this statement also served as a list of those people to be regarded as occupiers of Pella by the Department - if anyone had not added his name he and his family would probably have been forced to leave Pella on its transfer to the Department of Social Welfare. The Baster leaders in Pella were, however, dissatisfied with the fact that the Damara inhabitants, whom they continued to regard as unacceptable strangers, were not to be removed from Pella together with the 'White' residents. With their conversion to Catholicism the Herero leaders had evinced a preference to stay at Pella, particularly after the Church had granted them the right to remain on the Mission Farm. As the Baster leaders expressed it in a petition to the Department of Social Welfare: "... We coloureds have decided not to accept the Act along with the Damaras. We want a clean [skoon] Reserve. Because we Coloureds get almost beaten almost to death and therefore we do not want them here ..." (RCMP/4. Undated Petition, submitted in November 1950). According to one of my informants, Vaaltyn Diergaardt, the root of the problem was that after the meetings a number of the Baster farmers had begun to reconsider their position, for they had been informed by the officials that their farming activities were likely to be increasingly strictly controlled under the Department through the introduction of a stock reduction scheme by means of a quota system. As a result, they had begun to question whether their leaders were right in insisting that

the Mission Farm be placed under the control of the Government. Some of these people began advocating a more moderate stance, under which they would have been prepared to accept continued control by the Church, as long as the 'White' residents left Pella. Consisting mainly of members of families Diergaardt and Magerman, these people soon came to form a moderate faction among the local Basters, but they could exert little significant influence. They did not openly oppose the conservatives until after the transfer of Pella to the Administration of Coloured Affairs in 1974, to which they later gave their support when the missionary indiscriminately suppressed their political activities along with those of the conservatives (see below). After 1974 the conservatives adopted the moderates' arguments against the controls to be placed on the quantity of livestock allowed in the Reserve, having until then ignored this aspect of government planning for Pella, while the moderates also changed their position to support the stock reduction scheme so as to prevent the Baster conservatives, who dominated the Advisory Board established after 1974, from enriching themselves at the expense of other farmers.

The emergence of this moderate faction led the more conservative Baster farmers in Pella to attempt to win back possible waverers by playing on their long-standing racial and cultural prejudices towards the Damara and Herero people at Pella, concentrating particularly on the supposed dangers of intermarriage that could occur among young Baster and Damara people as a result of growing familiarity, and on the large amount of stock owned by the Herero farmers in the area. Incensed by the attempt to remove them from the Mission Farm and fearful of being forced to return to South West Africa, where conditions were unsettled, these Herero farmers retaliated by giving their support to the Bishop in his attempts to enforce the regulations and publicly favouring arguments that the 'White' inhabitants be allowed to remain at Pella. A number of incidents and confrontations between Basters and Damaras then occurred in the village and at various places on the Mission Farm, culminating in a violent assault by a number of Damaras on a Baster farmer who had attempted to plough a piece of land within the area known as Mik, and which had been regarded as having been set aside for the Herero refugees by Bishop Simon. In response to a request from the Bishop for a clarification of the position regarding the Damaras at Pella, the

Department of Social Welfare pointed out that Act No. 12 of 1949 (supplementary to Act No. 29 of 1909) protected the rights of Natives (Damaras and Hottentots) already settled on the Mission Farm and that there were therefore no grounds for concern (RCMP/4. Department of Social Welfare to Bishop Thünemann, 27/7/1950). Shortly after this incident there was another clash between the Baster and Herero residents at a meeting preliminary to a visit by the Magistrate for further consultations on the transfer of Pella's land and administration to the Department of Social Welfare. When their right to live at Pella was questioned all the Herero people left the meeting, their *kaptein* threatening a 'bloodbath' if any Baster attempted to turn them off Pella. In political discourse at Pella at the time of my fieldwork, this meeting was called the *assegai-vergadering*, (lit. spear meeting) and was often cited by my informants, from both sides involved in the conflict, as the point from which the gulf between Baster and Herero inhabitants appeared to have become quite unbridgeable.

Disagreements later also arose over the question of the type and amount of compensation to be given to the 'White' residents. At the meetings the official present had made it clear that the Government considered even the earlier compromise agreement as incompatible with its policy of 'apartheid' and had repeatedly emphasised that no descendants of the 'White' families then living at Pella would be allowed to retain their parents' rights but would have to move away. After representatives from the Department of Social Welfare had consulted with the 'White' residents, however, this stand was modified so as to allow a small number of livestock to be kept by those families who wished to continue living on the piece of land to be allocated to the Mission, but endless wrangling ensued on the exact number to be permitted per person and on how these rights were to be disposed of after the holder's death (RCMU/7. Department of Social Welfare to Bishop Thünemann, 7/12/1951).

The conservative Baster farmers refused even to consider this new compromise, while the 'White' residents were themselves dissatisfied with being unable to retain the means of securing a livelihood from stock-farming and with the manner in which the Department of Social Welfare was forcing them to abandon their homes. At the time of my fieldwork in the 1980s, some of my 'White' informants, who had been

born in Pella and still regarded themselves as 'Pellanaars' even after having had to leave Pella in 1973, spoke in interviews with considerable bitterness of how they had felt themselves to have been 'betrayed' by the National Party Government at that time, and of the apparent bias of the Department of Social Welfare in favour of the 'Coloured' section of the population. This was particularly interesting as they were nevertheless supporters of the National Party at that time. These disagreements nonetheless caused the negotiations between the Church and the Department of Social Welfare to become deadlocked on the question of compensation for the 'White' residents, and eventually the Department of Social Welfare decided to drop the matter until the Bishop could suggest some alternative set of proposals (RCMU/7. Department of Social Welfare to Bishop Thünemann, 6/02/1952). According to my informants, Bishop Thünemann was under pressure from his relatives and 'White' friends in Pella to protect them from being dispossessed, and he decided to do nothing until he had reviewed the situation more fully, with the result that the negotiations came to an end with no prospect of a solution being found. From this date, in a conscious symbolism of the impasse, Bishop Thünemann began referring in his correspondence to Pella as having two communities, one 'White' and one 'Coloured', at Pella, rather than two sections of one community as had been his previous practice (RCMU/7. Bishop Thünemann to Department of Social Welfare, 14/2/1952).

Other factors were also at work in persuading Bishop Thünemann to reconsider his opinion that the best solution to the dispute lay in transferring Pella to the Department of Social Welfare. In the period 1951 to 1953 Peter Weidner, head of one of the 'White' families at Pella, began mining operations on the deposits of corundum-sillimanite ore in the vicinity of the hamlet at Annakop (Weidner 1955). This created employment opportunities for a large number of labourers, while the contributions made to the Church in return for the right to exploit the deposits on the Mission Farm enabled the missionaries to undertake projects to improve public facilities under its control. Before 1961 Weidner made considerable contributions of money, equipment, services and infrastructure in the form of road construction to the Church, and after this date an annual amount of R1 000 was given to the Mission in addition to these (RCMP/28. Weidner to Bishop Esser, 28/5/1961). The

opening of the mine meant that pressure on natural resources in the Mission Farm could be reduced through a lessening of the dependence of the population on stock-farming for a living and led Bishop Thünemann to hope that a rise in the living standards of the 'Coloured' inhabitants would contribute to making them "more tolerant of their fellow human beings" (Weidner 1979: 82).

More important for the immediate policy of Bishop Thünemann was the influence of his Coadjutor Bishop, Bishop F. Esser, who was appointed during this period. Bishop Esser, who was at that time Vicar Apostolic of Keetmanshoop, encouraged Bishop Thünemann to consider reintroducing a representative system of local government to Pella and managed to overcome Bishop Thünemann's reluctance by drawing his attention to the success of a strictly limited and directed form which had been introduced at the Catholic missions of Gabis and Heirachabis in Great Namaqualand (RCMU/14. Bishop Esser to Bishop Thünemann, 6/11/1952). Bishops Thünemann and Esser co-operated in drawing up a new set of regulations (Appendix H), the fourth custumal for Pella. In January 1954, Bishop Thünemann introduced the new system to the community. As had been the case since 1941, the priest at Pella remained almost entirely excluded from the process of local government which continued to be dominated by the Bishop. After 1941 Bishop Thünemann had dominated local affairs because the then priest in charge of Pella Mission (Fr. Archambaud) had been unable to wield much influence owing to an alcohol problem. In 1951 a new French priest, Fr. Malery, had been selected by Bishop Thünemann as a successor to Fr. Archambaud, but in 1954 he was still in a subordinate position while undergoing further training in mission work.

The new system soon proved unworkable as the Council could not function effectively. The Council was composed of members selected by the Bishop and the 'White' mayor (the Bishop's brother), but each of the three meetings actually held in 1954 ended in altercations between Bishop Thünemann and the mayor on one side and conservative Baster members on the other (RCMP/4. Bishop Thünemann to Bishop Esser, 10/6/1954). The Baster members not only continued to refuse to recognise the legitimacy of the secular authority of the Church, but also openly accused the

Bishop of using the system to perpetuate the 'White' inhabitants' control of the Mission Farm's resources.

This rebuff left Bishop Thünemann totally discouraged and, disappointed at his failure to solve the problems of Pella and despite the advice of Bishop Esser, he again approached the Government (through the Division of Coloured Affairs in the Department of the Interior, which had taken over responsibility for the Reserves from the Department of Social Welfare in 1952) with the intention of resuming the stalled negotiations (RCMU/7. Bishop Thünemann to Commissioner of Coloured Affairs, 8/6/1954). Before any concrete steps could be taken in 1955, however, Bishop Thünemann suffered a severe breakdown of his health that left him incapable of continuing his duties. Bishop Esser then assumed control of Diocesan affairs, and immediately halted the negotiations on Pella until such time as he could re-appraise the situation and formulate a new policy for resolving the problem posed by the intransigence of all the concerned parties involved in the dispute on the future of the Mission Farm (RCMU/14. Memorandum on Pella, 4/4/1955).

The sillimanite mining industry which developed in northern Bushmanland during the 1950s decade (De Jager 1963; De Jager & Von Backström 1961) played an important role in the subsequent direction of events at Pella by altering the fundamental structure of the community from one almost entirely dominated by local farmers to one in which there was a clear division between those dependent on farming activities and those engaged in the mining operations. Though the mines were little more than large quarries, they were dependent upon abundant semi-skilled and unskilled labour because extensive mechanisation was beyond the financial resources of the mine-owners. The deposits themselves were too small to warrant the expenditure of large sums of money on machinery which was subject to rapid deterioration. The development of the mines absorbed a significant number of people from the local population of the region, and led to their concentration around the mining centres, either in temporary settlements or in the nearest village, as in the case of Pella (see Table 2.1). This meant that the composition of the population of the Mission Farm again altered, with more people increasingly dependent on the mines for a living and fewer

subsisting from agricultural pursuits. Whereas in 1941 the percentages of the population deriving their income from farming and non-agricultural sources were 68.2% and 22.7% respectively (RCMP/Misc. Journal of Johannes Basson, 11-17/2/1941), by 1962 this had been reversed to 25.9% and 73.0% respectively (the remainder being unemployed) (RCMP/4. Census of Pella, 15/5/1962). The higher wages obtained from labour in the mines, as opposed to those from farmwork, enabled a higher standard of living. The mine-owner at Pella also made available loans for the construction of houses in Pella village: after twelve months continuous employment an employee could obtain an interest-free loan of up to R60 and the necessary building materials, the loan then being deducted over an agreed period from his salary, and further loans and materials could be obtained for extensions later. This had the effect of producing a division between those 'Pellanaars' whose livelihood depended on the natural resources of the Reserve, such as grazing, and those for whom wage labour had become a way of life liable to be adversely affected by the repercussions could follow from the ending of Church control. In discussing this period of the dispute over Pella with me, my informants said that they had been concerned that if the 'White' mine-owners were alienated through the dispossession of their property in the village, they could have retaliated by refusing loans to workers and other forms of assistance to the inhabitants. Though threats of this nature were never made in public, there is documentary evidence that the mine-owner made an effort to protect the 'White' inhabitants from eviction by putting pressure on the missionary in 1969 through cutting off his contributions to the Church and refusing to assist in the construction of new classrooms for the school, but that he relented in 1973 when it became clear that the transfer of Pella to the Administration of Coloured Affairs was inevitable (RCMP/38. P. Weidner to Fr. Malery, 10/4/1969; Fr. Malery to P. Weidner, 7/6/1973).

In retrospect it is possible to see that the experiment of placing an "indigenous" bishop in control of the Diocese was responsible for many of the problems which beset the Church authority in relation to Pella after 1940, since Bishop Thünemann had been unable to free himself from obligations imposed by his close links of kinship and friendship with a limited section of the people under his control. The succession of his

Coadjutor, Bishop Esser, a German-born missionary, concluded this experiment and marked a return to what the Church regarded as genuine missionary rule over the community. Simultaneously this was also a turning point in the efforts of the Church to solve the vexed question of how the political aspirations of the people at Pella and the central government could be reconciled with its own ideas on ideal relations between spiritual and secular authorities.

Bishop Esser was as conservative as his predecessor and was also inclined towards a Regenerationist line of thought, though by all accounts he seems to have possessed a keener insight into many of the problems confronting the Church. As already shown, he was well acquainted with affairs at Pella and his advice had guided Bishop Thünemann when he had been "quite at [his] wits' end with the 'Pellanaars' (RCMP/4. Bishop Thünemann to the Department of Social Welfare, 30/5/1952). Bishop Esser later played an important part in the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council dealing with lay participation in church affairs and, according to Fr. Malery, he took the view that the reforms then being formulated would revitalise and preserve the Catholic Church by placing it at the forefront of change rather than leaving it merely to respond continuously to pressures emanating from the laity - from being the unchanging Rock of Ages, the Church would become the shepherd leading his flock towards a new future.

It was with these ideas in mind that Bishop Esser approached the political problems of Pella. Having conducted a brief survey of the Mission Farm in 1956, he identified four main problems facing the Church authority, viz. "(i) the lack of legal authority to compel obedience from unruly followers, (ii) the loss of confidence in the Church on the part of the Coloured inhabitants, (iii) the direct involvement of our missionaries in local affairs, (iv) an incorrect assessment by the Coloureds of their position regarding their so-called rights of occupation" (RCMU/14. Memorandum on Pella, 6/1/1956). Bishop Esser considered (ii) to be the most urgent, and he thus directed his first steps towards rectifying this situation, believing that by restoring the prestige of the missionaries as an objective authority,

in particular that of the Bishop himself, a firm foundation would be laid for future efforts to solve the impasse over the future of Pella.

Sole responsibility for administering Pella was now vested in the resident priest, allowing the Bishop to withdraw from direct involvement in the process of local government. In reality it created a proxy ruler and left the Bishop free to deal with the central government and to direct affairs from a safe distance, unaffected by any local repercussions to any aspect of his strategy. Whereas Bishop Thünemann had lived in Pella, Bishop Esser preferred to stay at Matjieskloof Mission near Springbok for greater convenience in communicating with the other missions in the Diocese, though his official residence remained Pella.

Under the Bishop's guidance a new priest, Fr. Schlight, succeeded in his task of regaining the confidence of "our Pellanaars". A definite reply from the Department of Coloured Affairs on the true extent of the powers of the Church at Pella read: "... as all responsibility for the administration of your Mission Station rests with the governing church authorities in terms of the Ticket of Occupation and in the absence of any law authorising regulations applicable to Pella, your regulations would be of the nature of mutual agreement lacking the force of law. Local co-operation seems to be the only alternative for the success of such a system ..." (RCMP/4. Department of Coloured Affairs to Fr. Schlight, 7/2/1957). This enabled Fr. Schlight, encouraged by the Bishop, to move boldly to co-opt some of the influential Baster conservatives. The council set up under the New General Regulations was abolished and replaced by a *Raad van Korporale* (lit. Council of Corporals) or *Burger-raad* (lit. Citizens' Council) consisting of five members and a chairman (the *Hoofkorporaal* (lit. chief corporal), who was also called 'president' in some documents, and who was in practice always a Baster). It was intended to serve as a representative body for the 'Coloured' population only and to assist the priest in the administration of Pella. The various taxes collected in terms of the *custumals* were replaced by a simple tax on livestock, which was to be used for the direct benefit of the 'Coloured' farmers. According to Fr. Schlight in 1983, the 'White' inhabitants were indignant at losing their representatives, but were somewhat mollified when he let them

know that he still regarded the mayor as their spokesman (The position was still held by the local shopkeeper, Bishop Thünemann's brother). Fr. Schlight managed to overcome the suspicion of the conservative Basters by adopting a favourable stance on the arguments of the Baster farmers concerning the use of the natural resources of the Mission Farm, and openly took their side against the 'Whites' in a dispute over rights to a spring which the mine-owner had claimed for his own use in 1957. Nevertheless, the more over-arching conflict between the 'Whites' and the 'Coloured' inhabitants over the right to live at Pella continued. The Baster conservatives used the *korporaalsraad* as a platform to approach the Department of Coloured Affairs on the question of their rights, and again to demand the removal of the 'White', Damara and 'Hottentot' residents when the control of the Church was ended, on the grounds that these people were not 'Coloured' in terms of the existing legislation (RCMP/38. Fr. S to Bishop Esser, 4/10/1958).

Between 1955 and 1959 the central government took no further steps on the proposed creation of a Coloured Reserve at Pella, mainly due to the inadequacy of the existing legislation to resolve difficulties over compensation for the 'White' residents and because a firm policy for the Coloured Reserves in general had still to be developed. Towards the end of 1959, however, the Department of Coloured Affairs notified the Bishop that it had received letters from the community which indicated that "the occupants are still as willing to have the Department assume the responsibility for Pella as they were in 1950", and advised him of a new set of proposals, which were that (i) the Church should confirm its agreement of 1950 to the application of Act No. 29 of 1909 to Pella; (ii) the Ticket of Occupation of 1881 should be cancelled so as to facilitate the application of the Act; and (iii) that a portion of land would be granted to the Church after the application of the Act so that it could continue its religious activities (RCMU/7. Department of Coloured Affairs to Bishop Esser, 4/9/1959). No mention was made of compensation for the 'White' inhabitants, or of further consultations with any local inhabitants.

Had such an offer been made to Bishop Thünemann he might well have accepted it merely to rid himself and the Church of the whole problem. Bishop Esser viewed the second proposal with alarm, however, for it

seemed to indicate that the position of the Catholic Church as the established church at Pella would be at the mercy of the Protestant-orientated National Party government once the Ticket of Occupation had been cancelled. The proposal implied that, by conceding the rights of the 'Coloured' inhabitants of Pella and consenting to depriving their 'White' co-residents of theirs, the Church would also be required to surrender its privileged position at Pella. This was in direct conflict with Bishop Esser's view of the role which the Church had to play in the community as a source of spiritual, if no longer temporal, leadership, since it would have allowed Protestant churches to establish themselves and divide the community even further. Bishop Esser fully appreciated the trend towards a subdued anti-catholic policy which was adopted by the National Party government in the 1950s, involving pressure on Church-run private schools and institutions which served as foci for opposition to the implementation of the 'apartheid' policy, for the Catholic Church had early on made known its opposition to enforced segregation, as evidenced by statements published by the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference in 1952, 1954 and 1957 (RCMP/21. Copies of statements). The Church remained true to its traditional doctrine of 'accidentalism', whereby the form of the secular government was of little consequence as long as Catholic interests were respected, this always enabling the 'lesser of two evils' to be accepted and exploited to the advantage of the Church (Carr 1980). This was also the reason for the Bishop's urgency in attempting to regain the confidence and trust of the people at Pella in order to remove any "democratic" reason the Government could offer as cause for demanding the transfer of the Mission Farm to the State "so as to further the aspirations of the inhabitants" which were allegedly being hindered by a reactionary church authority (RCMP/38. Bishop Esser to Fr. Malery, 5/11/1959). At the end of 1959, Bishop Esser transferred Fr. Malery back to Pella to replace Fr. Schlight, in preparation for the re-establishment of a Regenerationist system to stifle opposition to the continued control of the Church.

After seeking legal advice at the beginning of 1960, the Bishop took a fateful decision to resist the Government quietly and tactfully through prolonged negotiations until such time as the Government threatened to end Church control in terms of the Crown Lands Disposal legislation, at

which point he or his successor would have to reconsider the position (RCMU/7. Bishop Esser to Fr. Malery, 3/7/1960). In the hope that the National Party Government would sooner or later be removed through defeat at the polls, this policy was pursued determinedly until 1971, when Bishop Minder, Bishop Esser's successor, finally found himself forced through its logic to end the control of Pella by the Church (RCMU/7. Bishop Minder to Fr. Malery, 3/11/1971).

As recommended by Bishop Esser, Fr. Malery reformed the structure of local government by establishing a conservative, authoritarian system with the same underlying assumptions of Bishop Thünemann's 'Regenerationism' of the 1940s. It endeavoured to bring together all the competing interest groups into a situation in which they could be tightly controlled and, as in the past, rested on exploitation of the submissive apathy of most of the inhabitants to expose the activist elite to incorporation in the system. The idea behind the reform lay in the recognition that until then (1960) the system of local government had been deficient because the councils had failed to represent all the various competing forces and groups in the community, and that genuine representation could only be achieved by applying the principles of what Bishop Esser called "organic democracy", by which he meant that heads of families and corporate bodies were the proper channels through which a society of individuals should conduct its relationship with government (RCMP/38. Bishop Esser to Fr. Malery, 15/10/1960).

In reconstituting the Council, Fr. Malery revived the form of the "Ruling Council" as it had been under Bishop Simon, with five 'White' and five 'Coloured' Members, but removed the deputy status of the foreman of Central Pella (Appendix E). Available information which I obtained from Fr. Malery about the composition of the Councils from 1960 reveals a simple formula for the success of the system. Through selective appointment, the politically-conscious elite of the community could be partially satisfied by the rewards of public office - such as the apparent power to regulate their affairs themselves (though the priest still held the final power to approve or disapprove their decisions), and the prestige derived from their position as recognised decision-makers - while simultaneously the chemistry of the composition of the Council balanced and neutralised the families and groupings. In

discussing the workings of the Council with me, Fr. Malery described how he had ensured that, for example, the 'Pellanaar' "pioneers" were always opposed by those who were regarded by them as "newcomers" ('*inkommers*'), while among the Baster members those from the Raman family were always counterbalanced by others from the Diergaardt or Waterboer families, and that there were equal numbers of farmers and labourers. He did this with the intention of never excluding any of the groupings, which he recognized as politically significant in the community, from holding symbolic power. He furthermore prevented the development of monopolist tendencies in the council by retaining the power to appoint or dismiss members at will outside the electoral process. Thus if a member showed signs of overstepping the limits of acceptable political activity, such as endeavouring to undermine the position of the priest by, for example, writing letters of complaint to the Department of Coloured Affairs or the Bishop, or attempting to upset the balance of power by advocating re-alignments of interests (such as suggesting that the 'Coloured' and 'White' residents had common cause against the Church, as happened at one meeting) he could be summarily dismissed and replaced. Fr. Malery also revived the division of Pella into districts with foremen and again recognised both the 'White' mayor and the 'Coloured' *burgermeester*; none of these officers were *ex officio* members of the council, but here too it was possible to play off one faction against another through appointments of foremen.

From the accounts of my informants, this system successfully stultified public political life at Pella. The Baster 'Pellanaars' began suspecting that the Government was aiding and abetting the Church, an effect not planned but also not unwelcome to the missionary as it held the possibility that it would weaken the Baster conservatives' willingness to collaborate with the National Party government. Balancing the representatives as described above produced weak councils with the members so riven by competing interests that they lacked the coherence to resist the Church authority, and were thus unable to hinder the Bishop in his intention to prevent the realisation of the Government's desire to bring the Mission Farm under its control.

While resistance in the Pella community was being suppressed by this divide and rule policy, Bishop Esser followed his stated policy of delaying implementation of the intentions of the Government towards Pella with considerable skill. Unlike Bishop Thünemann, who had regarded the Government as an ally, Bishop Esser saw it as a threat to all that had been achieved by the Catholic mission, not only at Pella but also in the Northern Cape as a whole. Bishop Esser struck a careful balance between co-operation and obstruction, drawing up alternative sets of proposals which then had to be subjected to the closest examination by both the Department of Coloured Affairs and the Bishop together with his Diocesan Council, a body of priests set up to advise the Bishop on matters affecting the Diocese. Between May 1960 and December 1962 there were some thirty points of difference which had to be cleared up, despite a formal proclamation issued by the Bishop and the Diocesan Council in November 1960 to the effect that the Church was prepared to offer "provisional and conditional approval, subject to further discussion" (RCMU/7. Proclamation. 20/11/1960) of a set of "guidelines" for the eventual agreement to be drawn up on the transfer of Pella to the Department of Coloured Affairs. These provisions included, amongst others, recognition of the Roman Catholic Church as the established missionary society at Pella, with restrictions on the rights of other denominations to practise at Pella (such as not being allowed to build churches); a grant of a portion of land, roughly 50 morgen (42.6 hectares) in extent, under absolute title to the Church, and a further portion of fifteen morgen (12.8 hectares) on the banks of the Orange River for irrigation purposes; a grant of rights to the Church for pasturage for a limited number of livestock, firewood and water; and a formal reassurance that the Church would be in no way subject to interference in its affairs by the Management Board to be established to administer the affairs of the Reserve.

After these guidelines had been set out, the problem of the rights of Damaras to live at Pella was, from an administrative point of view, resolved in 1961 when, despite strong objections from conservative Basters, the Bishop and the Department of Coloured Affairs agreed that Damaras had every right to live on Pella because they were officially classified 'Coloured', but that no Natives (in Afrikaans, *Naturelle*, the term then in use to classify 'Blacks') could live on the Reserve

(RCMU/7. Department of Coloured Affairs to Bishop Esser, 19/5/1961). Though this recognition gave the Damara residents of Pella, especially the Hereros among them, much needed security it did not remove the possibility that the Basters would later challenge the basis of their classification, a fear that was still very much alive at the time of my fieldwork in the 1970s and 1980s, and this effectively prevented the local Herero *kaptein* from attempting to reach any form of understanding for mutual benefit with the Basters. In this regard, it is interesting to note that when a temporary Advisory Committee was formed in 1973 as part of the preliminary arrangements for the transfer of Pella to the Administration of Coloured Affairs, Adam Basson, the Herero *kaptein* at that time, was appointed as a member along with the leaders of the Baster conservatives, and he gave them his support in their discussions with officials from the Administration of Coloured Affairs in return for a seat on the Advisory Board that was established after the proclamation of the Reserve. Though he thus succeeded indirectly in gaining recognition from the Basters of the Damaras' right to representation, neither he nor the conservative Baster leaders saw this as a full alliance.

Between 1962 and 1966 there was a long delay while the Government introduced new legislation on the Coloured Reserves in South Africa (Act No. 24 of 1963, with its various sets of subjoined regulations), under which the Reserves were transformed into 'Rural Coloured Areas' and were thereby incorporated into the evolving policy of the National Party Government towards the 'Coloured People' in general (Curry 1979: 2). During this period the stance of the Catholic Church towards 'apartheid' became even more inclined to one of outright opposition in contrast to the disapproving tolerance of the 1950s (Bauer 1994). Consequently, according to Fr. Malery, Bishop Esser grew ever more convinced that his policy on Pella was sound. He considered it important to provide a symbol of the commitment of the Church to its principles, even if this was at the cost of imposing dictatorial rule on the last non-racial mission station under the control of the Catholic Church in the Northern Cape.

Despite his attempts to delay negotiations, Bishop Esser found that by the end of 1966 his confident gamble on an electoral defeat of the

National Party Government had not been realised. He was thus being pushed inexorably to the point where he would no longer be able to delay taking a final decision, for he had been trapped by his own tactic of pretending to negotiate while the Department took his concessions seriously, evidently on the assumption that his wily persistence was aimed merely at securing the best possible conditions for a transfer. In December 1966 all that remained were a few small points on the wording of the agreement and its final approval by the Diocesan Council. With Bishop Esser's sudden death at the end of 1966, however, the whole process of negotiation came to a standstill until his successor could take office. In the interim a Vicar-General acted in Diocesan affairs, but took no action on Pella.

Almost a year passed before the new Bishop, Bishop J. Minder (a missionary from the American province of the O.S.F.S. in the U.S.A.) was appointed (October 1967) and consecrated (January 1968). Under his rule, which continued until he resigned in 2000 (and was replaced by Bishop E. Risi), the liberalisations and reforms recommended by the Second Vatican Council (Abbott, 1966; Flannery 1975) were spread throughout the Diocese, despite opposition from certain conservative priests, and greater attention was paid towards conformity with the standards and opinions of the Roman Catholic Church towards the serious social and political problems of South Africa. The re-orientation of the Roman Catholic Church towards the National Party Government and its policies proceeded rapidly after the 1960s decade. In 1977, for instance, the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference admitted that the Church had lagged behind in matters of social justice, and by 1980 had committed itself to the "total liberation" of all people in South Africa (Bauer 1994). After having made a careful examination of the problems surrounding Pella when he had taken office, Bishop Minder reached the conclusion that the prevailing situation was highly unsatisfactory and had to be resolved before it damaged the new image of the Church as the champion of the oppressed and poor. At the time (1968-69) the Bishop was also influenced by arguments inside the Church against the Church holding large amounts of landed property in a country where land tenure was so contentious an issue.

Bishop Minder shared Bishop Esser's opinions on the inadvisability of handing over control of Pella to people who showed no evidence of being capable of handling their own affairs in an "objective, responsible fashion" (RCMU/7. Bishop Esser to Fr. Malery, 27/11/1962), but agreed with the Government view that much capital expenditure was necessary to update or create necessary public facilities and services. He was, however, also fully aware of the injustice that would be done if the remaining 'White' inhabitants were to be forced to leave for, by then, faced with an uncertain future, most of the younger 'White' families had left, leading to the closure of the 'White' school in 1965, and only about fifty mainly elderly 'White' people were still living in Pella. The Administration of Coloured Affairs, which had taken over the Rural Coloured Areas in 1969, also appreciated these points concerning the 'White' population, with whom difficulties regarding compensation had been a major stumbling block in the way of a settlement in the past. Accordingly it made its last compromise on the matter in 1969, offering to allow the pensioners to remain at Pella in their own houses, but without livestock, until their deaths, while requiring only the younger people from among the 'White' population to leave and settle elsewhere. It also reduced the amount of land to be excised from the Reserve and granted to the Church, but simultaneously guaranteed the freedom of the Church from any interference in its affairs from the Advisory Board to be established in the Reserve. It was intended that the Advisory Board would be upgraded to Management Board status after a probationary period to give the inhabitants time to adjust to their new circumstances (RCMU/8. Department of Coloured Affairs to Bishop Minder, 25/1/1969).

These were the most favourable conditions ever offered to the Church, and testify to the late Bishop Esser's skills as a negotiator. Bishop Minder continued to delay taking the final decision, however, both on account of pressure from the 'White' residents of Pella for compensation for their houses and from reluctance to be seen assisting the Government in implementing its 'apartheid' policy. After much correspondence, the Administration of Coloured Affairs eventually agreed to allow the departing 'White' families to sell their fixed property to interested 'Coloured' residents of the Reserve. After a number of further delays on the Bishop's part, caused by renewed

opposition from the 'White' residents, the Administration of Coloured Affairs indicated in 1971 that its patience was running out, pointing out that the environmental conditions at Pella were rapidly deteriorating and were allegedly causing much hardship to the farmers. Mindful of his predecessor's policy directive in such a case, Bishop Minder then finally gave his consent to the application of Act No. 24 to Pella, and so brought an end to the long dispute (RCMU/7. Bishop Minder to Fr. M, 3/11/1971). On the 22nd of June 1973 Pella was formally declared to be reserved exclusively for the occupation and possession of 'Coloureds' (Proclamation No. 141, dated 30/5/1973. Government Gazette No. 3937, 22/6/1973). The 'White' inhabitants, with the exception of the shop-keepers in Pella village and those employed on the mine at Swartkoppies (where they were living in houses at the mine compound), were then compelled to leave and their properties were taken over by wealthier 'Coloured' residents. Most of the 'White' families moved to urban centres in the Northern Cape, notably Springbok, Pofadder, Onseepkans and Upington, but a few left Namaqualand and settled in Vredendal and Cape Town. Control of the new 'Rural Coloured Area' was transferred from the Roman Catholic Church to the Administration of Coloured Affairs on the 1st of January, 1974, initiating a new era in the history of Pella and the relationships between its inhabitants and the Catholic Church.

In overview, the period of Catholic missionary control and administration at Pella can be regarded as having been characterised by a highly centralised structure of authority in which temporal and spiritual power were combined, enabling the missionaries to control their subjects on the Mission Farm with considerable success through exercising the power derived from their position as an integral part of the system of government developed in South Africa to perpetuate racist capitalist domination. Yet their position was contradictory and was gradually undermined by irresistible political trends, so that ultimately the Catholic Church was compelled to give up its secular control of Pella under pressure from the central government. After 1974 a new administrative structure was introduced to the community in the Reserve and, while the inhabitants were virtually as powerless as they had been in the period of Church control, the new system of government was to be more open to manipulation by the political elite, allowing

them to exercise a degree of influence not previously possible under missionary control. Their actions to protect their interests under the new regime will be shown in Chapter 5.

The course of political contest in Pella shows furthermore that local manifestations of class struggle were cast in terms of ethnic differences, so that the consequent diversity of interests created differentials which generated varied responses to socio-political developments in the community. Endemic conflict in the community enabled forces beyond its boundaries and at a higher structural level to exploit the interdependency between ethnicity and class to further a wider struggle. It is one of the ironies of the social history of Pella that in their struggle to wrest control of the productive natural resources of the Reserve, the Baster inhabitants there came to perceive the Church authority and the dominant 'White' residents as one entity, for in pursuing their goal of altering the ethnic basis of control of the territory they were unaware that in supporting Government policy against the Church they were destroying their shield against final incorporation into the system of capitalist domination in South Africa. As I shall show in Chapter 5, not until the late 1990s would the Church begin to reassert its influence in the social development of the community and to play a new role in identity politics in Pella.

CHAPTER 5

CULTURAL HYBRIDITY AND THE POLITICS OF SIMILARITY IN PELLA

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I continue my discussion of ethnic mobilization in Pella by examining the responses of the Baster and Damara residents of the Reserve to local manifestations of then emerging mass politics in South Africa during the last quarter of the 20th century and to the new role of the Church in the post-apartheid era. The spread of populist ideologies in the wider society, with their stress on interests and identities beyond those of the local community, faced the Basters in Pella with a dilemma. This was because they perceived the changing political and social conditions in South Africa to be eroding the foundations on which they imagined their utopia would rest - a utopia based on their sense of their own social identity and their control of the land in Pella. As I show, they consequently experienced problems in presenting viable claims for the additional land that they wanted for Pella.

The National Party government was never able successfully to resolve the issue of a 'Coloured' identity, yet shortly before the creation of the Republic in 1961 the majority of National Party policy-makers appear to have taken a view that 'Coloured' people should be regarded as a "*Volk-in-wording*" (Venter 1974: 10) and should be treated as a 'nation' for the general purposes of the policy of separate development. The legislation that replaced Act No. 29 of 1909 and its numerous amendments and supplements was designed to assist in the realisation of this goal. Shifts in official terminology are good indicators of changes in policy, and the substitution of 'Rural Coloured Areas' for 'Reserves' is as reliable in this regard as the various changes from 'Native Reserves' through 'Bantustans' to 'homelands' and 'Self-governing Black National States' in the case of the African Reserves. The Rural Coloured Areas Act (No. 24 of 1963) marked the incorporation of the Coloured Reserves into the general

policy of separating 'Coloureds' from other 'population groups' in terms of the 1950 Population Registration Act. They thus became in effect rural Group Areas. These 'Rural Coloured Areas' were placed under the control of the Department of Coloured Affairs, and then, in 1970, they were transferred to the Administration of Coloured Affairs under the Coloured Representative Council (the latter was a short-lived body for which 'Coloured' people were paternalistically allowed to vote instead of being represented in Parliament by 'Whites'). The Act made provision not only for the political evolution of these territories through a process of increasing local autonomy, but also, equally importantly, for economic development on an unprecedented scale that was intended to create and sustain a significant degree of differentiation between town-dwellers on the one hand (each of whom would live on a plot in a planned village) and *bona fide* farmers on the other (each of whom would have an 'economic unit', or small farm).

Pella was, as I have noted above, the last of the Reserves to be proclaimed in Namaqualand, coming into being only at the beginning of 1974. In this chapter I show how the Basters at Pella coped with the consequences of their adoption of a 'Coloured' identity and the results of direct rule by the central Government after Pella became a Rural Coloured Area. In the course of participating in the new local government structure, the leaders of the Basters at Pella resisted a Government-sponsored development programme which would have imposed a radically different form of land tenure, and the factions among them that had emerged during their earlier contests with the Church (Chapter 4) were strengthened. There was also an increasing focus on relations with the Damaras of Pella (especially as a result of closer contact brought about by resettlement of Damaras among Basters in the planned development area of the village), with conservative Basters using the supposed threat posed by these people to obtain conformity to their views in resisting the implementation of the plan. Modifications to the plan were claimed as a victory by Baster conservatives who later entrenched their controlling position by dominating the Management Board which replaced the Advisory Board. With the political transformation of South Africa that began in 1994 and the establishment of a new form of local government, however, these same Baster conservatives lost their local political power, as happened to the

local elites in the other Namaqualand Reserves (cf. Westaway 1994), and faced the prospect of having to re-negotiate the basis of their identity in a new political dispensation dominated by their local opponents. After the demise of apartheid, the political process that was meant to be inclusive nevertheless came to be perceived by them as exclusionary, and led them to reclaim certain aspects of their cultural past in a new form of identity politics based on the symbolic significance for them of the Nama mat-house.

PELLA AS A RESERVE AND COMMUNAL AREA AFTER 1974

With the transfer of Pella to the Administration of Coloured Affairs on the 1st of January 1974, patterns of political life in the community were profoundly changed, although the transition took place smoothly. My informants told me that, at that time, most of the people in Pella were in favour of the change, and the new form of local government was established without difficulty unlike in certain of the other Reserves in Namaqualand where there had been concerted resistance to the implementation of Act No. 29 of 1909 (Carstens 1966: 31; Luyt 1981: 163-66). My account in this section of the late-apartheid era local government structure in Pella is intended to be contrasted with those set up by the Catholic missionaries in order to show continuities and discontinuities in form and function that impacted on local identity politics.

The basic organ of local government in all the Namaqualand Reserves was a Management Board, the lowest tier in a system of administration which had its roots in colonial practice throughout the British Empire but which closely resembled reservation governments in Canada and the USA (Carstens 1991; Williams 1970). In newly-proclaimed Rural Coloured Areas (which were still popularly called Reserves), Act No. 24 of 1963 (and its replacements) made provision for a graduated system of increasing local autonomy for management bodies drawn from those inhabitants classified as Registered Occupiers. In areas incorporated under the Administration of Coloured Affairs and its successors the first stage was the appointment of a Superintendent (usually a career official from outside the Reserve) and the formation of an Advisory

Board which in the second phase became a Management Board. At Pella the Superintendent was assisted for the first six months of his period of office by an appointed advisory committee of leading residents until an election was held to choose members for the Advisory Board. From then on, this structure, an effective executive officer assisted by an Advisory Board, continued until 1989, when it was replaced by a Management Board consisting entirely of elected members under a local chairman. The central government delayed upgrading the status of the Advisory Board to that of Management Board, despite repeated applications from Baster members who were keen to secure full control over their affairs, until it was satisfied that it would be able to receive the co-operation of the Management Board in implementing a planned programme of development for Pella (see below). The Management Board functioned until it was replaced by a transitional local council in 1994 as part of the restructuring of local government after the end of National Party rule.

The Advisory Board (popularly referred to as the "Raad", or council) consisted of five ordinary members ("Raadslede"), a chairman (the Superintendent) and a secretary, while the Management Board had ten ordinary members with an elected chairman and an appointed secretary. In the case of the Advisory Board neither the chairman nor the secretary was able to vote in proceedings, even when decisions could not be reached through a consensus of opinion among the Members; with the Management Board only the secretary was excluded from voting. Meetings were held at least once a month, but special meetings could be held from time to time to discuss matters of urgent concern. The secretary was required to keep minutes, a copy of which had to be submitted to the Regional Representative of the central government administrative structure responsible for controlling the Reserves (e.g. the Administration of Coloured Affairs in Upington until 1984, the Department of Local Government, Housing and Agriculture until 1994). Only in exceptional circumstances were verbatim records of meetings kept, and the summaries of discussions contained in the minutes of meetings that I examined tended to give a favourable gloss on the role of the chairman and members supporting his opinions (for example, in RCAPA. Official Minutes of the Advisory Board, 1975-1979).

The ordinary members of the Advisory and Management Boards were elected by the Registered Occupiers of the Reserve (subject to the complete payment of their taxes) at annual meetings called for that purpose each July. Candidates for election not only had to be Registered Occupiers, but also had to meet certain other criteria, such as, amongst others, not being insolvent, mentally disordered, or having been previously convicted for an offence (Government Notice R.1375 of 1965, Regulation 11). There was no formal economic incentive for Registered Occupiers to make themselves available for public office as the Board members did not receive payment for their services, other than being granted allowances according to distances travelled in the Reserve on "official business". In general a term of office covered three years but, as one third of the members were obliged to retire each year, in order of the least number of votes received, a term was often considerably shorter (unless the member was re-elected). In addition to ordinary elections, extra-ordinary elections could be held to replace members who vacated office before the expiry of their terms. Government Notice No. R1375 of 1965 lists over twenty conditions under which a member could be compelled to vacate his seat, the most important of which is probably 15(I), in which a member could be forced to resign if he had attempted to undermine the authority of the Advisory Board, refused to submit himself to the provisions of Act No. 24 of 1963, or had shown himself generally unfit to perform his duties in a satisfactory and dignified manner. This regulation was open to very broad interpretation and it effectively prevented members from resorting to informal measures to exert pressure on the authorities if their political aims were thwarted by the Superintendent or other members. This, as Carstens (1966: 136) has pointed out for a similar provision in the regulations subjoining Act No. 29 of 1909, revealed very clearly the extent to which the Advisory Board and Management Board were subjected to the control of the central government.

Though there were no officially recognised wards, the members agreed among themselves at the first meeting after each election as to who would represent each of the districts established by Bishop Simon under the former customs of Pella, in tandem with one or more of the discrete neighbourhood areas in the village. In contrast to the system prevailing under the missionaries, the boundaries of the areas (which

were called wards - wyke) for which each member was responsible were elastic, varying according to circumstances such as place of residence of the member, personal preferences or other reasons, but the responsible member was still expected to act as an intermediary between the people of the district and the Advisory Board/Management Board, and if possible also to deal with minor disputes and problems in the area as had been the case during the period of Church control. After 1985 each member also took on a portfolio with particular responsibility for collecting information about and dealing with one or more facets of service provision, e.g. utilities such as water and electricity, sanitation, pasture management, roads, health services, etc.

During the time of the Advisory Board, responsibility for the administration of local affairs rested with the Superintendent, this authority having been delegated to him by the Regional Representative of the Administration of Coloured Affairs who was the head of the Regional Office at Upington. After 1989, this responsibility was vested in the Management Board as a whole. The fact that Pella fell under the Gordonia Regional Office and was thus separated for administrative purposes from the other Reserves in the magisterial district of Namaqualand had important implications for both the recruitment of personnel and the implementation of government policy, on account of certain differences in orientation and practical experience of administration. The Gordonia Regional Office was more concerned with the well-populated agricultural settlements along the Orange River between Augrabies and Prieska and had only three Reserves (Pella, Mier and Eksteenskuil) under its administration, none of which had large populations. This limited the range of opportunities for staff to gain practical experience in running the kind of independent administrative structures for the Reserves that had been envisaged by those who framed Act No. 24 of 1963. After 1994 and the start of a fully democratic South African state, however, the Management Board of Pella was abolished and control over local affairs passed from the then Department of Local Government and Housing in the House of Representatives to the Department of Local Government in the Northern Cape Provincial Government, represented by its regional office in Springbok, which instituted a transitional local council in Pella. This integrated Pella with the other Namaqualand communal areas under a

common administrative structure, which could in theory draw on a wider range of expertise in dealing with local matters.

The function of the Pella Advisory Board was to assist the appointed Superintendent in his duties by making recommendations regarding the handling of local affairs and approving administrative decisions taken by the Superintendent and/or officials in the Regional Office. Its decision-making powers were severely limited though, as shown below, the few important decisions actually taken by the Advisory Board could affect all persons residing in the Reserve and the course followed in implementing key aspects of Government policy, in particular that of the development programme for the Reserve. The principal executive duties of the Superintendent in consultation with the Advisory Board consisted of provision of essential services, control of farming activities, collection of local taxes, and the approval of various applications, which could range in a single meeting from issues as diverse as a mining prospect to the acquisition of a building plot in the village, as well as the general administration of Pella. This was all in accordance with Act No. 24 of 1963 and the accompanying regulations set out in Government Notices R.1375 and R.1052. In 1989 these functions and responsibilities passed to the Management Board which had extensive powers that could be exercised with the approval of its regional superiors.

Neither the Advisory Board nor the Management Board had any judicial functions though, as Carstens (1966: 137) has pointed out for the Management Board of Steinkopf, some features of a judiciary were present. For example, the members could advise or approve of action to be taken against Registered Occupiers who had failed to pay their taxes, or against trespassers in the Reserve. Under certain circumstances people approached the Boards to settle disputes which they considered to be either too trivial or too delicate to be handled through the normal legal channels of the magistracy at Pofadder. In general, however, such approaches were not encouraged, mainly because the members had found that a proposed solution was not always acceptable to the various parties involved as it was not regarded as binding on those concerned.

Meetings of the Advisory and Management Boards could be distinguished into three types, viz. ordinary and extra-ordinary meetings of the Board itself and general meetings held by the Board with the residents of the Reserve. At ordinary meetings the matters dealt with were those of immediate concern to the general routine administration of the 'Rural Coloured Area', representing both internal affairs and matters of importance to their regional superiors. These were things such as finances and the local works programme, matters affecting farming and other agricultural activities, and the handling of various sorts of applications, including those for building plots and tracts of land that affected the rights of inheritance and usufruct of the inhabitants of Pella. Extra-ordinary meetings of the Board might also be held from time to time for special purposes, but were extremely rare. On one occasion during my period of fieldwork when an ordinary meeting of the Advisory Board had been cancelled for lack of a quorum, the two members present sat informally with the Superintendent to hear a complaint from a Registered Occupier, and this was later entered in the minutes as an extra-ordinary meeting. General meetings were essentially tests of public opinion, whether in the form of elections of members, annual report-back meetings (usually held in December), or when either the members of the Board or the regional administration itself had decided to refer a matter for consultation and discussion with the inhabitants of Pella. In such cases, of course, this did not mean that the Board or the regional administration would necessarily respect the opinions expressed at the meeting. Most of the business of the Board concerned dealing with applications from residents (such as those mentioned above), along with matters concerning finance, the works programme and the development programme. At the meetings I attended during the period of my fieldwork, discussions of the works programme and development programme claimed most of the attention of the members, and other matters were dealt with quickly towards the end of the meetings. The Board could, and did at times, spend up to an hour discussing merely one aspect of the development programme, such as the erection of fences in certain parts of the Reserve, or devote almost half an hour to pondering the pros and cons of repairing windpumps and gates, and yet dispose of an application for rights of occupation (which would determine the course of the applicant's life) in a matter of one or two minutes. If an applicant's credentials were questioned, however, the

process of course took longer, or the application was dismissed even more swiftly.

The Advisory Board was very restricted in terms of being able to take decisive action. It could do little more than recommend and approve on most issues, and there were few areas where firm decisions were required. The Superintendent and the Regional Office could intervene at any stage in those areas where members had been asked to give an opinion or where a decision had been left to them. This was particularly the case in meetings where the Superintendent or officials of the Regional Office persuaded or directed members to express the 'correct' views. In 1978 the Superintendent of Pella told me that on several occasions he had had to 'guide' members so that they did not make 'stupid' decisions as a result of their 'ignorance'. This was not so much out of concern for the members as from fear of censure from his superiors, for the Superintendent had to reconcile the conflicting interests of the Government and Regional Office with those of the members, but without attracting the adverse publicity that would have followed from an excessive display of authoritarianism. As I showed in Chapter 4, the missionary administrators of Pella had not had to labour under such constraints. The Regional Office could also reject recommendations from the Advisory Board and return a matter for further consideration - if necessary repeatedly until it had received what it regarded as a satisfactory answer. Despite the wide powers granted in theory to the post-1989 Management Board in terms of the legislation then in force, none of these could be exercised without the approval of the regional administration or the responsible Minister in the central government, and the characteristics of the Advisory Board decision-making process persisted.

As I have noted above, the Advisory and Management Boards were the lowest level in the system of local government provided for the administration of 'Rural Coloured Areas'. As such they served as the link between the structure of general government in South Africa and the people they were supposed to represent in the course of the implementation of the policies of the ruling party. Just as Carstens (1966: 28) pointed out for the Management Board of Steinkopf, so also the Boards at Pella were instruments of the central government used to

enforce Act No. 24 of 1963 and its subjoining regulations and the succeeding Acts. The Advisory and Management Boards, however, also functioned to serve the people in the area of their jurisdiction in the management of their own affairs and as an outlet for those with leadership potential. Such low-level government bodies are inevitably subjected to stresses in attempting to reconcile the interests and demands of higher-level government with those of the people and communities which they ostensibly represent and from which they are recruited (Kuper 1970: 101; Williams 1970; Carstens 1991). In writing of the difficult position in which chiefs find themselves in contemporary systems of government, Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes (1949: 98) refer to such situations as deriving from the 'inter-calary' nature of their roles, and Kuper (1970: 102) has described this as follows: "... the headman has been at the same time the leader of his people and a servant of Government. His tribesmen expect him to represent their interests to the Administration, while the Administration tends to expect him to behave like a Government servant, representing the interests of the Administration in his village". Both Carstens (1966) and Sharp (1977) have shown that the system of local government applied in the Northern Cape Reserves during the twentieth century always functioned under similar dual constraints. Despite the relative autonomy of the Reserve Management Boards they displayed considerable evidence of such stress and divergence in the perception of their tasks, for in playing out their roles the Members were fully exposed to the conflict that inevitably develops between internal and external socio-political forces.

Members of the Advisory and Management Boards were recruited through popular elections, which also served indirectly as a means of testing public opinion on the effectiveness of the administration of local affairs. Extra-ordinary elections could be held to replace members who died or resigned before the end of their terms of office. Judging from the records and my informants' accounts, the elections in the early years of the Advisory Board were, generally speaking, fair representations of the electoral process, but by 1979 rising community dissatisfaction with the Advisory Board had caused a virtual boycott of the electoral process by the inhabitants (see below). At the election meeting in July 1976, for example, attendance by Registered Occupiers

was some three hundred (a poll of about 85%), whereas at the election in 1979 there were only nineteen people from Pella present, apart from the Superintendent and myself. Of these nineteen people, only fourteen actually took part in the voting, the others being the Advisory Board members themselves who were excluded from casting votes, giving an effective poll of about 4%. Similarly low voter turnouts also occurred in subsequent elections for the Management Board, making it difficult to accept claims by the members that the process was democratic and that they were representative of the inhabitants.

Taken as a group, the members elected since 1974 closely resembled those who had served on the various Councils under the missionaries after 1941, though, of course, there were no longer any 'White' members. Most were elderly farmers and pensioners, though a few younger teachers were "elected" in the late 1980s. All except one were members of the dominant Baster grouping and were closely related to one another if not by descent then at least through one or more marriages in their families, giving rise to a considerable degree of continuity across generations in participation in political activity. The one exception was the Damara headman and Herero *kaptein*, who secured a seat on the Advisory Board and then on the Management Board in exchange for his support for the Basters; although there were distant links with the Basters created by marriages contracted by his relatives after 1974, obligations that might have arisen from these were not recognised, mainly because none of these mixed couples of Basters and Damaras were resident in Pella or its vicinity.

Table 5.1 below shows the process of selective replacement of members through the electoral mechanism, and reveals shifts in the relative strengths of conservatives versus moderates during the period when the Advisory Board was politically active. Other divisions such as those between farmers and labourers are not significant as, apart from the few teachers, none of the members has been anything other than a farmer. It should also be noted that the partial alliance between the Basters and Damaras broke down in 1979 after relations had become strained during 1978. The Damara headman (Abraham Basson - AB) walked out after a series of disputes with the Baster members over the rights of Damaras to live on Pella and when he refused to be further

associated with official cover-ups of misconduct on the part of the then Superintendent. By 1982, however, the rift had been mended and he had resumed his seat.

TABLE 5.1 Election and replacement of Advisory Board Members

Ward	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
1	AB e	e	e	e	e r*	GJ e
2	VM e r*	WR e	e	e r	PW e	e
3	AR e	e	e	e†* BB e	e r	VD e
4	AW e	e	e	e	e	e
5	SW e	e	e	e r	CW e	e

e = elected/re-elected; r = resigned; † = died

* = discontinuity in political orientation of member

Capital letter couplets refer to members named in the text

All the Members were 'Pellanaars', as non-registered occupiers (so-called 'Inkommers' - newcomers) were unable to stand for office, and all except Abraham Basson (AB) were Basters. On the moderate-conservative continuum it can be seen that the moderates, represented by Vaaltyn Magerman (VM), withdrew from the Advisory Board after only a year, while another moderate who was appointed to replace Adam Raman (AR) resigned within a few months, his place being taken by a conservative Berend Beukes (BB) (see * discontinuity in Table 5.1). The personnel changed markedly from 1978, with all but Abraham Waterboer (AW) and Stoffel Waterboer (SW) being replaced at one time or another. This was because the members found it impossible to continue after having been forced to accept the state-driven development programme, and they made way for younger men (Paul Waterboer (PW), Charles Waterboer (CW), Gert Jannetjies (GJ) and Vaaltyn Diergaardt (VD)) who again endeavoured to prevent the implementation of the programme. These too, however, were compelled to give way under pressure in 1979 (see below), but most were nevertheless still all in office at the end of the period covered by my field study. Though lack of administrative capacity undoubtedly hindered the performances of both the Advisory and Management Boards, longstanding Members such as Abraham Waterboer and Stoffel Waterboer gradually built up experience and skills that enabled them to make use of the administrative structure and procedures to further the interests of the Baster farmers and acquire additional land for Pella in the 1990s (see below).

The comparative fluidity of election and replacement can be ascribed to the fact that there were no genuinely representative leaders at Pella, with the exception (as has already been noted) of the Damara headman/Herero *kaptein*. In this respect the effects of the missionaries' policy to suppress viable leaders can be readily seen, but there is also another element. As shown by Sharp (1977: 251) for the 'burgers' of Komaggas and Concordia, the Basters of Namaqualand were generally loyal to what he called "the ideal of extreme democracy", in which political authority was supposed to be vested in the 'burger corporation' and was therefore only temporarily conferred on the individual by the community. At Pella the idea of a communal hold on political authority was also restricted as a result of the divisions in the 'Coloured' community. Despite the necessity for the 'Coloured' inhabitants to combine in dealing with the Church authority and with the 'Whites', the notion of an over-arching local identity had been developed only as an ideological concept among the politically-conscious minority of conservative Basters and had little appeal for the passive majority. Most of my informants took the view that a genuine leader had to be invested with authority from a source outside the community before he could be recognised, and the fact that the community itself was splintered into jealously independent kin-groups, cross-cut by other divisions such as those between Baster and Damara or 'Inkommer' (newcomer) and 'Inboorling' (locally-born), tended to encourage this idea. The result was that legitimacy as a leader was very difficult to obtain beyond the bounds of kinship or what could be loosely called "tradition", as in the cases already mentioned of the Damara and Herero leaders, and the more prominent Baster families. Consequently, unless an individual was ascribed authority from his status in a recognised source, such the Church, school, or family seniority, his recognition as a leader depended on circumstances such as the need for leadership in the face of outside pressure. Even here, leadership tended to be restricted because members were not allowed to take part in political activities that could have undermined the standing of the Advisory Board or the Management Board (Government Notice R.1375, 15/9/1965: 15(i)), and informal leadership was incapable of overcoming the constraints set out above.

At the time of my initial fieldwork in 1978-9 there was little direct involvement with 'Coloured' political parties outside the Reserve, such as the Federal and Labour Parties, though there was some support for these two parties and for the African National Congress (banned at that time) among certain of the schoolteachers. In contrast to the situation in the other Namaqualand Reserves, however, the teachers as a body enjoyed little respect among the local people and they were frequently derided for their pretensions and superficial outlook on local affairs. During later periods of fieldwork, however, I noticed that these attitudes were changing as new teachers joined the school and a younger generation came to maturity in the community. The result was that during the 1980s a few teachers were elected to the Management Board that had replaced the Advisory Board.

The sources of power for those aspiring to become leaders lay, for the most part, outside the community, these being external individuals or bodies such as the Church (as in the case of small community associations) or the regional government structures as the representatives of the central government which had, as always, continued to hold final decision-making powers. This is because, generally speaking, the most important political struggles were waged across the boundaries of the community with outsiders rather than within the community between groupings or factions. Consequently the weaknesses of local-level leadership were magnified in the wider arena and rendered the community powerless to determine its own affairs, and even informal leaders were reduced to being only opinion-makers. The formal leaders were unable to force compliance with their wishes or those of the regional government structures without the backing of the state, and both they and the informal leaders could only appeal to factors held in common to create a basis for decision making.

In order to illustrate the points above, the following section provides an overview of the course of political events in Pella between 1974 and 1998, taking as themes first the struggle waged by the various Board members against the implementation of the development programme that was intended by the Government to bring Pella in line with the other 'Rural Coloured Areas' in the Northern Cape, and then the pressing of land claims as a way of expanding Pella for the benefit of those of the

inhabitants engaged in farming. It will show that, despite the weakness of local leadership and the continuing absence of mass political mobilization, the politically-conscious Baster conservatives represented on the Pella Advisory and Management Boards were able to bring about alterations in the policy of the central government towards Pella, exercising a degree of influence that would have been unthinkable during the period of missionary control. This process, however, strengthened a local awareness of ethnic divisions in Pella that became increasingly important in determining local political action following the transformation of the national and local political situation after 1994.

THE POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT, 1974-1998

The transfer of Pella to the Administration of Coloured Affairs in 1974 brought a profound change in the political life of the community. With the formerly dominant missionaries left bereft of direct influence, and the economically powerful European inhabitants having left the Reserve permanently, the "Coloured" inhabitants from then on had to deal directly with central Government through officials of the Administration of Coloured Affairs which, in terms of official policy, considered the development of the resources of the new Rural Coloured Area as synonymous with their progress towards becoming a viable "Coloured" community bound into the wider planned socio-political and economic framework of apartheid South Africa. The most important struggle thus became one which had to be waged across the boundaries of the Reserve, rather than internally as had been the case before 1974. Consequently, after the establishment of an Advisory Board to assist the Superintendent of Pella, the focus of concern for all the inhabitants was whether or not and by which means to accept or reject the programme of development that had been drawn up and put forward by the Administration of Coloured Affairs.

One of the principal motivations for the transfer of Pella to the Administration of Coloured Affairs, given by the Government and the Church alike, was that the Rural Area lacked adequate facilities that were needed for its rapidly growing population. The Church had claimed

that it did not have sufficient funds to cope with increasing numbers of people on the Mission Farm. As we have seen, most of the improvements made to the farm after about 1950 and of benefit to the population as a whole, were made with the assistance of private individuals or groups, the Church confining itself to the maintenance of the existing facilities. The principle underlying the policy of the state in developing 'Rural Coloured Areas' was that potentially economically active persons would be redistributed between agricultural and non-agricultural activities, in the latter case with the bulk being concentrated into labour outside the borders of the Reserve (Van der Horst 1976: 45-6).

The development programme for Pella closely resembled those for the other 'Rural Coloured Areas' in Namaqualand and Gordonias, and paralleled the so-called "betterment schemes" (Smit & Booysen 1981: 26) pursued in the 'Bantustans' or 'Homelands' in the eastern part of South Africa. Though subsequently modified in certain respects, "[it] provide[d] for the planning, classification, and division of each area with due regard to local circumstances, the cancellation of existing rights, where necessary, and the re-allocation of land rights, to provide for: residential areas in accordance with town-planning standards; a town commonage for dumping and for the expansion of the residential area and, if and so long as it may be available for the purpose, as grazing for animals of occupiers of erven; ... an agricultural area, subdivided into lots of such size, shape and situation as the Minister may determine, and an outer commonage, being the remaining extent of the area for the exclusive use in the prescribed manner of *bona fide* farmers" (Van der Horst 1976).

Planning of township areas 'in accordance with modern standards' required surveying of building plots and the issue of deeds of grant to Registered Occupiers, the building of roads and streets, the installation of water, electrical and sanitary systems, the provision of medical services (usually in the form of a clinic) and for making available facilities for the provision of certain types of public services, such as policing, and recreation. By the time of writing, considerable progress had been made with this aspect of the development programme, and almost a third of the central village had been

completely redesigned, without the demolition of any dwellings, and a large number of inhabitants from other parts of the village had built new houses on plots which had been laid out among those of the older dwellings.

Agricultural planning called for a division of the pasturage of Pella into camps, erection of boundary and camp fences, sinking and equipping of boreholes or improvement of existing water supplies in each camp, including the construction of dams and watering-points for livestock, and land reclamation/conservation, including construction of contour banks, eradication of alien vegetation and pests, and planting of drought-resistant plant-cover where appropriate. The most important and controversial aspect for those affected, however, was that which required restrictions on the numbers of livestock kept by farmers and other inhabitants so that the carrying capacity of the available grazing was not exceeded, reductions in the numbers of draught animals (mainly donkeys), and halting the cultivation of "uneconomical" crops as well as over-exploitation of natural vegetation for fuel.

Efforts by the state to achieve greater control over and direction in farming activities must, in addition to its part in the policy of the Government towards the 'Rural Coloured Areas', also be seen in the light of strategic economic planning at national level (Cloete 1971), where declines in the quality of natural resources available to farming was causing considerable concern at that time. Just as was the case for 'betterment' in the 'Bantustans', and Native Reserves before that, one sees then the extension of conservation principles, such as grazing systems designed to stabilise the vegetation and encourage its recovery from past over-exploitation (which were particularly in vogue during the 1960s decade) and more drastic measures through reductions of stock numbers (from the 1970s onwards) as having been in line with similar measures then being introduced with the aim of enabling the 'White' farming community to become more efficient and more economically productive in the support of the population of South Africa (Barnard et al 1972: 70-1). A key difference in regard to Pella and the other Namaqualand Reserves, however, was that, unlike the 'White' farmers in Bushmanland, the farmers at Pella were compelled to reduce their stock

without receiving compensation (Cloete 1971), and this led to considerable opposition on their part.

At Pella attempts were made to implement these measures and some progress was made in the provision of watering-points, but outright opposition made impossible any reductions in the number of livestock or the fencing of camps. Only after the virtual elimination of the small stock-owners and immense depletion of the flocks of the full-time farmers in Pella as a result of the serious drought conditions in the late-1980s, was it possible for any progress to be made with this aspect of the development programme. Resistance to implementation of the development programme had its roots in the period of missionary control of Pella. After 1950, improvements enabling more efficient utilization of existing natural resources in the Reserve had enabled those dependent on farming for a living to develop techniques of exploitation sufficient for their immediate needs, but any change from communal to privately-held land and water would have involved a shift towards the pursuit of competitive individual strategies, and few had the economic means for this.

Opposition to the state-planned development schemes did not mean, however, that the various groupings among the inhabitants did so for similar reasons. From the point of view of outsiders in the regional government administration, the resistance of the people at Pella stemmed from ignorance and conservatism coupled with confusion about the real aims and goals of the scheme. The first superintendent of Pella, for example, frequently argued in interviews with me that the administration favoured a 'scientific' approach to the development of the community, while the people wished to follow their "traditional" way of life and continue in the "ways of their fathers" with all the consequent inefficiencies and poverty that these customs brought. Other officials were wont to add to this that "agitators" were persuading the people to oppose the government, particularly in the matter of the payment of local taxes which were falsely perceived as the sole means whereby the development work was financed.

In contrast to the official view, the inhabitants of Pella saw the development programme as a material threat to their livelihoods and

their future. Local farmers, both Baster and Damara, rejected the proposal to divide the Reserve's pasturage into six "economic units" for private ownership, since this would have forced most of them off the land, and even the wealthier farmers who potentially stood to gain from such a scheme opposed it on account of the restrictions that would be imposed on their agricultural activities. For the inhabitants of the village, who were for the most part labourers, the town planning aspect of the scheme was welcomed for the recognised improvement in living standards which would follow. They too, however, found the proposed changes in agricultural land tenure unacceptable since they would be deprived of the opportunity to keep small numbers of livestock for domestic use. These three sets of contrasting views and attitudes demonstrate the disparity in aims and expectations which always tend to exist between rulers and ruled and by which relations between these two classes are conducted in a state of mutual incomprehension and misunderstanding. However, in Pella different perspectives such as these had the effect of fragmenting the solidarity among the farmers and dividing the wage-workers in the Reserve from them, so that compromises had to be made between different factions in order to preserve the facade of a united community in dealings with outside authorities.

The principal factions which had emerged among the Basters at Pella during the last years of missionary rule were those who held conservative and those who held moderate views on the conduct of relationships with the other inhabitants of Pella, viz. the 'Whites' and Damaras (the Nama were socially and politically insignificant), and the Church. The conservative Basters were united in seeking the removal of the 'White' and Damara residents and the ending of missionary administration. The moderates, on the other hand, were prepared to allow Damaras to remain in the Reserve, though they would have preferred to have had the dominant Herero families who gave cohesion to this group given the opportunity to take up residence elsewhere. They were divided on the question of the secular administration, some favouring the creation of Coloured Reserve, others the retention of missionary control subject to a clearly-defined and legally valid set of community regulations. The conservative faction consisted almost entirely of farmers, while the moderates included both farmers and

labourers. Neither faction recognised the Damaras at Pella as a possible source of support except in terms of an alliance on a group basis, for both held strongly negative attitudes towards these people whom they perceived as racially and culturally different from themselves. As shown above, under the leadership of a powerful Herero family which claimed pre-eminence on the grounds of high lineage, length of residence at Pella, and a charter of regional authority received from Chief Maharero after the end of the First World War, the Damaras themselves considered that the permission to live at Pella, granted to them by the early Catholic priests, gave them the same rights as the Baster (and 'White') residents. They thus conducted their relationships with them on the basis that their support in the face of outside interference in the affairs of the community depended on the Basters respecting those rights of residence and usufruct of the natural resources of the Reserve.

The initial attempts by the administration in 1976 to secure the consent of the Advisory Board to the implementation of the development programme were unsuccessful because the Board was dominated by conservative Baster farmers who all opposed the scheme. Lengthy discussions with the members of the Board nevertheless continued, but were fruitless until internal dissent, among both the conservative and moderate factions in the community, compelled the Board members to review their position of total opposition and give their approval in 1978 to that aspect of the programme concerned with town planning (RCAPA. Official Minutes of the Advisory Board, 15/3/1978). The frustration deriving from the gap between the high expectations in the community of the advantages of freedom from missionary control and what actually took place on the ground led to a rapidly growing rift between supporters of the Board and those disillusioned by the Board's apparent failure to have the development programme completely cancelled.

When the Board eventually succumbed to the persuasions of the administration and passed a resolution to implement the programme in 1978, there was general dissatisfaction in the community. The local farmers saw that, in spite of assurances that reductions in the numbers of livestock permitted to them would be part of a long-term process of agricultural renewal, the ties of their families to what they regarded

as their land would be irrevocably lost once the "economic" farming units became a reality. The wage-earning people resident in the village were disturbed by the lack of any guarantees on the part of the administration as to how far it would go in the reconstruction of the village, which seemed to imply that there would be a compulsory movement of the population into a planned settlement area. In the course of the ensuing clashes of opinion some Baster conservatives sought to redirect the high feelings generated by local accusations of their incompetence and self-service by using the Damara headman as a scapegoat on account of his refusal to assist the Baster Board members to protect one another's positions. Though a moderate, the headman had been made a member of the Advisory Board in exchange for his political support and as a means of preventing the Damaras from being alienated from the socio-political advance of the community. The Damaras interpreted this as a prelude to another attempt by the conservative Basters to secure their removal from Pella, and withdrew their support for them. Though such an attempt could not have succeeded unless the Damaras were re-classified "Black" instead of "Coloured", Adam Basson told me that he preferred not to antagonize the administration as he saw it as a potential ally against the conservative Basters.

Further boycotts and disruptions of local government activities followed, ending with a virtual breakdown of the administrative process in 1979 when the then superintendent proved unequal to his task. Officials from the administration, in attempting to break the deadlock, were subsequently able to use the new flexibility which had stemmed from high-level re-appraisals of policy towards the Rural Coloured Areas after 1978 (see below), to have the members of the Board pass a modified form of the development programme in 1979, in terms of which the "economic units" were replaced by a system of camp rotation to control use of the pasturage (RCAPA. Official Minutes of the Advisory Board, 31/8/1979). The implementation of the programme during the following six years was overseen by 'White' officials from the Administration of Coloured Affairs instead of the successive superintendents (who since 1974 had been 'Coloureds' from outside Pella). Bound by the terms of its resolution passing the Development Programme, the Board was left powerless to influence the course of events any further.

For both the conservative and moderate Basters their failure to prevent the implementation of the state-sponsored development programme appeared to suggest that they had no power to do more than delay the intentions of the outside authorities than they had had to influence the missionary administrators of Pella before 1974. Their objection to the original proposals was essentially that the imposition of such an inflexible pattern of development would be inequitable and, by ending the system of communal land tenure, would exacerbate internal differentiation of a kind which they found unacceptable in terms of the internal principles of organisation around which their community had been built. Objectively viewed, however, a combination of internal and external factors won, for the Baster conservatives at Pella, an alteration of the development programme towards a direction they desired, that of preventing the end of communal land tenure in the Reserve. Moreover, through an intensification of ethnic conflict in the community with people perceived as not conforming to those principles, the Baster conservatives were able to strengthen the legitimacy of the Baster farmers' claims to the land in the Reserve by reducing the potential influence of their moderate opponents who included both Basters and Damaras.

The 1963 Act was repealed in 1978 and replaced in 1979 by the Rural Coloured Areas Law (Act No. 1 of 1979) of the Coloured Persons Representative Council. The powers over the 'Rural Coloured Areas' held by the Minister of Coloured Affairs were now transferred to the Executive Committee member of the Coloured Persons Representative Council who was responsible for Rural Areas and Settlements. Shortly afterwards, this member of the Executive Committee, Mr D. Curry, announced at a conference of the Management Boards of Gordonia in Upington that the 'Rural Coloured Areas' were to be administered in a manner similar to that of other 'Coloured' villages, and were no longer to be treated as Reserves resembling the 'Black homelands' (Official Minutes, 31/8/1979). This shift in policy represented a further change in Government thinking on the position of 'Coloured' people, reflected in the second Constitution of the Republic of South Africa which was introduced in 1983. It provided for a single Parliament with separate representation for each 'population group' ('Whites', 'Coloureds' and

'Asians') retained through the institution of three chambers, each having decision-making powers that were confined to matters relating to the 'population group' represented in it. The Reserves then became the responsibility of the 'Coloured' House of Representatives in the new 'tricameral' parliament and there was a considerable surge of official interest in their development. Act No. 1 of 1979 was replaced by the Rural Areas Act, No. 9 of 1987, under which the Management Boards and the Minister in the House of Representatives could allocate land for residential and agricultural purposes after consultations with the community. An amendment (Act No. 112 of 1993) extended the powers of the Management Boards, which were now permitted to take over land held in trust for the community, while another, earlier, amendment (Act No. 108 of 1993) allowed the privatisation of certain rural land, opening the way for people to be removed from communal land when it passed into private ownership. During this period, attempts were made to introduce individual land tenure in the Reserves but were abandoned after successful court challenges by the residents of several of the Reserves, notably Leliefontein, Richtersveld and Steinkopf (Robins 1997; Westaway 1994).

In Pella, when the status of the Advisory Board was raised to that of Management Board on 24 June 1989, it gave the members more power over the affairs of the Reserve, including a veto over proposals from the Regional Office. The development programme was already well under way in regard to town planning proposals, and over the following five years the implementation of improvements to the development area in Pella village proceeded, at least as far as the then deteriorating national financial situation allowed. The Management Board members continued to hold out successfully against the privatisation of communal land in the Reserve, while simultaneously taking measures to assist the farmers with improvements to water supplies. The emphasis on the development of Pella village, where the bulk of the population lived, at the expense of the agricultural side of the Reserve can be ascribed in part to shifting priorities at regional and national level brought about by political changes such as the independence of Namibia and the transition to a new political and socio-economic order that began in 1990 and accelerated after 1992. It was also due, however, to that fact

that after 1989 the Pella Management Board began pursuing the matter of obtaining additional land to be incorporated in the Reserve.

The question of enlarging the amount of land available for farmers at Pella had frequently been raised in the period since 1974, but had been resisted by the regional authorities on account of the expenses involved and reluctance to grant land formally to untrained farmers who, it was assumed, would over-stock it and cause degradation of natural resources. Conservative Baster farmers and their representatives on the Advisory and Management Boards were the main proponents for the enlargement of Pella. They saw themselves as living on land that their forebears had occupied since the early part of the 19th century, but which had been occupied previously by Nama and other Khoisan people, from whom they could, if they so chose, claim descent. While they recognised that they were living on a Reserve the boundaries of which were created in 1974 with direct reference to the boundaries of the Catholic Mission Farm of Pella, they considered that it comprised only a tiny fraction of the lands which they claimed to have been held by their forebears and used by their ancestors. The few Nama people at Pella could make a stronger claim to rights of occupation on the grounds of descent from earlier Khoisan inhabitants of the area, or more broadly through kinship with Nama people in southern Namibia whose ancestors had also lived in the vicinity of the Orange River. My Baster informants at Pella were dismissive of claiming links to the local Nama, however, arguing that the close association of Nama-speaking people with the Damara and Herero people in the Orange River Basin, the latter regarded as unwelcome immigrants, had rendered the claims of the local Nama residents invalid. For the Basters at Pella, acknowledging links with the Nama people of the Orange River Basin would have meant recognising links with the Damara population and their claims to be permanent residents of the area.

With repeated representations through official channels having failed, as already explained, the Management Board of Pella submitted a list of land claims to the Surplus People Project (an NGO concerned with land issues and other political activities) in February 1993, acting, so it said, on behalf of the community. As on previous occasions, they sought the incorporation into Pella Reserve of six non-contiguous farms to the

west of Pella in Little Bushmanland, viz. Karganab [Garganab], Witbank, Gwadam [Guadam], Ghoeniams [Huniams], Kabees [Kabies] and Abbassas. They also demanded that the boundaries of farms neighbouring Pella should be investigated for accuracy, and that the process whereby those farms had been acquired should also be examined. These were the farms Coboop, Eyetis [Eyties], Witsand, Springputs, Klein Pella and Kambreek. The conservative Baster Board members argued that all these farms had been part of Pella during the period of the Rhenish Mission at Pella, and they also laid claim to the outlying springs which had once been designated as border points for Pella (Coboop, Namies, Achab, Gamsberg, Aggeneys, Grootrosynebos, and Dabinoris), all of which were said to have been used historically by the inhabitants of Pella (see Chapter 2).

The land claims made by the Basters at Pella did not succeed, however, as the farms along the Orange River between Pella and Steinkopf were already being developed for the benefit of their respective inhabitants, who had already lodged claims to the land there. During the late 1970s some of these farms had been acquired by the state for conservation and also strategic purposes, in anticipation of possible military conflict along the Orange River border after Namibian independence. When this did not materialize, non-government organizations began developing the farms, supplying agricultural equipment, seed and technical expertise to set up irrigated plots for small-scale farming operations. At Witbank, for example, the local, mainly Damara, population had a long record of occupation extending back into the 1860s, and for much of the 20th century had been served by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church. With the support of the NGOs, the Damaras and other inhabitants living there had made claims to Witbank, the neighbouring farms, and also to portions of the Pella, citing long occupation and their links with the Nama inhabitants of the areas concerned in their motivations. To complicate matters further, the Baster farmers at Steinkopf had laid claim to the land along the Orange River as well, on the grounds that it had been part of the Rhenish mission territory administered by Rev. Brecher in the 19th century, and because descendants of the "original" inhabitants now lived in Steinkopf and Concordia. One of the Steinkopf land activists, Charles Cloete, went so far as to claim Pella itself for Steinkopf, because, as

he told me in 1998, Pella had been an outpost of the Rhenish mission at Steinkopf (see Chapter 2). None of these competing claims had been pursued to a conclusion by the time of writing, but in 2003 my Baster informants at Pella expressed much frustration at having been thwarted by the extensive vested interests that they had encountered at the time of making their claims to the farms along the Orange River. They then began to look for other means of supporting their claims, but it was not until after the 1994 change of government in South Africa that they began to redefine their position in local identity politics so that it would resonate with a wider discourse on indigenous land rights and cultural identity.

Under the Interim Constitution of 1994 and the third constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1996, transitional local councils were set up in the Reserves to function as embryonic municipalities. By 2000, however, they were merged into new district councils created following a complete overhaul of local government structures that took place after the national local elections that year. The former Reserves now effectively became little more than municipal commonages, though, at the time of writing, it appeared likely that local autonomy would continue through a system of ward councils, and that some form of communal tenure might be retained through vesting land rights in Community Trusts as was being done in the former 'Black homelands' (Map 4). These issues were being addressed through the Communal Land Rights Bill of 2002, which was proving to be controversial for its proposals to strengthen the powers of 'traditional' leaders while also giving communities the option of choosing a system of land tenure best suited to their own needs, among them individual private ownership (Department of Land Affairs 2002: 8).

For Pella, the change of government in South Africa in 1994 and the abolition of the Management Board and the institution of a Transitional Local Council (TLC) in terms of the Local Government Transition Act in November 1994, marked the beginning of a new era. It created new conditions that led to far-reaching political changes at the local level that mirrored the broader transformation of South Africa then in progress. The eight-member council was evenly balanced between representatives of the National Party (NP) and African National

Congress (ANC), six were women, and the chairperson was a Damara woman. The conservative Baster farmers and the leading Baster families of Pella now found themselves isolated and without formal political power. The TLC set out new priorities and began implementing them with the support of the Northern Cape provincial government. These included improvements to the water supply to the village, providing homes for poor people and running work schemes for unemployed people in Pella (nearly 60% of the potential economically active male population was at that stage unemployed, according to the secretary of the TLC). Most of the new developments took place in the Melkbosrand neighbourhood, where most Damara people in Pella lived, reflecting the change in the power structure in local government. The ANC election victory in the Northern Cape too had a profound effect on the Damara inhabitants, who began identifying themselves as "Blacks", rather than as "Coloureds" and gave their support to the ANC - "If you are a Damara, you are Black and you are with the ANC", as one informant put it to me in 1998. This shift sharpened the old division between Basters and Damaras, hardening the ethnic divide along party-political lines.

A further effect of changes that occurred with the introduction of the post-apartheid constitution was that Baster and Damara land claims could not be accepted, since the alleged dispossessions predated 1910, when the Cape Colony became part of the Union of South Africa, and 1913, when the Cape Act No. 29 of 1909 was first applied to the Namaqualand Reserves. This arose because the agreements reached during the first round of constitutional negotiations before 1994 included a compromise that 1913 (the year of the first Natives Land Act) would be the cut-off date. The urgent need for additional land was recognized, however, and, with the assistance of Norwegian and Swedish donors, one of the farms that had been claimed by Baster farmers (Dabinoris) was purchased by the community of Pella and plans were laid to train local farmers in modern agricultural methods. According to my informants, attempts to buy other farms failed as the asking prices were too high. The acquisition of this farm went some way to satisfying the Baster farmers, but they did not abandon their claims to Witbank and the other farms.

The old contest between the Basters and Damaras in Pella intensified after the local conservative Basters lost their hold on the local government structures, and it shifted into new terrain that gave free play to identity politics on a scale hitherto unseen in Pella, particularly in the late 1990s when the Roman Catholic Church began to reassert its influence in the socio-political development of the community. I now turn to an explanation of that process and its outcomes.

As I showed above, many of the conservative Basters at Pella had long rejected the principle behind the Government grants of 1874 and 1881 to the Catholic Church on the grounds that these had been made to the Church and represented reductions from what they themselves claimed as having been the full extent of the land of their forebears (Appendices A and B). Members of both conservative and moderate Baster factions would have liked to have had the 'original' boundaries restored, but there was uncertainty over the definition of the 'original' boundaries (Appendix B). One line of thought was that Pella and the Steinkopf Reserve should be linked by the incorporation of all the intervening land, but this was rejected by most people - kin links with Steinkopf notwithstanding - because the final step of amalgamating the Reserves, which was the stated goal of the Baster elite in power in Steinkopf in the 1990s, would have reduced the Catholic 'Pellanaars' to a small minority in what would have amounted to an enlarged Protestant-dominated Reserve. Another view was that earlier provisional boundaries laid out in 1863 during the period when the Rhenish Mission Society was in control of Pella would have been ideal, but it was recognized that there was no legal basis for this claim as the Civil Commissioner's report and recommendations (1/SBK 5/1/3. E. Judge to Colonial Secretary, 24/3/1864) had never been accepted.

A further difficulty for the conservative Basters at Pella in making a sustainable land claim was the lack of continuity of occupation. With access to the parish registers and the old registers of claimants held by the Catholic Mission, they themselves recognised the absence of direct continuity by origin and descent with those Basters who had been at Pella during the Rhenish period, and had to rely on subsequent links through marriage to descendants of those Basters in Steinkopf and

Concordia in making their land claims. This also meant that they could not readily demonstrate an identity link with Nama people who had once lived in the Pella area. Reclaiming links to indigenous inhabitants in Namaqualand has been an important part of the strategy followed by residents of other Namaqualand Reserves when faced with similar problems, as in the case of the Richtersveld (Sharp & Boonzaier 1994). Neither the conservative nor the moderate factions among the Basters in Pella recognized links with local indigenous people through kinship because they knew only too well that their forbears had come from southern Bushmanland and Griqualand. Even passable putative links were not realisable because the Nama in the Orange River area had long been recognized to be closely associated with the Damara population, and because of historic hostility towards the Bondelzwarts and /Hobesen north of the Orange River on account of events connected with the uprisings of 1904 and 1922. The issue was further complicated by the ongoing contest between the Basters and Damaras at Pella. The Damaras considered themselves entitled to the Nama inheritance on account of their kinship links with the indigenous Nama and their adoption of some Nama cultural traits, and, on this basis coupled with their long historic residence south of the Orange River, contested the claims of the Baster at Pella by making their own claims not only to the lands west of Pella but to Pella itself.

The immediate relevance of these claims and counter-claims was not limited to people living in Pella. The growing involvement of the younger population from the various groupings in Pella in the mining industry, especially at Aggeneys, had lessened the urgency of land issues for them (other than those concerning the planning and development of Pella village), but it had not reduced their sense of community and identification with the interests of the older 'Pellanaars'. If anything, their ethnic awareness had been strengthened through their contacts with and rejection by 'Black' migrants from the Eastern Cape working in the mine at Aggeneys. The political and social changes under way in South Africa after 1994 thus presented another dilemma for all in or connected with Pella. While the possibilities of obtaining more land at the expense of 'White' farmers were recognized, despite the 1913 cut-off date for land losses that could be restored in terms of the post-1994 government's land restitution programme, there

were also fears of 'Blacks' coming into Namaqualand and taking over land (or being allocated land) with the support of the government, or at least by the ANC as the ruling party in the Northern Cape which was intent on expanding its support base in communities across the Province.

At the time of my fieldwork in 1998 the conservative Basters at Pella felt that they no longer had direct control of their political affairs in the Reserve because decisions concerning the form of the transitional local government authority were taken by a remote government without evident sympathy or concern for their interests. Their awareness of these issues had been heightened by their knowledge of the situation that had arisen in Rehoboth after the independence of Namibia as a result of conflict between local Baster leaders and the SWAPO government over the loss of local autonomy for Rehoboth (Steenken 1995: 15). It had been reinforced by negative experiences of hostility that they and members of their families had experienced from 'Black' migrant workers on the mines in Namaqualand, as well as by their inability to rebut the claims made by local Damaras. Damara men and women who worked on the Namaqualand mines, especially those at Aggeneys, had themselves also experienced rejection by 'Black' migrants, mainly because they spoke Afrikaans as their home language and because their origins were outside South Africa. This limited the extent to which they were prepared to identify with 'Blacks' from elsewhere in South Africa beyond rhetorical gestures of solidarity, and reinforced their determination to retain their residential rights in Pella.

The consequence was an increasing tendency among the Basters at Pella to close themselves against hegemonic influences, especially growing secularization. The universalism of the Catholic Church had prepared its local adherents for action in a wider arena, but had simultaneously given them the means to resist final incorporation. While some of the Basters at Pella were strongly anti-clerical because of the struggle with the Catholic missionaries in the 1960s, this did not imply a general anti-church attitude, and, by the end of my research period, they had begun to look anew at the role played by the Church in the past and to review the basis of their cultural identity. Baster

informants now began to express doubt as to whether or not their parents had been right to discard the protection of the Church and to force most of the 'White' inhabitants to leave Pella. The return of some former 'White' residents to Pella was mentioned as a not unwelcome possibility that would restore the community, and I heard hopes expressed that the Catholic Church would resume control of Pella. Though the Church had remained strictly neutral in local affairs since 1974, and was in fact unwilling to consider resuming control of Pella, it was thought that this policy would change in the 1990s when the Church shifted towards a programme of "inculturation" (see below). This involved mounting a renewed missionary effort using the developing 'indigenous' clergy (who were mainly Basters) to strengthen and expand existing Catholic communities. The goal was to counter the influences of secularization and Islam in the region which, according to Fr. Malery in 1998, were increasing under the new democratic regime. Even in 1998 there was also still a sympathetic interest among the conservative Baster leaders in Pella in the proposed establishment of an Afrikaner statelet in the Northern Cape, for the leaders of the movements involved had stated their willingness to include 'Brown Afrikaners' and that there would be no large-scale removals of the local residents. This implied that existing land rights and the autonomy of local communities would be respected (that this also meant accepting the permanence of the Damara population was ignored). It thus offered the Basters of Pella a means of pursuing their utopian goals. At that time there appeared to be no overt identification with Griqua nationalism among the local Basters at Pella as the Griqua Independent Church, which underpinned and monopolized notions of Griqua and Khoisan identity, was a Protestant church.

The most overt manifestations of the tendency amongst the Basters at Pella towards ethnic closure and the assertion of an "opposition culture" came, however, through the use of material symbols of identity, such as the mat-house (*matjieshuis*) and the derivative hessian-covered *rondehuis* (lit. round house), as a means of expressing cultural differentiation and continuity with the past, all of it being done overtly for political purposes. The mat-house, the classic vernacular dwelling used by Nama pastoralists in Little and Great Namaqualand, is still constructed and used in parts of Namaqualand, for

it remains a convenient and cheap form of dwelling structure that can also be used for other purposes. In 1997, for example, Jan and Christina Jannetjies, members of a minor Baster family which had risen to prominence in Pella through participation in the local government structures of the 1980s and through success in its farming activities before 1994, established the celebrated *Kultuur Koffiekroeg* (Culture Coffee Bar) for both commercial and cultural gain. As a small local business venture it was intended to provide accommodation for the growing number of tourists visiting Pella, and was marketed nationally and internationally with the assistance of the Northern Cape provincial tourism authority. It comprised a large *rondehuis* and three smaller ones around an outdoor cooking enclosure. Each contained basic amenities, the simple furnishings being similar to those found in ordinary mat-house dwellings in Namaqualand, including locally-made skin mats and quilted bed covers, and was meant to give tourists a living experience of "Nama" culture, as interpreted by Christina Jannetjies. In symbolic terms, however, it had far wider significance. Not only had the *Kultuur Koffiekroeg* been built in a central position in the commercial hub of Pella village next to the Catholic mission grounds, and on a plot of land that had formerly been the property of the Thünemann family (formerly the leading 'White' family in Pella), thus indicating that the Basters saw themselves as the successors in title to the former power-holders in Pella, but it also served as a highly visible statement to everyone in the area of the "Nama" origins of the Basters in Pella. In 1998 plans were also being made by a women's group associated with the Church to establish a museum in the vicinity of the *Kultuur Koffiekroeg*. The plan was to construct a classic mat-house that would be complemented by displays of local material cultural objects, the stated intention being to reinforce the new-found sense of continuity among the local Basters with their newly-claimed Nama ancestry, contrary to whatever the Basters may have previously asserted about their origins. By the end of my fieldwork, neither the Damaras nor the Nama people in Pella had reacted directly in material terms to the Baster response to their challenge to the Basters' far-reaching land claims in northern Bushmanland. As I show below, the mat-house has become a potent, contested cultural symbol with particular significance in Khoisan identity politics, and, in this respect, the response of the Basters at Pella can be seen to parallel a

similar pattern that occurred in other Reserve communities of Namaqualand and southern Namibia in the 1990s decade (Sharp 1997; Sharp & Boonzaier 1994; Robins 1997; Davison & Klinghardt 1997).

THE MAT-HOUSE AS DWELLING AND SYMBOL IN NAMAQUALAND AND PELLA

The changing significance of the mat-house (*matjieshuis*) in Namaqualand and the Pella Reserve provides an example of contrasting symbolic values attached to an indigenous cultural artefact held in common by different ethnic groupings. As I shall show below, the mat-house, a vernacular dwelling formerly used by Nama-speaking Khoekhoe pastoralists in Namaqualand and southern Namibia, has become a powerful symbol of identity among present-day inhabitants of these regions, as well as being used more widely in the visual vocabulary and rhetoric of contemporary Khoisan identity politics to evoke a sense of continuity with a romanticised past which contains a rejection of European conquest in the 18th and 19th centuries. For those living in the Reserves, it is an item that sets them apart from others living in villages and towns, while for Namaqualanders it distinguishes them from other South Africans.

The semi-permanent mat-house was well suited to the requirements of pastoralism. It could be dismantled and loaded together with other possessions onto the backs of pack-oxen and transported across the semi-desert plains and mountains of Little and Great Namaqualand. This facilitated the mobility of Nama herders, who travelled great distances when moving their cattle and sheep to seasonal grazing areas. The vernacular form of the mat-house had numerous practical advantages (Haacke 1982; Klinghardt 1987b). A taut dome-shaped framework of thorn tree poles, bound together with plant-fibre string, enclosed maximum volume while occupying a relatively small ground area; the upward curve of the structure gave the interior a spacious feeling although the actual interior volume was restricted; sedge mats fastened over the framework in particular patterns regulated atmospheric conditions within. In dry weather, air could pass through the mats to cool the interior and when it rained the sedge expanded to provide a water-tight roof. The front and back entrances, which faced east and

west respectively, were each protected by a mat that could be rolled up to increase ventilation and augment the light that filtered through the structure. Making the mats was a laborious task undertaken by women, but once the mats had been hung on the framework, maintenance was minimal.

While a few structures conforming to the above description have been preserved in museums, most examples in use today have hessian, plastic or corrugated iron over the domed framework. These variants of the mat-house are found side by side with European-style houses in the Reserves of Namaqualand and the communal areas of southern Namibia. Changes in size and materials have paralleled the processes of cultural change that produced new patterns of material culture and social organization among the descendants of Nama herders. In the 19th and 20th centuries, when household mobility was no longer required by people who had been settled on Reserves or in missionary-controlled farming communities, mat-houses were made to a larger size with near-permanent frameworks. Increasing use was made of materials such as canvas and sacking supplied by traders after loss of land had made it difficult to obtain sedge and fewer people had the skill to make mats, while in some places bushes were packed on the frame as a covering. Despite these changes, however, the dome shape has been retained even in cases where metal rods have replaced wood for the framework.

Mat-houses were also used quite extensively by sectors of the 'White' settler population in Namaqualand. Its positive practical features clearly outweighed any negative connotations associated with its Nama origin, pointing to a significant degree of cultural integration between the colonial and indigenous populations in the 18th and 19th centuries (see Chapter 2). Before surveying and fencing of farms ended large-scale communal use of land in the 20th century, 'White' and Baster herders and stock-farmers travelled seasonally over large distances to grazing areas in Namaqualand. In these circumstances the portable mat-house was a practical form of shelter, and was adopted from the indigenous Nama herders. There are also 19th century records of missionaries using large domed structures as temporary churches, and variants of the mat-house were used by German soldiers and police in Great Namaqualand before the construction of permanent quarters. These

diverse uses continued well into the 20th century, and at first transcended class and racial divisions in the population of Namaqualand. Some 'White' farmers preferred to live in mat-houses even when they had stone or brick farmsteads. In the 1930s most farmers still used mat-houses when they moved to stockposts in the winter-veld during the lambing season (Kotze 1942: 86). During the 1930s, however, the government and the Dutch Reformed Church began concerted efforts to persuade 'Poor White' farmers to become sedentary by providing them with land, bore-holes and money for building houses. Mat-houses were stigmatized as being unsuitable for settled 'White' people who eventually ceased to use them. As late as the 1950s, however, *trekboers* (migratory, landless stockfarmers) in Bushmanland continued to use mat houses as a convenient form of shelter (Van der Merwe 1945; Van Onselen 1961).

Many present inhabitants of Namaqualand nonetheless regard the mat-house as an important part of their cultural heritage, despite their complete absorption into the expressive sphere of the broader economic, politico-legal and social structure of the region and their inclusion in the agrarian-industrial complex of southern Africa. It is one of a number of cultural resources, including objects and practices, that are associated with domestic activities that people in all the Reserve communities of Namaqualand claim as differentiating them from outsiders (Sharp 1977). Material cultural traits such as these are, of course, only some of a vast range of heritage resources that exist as icons of collective memory: others include books, art, sites, places, landscapes, structures, etc. These tangible aspects are part of a bigger whole, operating and existing together with intangible modes of existence and memory, values, traditions, languages, oral histories, creativity, adaptability and distinctiveness. Yet just one icon of material or tangible culture lodged within such a matrix can centre all of them, as I shall show below through a consideration of the variable significance of the mat-house as a marker of ethnic affiliation. While these resources have been shared with other Namaqualanders, and many are no longer actively sought by the inhabitants of the Reserves, they have been used not only to legitimate claims to land, but also to create the basis of ethnic identities which called into question categorizations such as 'Coloured' which were imposed on the Reserve-

dwellers by outsiders in order to justify intervention in these communities (Sharp & Boonzaier 1994).

In the Reserves of Namaqualand and southern Namibia today, one finds that some people who have resisted government development programmes invoke the mat-house as a symbol of continuity with a romanticized precolonial past. Elderly people have frequently refused to move into more modern types of housing. For example, when the former Rhenish mission house in Steinkopf was converted to an old-age home in the early 1970s, some local people would not abandon their mat-houses and move into the building. To familiarize them with the new institution, a number of mat-houses with hessian coverings were erected close to the building. They stayed in these houses until the advantages of the facilities in the new accommodation caused them to change their views (Ferreira 1986: 76). Other Reserve-dwellers have viewed the mat-house more broadly as a reminder of the connection between their indigenous ancestors and their more recent colonial forbears. In the 1990s, use of the mat-house in evoking historically-rooted Nama identity has been interpreted as a strategic response to the post-apartheid situation in which claims to land in Namaqualand could only be legitimized by proof of links to the precolonial inhabitants of the region (Sharp & Boonzaier 1994). Ironically, the descendants of indigenous Nama groups in Little Namaqualand now live for the most part north of the Orange River in southern Namibia, as a result of the migrations of their 19th century predecessors, but so far they have made no direct claim on Little Namaqualand.

Claims to identity constitute the main reason for the modern use of reconstructed versions of the vernacular mat-house, not only in ceremonies of communal importance, but also in a range of other situations, such as in schools and tourist camps, where the persuasive presence of the mat-house can be used to proclaim Nama identity both to community members and outsiders. Even outside the Reserves, some 'White' Namaqualanders, descendants of the pioneer Dutch farmers in the region, now faced with profound political and socio-economic changes at national level, have reclaimed the mat-house and view it as a symbolic claim to their historical occupancy in the region. They not only build examples for use as guest houses, but also use simpler models for

ceremonial purposes. Mat-houses were thus used in 1998 as accommodation for visitors in the "Namastat" resort south of Springbok; and the earliest recorded example of a ceremonial mat-house was one used in 1989 on a float depicting *trekboer* life in a procession to commemorate the founding in 1864 of the then still 'Whites-only' high school in Springbok. Beyond Namaqualand and southern Namibia, the mat-house has been given a role in Khoisan identity politics by self-conscious groups such as the 'Griqua', who have used it in ceremonies to celebrate the binding of people from a diversity of Khoekhoe origins into their own unique blend of nationalism and religious identity. In brief, the changing symbolic value of the mat-house intersects and mediates current social concerns in the complex political and cultural domains of contemporary Namaqualand and southern Africa.

One of the best documented recent examples of the mat-house as symbol of identity was recorded during a public event held at Khubus in northern Namaqualand, at which a contract was signed between representatives of the National Parks Board and the inhabitants of the Richtersveld Reserve for the development of the Richtersveld National Park (Boonzaier 1991, Sharp & Boonzaier 1994, Robins 1997). The contract had resulted from intensive negotiations between the local inhabitants and the National Parks Board, in the course of which the Reserve-dwellers had succeeded in obtaining official recognition of their own claims to the land in the Reserve and the proposed National Park on the basis of indigenous rights, rather than the less secure rights of occupation granted by the legislation that had defined the Reserve as land set aside for people classified 'Coloured' under the apartheid laws then in force. In the course of the struggle for recognition of these rights, the people of Northern Richtersveld drew on images of their Nama ancestry in support of their claims, which they reinforced through the selective use of symbols that they regarded as indicating a continuity of Nama culture in their community. In the ceremonies to mark the signing of the contract, the people of the Reserve stressed their assertion that they were the heirs of the precolonial Nama-speaking pastoralists of the area by staging various aspects of 'traditional' Nama culture (Sharp 1997: 9). The focal point of the activities, held in the grounds of the old mission church, was a mat-house built specially for the occasion and covered with new sedge

mats hung according to what those who erected the mat-house regarded as a customary pattern. Mat-houses of this particular type were not used anywhere in the Reserve at that time. The mat-house was used for the performance of an initiation ritual for young Nama women, and for a symbolic wedding ceremony intended to express the 'marriage' between the National Parks Board and the northern Richtersveld community for their mutual benefit.

The use of the mat-house in this way was part of a broader assertion of ethnic identities based on indigenous origins then taking place in nearly all Reserves of Namaqualand and southern Namibia as a result of changing political and socio-economic circumstances. In South Africa during the 1980s, as I showed above, the government was seeking to end the system of communal land tenure in the Reserves and, with the support of wealthier inhabitants, to impose a system of individual tenure that would have had the effect of depriving the majority of the poorer inhabitants of access to land, and thus jeopardizing their livelihoods. Although the contemporary situation was rooted in complex processes of transformation and colonization, the inhabitants of the Reserves could assert a form of Nama identity, based on a combination of local knowledge and recorded information, that was appropriate to the purpose of securing their claims to land on the basis of a generalized notion of descent. In the 1990s, the removal of apartheid legislation posed new challenges to the basis of communal rights to land in Namaqualand and created uncertainty regarding the future system of tenure. At the same time, this caused the established Reserve communities to become concerned about outsiders seeking to settle there. Thus new fluidity in local politics that followed has resulted in ever greater ambivalence in claims to Nama identity, which can mean a range of different things to different people and to the same people at different times (Sharp 1997:16).

The ironies implicit in claiming Nama identity become apparent if one compares the situation in Namaqualand in South Africa with that which prevailed in pre-independence Namibia in the 1980s, where the South African Administration actively promoted the notion of Nama identity as part of its policy of apartheid in the territory. During the 1960s and 1970s various Reserves in southern Namibia that had been established by

the former German colonial government and the post-World War I South African administration were consolidated to form 'Namaland', a 'homeland' for all people, rural and urban, who were officially classified 'Nama'. Those Reserves that did not become part of the homeland, such as Bondelswarts, were deproclaimed and large portions of their populations were resettled in various parts of Namaland (cf. Du Pisani 1976). As part of its attempts to gain legitimacy for the 'homeland' and the 'tribal council' that controlled it, the Administration sought to encourage the development of 'Nama culture' in various ways in order to break down clan and group allegiances that provided foci for resistance. Officially sponsored ceremonies were held annually in the various settlements in the homeland to celebrate Nama culture, invariably with the focal point of these events being a 'traditional' mat-house or variations of it. This appropriation did not, however, succeed in breaking resistance to official demands for conformity. The first tentative moves towards associating with a broader notion of Nama identity occurred only after Namibia gained independence in 1990. Uncertainty over security of land tenure under the then new SWAPO government, and perceptions of being threatened by Ovambo dominance in the new state, resulted in the Nama population in southern Namibia emphasizing their own collective Nama identity.

The symbolic value of the mat-house has also extended beyond Nama identity politics to that of Khoekhoe identity in general. This was demonstrated at a conference on Khoisan identity and cultural heritage held in July 1997 in Cape Town, organized by the Institute for Historical Research at the University of the Western Cape and held in the value-loaded settings of the Dutch Reformed Church Synod Centre and the neighbouring South African Museum (the latter now being part of Iziko Museums of Cape Town). The conference brought together academics, representatives of Khoisan cultural organizations from all over southern Africa, and members of the general public. By providing opportunities for people who regarded themselves as Khoisan to express their concerns and exchange views with delegates, and for academics to share the results of their research, the conference was intended to stimulate greater awareness of Khoisan heritage. The Khoisan representatives also used the conference strategically as a platform for calling on the governments of South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and

Zimbabwe to protect the rights of indigenous minorities to land and their own languages.

In addition to the academic sessions the conference included two Open Days at the South African Museum, during which several Khoisan organizations presented performances in celebration of their cultural heritage. The Griqua National Conference (GNC), the Khoisan Representative Council and the Cape Heritage Development Council (CHDC) staged an elaborate series of ceremonies at the South African Cultural History Museum (also now part of Iziko Museums of Cape Town) and the South African Museum to celebrate the process they had initiated to reclaim and popularize hidden histories, in order to reconnect people 'fragmented and stripped of their identity under colonialism and apartheid' to their ancestral roots (*Mail & Guardian*, July 25 to 31 1997). A key focus of the ceremonies was a mat-house constructed in the courtyard of the South African Cultural History Museum, where a young Griqua woman underwent a puberty rite. The mat-house itself consisted of a crudely-formed dome of bent branches covered with bundles of reeds obtained from various public parks in the southern suburbs of Cape Town, and was built by men of the Cape Heritage Development Council. In this case the improvised structure served to evoke a generalized image of a dwelling common to the forbears of all those claiming Khoekhoe descent, its simplified construction and absence of mats avoided reference to more specific identities, though the exclusion of references to San dwellings pointed to the long-standing underlying tensions between Khoekhoe and San organizations over representivity, and that formed a sub-text to the conference. Although the exhibition of a Nama camp in the South African Museum provided an ethnographic model that could have been followed in building the mat-house, attention to accurate detail was clearly not important for such a symbolic object, and may have been avoided in order to prevent any too precise associations. In contrast, when the Griqua National Conference established a cultural centre at Ratelgat north of Vredendal in southern Namaqualand in 1999, attempts to represent something said to be "authentic" did matter. Thirty mat-houses were constructed as accommodation for visitors, each covered with sedge mats made on commission by Nama women from the Leliefontein Reserve in central Namaqualand, and, when I visited the centre in 2004, the manager could

demonstrate to visitors the "correct" Nama deportment for entering and leaving a mat-house.

In social interaction, symbolic phenomena do not convey precise and predictable messages; they work through evocation by focusing attention on possible and plausible associations (Sperber & Wilson 1986). Thus, symbols work without having precise meaning; ambiguity is necessary to give material symbols their multivalency as mediators of social action. In considering the varied uses of the mat-house as an icon of identity, it seems significant that mat-houses made for symbolic purposes were always devoid of household objects or inside fittings. In this respect they differ entirely from the reconstructed mat-houses in museums, which invoke ethnographic veracity through attention to interior detail, and also from contemporary rural dwellings and cooking shelters that have all the necessary fittings and objects for everyday use. As a political and cultural symbol the mat-house is thus a radical reduction of a vernacular dwelling-unit to an evocative form which works precisely because it is familiar and embedded in consciousness and yet empty of any specific content that would locate and limit it in space and time. Unlike a museum representation that claims a particular kind of 'authenticity' for a constructed 'reality', the improvised mat-house as symbol-in-action depends entirely on ambiguity, but nonetheless carries a powerful message of 'authenticity'; what constitutes the 'authenticity' derives from the fact that people claim it as their own in the process of constructing a sense of group or social identity.

We can draw similar conclusions from a consideration of the derivative *rondehuis* ('round house'), a dome-shaped shelter of curved wooden poles covered with hessian or other materials, which is essentially a modern version of the mat-house. Nowadays only a few Nama traditionalists, mostly elderly people, still use mat-houses actually covered with sedge mats, notably in the Steinkopf and Leliefontein Reserves. In contrast to the high symbolic value of the mat-house, the *rondehuis* has come to be regarded as a degraded form of the mat-house, made of discarded materials of European origin, and used only by poor people living on the edges of rural settlements, or as a temporary shelter for shepherds at stockposts. In that respect, it has taken on the image of the mat-house in the 1920s and 1930s.

For much of the 20th century, however, the *rondehuis* was an integral part of urban landscapes in Namaqualand. Photographic records of towns such as Okiep, Springbok and Nababeep, as well as villages like Steinkopf, Concordia and Pella in the communal areas of the region, show a remarkable variety of shapes and sizes, and the ingenious use of materials such as hessian, canvas and metal sheeting for covering *rondehuise*. While the use of a *rondehuis* was an adaptation to new and changing circumstances, it also indicated growing social separation based on class differences. While the mat-house was shared as a common dwelling form among rural Namaqualanders of both indigenous and European origins, people of the latter category who moved into the towns from the 1930s onwards built rectangular brick houses rather than *rondehuise*, for, as I noted above, 'Poor Whites' were being discouraged from living in mat-houses at that time.

Since the mid-1990s there have been major changes in Namaqualand that have paralleled the broader transformation of South African society. Cultural identities are being renegotiated and new elites have arisen in response to far-reaching political changes and community development programmes. Changes in attitudes towards dwellings as status symbols, and the application of urban planning principles in the towns are causing the abandonment of the *rondehuis*. When people obtain plots, they might first put up a *rondehuis* to live in while building a house, but then demolish it as soon as the house is finished, or else turn it into a cooking-shelter until the kitchen is completed. On a fieldtrip to northern Namaqualand in 1998, I saw substantial numbers of *rondehuise* only in the town of Steinkopf: in Concordia there were only five, and none in Okiep, Nababeep, Springbok or Pella. In 2002 only about twenty *rondehuise* remained in Steinkopf and Concordia. At the beginning of the 1990s there were significant numbers of *rondehuise* in all these places, and it would appear that the demise of the *rondehuis* as a dwelling structure in the urban areas is only a matter of time.

Paradoxically, the growing interest among Namaqualanders in developing local museums with attached accommodation to attract tourists may have given the *rondehuis* a reprieve. Mat-houses made for tourist camps and outdoor museum displays require expensive maintenance owing to their

deterioration through the natural weathering of the sedge mats, as mats have to be bought from the few remaining skilled producers. The *rondehuis*, on the other hand, with its neat covering of layers of brown hessian, can be maintained more easily and cheaply. According to informants in the local tourism industry, the *rondehuis*, which preserves the dome shape without the use of mats, has proved to be as satisfactory as a real mat-house in giving foreign visitors the "authentic" experience of living in a Nama dwelling. While the mat-house will undoubtedly remain a symbol for Nama traditionalists and other Namaqualanders, the humble *rondehuis* may thus have gained a new value as a temporary dwelling for tourists.

As I showed above, however, in the late 1990s at Pella the *rondehuis* took on an entirely different significance, akin to that of the mat-house proper in Namaqualand. As we saw, changes in local government had altered the balance of power between Baster and Damara residents. Together with shifting contests over land claims, these changes had led to a process of reassessing and revaluing cultural identities in the various groupings in the population. When the Damaras at Pella and elsewhere in northern Bushmanland began tentatively identifying with the 'Black' majority in South Africa and translated this into support for the ANC, the Baster inhabitants of Pella began vigorously asserting their "Nama" *origins* - as opposed to making connections with the contemporary Nama population. Those same Baster 'Pellanaars' also started to assert and represent Nama elements in their cultural identity. Though this was, for the most part, expressed in discussions over local issues and in the campaign to obtain the incorporation of additional land for Pella, the establishment of the "Kultuur Koffiekroeg" was an interesting result in material terms.

It would be easy to follow Sharp and Boonzaier (1994) in regarding this response of the Basters as an "instrumentalist" use of Nama identity by association for political ends - the political motivations of the conservative and moderate Baster factions as well as the Damaras being quite obvious. It would be equally easy to agree with Robins (1997: 26) that it constituted a "recuperation of memory" of Nama tradition, a staged and short-lived outward expression of "cultural hybridity" in identity politics that "reflects and contains the traces and embodied

evidence of Nama historical experience" (ibid.), that can be situated in a global process of revitalization of indigenous identities. Conspicuously absent from the analyses cited above, however, is the ongoing role of the Christian churches in shaping patterns of identity in the Reserve communities of Namaqualand. The resurgence of Nama identity among people in Namaqualand began in the late 1980s, reached a peak during the 1990s, and from the mid-1990s increasingly became part of Khoisan identity politics. This period coincided with the "Decade of Evangelisation" pursued by both the Catholic Church as well as the Protestant churches in the run-up to the Millennium 2000 event, and that was intended as a stimulus for the churches to focus on their basic commitment to proclaiming the Gospel and the process of indigenizing the Christian Church in Africa. As early as 1975, as part of the reforms introduced in the Catholic Church after Vatican II, Pope Paul VI pointed out that evangelisation had to be addressed "to culture, as part of the human phenomenon" (Shorter 1994), an insight contained in the pivotal conciliar document *Lumen Gentium* (Flannery 1977: 350-426) which contributed directly to the development of the idea of "inculturation", or a dialogue between faith and culture, as an indispensable aspect of evangelisation.

"Inculturation", a process the Church understood to be necessary for integrating Christian (and specifically Catholic) beliefs into local cultural patterns in all their global diversity, and without contingent domination and alienation ("incarnation"), was subsequently developed at least in theoretical terms by Catholic anthropologists, notably Fr. Aylward Shorter (1994). The incarnation of the Christian faith through the indigenization of the hierarchy of the Church was regarded as central to the process, one which is itself an outgrowth of the revolutionary concept of adaptation first followed by Jesuits in the East and the Americas during the 16th and 17th centuries. Adaptation started soon after Vatican II in the 1960s when Catholics were given permission to translate the Latin liturgy into vernacular languages (in Namaqualand this was Afrikaans). The idea was soon developed by anthropologists in the service of the Catholic Church into "inculturation" proper, whereby the process of building the indigenous Church would grow "from below" with the Gospel as a seed, instead of being imposed by the metropolitan Church. The abolition in 1969 of the

Ius commissionis which sustained full missionary activity in perpetuity, cleared the way for the eventual replacement in places such as Namaqualand of the foreign clergy, but this been an uneven process in many parts of the world. In post-colonial Africa, the creation of an inculturated African Catholic church, relevant to the context and life-situation of all people in Africa, came to be regarded as an urgent task for the 21st century (McGarry & Ryan 2001).

Throughout the 1990s, and up to the present, "inculturation" has been the determining feature of the programme of evangelisation and renewal, its implementation involving the restructuring of Catholic communities world-wide according to a paradigm of mission that will lead eventually to a "culturally polycentric Church" no longer centred on Europe. The restructuring process has focused on the formation of "Basic/Small Christian Communities" under lay leadership and guided by "indigenous" regular or secular priests and other religious (Baur 1994: 307). In the parishes of the Diocese of Keimoes/Upington in Namaqualand, the programme of evangelisation has been co-ordinated by NAMKO (*Namakwaland Katolieke Ontwikkeling*), based in Okiep but accountable to the Bishop in Keimoes, which has managed the basic implementation with notable success in most of the parishes, notably urban ones such as Matjieskloof, Port Nolloth and Okiep where community structures were put in place in the early 1990s. The indigenization aspect of the programme has, however, proceeded only as far as the first stage with the institution of lay participation through the parish council as a "grassroots" structure to foster "inculturation" through "self-evangelisation".

In Pella the local priest, Fr. Malery, began the process of Catholic renewal in 1997 by first encouraging his parishioners to familiarize themselves with the new Catechism, and then followed this up with an ongoing campaign urging them to read the Bible for themselves, particularly the New Testament in which the Gospels and Letters set out the principles important for everyday Christian life. At the same time he started to apply the principles of "inculturation" by making the Parish Council more representative of all sections and levels in the community, drawing in members not only from Pella itself but also the outstations. He also allowed greater freedom of liturgical

interpretation in the services of the Church, particularly through the introduction of music, choral accompaniments and dance that reflected concepts of Christian worship practiced in the "Nama" congregations at Catholic missions in southern Namibia. In 2002 Fr. Malery told me that he considered that implementing the "inculturation" process in these ways from below, as well as through the creation of interpersonal relationships based on Biblical and Salesian principles which had long been integrated into the community ideology at Pella through missionary activity, was proving more effective than it had been imposed from above by the Diocesan hierarchy.

The intersection that was thus created between religious renewal and community revitalization among the inhabitants of Pella can be seen to have added a new dimension to the heightened cultural awareness in the various groupings at Pella in the late 1990s. In conjunction with the changing political situation, the 'Pellanaars' felt encouraged by the changes in the practices of the Church to develop a sense of their 'own authentic culture' that underpinned (even if it did not determine) their use of mat-houses and *rondehuise* as iconic of that sense, as in the case of the *Kultuur Koffiekroeg* at Pella. The 'inculturation' process gave claims to particular forms of cultural identity a religious sanction that they have not thus far had in the Protestant-dominated Reserves of Namaqualand. This parallels a similar process of appropriation of the mat-house by the Griqua Independent Church and the GNC as part of their assertion of Griqua nationhood (see above). It is very significant, however, that at Pella the mat-house has been used as a symbol only in its own right, with no attempt being made to stage "Nama" or "Khoekhoe" ceremonies, such as the initiation of girls to womanhood, as has been the practice of the Khoisan revitalization movements (see above). At Pella, both the classic mat-house and the dome-shaped *rondehuis*, as polar-centred traditional dwellings (Michell 1994), can thus be seen to have been incorporated into the "inculturation" process and taken on a symbolic meaning far beyond those suggested by instrumentalist and recuperative interpretations of their significance.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have considered the sociality of the community at Pella from three perspectives, socio-political, religious and material cultural. I have used Tambiah's model of two parallel investigations of the inscription of identities and ethnic mobilization to show the complex ways in which ethnicity has operated over time in the formation of social identities. In this concluding chapter I draw together the themes that run through the work and highlight the common areas in what may appear on the surface to be a diverse series of case studies, thereby returning to my central thesis which is that similarities in attributes and symbolic representations can be perceived as threatening and become the source of conflict when they appear to have been appropriated and alienated.

I began by pointing to an ambivalent dimension in social identities in studies of ethnicity in which it seems to be generally assumed that actual or perceived differences lead people to identify one another as part of one or more opposing ethnic groups. I have used this work to demonstrate, however, that differentiation arises not so much from distinctiveness in itself, but from claims that are made about such distinctiveness. Conflict on whatever level arises at least in part (it also arises over resources such as land and water) from competing claims to the same or similar symbols of identity that have been used by groups in constructing their identities, especially when the historical range of potential symbols has been shared with one or more other groups through force of circumstance. The result is that a group's members see their identities as overlapping in cultural terms with those of another group. They then perceive the other group as a hindrance to the full realization of their own aspirations.

I have then gone on to question another assumption, one that follows from the first, viz. that cultural commonalities and shared symbols imply social cohesion. I have done so by arguing that a consciousness of shared culture can at times be a source of conflict and

confrontation rather than a source of solidarity. While it may seem illogical for groups to become as much opposed to one another through their similarities and resemblances as they do through their perceived differences, the demarcation disputes that consequently arise over cultural or ethnic symbolism actually serve to sustain ethnic boundaries in situations where powerful external forces are at work in promoting integration.

Both Trigger's study of Doomadgee Reserve (1992) and that of Carstens of the Okanagan in Canada (1991) were guided by two principal questions: have Australian Aboriginal and Native Canadian people been dominated hegemonically as well as structurally, and does the ethnography reveal everyday forms of resistance similar to those identified among other subordinated people? Setting the colonial encounter in Gramsci's notion of hegemony, as involving asymmetrical class relations and cultural imperialism, the two authors came to similar conclusions about the people in the Reserves they examined, both of which had been influenced to a greater or lesser degree by Christian missions. They argued that, although Christian doctrine on its own did not constitute a dominant ideology and did not provide a basis for resistance of a kind found elsewhere, Christianity did bring about political accommodation. It had a pervasive and enduring effect on the consciousness of the people, modifying active rejection of mission authority rather than giving rise to its legitimation. Much of village life took on an oppositional character of a culture of resistance, with socially closed domains that excluded 'whites' and offered resistance to administrative and evangelical intrusions. Aboriginal worldviews in particular were not penetrated hegemonically by the beliefs and values of the dominant society, and only a small number of people expressed a belief in the legitimacy of the existing structure of power relations. Resistance was, however, tempered by the need for accommodation, as in neither the Australian nor the Canadian cases did the local people have the power, or the advantage of favourable conditions in the wider society, to enable them to change the structure of power relations.

A comparison of the material from the Namaqualand Reserves with the accounts of Doomadgee and, to a lesser extent, the Okanagan is

particularly revealing for informing questions about coercion, hegemony and resistance. There are strong parallels at the level of administration and processes of cultural transformation among them, especially in the case of the Pella Reserve with the autocratic role of the Catholic Church and the fact that missionary control lasted much longer there than in the case of the other Namaqualand Reserves. In Chapter 2 I referred to some of the similarities and dissimilarities between the Reserves, or 'Rural Coloured Areas', of Namaqualand and the African Reserves, or 'Homelands', elsewhere in South Africa. Despite disparities in size, population and surrounding legal frameworks, and differences in regional historical experiences, the Namaqualand Reserves were never simply instruments for domination by a ruling elite or by 'White' capital. The strength of the communities created by the missionaries, and the local identities which emerged as a result, produced an absence of common feelings of identification as a class with urbanised 'Coloured' people in Namaqualand, and with 'Black' people elsewhere in the wider society. At the local level this also led to a negation of apartheid Government policy which was intended to ensure the formation of a single 'Coloured Nation'. Those people in Namaqualand who chose to remain residents of the Reserves may be seen as having called into question the notion of a single 'Coloured' (or indeed 'Black') identity by affirmatively asserting enduring separate identities which lay outside the then current racist and populist discourses, and which still today continue to shape those people's participation in South African socio-political processes.

An overview of the two centuries of missionary activity in the Lower Orange River Basin reveals the nature and breadth of the Europeanisation that accompanied the colonial and missionary undertakings there. This was shown especially in Chapter 3 through my analysis of mortuary rituals in Pella, in which I examined the principal characteristics of social structure and organization, different types of solidarity, and the main foci of differentiation such as kinship, age and sex, religious and ethnic affiliations in the community. The very small number of remaining traits of indigenous Nama provenance indicated that, in terms of cultural formation, the hegemonic processes of acculturation and assimilation - through internalization of the values and practices of the dominant social

ideology - have proceeded so far that, in cultural terms, the community at Pella, in common with those formed by the inhabitants of the other Namaqualand Reserves, has to be regarded as part of a wider synthetic cultural system brought into being by the historical processes which have given form to the current shape of South African society.

These processes of cultural transformation cannot be dissociated from a protean colonial administrative domination that inexorably dictated the meaning of the changes; as Weber put it "... every domination expresses its functions through administration while every administration necessarily dominates in order to carry out its function ..." (1968: 948). During the hundred years of secular control of Pella by the Roman Catholic Church, the system of local government for the Mission Farm was characterised by a highly centralised authority structure that enabled the missionaries there to exercise wide-ranging powers derived from their position as both spiritual leaders and temporal rulers. The position of the missionaries was legitimated by the fact that missionary control of communities was recognized as forming an integral part of the general system of local government in South Africa. Though the missionaries at Pella were not held personally responsible by the central Government for their administrative function, they were nonetheless accountable to the hierarchy of the Church. The concentration of authority in the structure of Church government produced a personalised form of local government based on an authoritarian relationship between the priest and his congregation that resulted in an autocratic rule mediated only by the process of routinisation. Ultimately the missionaries' position of authority was undermined by political processes set in motion by the elaboration of the 'apartheid' policy by the National Party Government after 1948, and they were eventually forced to transfer their secular control of Pella to the central Government. Subsequent administrative development incorporated the community into the formal bureaucratic system of local government for people classified as 'Coloured' in South Africa. The removal of those of the inhabitants who had been classified as 'White' was a major step in the subjection of the community to the application of national policies through the extension of central government laws and administrative enactments. In this period, in contrast to the personalised rule of the missionaries (assisted from time to time by

largely powerless councils), the decision-making process under the new system was placed in the hands of officials outside the Reserve. As the provisions of the constitutional structure for 'Coloured' people called for participation by the community in the political process, however, a new political elite, consisting mostly of leaders from among the Baster residents of the Reserve, was able to manipulate the system for its own benefit and to exercise a degree of control over its affairs that was previously beyond its reach. In the transformation of governmental structures and processes that followed the collapse of apartheid and the change of government in 1994, however, the Baster political elite lost its power, as had happened in the other Namaqualand reserves in the 1950s (Carstens 1966: 236-237). It was replaced by a leadership group more representative of class and ethnic interests in the community.

The course of the long contest over control of local government structures in Pella shows, furthermore, that local manifestations of class struggle were cast in terms of ethnicity. The result was that there was a consequent diversity of interests created that generated varied responses to socio-political developments in the community. Endemic conflict in the community enabled forces beyond its boundaries, and at a higher structural level, to exploit the dependency between ethnicity and class to further a wider social struggle in a desirable direction. It is one of the ironies of the social history of Pella that, in their struggle to wrest to themselves control of the productive natural resources of the Reserve, the Baster residents of Pella came, in the period prior to 1974, to perceive the Church authority and the dominant 'White' inhabitants as one entity, and also to have maintained that perception into the late 1990s. It is ironic because, in pursuing their goal of altering the ethnic basis of control of the territory through supporting 'apartheid' Government policy against the Church, they were destroying their shield against their own final incorporation into a system of capitalist domination in South Africa. As I showed in Chapter 5, not until the late 1990s was the Church able to begin to reassert its influence in the social development of the community. Yet by then its role was less one of protection than one of actively attempting a transformation of the community through 'inculturation' in order to resist secularization,

and thereby implicitly to provide a basis for resistance to the standardizing process that goes with most capitalist expansion as it incorporates those on its margins.

Reviewing the process of the political incorporation of Pella into the national system of local government shows clearly that there was a certain degree of continuity of form between the missionary and bureaucratic systems of local government. It is one that resembles a similar continuity observed in the Reserves in Namaqualand (Carstens 1966, Sharp 1977). Pella differs from the Reserves in Namaqualand, however: whereas the Namaqualand Reserve councils were transformed, already by 1952, into boards of management with an enhanced degree of authority and power (but not necessarily legitimacy), in Pella after 1974 the authority structure altered in outward appearance while its essential content remained the same. The local balance of power was unaffected on account of legal restraints placed on the performance of their new socio-political roles by members of the ruling class. The fact that this transformation took place within a process of political incorporation designed to establish a distinctive type of administrative structure required by National Party policy meant, nevertheless, that the position of the participants themselves was shifted. After 1994, the process of incorporation was accelerated and Pella was drawn even more firmly into the broader governmental system of the secular South African state, which had the effect of causing both the old and new elites to explore new ways of reclaiming control of their affairs through instrumentalist assertions of cultural identity.

In reviewing the process of political incorporation into the national system of local government, it is also clear that there was a certain continuity of form between the missionary and bureaucratic systems of local government that resembles a similar continuity observed in the Reserves in Namaqualand (Carstens 1966, Sharp 1977). Pella Reserve differs from the Reserves in Namaqualand, however: whereas the Namaqualand Reserve councils were transformed into boards of management with an enhanced degree of authority and power (but not necessarily legitimacy), in Pella the authority structure altered in outward appearance while its essential content remained the same, with the

balance of power unaffected on account of legal restraints placed on the performance of new socio-political roles by members of the ruling class. The fact that this transformation took place within a process of political incorporation designed to establish a distinctive type of administrative structure required by National Party policy meant, nevertheless, that the position of the participants themselves was shifted. After 1994 the process of incorporation was accelerated and Pella was drawn even more firmly into the broader governmental system of the secular South African state, which had the effect of causing both the old and new elites to explore new ways of reclaiming control of their affairs through instrumentalist assertions of cultural identity.

The two parallel investigations of ethnicity that I have undertaken along the lines of Tambiah's 1996 model showed that the political and social processes operating in Pella produced over time a relatively stable pattern of ethnic distinctions. It was one that rested on a generational continuity that has endured through to the end of the 20th century, pointing to the strength of local socialization in both private and public spheres under the influence of the Catholic Church. Ethnicity and identity construction processes have clearly long been associated with the relationships between categories of people in Pella, with local inter-group relationships, and with processes of changes in population and cultural transformation. Though, in popular terms, notions of identity and ethnicity were often significantly influenced by subjective interpretations of history and sentiments accompanying those interpretations, it can be argued that ethnicity and identity are dependent albeit dynamic variables. My parallel investigations have also made clear that under both post-colonial and post-apartheid conditions in southern Africa, as they occurred in Namaqualand, particularly strong expressions of identity and of ethnicity have continued to occur among minorities, as we have seen in the processes of their inter-group relationships. In the Khoisan revitalization movement, viewed as a political movement, significant cultural markers were being used as symbols according to the relationship between varieties of groups, processes of changes and inter-group relationships, though the processes of conflict and resolution were still proceeding at the end of the period of my

fieldwork. While it appeared that emphasis on Nama identity was beginning to decline in the Reserves in Namaqualand towards the end of the 1990s (Robins 1997), suggesting a cyclical progression in the assertion of ethnic sentiments and claims in response to specific circumstances, my study of Pella suggests a linear progression in assertions of Baster and Damara identities in response to changing situations, this being a result of the inscription and naturalization of identity patterns through the involvement of the Church in shaping everyday and ritual life.

I have shown in Chapter 5 how the strengthening of ethnic identities in the Namaqualand Reserves, exemplified by the situation in Pella, developed into a contest over a commonly-held cultural symbol, the 'traditional' Nama mat-house and its derivative *rondehuis*. This can be situated, as Robins (1997) has done, as a staged and short-lived outward expression of 'cultural hybridity' in identity politics that reflects and contains the traces and embodied evidence of Nama historical experience in a global process of revitalization of indigenous and other identities that is running in parallel to an increasingly uneven long-term decline in the powers of the state. Sahlins (1999: 410) has commented on such cultural revitalization as "this surprising paradox of our time: that localization develops apace with globalization, differentiation with integration; that just when the forms of life around the world are becoming homogeneous, the peoples are asserting their cultural distinctiveness". He thus joins other scholars of globalization in noting the surge in the marking of cultural difference as a response to the hegemonic threat of world capitalism. The politics of similarity and the politics of difference have thus to do with the indigenization of modernity and the creation of autonomous cultural space as a mode of cultural production. As Kuper (2003: 395) has argued, it may be possible to regard this international movement as a fostering of "... essentialist ideologies of culture and identity ...[that]... may have dangerous political consequences". Yet, as I have pointed out, we need also to consider the ongoing role of universalist Christian churches in shaping patterns of identity. Such a role is still today being played out in the Reserve communities of Namaqualand, just as clearly as it occurs elsewhere in the world, at least by the Catholic Church with its commitment to "inculturation" as

a way of indigenizing its version of Christianity in Africa and throughout the world. The effects of the Church playing that role are to reinforce local commitments to neatly bounded social groupings and to the boundaries that are understood to separate them.

The Catholic Church's notion of "inculturation" depends on communal consensus about cultural configurations and continuity in forms of expression. As its implementation process started only relatively recently in Namaqualand, one cannot yet assess more than its immediate effects or offer any view of its long-term prospects of success. As I have shown in my consideration of the multiple uses and interpretations of the classic Nama mat-house and its symbolic variations, the potential for conflict arising from indeterminacy, the co-existence of contradictory traits, the absence of fixed references or their eradication, and the decontextualisation of features, is very high; yet simultaneously these are favourable to the birth of new cultural patterns that will cross-cut and replace existing ones. This pointed to the weakness of an instrumentalist perspective for the interpretation of identity construction, whether in the colonial, post-colonial or democratic periods in southern Africa, and cast doubt on the efficacy of the concept of the "recuperation of memory". This has implications for the value of the theoretical concept of hybridity, which has been widely deployed in cultural studies. Sharp (1997: 17) has argued that cultural hybridity cannot be a synonym for syncretism as it involves no assumption of an original culture as the basis for social memory, and because it refers to an awareness of multiple positions rather than a 'mixing' of two or more cultures. As Friedman (1997) has pointed out, however, hybridity is a genealogy (from its origins as a biological concept), not a structure, i.e. "it is an analytic construal of a people's [sic] history, not an ethnographic description of their way of life" (Sahlins 1999: 412). Where that history is only partially known, or is perhaps unknown, hybridity may offer a way of understanding diversity of expression in identity politics. But, as my case study of the changing significance of the mat-house set in the context of historically situated processes of socio-political transformation has shown, hybridity can at best be a way of describing only a particular stage in a known historical process. To account for cultural persistence and continuities, as Spiegel (1997) says is important, one

needs to trace out changing, multifarious concepts of reality (interpretations of the unattainable "real"). One needs also to seek out the factors that support their likelihood and that guarantee the quality of their rendering or alter their credibility. These are approaches necessary for mapping out the hazardous and random processes of culture and tradition as they manifest through the politics of similarity as forms of resistance to the coercive and hegemonic forces of globalization.

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C. UNPUBLISHED SOURCES**Parish Archives, Roman Catholic Mission, Pella**

RCMP/1. Bishop Simon's Papers

RCMP/2. Letterbook of Bishop Simon

RCMP/3. Old Regulations of Pella

RCMP/4. Pella Reserve's Documents

RCMP/6. Bishop Simon's Pocketbooks

RCMP/16. Pella - Parish Statistics

RCMP/24. Pella Primary School Statistics - Class Schedules 1905-1958

RCMP/28. European School Correspondence. No. II

RCMP/38. Important Documents

RCMP/41. Miscellaneous Items of Bishop Thünemann

RCMP/Misc. Journal of Johannes Basson

SIMON, J.-M. 1932. *Deuxieme partie des Souvenirs 1909-1932*. [typescript]

Diocesan Archives, Roman Catholic Mission, Upington

RCMU/1. File A. Diocese History. Documents.

RCMU/5. Quinquennial Reports

RCMU/7. Pella: Administration

RCMU/13. Papers of Bishop Thünemann

RCMU/14. Notes and Letters of Bishop Esser

Cape Archives, Cape Town

Records of the Magistracy of Namaqualand (Springbokfontein)

1/SBK, 5/1/2. Letters dispatched by Civil Commissioner, 1860-63

1/SBK, 5/1/3. Letters dispatched by Civil Commissioner, 1864-66

1/SBK, 5/1/4. Letters dispatched by Civil Commissioner, 1867-69

1/SBK, 5/1/5. Letters dispatched by Civil Commissioner, 1870-74

1/SBK, 5/1/6. Letters dispatched by Civil Commissioner, 1874-77

1/SBK, 5/6/1. Letters dispatched re Communal Reserves Matters, 1912-14.

Rural Coloured Area Pella Administration (RCAPA)

Annual Reports for Pella, 1974-1978.

Official Minutes ('Notules van Vergaderings') of the Advisory Board, 1975-1979.

Iziko: South African Museum

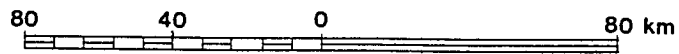
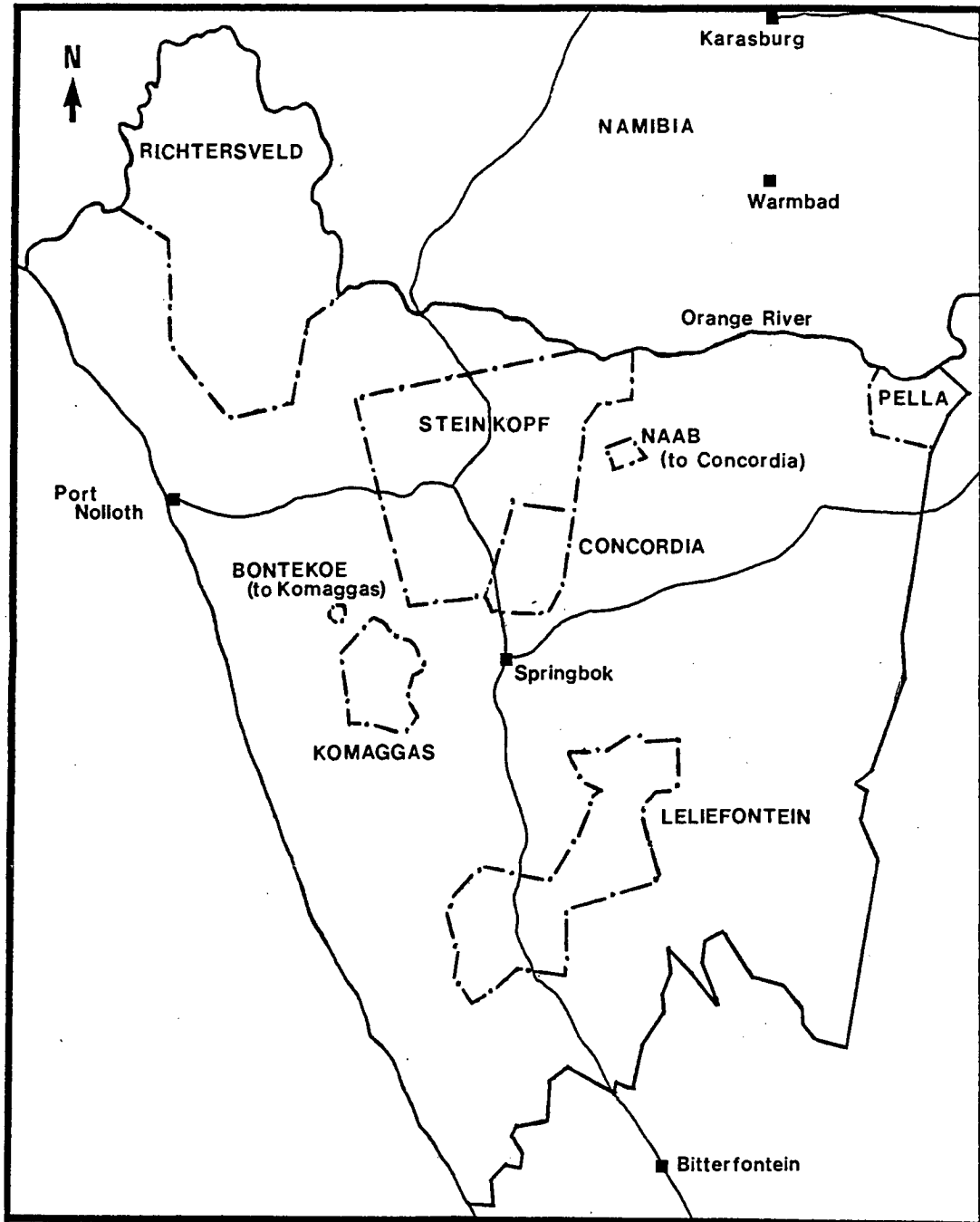
Drury, J. n.d. [1911] Notes on Bushman and Hottentot graves. SAM Correspondence Files.

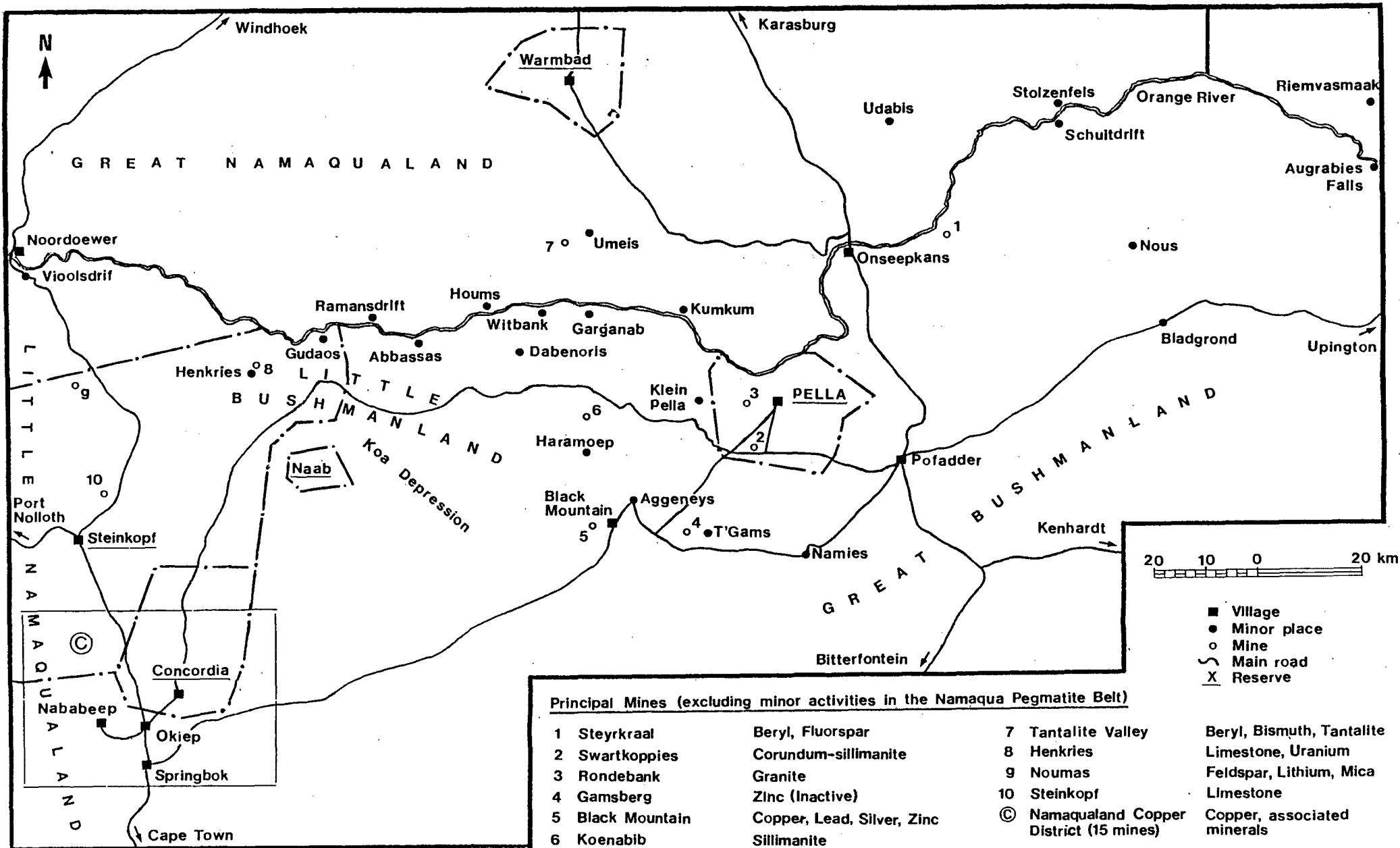
Others

Department of Social Welfare: File SW.458/10, Vol. I.

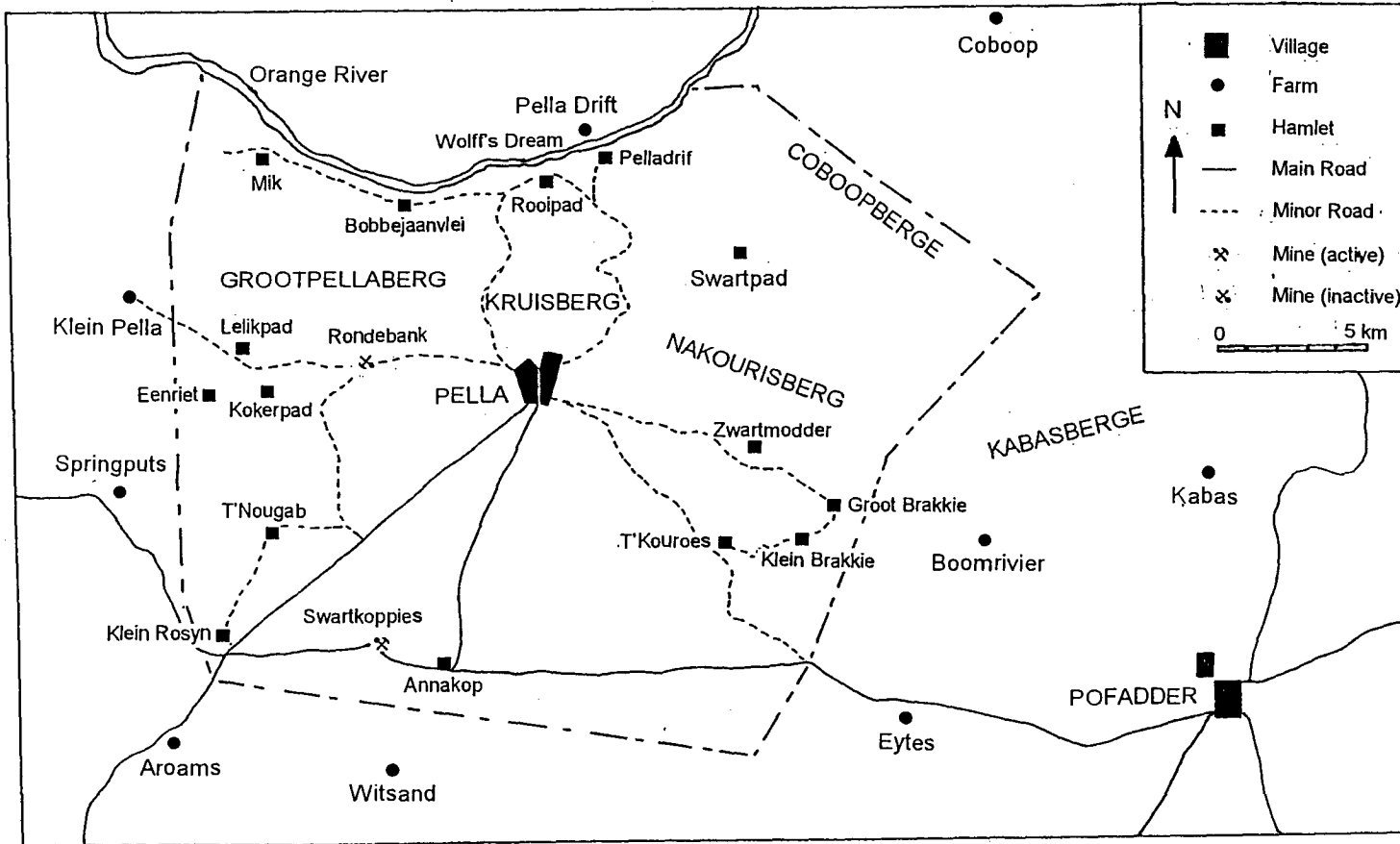
Pofadder Magistracy: District Record Book (Pofadder Office).

MAP 1: RESERVES IN THE NORTH-WEST CAPE, 1990

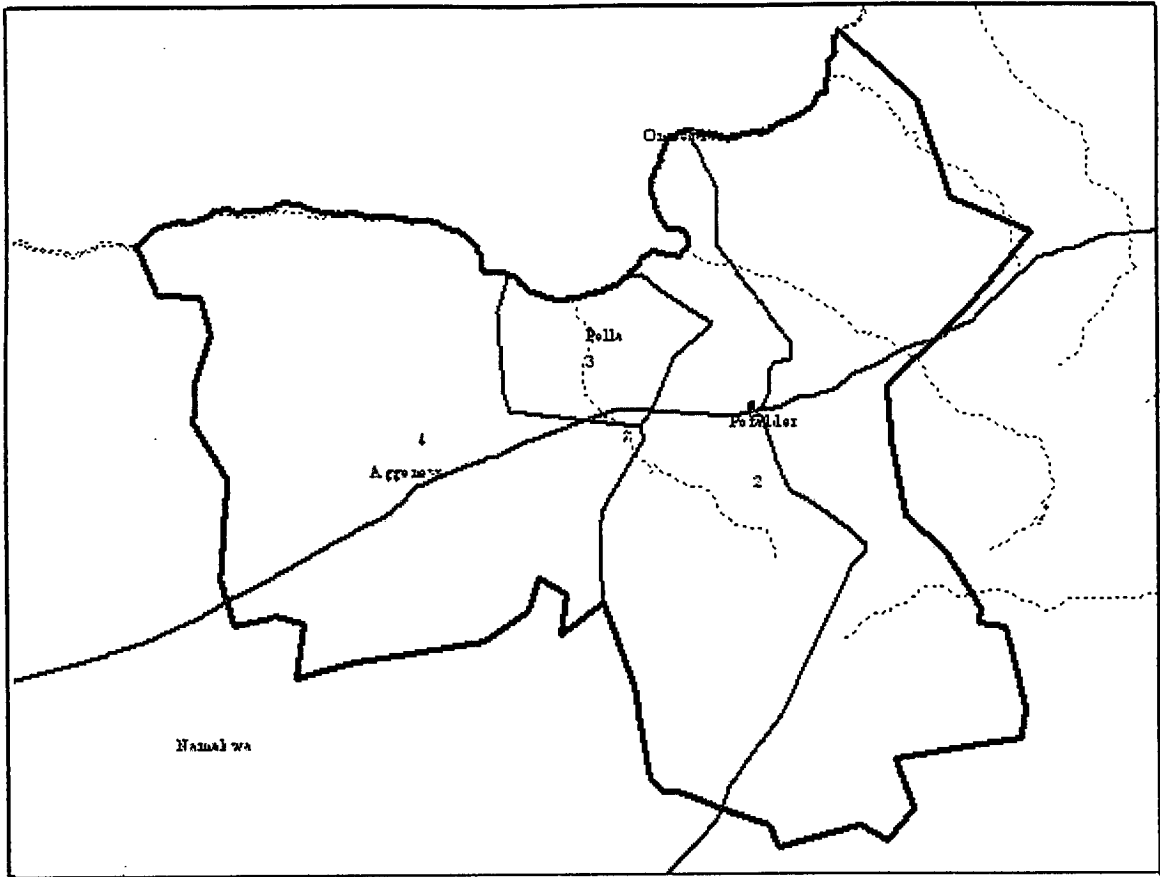




MAP 2: NORTHERN BUSHMANLAND



MAP 3: PELLA RESERVE, 1990



MAP 4: KHAI-MA MUNICIPALITY, 2003

PLATES

All photographs by G. Klinghardt, unless otherwise indicated.

PLATE A

a. 'Coloured' members of the Pella congregation preparing to enter the Cathedral for a ceremony of re-consecration in 1986. The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception was completed in 1895 and modelled in Roman-Gothic style on the Cathedral of SS. Peter & Paul and the Pope Urban VI Collegiate Chapel in Troyes, France.

b. 'White' members of the congregation, formerly resident in Pella, standing apart from the 'Coloured' members before the re-consecration ceremony in 1986.

PLATE B

a. A school class in the old "Klipskool" building at Pella Mission, probably between 1919 and 1921, with senior pupils on the left and junior pupils on the right. The careful composition suggests that the photograph was taken for propaganda purposes. The eight 'White' boys represent six of the European family groupings in Pella and the two Baster boys the two largest Baster family groupings, while the Damara and Herero boys each represent the leading families of these two groupings. (Parish Archives, Pella)

b. Everyday interaction in the village shop in January 1978 among members of the four ethnic groupings in Pella, with the 'White' shopkeeper attending to Damara, Baster and Nama customers.

PLATE C

a. Bishop J. M. Simon (centre), with his Coadjutor and successor Bishop O. Fages (fourth from left), priests from other Catholic missions in Namaqualand, and acolytes and choristers drawn from the local 'White' residents, in the vestibule of the Cathedral after a ceremony in 1923 to mark the Silver Jubilee of his consecration as the first Bishop of the Orange River. (Klinghardt Family Collection)

b. Bishop H. J. Thünemann (left) with his Coadjutor and successor Bishop F. X. Esser in the garden at Pella Mission in 1955. (Klinghardt Family Collection)

PLATE D

a. Praying for the deceased at a Damara wake, 1979.

b. Mourners sitting around a fire at a Damara wake, 1979.

PLATE E

a. Damara graved-diggers in the cemetery at Pella, 1979.

b. A funeral procession following an improvised "hearse" to the cemetery at Pella, 1979.

PLATE F

a. Fr. Malery sprinkling holy water on the coffin of the last 'White' mayor of Pella, 1978. In front of the Thünemann's family plot are the Bishop of Keimoes-Upington (left) and 'White' former residents of Pella (right). In the background, 'Coloured' residents attending the funeral can be seen lining the fence around the 'White' section of the cemetery.

b. Mourners listening to an eulogy at the burial of a young Damara woman at Pella in 1978.

PLATE G

a. As described in the Chapter 3, the cemetery at Pella was divided into 'White' and 'Coloured' sections in 1962, when the 'White' residents of Pella were seeking, unsuccessfully, to win the sympathy of the Nationalist Government for their claims to the right to live at Pella. Though discrete areas had always existed in the cemetery, this demarcation with a wall and a fence was a material symbol of the division that had arisen as a result of the long dispute over land rights on the Mission Farm. (1987)

b. A 19th century grave, with head- and foot-posts, in the mountains along the Orange River at Rooipad in the Pella Reserve, 1985.

PLATE H

a. Nama graves, with encircling stone borders, in the Pella cemetery, 1984.

b. Fr. Malery sprinkling holy water on graves in the Pella cemetery during the All Souls commemoration ceremony in 1979.

PLATE I

a. Mat-houses in use as private dwellings, Steinkopf, 1991.

b. An example of a symbolic mat-house, erected for the 2002 Heritage Day celebrations at Genadendal in the Western Cape.

PLATE J

a. The "Namastad" tourist camp at Springbok in Namaqualand, 1998.

b. A classic mat-house in the "Namastad" tourist camp, Springbok, 1998.

PLATE K

a. The mat-house at the *Kultuur Koffiekroeg* at Pella in 1998, with Mrs Jannetjies ("*Ouma Toeka*") in the doorway.

b. "*Rondehuise*" used as tourist accommodation at the *Kultuur Koffiekroeg* in Pella, 1998.

PLATE L

a. Part of the mat-house village at the Griqua Ratelgat Cultural Centre, north of Vredendal, in 2004. The large elongated mat-houses at the rear housed ablution facilities.

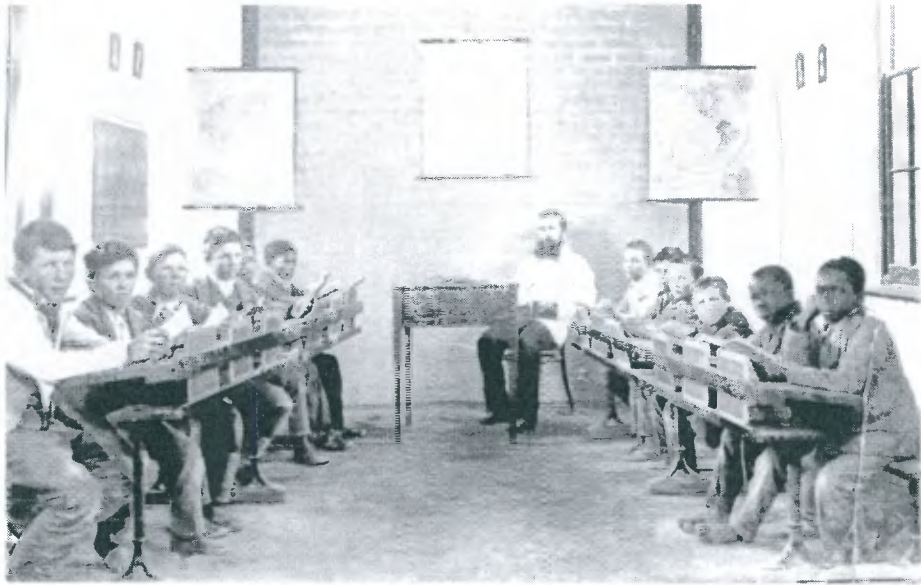
b. A classic mat-house at the Griqua Ratelgat Cultural Centre, 2004.



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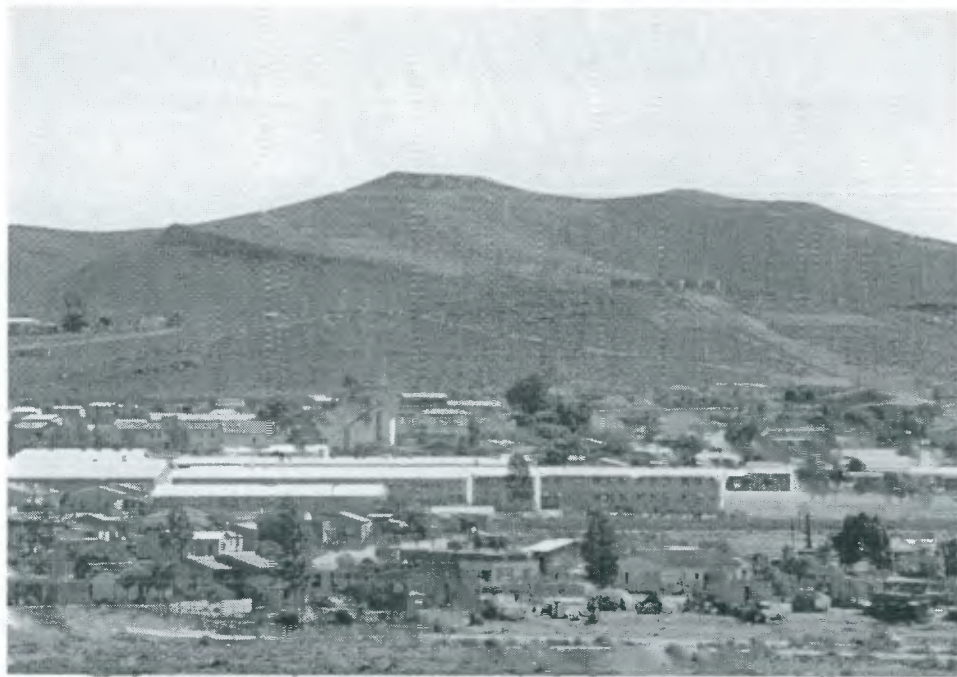
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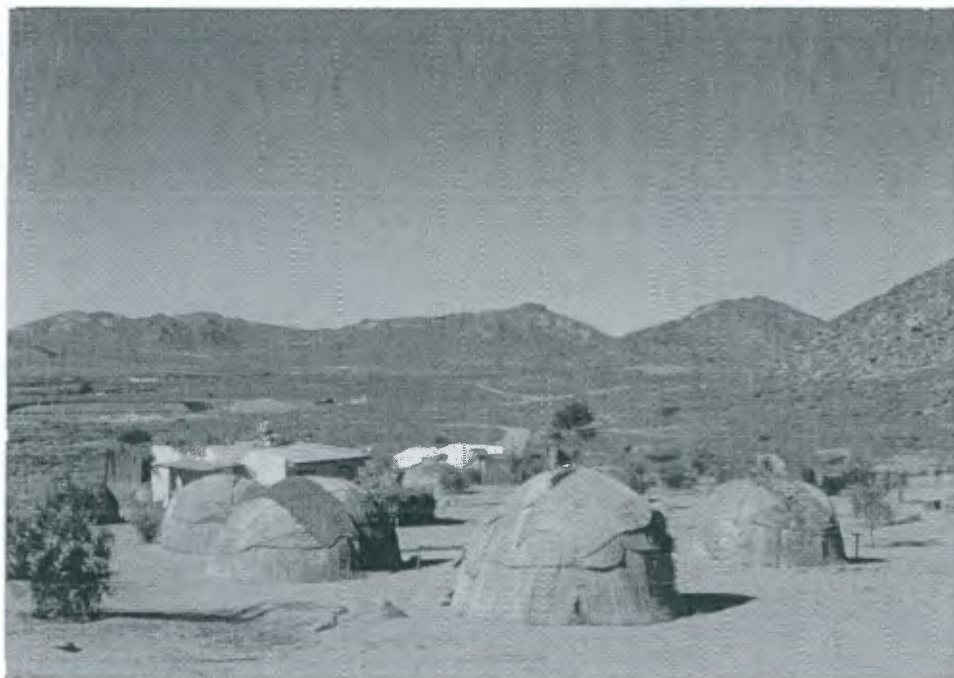
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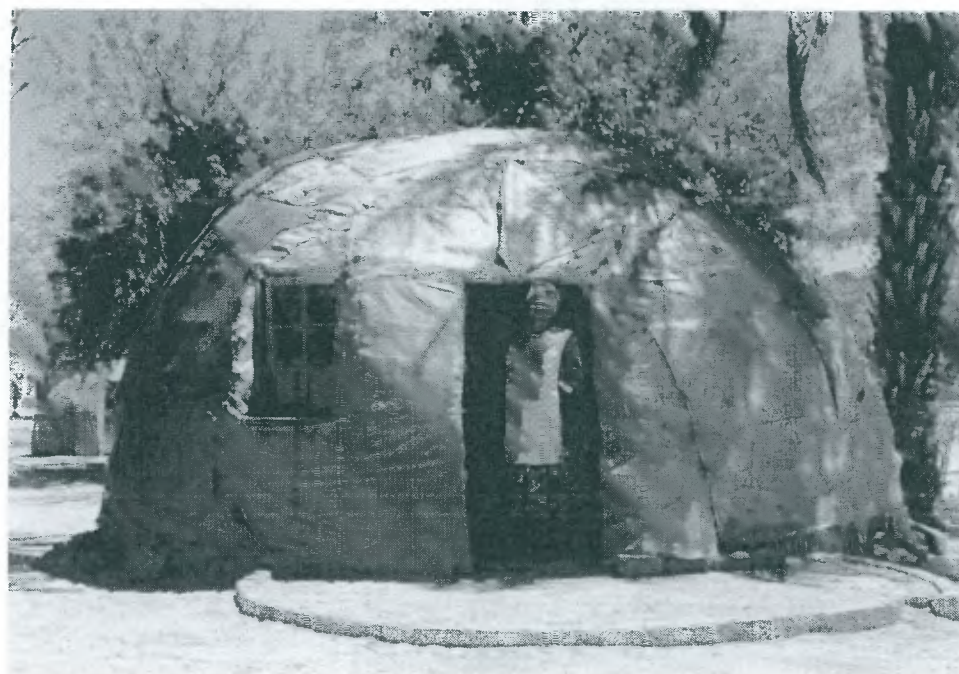
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APPENDIX A

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPATION, 1874

Under authority of the Government surveyor by letter of the Hon'ble the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works, No. 875, dated 31st March 1874, I do hereby certify that the Most Reverend Dr. Leonard, Roman Catholic Bishop and Vicar Apostolic, Western Districts, Cape of Good Hope, and his Successors in that Office, have permission to locate certain Roman Catholic Priests of the Society for African Missions and their followers, upon the Crown Land known as "Groote Pella", situate in the Division of Namaqualand on the Orange River, and described as in extent about ten thousand (10,000) morgen (equivalent to about 21,165 acres English measure), on the following Conditions:-

I. That the occupation of the said land shall not begin before the expiration of the existing annual lease thereof; and that the said occupants shall not be disturbed until the said land shall have been advertised for lease under Act No. 19 of 1864.

II. That notice shall be given by the Government to the said Most Reverend Dr. Leonard or his Successors in Office, of at least one year previous to the termination of this permission to occupy.

III. That Government Land Surveyors employed in the survey of Crown or other Lands, with their assistants and servants, shall have the right of access at any time to any part of the said Land for professional purposes, and the right of occupying any part of the said Land and grazing and watering their cattle or horses on all pastures and at all waters.

IV. That all roads running over the said Land may be used by the public as cattle Thoroughfares ("Trekpaths") to the extent of two hundred (200) yards on each side of any such road.

V. That the public travelling shall have the right of outspanning on any part of the said Land.

VI. That the right of searching and mining for ores, metals, minerals, or precious stones upon the said Land is reserved to the Government, or to any person authorised by it.

VII. That the Government does not undertake to point out any beacons.

VIII. That should the Description given of the said unsurveyed land be such as to take in any part of a surveyed lot already leased, the lease shall stand precedent.

IX. That the Government will not be prepared to make any compensation to the said Most Reverend Dr. Leonard or his Successors in Office, at the termination of this permission to occupy, for any Improvements made by him or these without formal authority from the Government - should such authority be desired in respect of any contemplated Improvements, the Applicant will have to state the character, object, situation and estimated cost of such Improvements; and further supply all such particulars as may be required to enable the Government to judge whether or not, and for what maximum amount, any contingent eventual

claim for compensation ought to be entertained on termination of this permission to occupy. Compensation will be made in respect of such Improvements, in the event of the Applicant not becoming the Owner or Lessee of the said Land. Such compensation will in no case exceed the amount either of the estimated or of the actual costs of authorised Improvements and will be determined by valuers appointed for the purpose in the following manner, viz.:- one valuator to be appointed by each side, and a third to be chosen by those two, before proceeding to act - and the award of such valuers or any two of them shall be final.

X. That any existing Improvements on the said Land shall be kept in good repair during the duration of this permission to occupy and be delivered up in good repair at its termination - but that no compensation will be given in respect of such improvements.

XI. That the said Most Reverend Dr. Leonard, or his Successors in Office, shall not let any portion of the said Land or any buildings or erections thereon, without the sanction of the Government.

XII. That the Government may cancel this permission to occupy forthwith, without any notice, upon the breach of any of the Conditions of Occupation herein set forth.

Surveyor General's Office,
27th July, 1874

(sgd) A. de Smidt
Surveyor General

Appendix

I do hereby certify that the right of occupation conveyed by this Inclusionment to the Most Reverend Dr. Leonard, Roman Catholic Bishop and Vicar Apostolic at the Cape of Good Hope, has been transferred to the Very Reverend John Devernoille, Administrator and Vice-prefect Apostolic, Central District of the Cape of Good Hope. (See letter from the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works dated 8th December, 1874, to my address).

(sgd) A. de Smidt
Surveyor General

Surveyor General's Office,
17th February, 1875

Source: RCMP/1

APPENDIX B

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPATION, 1881

Under authority of the Government, conveyed by a letter of the Honourable the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works, No. 905, dated 9th May, 1881, I do hereby certify that the Very Reverend Auge Francois Gaudeul, Vice Prefect

Apostolic of the Cape Central Districts, and his Successors in that Office, have permission to locate certain Roman Catholic Priests of the Society for African Missions, and their followers, upon the Crown Land known as "Groot Pella", situated in the Division of Namaqualand, on the Orange River, and described as extending on the West to the "Klein Resinbosch River", a dry watercourse, from a place on the Orange River called "De Myk" up to Klein Resinbosch; on the South to the Road from Klein Resinbosch to Pofadder, so far as its intersection with the Road from Pella to Pofadder; thence, on the East, to a straight line to the nearest point of the Mountain range North-East of Pella; thence, on the North, to the said Mountain range as far as the place called "Rooi Pad", on the Orange River, where the mountain range comes to the water's edge; thence, on the North-West, to the Orange River so far as "De Myk"; on the following Conditions:-

I. That the said Occupants shall not be disturbed in their occupation of the said land until it shall have been advertised for Sale under the provisions of Act No. 14 of 1878.

II. That notice shall be given by the Government to the said Very Reverend Auge Francois Gaudeul, or his Successors in Office, at least one year previous to the termination of this permission to occupy.

III. That Government Land Surveyors employed in the Survey of Crown or other Lands, with their assistants and servants, shall have the right of access at any time to any part of the said land for professional purposes, and the right of occupying any part of the said land and grazing and watering their cattle or horses on all pastures and at all waters.

IV. That all roads running over the said land may be used by the public as Cattle Thoroughfares (Trekpaths) to the extent of two hundred (200) yards on each side of any such road.

V. That the public travelling, shall have the right of outspanning on any part of the said land.

VI. That the right of searching and mining for ores, metals, minerals, or precious stones upon the said land is reserved to the Government, or to any person authorised by it.

VII. That the Government does not undertake to point out any beacons.

VIII. That should the description given of the said unsurveyed land be such as to include any part of a surveyed lot already leased or granted, the lease or grant shall stand precedent.

IX. That the Government will not be prepared to make any compensation to the said Very Reverend Auge Francois Gaudeul, or his Successors in Office, at the termination of this permission to occupy, for any Improvements made by him or them without formal authority from the Government. Should such authority be desired in respect of any contemplated Improvements, the applicant will have to state the character, object, situation and estimated cost of such Improvements; and further supply all such particulars as may be required to enable the Government to judge whether or not, and for what maximum amount, any contingent eventual claim for compensation ought to be entertained on termination of this permission to occupy. A record should be kept of all authorised Improvements, and on termination of this permission to occupy, compensation will be made in respect of such Improvements, in the event of the applicant not becoming the proprietor of the said land. Such compensation will in no case exceed the

amount either of the estimated or of the actual cost of authorised Improvements and will be determined by valuers appointed for the purpose in the following manner, viz.:- one valuator to be appointed by each side, and a third to be chosen by those two, before proceeding to act - and the award of such valuers or any two of them shall be final.

X. That any existing Improvements on the said land shall be kept in good repair during the duration of this permission to occupy and shall be delivered up in good repair at its termination, but that no Compensation will be given in respect of such Improvements.

XI. That the said Very Reverend Auge Francois Gaudeul, or his Successors in Office, shall not let any portion of the said land or any buildings thereon, without the sanction of the Government.

XII. That the Government may cancel this permission to occupy forthwith without any notice upon the breach of any of the Conditions of Occupation herein set forth.

(sgd) A. DE SMIDT,
Surveyor-General

Surveyor-General's Office,

9th June, 1881.

Appendix 1

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, the undersigned, Francis Gaudeul, Roman Catholic Priest, at present of Cape Town, do hereby, in my capacity of Administrator of the Roman Catholic Missions of the Central Prefecture of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, nominate, constitute, and appoint the Most Reverend John Leonard, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cape Town aforesaid, to be my true and lawful attorney and agent, with power of substitution, for me, and in my name, and on my behalf, to occupy, manage, use, and administer the missionary house, land, and other property situate at Pella, Namaqualand; and also for me and in my name to act with the Colonial Government, and all or any other persons or person interested, in respect of such missionary place and property as aforesaid; and also for me and in my name to make and do all lawful acts and things whatsoever in and concerning the said premises as fully and effectually as I might or could if personally present and acting thereon; hereby ratifying, allowing, and confirming, and promising and agreeing to ratify, allow, and confirm, all and whatsoever my said attorney and agent shall in my name lawfully do, or cause to be done, in and about the premises, by virtue of these presents.

Thus done and executed at Cape Town this Twenty-fifth day of October, in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight hundred and Eighty-two, in the presence of the subscribing witnesses.

(sgd) A.F. GAUDEUL

As Witnesses:

(sgd) John J. O'Reilly
(sgd) John O'Dwyer

Appendix 2

Under authority of a letter of the Honourable the Commissioner of Crown Lands, dated 11th December, 1882, I hereby certify that this Ticket of Occupation is transferred with the consent of the Very Reverend Auge Francois Gaudeul to the Most Reverend John Leonard, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cape Town.

(sgd) J. TEMPLER HORNE,

for Surveyor-General.

Survey Office,

2nd March, 1883

Appendix 3

By a deed of the 5th September, 1917, and the 4th December, 1917, the right hitherto possessed by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cape Town, by virtue of this Certificate of Occupation, in respect of a certain portion of the within property, in extent approximately 200 hundred square rods, and certain buildings, etc., thereon, has been renounced and waived in favour of the Government of the Union of South Africa, as will more fully appear on reference to the deed filed in this Office with the duplicate original certificate thereof.

Deeds Office, Cape Town,
6th December, 1917

Appendix 4

Government rights cancelled. Vide certificate filed with counterpart.

Registrar of Deeds (sgd)
Assistant Registrar of Deeds (sgd)

Deeds Registry, Cape Town,
31st July, 1940.

Countersigned by Bishop H. J. Thünemann, 17th April, 1942

Sources:

- i. Certificate of Occupation; Appendix 1, 2 : RCMP/1
- ii. Appendix 3, 4 : RCMU/1

APPENDIX C

The following Regulations on the use of Liquors compel all the Inhabitants of Pella.

- 1) To bring or have brought on Pella any intoxicating liquors such as Beer, wine and Brandy unless a permit has been given to the effect and which must be renewed for each.
- 2) It forbid to search honey on Pella ground without having the same.
- 3) All liquors such as Beer wine brandy that shall be brought to Pella without this permission shall be confiscated and in such case always destroyed.
- 4) Those who become intoxicated on Beer wine or brandy be procured with permission shall be punished as follows:
 - (a) All Beer, wine or Brandy which he yet possesses shall be confiscated and destroyed.
 - (b) He shall be made to give in the written hand, that he will not use liquors, namely Beer wine or Brandy, before at least twelve months are passed.
- 5) The privilege given to live at Pella shall no longer be granted to these Offenders, under these Regulations.
- 6) Guilty Offenders of the Government service shall be reported to their Superior, namely the Magistrate, the Chief Constable.

Source: RCMP/3

APPENDIX D*

The following Regulations for the Moral Benefit compel all the inhabitants of Pella.

- 1) Women shall not appear in the Village with clothes such which provoke the evil passions of men.
 - (a) Forbid to women are Dresses tight in certain places, or short above the ground.
 - (b) It is shameful for women to wear dresses of short Sleeve or made low in front.
 - (c) Women shall wear Stockings at all times.
- 2) Girls of the age 12 and more to wear dresses that shall reach to the knees, and they must wear Stockings at all times.
- 3) Boys shall not appear in the Village with the upper legs naked.
- 4) Girls shall not walk out in hidden places. This is immoral and dangerous.
- 5) It is forbid to All to dance, except with my permission.
- 6) Those who ignore these Regulations are Offenders before the Holy Church, and in such case the privilege given to live at Pella shall no longer be granted.

* Regulations (1) to (6) were issued by Bishop Simon in 1887, and they were later confirmed by Bishop Thünemann along with (7).

Additional Regulation

(7) No respectable, decent woman or girl is ever to be seen on a bicycle.

Approved by the Chairman and Council,
 (sgd) + H. J. Thünemann
 Pella, the 11th June, 1941

Source: RCMP/3

APPENDIX E

V + J

RULES FOR THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT OF PELLA

I. Under the Certificate of Occupation the Crown Land Pella is given as a farm to the Roman Catholic Church, represented by the Head Missionary.

II. The Head Missionary has the following rights:

1. to admit people wishing to reside at Pella, who are Catholics or who are convinced of the Truth of our Holy Religion.
2. to compel the departure of those guilty of public scandals, such as beer-brewing, dancing without permission, adultery and fornication, disgraceful or disrespectful conduct, for between two and three years, or permanently.
3. to grant and withdraw trading rights.
4. to give permission to use pasturage and watering places on the farm.
5. to give permission to build houses, on condition that the occupants demolish such buildings on the instruction of the Head Missionary in the event of their leaving Pella without giving over the house to another occupant. The Church may hold such vacated buildings for its own purposes.
6. to enter contracts with prospectors, and grant leave to tap milkbushes, and to cancel such contracts.
7. to draw up and apply such regulations as he may deem necessary from time to time.

III. The farm is divided by inspection into six districts, in which each inhabitant shall have a fixed place of residence.

The inhabitants shall not be permitted to roam about at will with their flocks but shall remain in these districts, with an exception being made only in time of droughts.

Each district shall have a Foreman, whose duty it is to look after the affairs of the inhabitants there and to assist the Head Missionary when necessary.

IV. The Ruling Council consists of ten members, being five Europeans and five Natives.

The foremen of the districts are ex officio members of this council.

The remaining members are to be chosen by the inhabitants at a general meeting by means of a secret vote.

The Council shall assist the Head Missionary in the administration and control of the Pella farm.

The Chairman of the Council shall be the Head Missionary or, in his absence, the foreman of Pella. (Bishop Simon's meaning here is that the Mayor of Pella village - foreman of Central Pella - will act as chairman).

V. A portion of the pasturage is to be set aside for the use of transport riders and in time of drought. Fines are levied for trespass in this area. (See Regulations of 1927).

VI. Tax. This is to be levied on each household, and not according to the number of occupants. I can find no record of the collection of taxes before 1927, either on houses or livestock. I assume that Bishop Simon thought of these as contributions rather than taxes.

VII. An inhabitant of Pella, absent for some time, is allowed to retain his privilege to live here on his return, but if he had a grant of land for gardens, etc., then this lapsed on his departure.

The other Regulations of which Bishop Simon writes are those included in the Regulations of 1927, viz. Nos. III, IV, VII, VIII, IX and X.*

(sgd) + F. Esser
22/10/1957

Source: RCMU/14

*

Bishop Esser made no reference to the regulations contained in Appendices C and D in his reconstruction, possibly on the assumption that the missionary at Pella would in any case be aware of them. The reconstruction is unlikely to have much resemblance to Bishop Simon's original regulations owing to differences in style, but the content is correct according to the references to them in the documents used by Bishop Esser.

APPENDIX F

V + J

REGULATIONS TO BE OBSERVED BY ALL LIVING ON PELLA MISSION GROUND

I. A part of the grazing at Pella is reserved to large Cattle. Small cattle, like sheep and goats, found grazing in the reserved part, shall be fined 10/- each time they are caught therein by a member of the ruling Council. Out of these 10/- five shall be deposited in the Institute's Cash Box; the other 5/- shall be given to the man who has caught the trespasser.

II. Pella people who keep live stock on the mission ground shall pay every year 10/- per 100 small stock, up to 400, and 10/- per 10 large stock up to 40. This money goes to the Institute's Cash Box and must be paid during the first month of the year. If allowed to keep more, they shall pay an additional yearly tax of 1/- per 100 sheep or goats and per 10 large stock exceeding the 400 and 40 generally allowed. These amounts are also deposited in the Mission Cash Box.

III. With the consent of the Head-missionary, the members of the ruling Council may assist outsiders with grazing on Pella, at the rate of 2/6 per month for 100 sheep or goats or for 10 heads of large stock. The money must be paid in advance to the Foreman who shall Deposit same in the Institute's Cash Box.

IV. Are called Outsiders all who belong to another Denomination, also Catholics who possess their own farm or who, having no ground of their own, live outside of Pella. However, these Catholic outsiders may be admitted on the Mission property, when Pella has abundant grazing and at the rate of 1/- per month for 100 sheep or goats or 10 heads of large stock.

V. The £10 paid yearly by the two Stores at Pella go also to the public Cash Box.

VI. The tenth part of the amounts collected in the public Cash Box belongs to the Church. The rest shall be used to improve the place, to clean public Dams, repair public buildings, Church, Schools, Cemetery, Dipbath or to assist very poor members of the Congregation, with the approval of the Chairman and the members of the ruling Council.

VII. Catholics living within three miles from the Church must attend Divine Services every Sunday. Others living at greater distance and yet on Pella ground ought to attend the Sunday Services at least once a month.

VIII. All children must begin to attend school when six years old, and they must stay at school until they pass the VI Standard or have completed their sixteenth year.

IX. People or Parents who fail to comply with Articles VII & VIII or who send their children to Schools unapproved by the Church are liable to lose their rights on the mission ground.

X. All stray animals, whose owner is unknown, shall be impounded. When the owner is known, he shall be notified to take his live stock away from Pella. If he takes no notice of the warning the animals shall be impounded.

XI. The permission formerly given to have a space of grazing for lambs, calves, etc. is withdrawn.

Pella, January the 4th 1927
(sgd) + J. Simon

Source: RCMP/1

V + J

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PELLA MISSION GROUND

I. A Council (or 'Raad') shall be appointed to assist the Head of the Mission.

This Council shall consist of six members to be elected by the Occupiers of the Pella Mission Grounds, and a Chairman who will always be the Bishop of the Vicariate of Keimoes, or his authorised representative.

By Occupiers is here meant all persons of whom the Council may demand the payment of fees, as set out below.

Councillors are to be appointed for a period of three years. A member can nevertheless make himself available for re-election after this period.

The Chairman may at any time ask a member for his resignation.

II. A Secretary shall be appointed by the Council.

The Secretary will be responsible for ordinary secretarial work as well as for financial affairs concerning the Council.

His salary will be determined by the Council.

A Councillor may hold this office.

III. Ordinary meetings of the Council shall be held every two months on the second Wednesday of the month.

Extra-ordinary meetings may be held at any time when it is considered necessary.

Members who do not attend these meetings must give the reasons for their absence in writing to the Chairman.

IV. Further Regulations may be made by the Council on the majority of votes.

The Chairman, however, reserves the right to approve or reject any motion or proposed Regulation, even when the majority of votes is in favour of or opposed to such.

V. All regulations approved by the Council and the Chairman and properly made known to the Public by the Secretary must be carefully adhered to by all the persons concerned.

VI. Subject to the approval of the Chairman, the Council shall have the right to apply the following punitive measures when the Regulations are broken or ignored:-

- (a) Fines.
- (b) Withdrawal of rights to pasturage.
- (c) The Offender obliged to leave the Pella Grounds.

VII. A portion of the pasturage on Pella, as determined by the Council is to be reserved for largestock.

The owners of smallstock found in this portion shall be fined ten shillings (10/-) each time such livestock is caught trespassing in the reserved portion by any inhabitant of 17 years or older.

Of these ten shillings, five shall be placed Cashbox of the Council, and the other five shall be handed to the person who caught the offender.

VIII. Approved inhabitants of Pella may keep largestock and smallstock on the Pella pasturage, according to the Regulations and subject to the following conditions and rates.

The Rate for smallstock, i.e. sheep and goats, is as follows:-

Up to 400 - one penny per head per year

From 400 to 1,000 - threepence per head per year

From 1,000 to 2,000 - one penny per head per month

A maximum of 2,000 smallstock may not be exceeded.

The Rate for largestock, i.e. cattle and donkeys, is as follows:-

Up to 40 - nine pence per head per year

From 40 to 80 - two shillings per head per year

From 80 to 100 - one shilling and sixpence per head per month

A maximum of 100 cattle and/or 30 donkeys may not be exceeded.

All rates for rights to pasturage must be paid to the Council during the first month of the year, but the Council may arrange otherwise in special circumstances.

IX. The Council may hire pasturage to Outsiders, i.e. to Catholics or non-Catholics who are not inhabitants of Pella or who possess their own land, according to the following rates:-

10/- per month or portion thereof, per 100 smallstock or portion of 100

1/6 per month or portion thereof, per head of largestock

The maximum number of animals for which a hirer can obtain pasturage is to be 1,000 smallstock and 50 largestock

Pasturage shall not be hired to outsiders for periods longer than three months.

X. All stray animals of whom the owner is unknown shall be impounded. If the owner is known he shall be notified and warned to remove his livestock from Pella. If he should pay no attention to the warning the animals shall be impounded.

XI. The permission previously given to keep calves and lambs in a specially reserved portion is withdrawn.

Lambs which are definitely over the age of three months will not be allowed in the reserved portion to be determined by the Council.

XII. That district of the Mission Grounds known as Central Pella (or 'Pella Sentraal') shall be defined and marked out with beacons by a committee to be appointed by the Council. Only the inhabitants of Central Pella may hold and make use of rights to pasturage in this defined area. Smallstock belonging to other inhabitants may be impounded if found in this District.

The committee may inspect and define the other Districts if so desired by the inhabitants, and in such cases these provisions on trespass of livestock will also be applied.

XIII. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping an accurate account of the correct number of animals which each Occupier has on the Pella Mission Grounds.

The Council shall appoint a committee at least twice a year to assist the Secretary and enable him to conduct a thorough census of the livestock.

The committee shall consist of at least two members, one european and one coloured, and if more members are deemed necessary there shall be equal numbers of Europeans and Coloureds.

The committee shall have the right and duty to count the animals of every Occupier and make its report thereon to the Secretary.

Any Occupier who resists the counting of his livestock, or who in any manner attempts to hinder or prevent the duly appointed and empowered committee from performing its task, or who refuses to give the members the necessary assistance, shall be guilty of an offence, and will be dealt with under Articles V and VI.

The Council shall pay a reasonable salary to those appointed to carry out the census and counting of livestock.

XIV. The owners of shops or other business or trading establishments must pay an annual fee of £6 to the Council.

Cases concerning itinerant traders (or 'smouse') and speculators shall be dealt with separately by the Council.

XV. The Secretary of the Council shall hand over his Books to the Chairman at the end of the months of June and December of each year, when the Chairman may, if he thinks fit, audit them.

The Secretary shall also at the said times hand one tenth of the cash balance in the Council Cashbox and/or the Bank to the Roman Catholic Church of Pella.

The remaining money shall be used for local improvements, such as the cleaning of public dams, the repair of public buildings (Cathedral, schools, cemetery, diptank and pens), or to assist extremely destitute members of the congregation and/or the community.

XVI. All Catholics who live within three miles of the Cathedral must attend Divine Services every Sunday. Others who live at a greater distance and yet on the Pella Grounds must attend the Sunday service at least once a month.

XVII. All children who have passed their sixth year must attend school until they have either passed Std. VI or have reached the age of 16 years.

XVIII. Parents or others who fail to comply with the provisions of Articles XVI and XVII, or who send their children to schools other than those approved by the Church, may be deprived of their rights of residence on the Pella Mission Grounds.

XIX. Those guilty of committing public scandals may at any time be compelled to leave the Pella area.

Approved by the Chairman and Council,
at Pella, on the 27th day of January, 1941.

(sgd) + H. J. Thünemann
Vicar Apostolic

Vicariate of Keimoes

Source: RCMP/3

APPENDIX H

V + J

NEW GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF PELLA MISSION RESERVE

I. Preambulatory Explanation.

In the past the Bishop-in-Office had supreme authority in the management of the affairs of the Pella Mission Reserve. In view of the unavoidable delays in negotiations with the Government regarding the future of the Pella Mission Reserve, the Bishop-in-Office has resolved to resume the said supreme authority for the temporal management of the Pella Mission Reserve.

II. Council (or 'Raad') to advise and assist the Bishop-in-Office.

1. Representation of Councillors ('Raadsmanne')
 - a. One European.
 - b. One Non-european for each of the following districts: Pella Central, Kouroe & Annakoppe, Nougab and vicinity, Mik & Orange River.
2. Councillors shall be nominated by the Community, and appointed by the Bishop-in-Office, who may also reject any so nominated.
3. Councillors shall be appointed for a period of one year.
4. Councillors have no casting votes in the Council, and act only in an advisory capacity.
5. The Chairman of the Council shall be the Bishop-in-Office.

6. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be the Priest-in-charge.
7. The Council shall meet every three months. The Bishop-in-Office may at any time call an extra-ordinary meeting.

III. Funds.

1. Communal funds shall be obtained as follows:

a. Levying of fees for rights of occupation (similar to the hut tax and taxes on squatters).

i. All occupiers (or 'burgers'), i.e. those more or less permanently residing on Pella, shall be taxed as follows:

All males over 16 and below 65: 24/- p.a.

All females over 18 and below 60: 12/- p.a.

Schoolgoing children over 16 are excluded.

Teachers and lay personnel of the Mission are also required to pay this tax.

Traders and shop-owners shall pay £10 p.a.

ii. The mine-owners shall pay £20 p.a.

b. Levying of fees for rights of occupation to gardens.

i. Gardens of less than one morgen: 5/- p.a.

Gardens larger than one morgen: 10/- p.a.

The R.C. Mission is subject to this tax.

c. Levying of fees for Pasturage.

i. Smallstock

1-5 free

6-50 5/- p.a.

51-100 10/- p.a.

101-200 20/- p.a.

201-300 30/- p.a.

301-400 40/- p.a.

Over 400: For each 100, or portion of 100, exceeding 400 - £10 p.a.

ii. Largestock (Cattle and Donkeys)

Cattle: £1 per head p.a. (or any portion of a year exceeding one month)

Donkeys: 1-16 6/- a head p.a. (or any portion of a year exceeding one month)

Over 16 24/- a head p.a. (or any portion of a year exceeding one month)

iii. Hiring of Pasturage by Outsiders.

For Smallstock: 3d per head per month (or part)

For Largestock: 2/6 per head per month (or part)

2. These fees are payable half-yearly: on or before the 30th of March and the 30th of September.

3. With the exception of 1(b), the R.C. Mission is not subject to these taxes, in view of the fact that the secretarial work will be handled by its personnel, and this is to be regarded as adequate payment.

IV. Use of Funds.

Money in the Communal Funds shall be used as follows:

1. Payment of the Ranger, to cover travel costs, etc.

(The Secretary will not be paid)

2. Improvements in the Reserve, such as fencing, the repair of buildings, roads, diptank and pens, limekiln, cemetery, etc.

3. Charity, to destitute persons in exceptional circumstances, and in cases of sickness and death.

4. Funds may be used at a later date for the erection of a clinic, purchase of equipment, and for the salary of a nurse.

V. Ranger.

1. The appointment and duties of the ranger remain unchanged.

VI. Other Regulations.

1. The General Regulations for the Management of the Pella Mission Ground of 1941, as amended and supplemented, shall remain valid and apply to all persons residing on Pella, insofar as they are not superseded by these New General Regulations.

2. As provided for in Article 4 of the General Regulations of 1941, the Council may introduce new regulations subject to the approval of the Bishop-in-Office.

3. The Bishop-in-Office does not require the approval of the Council before introducing new regulations.

(sgd) + H. J. Thünemann
Bishop of Keimoes
25/5/1953

Source: RCMP/3

APPENDIX I

FIELDWORK & RESEARCH METHODS

The field research on which this thesis is based was carried in the course of four projects, three between January 1978 and September 1994 and the fourth ongoing since 1998. Together they represent a long-term research commitment to community studies of the Pella and Steinkopf Reserves. The first three projects gave particular attention to Pella, which was the only one of the Namaqualand Reserves that had yet to be subjected to anthropological study, and there was a need for comparative studies of all the Reserves to build up a resource of research data for use by those involved in various social issues relating to the Reserves.

In Project A I spent nine and a half months living in the Pella Reserve, spread over two periods of two and a half months in 1978 and a further period from June 1979 to February 1980. During the first two periods I established myself in the community and assembled a network of informants spanning as wide a cross-section of the community as possible. The results of this preliminary work were written up in a B.A. (Hons) dissertation on ethnicity and contemporary structures of social differentiation (Klinghardt 1978). In the third period I concentrated on studying the process of local government, both in the contemporary and historical contexts, as the extended period of familiarity with the community had enabled me to observe this process in action and had afforded me the time to tap both oral and written sources on the history of the Roman Catholic Mission, the community and local government in some considerable detail. This work was

written up in a M.A. thesis at the University of Cape Town in 1982 (Klinghardt 1982).

I subsequently undertook Projects B and C between 1983 and 1990 under the auspices of the South African Museum. They each comprised two parallel phases and were general studies of patterns of settlement and land use in the Reserves and Catholic missions in the Lower Orange River Basin, as well as nearby villages and mining settlements. Though the Orange River has always constituted a physical and socio-political barrier between the inhabitants of Little Namaqualand and Bushmanland and those of Great Namaqualand, a regional approach such as this made it possible to view these communities against a background of similar environment in which markedly different national historical processes have been in operation and thus illuminate significant features in their cultural formation. These studies also enabled additional material for Pella to be obtained to complement the data from Project A. Apart from Pella, I also undertook fieldwork in Warmbad and Gabis (Bondelswarts), Heirachabis, Onseepkans, Matjeskloof, Richtersveld and Steinkopf. I interviewed informants on a wide range of topics relating to patterns of social geography, farming activities, past and present distributions of land and water rights, and processes of cultural transformation over the past century. Between 1990 and 1994 I also undertook several private excursions to the field of study.

[Project D, a re-study of the Pella community with additional research in Steinkopf in the context of the transformation of South Africa after 1994, commenced in 1998 and is currently under way.]

In Project A I used four basic methods in examining the various aspects of the communities under study: (a) surveys of the households with questionnaires to obtain statistical data; (b) structured and unstructured interviews with informants to assemble data on group identity formation and social life in general, (c) observation of representative authorities and other organised associations to examine decision-making processes; (d) tapping documentary and oral sources to provide the necessary time depth to the study.

The tasks and objectives in Projects B and C were similar: to record over a number of years and different seasons of fieldwork the spatial layout and material organisation of a selected series of specific settlements. Field methods included statistical surveys and mapping of settlements, settlement units and associated human activities to enable systematic comparisons to be made of the Reserves. This involved recording activity areas (domestic proxemics), as well as monitoring patterns and cycles of activities within social, environmental and seasonal settings. It was also necessary to monitor human behaviour associated with specific spatial and material arrangements. The data gathered in this way was supplemented by information obtained from interviews with informants and the observation of daily and periodical activities, for at a higher level of abstraction, spatial, material and social behaviour had to be linked and analysed within the specific contexts of the communities' social strategies, attitudes and intentions, as integrated into the structure of the Reserve-dwellers' ideological and symbolic systems. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, these studies had to be placed in the historical structure of the region, so that parallels could be drawn from comparative studies. The data collected in the field was complemented and checked against information obtained from local and state archival sources in order to add a documentary historical dimension, and the use of dated sequences of aerial and other photographs augmented the mapping and photographic surveys made in the field.

Throughout the periods of fieldwork at Pella I lived in the Catholic Mission, a convenient arrangement that enabled me to establish close relationships with the missionaries themselves, as well as providing a relatively neutral base from which I could approach the various sections of the community without giving an impression of commitment to one or other faction involved in the political and social processes then in operation. I was always well-received by the people, though as was to be expected they were initially cautious in dealing with a stranger. Close acquaintanceship over the ensuing lengthy periods of fieldwork served to remove any lingering suspicions that I was a government official, a policeman or a priest in disguise. Most interviews were conducted in Afrikaans, but English was used with the missionaries and a number of European informants.

Field research undertaken in Cape Town and adjacent areas before, between and after the fieldtrips has included interviews with informants formerly resident in Namaqualand and Bushmanland. Though particular attention has been given to Europeans who had lived at Pella until it was proclaimed a Coloured Rural Area in 1974, a number of locally-resident Reserve-dwellers have also been interviewed in order to follow up certain aspects of an examination of oscillation between urban and rural areas by the inhabitants of the Reserves which had been initiated in Springbok and Keetmanshoop, a line of inquiry which had not been pursued by other researchers in the region.

The historical material has been drawn from the documentation preserved in the files of the Parish Archives at Pella Mission and in the Diocesan Archives at Upington, supplemented with material obtained from the State Archives in Cape Town and the National Archives in Windhoek, as well as a wide range of other sources including missionary publications, published official reports and documents, early travellers' journals and other literary works dealing with the Northern Cape and southern Namibia. All the material in the Parish and Diocesan Archives concerning the secular administration of Pella Mission and the Mission Farm was copied, with extracts and notes being made from material dealing with ecclesiastical matters. During Projects B and C the parish registers were copied, and have been computerized as part of Project D. Additional data was obtained from repositories in Gabis, Warmbad, Springbok, O'okiep, Onseepkans and Pofadder. A number of informants also kindly made available documents from their personal family records to me. A wide range of other sources, including missionary publications, published official reports and documents, early travellers' journals and other literary works dealing with Namaqualand, Bushmanland and southern Namibia have also been consulted. The material from the Parish and Diocesan Archives was for the most part in English, which was the official language of the Catholic Church in the Northern Cape until it was replaced by Afrikaans in 1968, but some early material, private communications between missionaries and ecclesiastical documents were in other European languages. I made my own translations from German, Latin and Afrikaans, but the priest-in-charge of Pella Mission very kindly translated various documents from French for me.