

characteristics persisted alongside the languages, artisanal skills, culinary practices, and Islamic traditions imported with slaves from around the Indian Ocean, providing a basis for individuals to forge alternative identities.

Evidence of such subaltern communities is fragmentary and sometimes conflicting, but no group identity was static. It is clear that the better-documented settler society continually renegotiated the terms of belonging; the outlines of indigenous, creole, mixed-race societies changed, as well. This social diversity has yielded a rich literature that establishes the general contours of various communities and maps their interactions.⁹ The history and ethnography of Khoikhoi and San communities,¹⁰ glimmers of Asian and nascent creole cultures,¹¹ characteristics of dominant settler society,¹² and a detailed picture of slavery and emancipation at the Cape are well documented.¹³ Currents of identity formation and collapse run through this scholarship, pointing toward the more recent work that explicitly interrogates identity and its categories.¹⁴ 5

Identities, Contingent and Performed

Variouly described as imagined, invented, and created, the intellectual framing of identity has been as malleable—and as effective—as its many lived experiences.¹⁵ Identity is not a fixed analytical concept, but rather is relational and contingent—like race, class, gender, and generation which are some of its constitutive elements.¹⁶ This theoretical emphasis on dynamism and purposeful construction does not mean that identity is only a fabrication of hindsight, or the imposition of control by dominant groups. On the contrary, even the deprecating categorization "Pygmy" has deep organic roots buried under layers of dispossession and power disequilibrium.¹⁷ Despite colonial "inventions," identities that surfaced during periods of contested interaction were, in fact, based on preexisting communities—not fabricated from whole cloth.¹⁸ This observation is as true for African societies as it was for settlers and slaves at the Cape. 6

Historically, then, identities have been both imposed and self-fashioned. The creation of distinct communities at the Cape shows that these processes were not mutually exclusive; individuals categorized into subordinated identities transcended social boundaries, and in some cases carved out alternative space for themselves. Amin Malouf emphasizes such agency, describing the self-conscious adoption or manipulation of identity in order to "belong" in a community. He sees the need to belong as motivation strong enough to explain shocking violence.¹⁹ Malouf's insights, though aimed at explaining more recent history, correlate with scholarship on earlier periods that casts identity as performative—a conscious choice with 7

both material and intangible outcomes.²⁰ The metaphor of performance implies both flexibility and selectivity: to perform or not; to adopt one role or another; to change roles midstream.²¹

Of course, there were significant constraints on such performances. Freed slave Angela van Bengal could perform the role of burgher Arnoldus Basson's housewife in a community of settlers, but she could no more perform the role of Governor than could her son-in-law Olof Bergh, though he was male, European-born, and high-ranking in the VOC bureaucracy. Gender, race, and class were not fixed, but there were limits on the extent to which individuals could puncture those categories in pursuit of belonging at the Cape. **8**

Identity and the Control of Labor

The prevailing taxonomy—determined by dominant norms but manipulated across the social spectrum—was embedded in paper: labels applied in the pages of the landdrost's reports; relationships implied in criminal investigations; social status noted in auction rolls; wealth accounted for in the opgaaf. This evident differentiation served fundamentally to control labor. **9**

Although legally explicit, the line between indenture and slavery blurred in practice. Company edicts protected Khoisan from enslavement from the earliest days of VOC settlement, but Jan van Riebeeck employed local servants, including Krotoa, whose incorporation into colonial society as Eva was never complete.²² Her liminal status was a harbinger of things to come for Khoisan, whose own family connections or sense of belonging were often no match for the colonists' insatiable demand for labor and the dominant society's concomitant ability to construe subordinate identities as subordinated labor. **10**

Legal slaves, imported by VOC ships from the east African coast, Madagascar, and across the Indian Ocean basin, were a significant segment of the Cape colonial population and a vital part of the economy as both commodities and labor. Valued and regulated, slaves left a paper trail through the eighteenth century that Khoisan labor did not. The formal registration of *ingeboekt* or indentured Khoisan workers did not begin until 1775, but the evidence for de facto bondage is strong enough to use the term to describe Khoisan labor throughout the eighteenth century.²³ **11**

Commando raids yielded captive women and children who were indentured on settler farms. Although the Company discouraged settlers from antagonizing independent Khoisan, officials did not actively inhibit impressing local labor. On the frontier, captives were a significant percentage of the labor force, so Khoisan workers and slaves were much more interspersed than in the more settled areas.²⁴ Though there were fewer slaves in frontier areas, colonial **12**

settlement was still strongly a slave society, in which both chattel slaves and other impressed laborers filled the lowest social and economic niche—a role many Khoisan sought to avoid or struggled to leave. Penn argues that there was "little difference between the condition of being a slave and the condition of being a servant."²⁵

It is important not to gloss over that "little difference" between slaves and servants, however. Working conditions were sometimes more harsh for Khoisan than for slaves, since it was in an owner's best interest to keep his capital investment alive, whereas there was no incentive not to work a Khoisan captive to death. Contemporary observers remarked on the degradation of those in servitude, and both the VOC and the British state took an interest—though largely an ineffectual one—in Khoisan welfare. A British summary of labor relations observed:

13

Although the polici [sic] regulations which have been given until the year 1803 are silent on the reciprocal rights and obligations which subsisted between the masters and the Hottentots who according to the already cited publications had engaged in the service of the Inhabitants, it is sufficiently known that the masters exercised the same discretionary power over their Hottentots which other Laws had granted them over their slaves, and that this has been the source of numerous well founded complaints on the part of the Hottentots since neither motives of self interest, the Hottentots not being saleable property, nor the superintending power of the Magistrates, could restrain the masters, who resided in the distant parts of the Colony, from tyrannising the Hottentots who happened to be under their control, and keeping them in a state worse than slavery itself.²⁶

Despite such an expression of concern, neither law nor custom effectively protected Khoisan from brutal servitude.

The report does, however, reiterate the point that Khoisan were not "saleable property," a crucial distinction between them and slaves. Economic imperatives or brute force pushed countless Khoisan into service, but those who could survive without working for settlers were not compelled to do so in the eighteenth century.²⁷ Perhaps the notation of Adam Kok as a Hottentot in the landdrost's ledger was a conscious manipulation of identity on Kok's part, a move away from a connection to chattel slavery, rather than a misreading of identity by a colonial record-keeper. Even the minimal documentation of Adam Kok's life makes him admittedly more legible than most enslaved, Khoisan, and mixed-race individuals of his time. However, his cameo archival appearances cannot firmly connect Kok to a specified colonial role; they can only point to the multiplicity inherent in performance.

14

Initial Social Permeability

The greatest range of performance undoubtedly existed at the intersection of identities, where colonial categories overlapped or collided. Subordinated women—slaves, freed slaves, or Khoisan—with European husbands, whether church sanctioned or common-law, could live as settler wives.²⁸ Their children were often included, unremarked upon, in settler family networks.²⁹ 15

The Basson family, for example, descends from one of the first Dutch immigrants to the Cape and his wife, Angela van Bengal. Angela had children before she married Basson in 1669. Her illegitimate daughter, Anna de Koning, married Olof Bergh, a Company soldier who eventually commanded the Cape garrison. Both Basson and Bergh became prominent landowners; their many children married across the ranks of settler society—wealth and status evidently outweighed race to determine belonging in settler society at the end of the seventeenth century.³⁰ 16

When Angela and Basson's eldest grandson, Arnoldus Willemsz married in 1722 or 1723, he chose a wife of substantial property. Maria Vosloo, recently widowed, had only two daughters, both already married, so she must have been at least ten years older than her new husband. As a widow, Maria controlled a fortune: three farms, each with a furnished house and resident slaves; a blacksmith's shop; and outstanding loans due to the estate. Kruijshoff, her principal farm, had a dairy, a wine cellar, and a wagonmaker's shop in addition to the house and farmyard. Maria or her late husband, Arnoldus Kruijsman, owed Arnoldus Basson Willemsz 13 rixdollars—half a year's rent on a loan farm, but a paltry sum in an estate worth 79,436:11:4 rixdollars, certainly not enough leverage to broker a marriage if Maria had not been willing.³¹ 17

Genealogy Chart: Fig. 4.1. The Vosloo Family

18

From uncertain origins, Maria had secured both wealth and status with her first marriage. Her union with Basson certainly cemented an alliance to another notable family, but given the members of the nascent gentry with whom Maria and Kruijsman had business dealings, she likely married Basson for his ability to manage the estate or for affection.³² As the Widow Kruijsman, Maria had money and connections of her own.

Both Kruijsman and Maria must have worked hard to achieve their position. In all likelihood, Maria's father was the Company's woodcutter, Johannes Vosloo—a man with money and status, but without acknowledged children.³³ Kruijsman arrived at the Cape as a midshipman. In 1699 he was seconded as a farmhand to Vosloo, for whom he worked until at least 1703. The following year he applied for and received his burgher papers in Drakenstein. He must have married Maria shortly thereafter. 19

Vosloo himself never married; in his will he declared that he had no lawful heirs.³⁴ However, he made bequests to Johannes van de Caab, Caspar van de Caab, Helena van de Caab, and to Christina and Anna Maria Kruijsman, Maria's daughters. Although Vosloo did not recognize his paternity, Maria made a bequest to "her father, Jan Vosloo of Drakenstein" in both of the wills she prepared in conjunction with her third husband, Jan Andries Dissel.³⁵ Kruijsman's estate owed 6,163:1:4 rixdollars to Jan Vosloo the Elder, and another 272:5:0 rixdollars to Jan Vosloo the Younger, indicating Kruijsman's relationship with his former employer continued for two decades after he left Vosloo's service. **20**

Surely it was not pure coincidence that Maria married a man who worked for her putative father. It seems more likely to assume she had some sort of relationship with Vosloo and that she was at least an occasional visitor—if not a resident—on his farm prior to her marriage. If she did not meet Kruijsman on Vosloo's farm, then Vosloo must have taken an active part in arranging the match, or at least facilitating their introduction. **21**

Given that Vosloo chose to make bequests to Caspar, Johannes, Helena, and to Maria's daughters (she died before Vosloo did), he must have had a particular relationship with these six people. Johannes Vosloo the younger, Caspar Vosloo and Maria Vosloo all appeared in the *opgaaf*, which indicates their place among their neighbors in the Drakenstein district.³⁶ The reference of a debt to "Jan Vosloo the Younger" in Kruijsman's inventory implies that Maria's brother was part of the local economy and was recognized by gentlemen appointed to oversee the administration of estates.³⁷ Both Helena and Maria made good marriages, despite being illegitimate and probably of mixed race. As Penn notes, "Favoured children of respected colonists probably passed unobtrusively into the ranks of colonial society, suffering no discrimination on account of their mixed blood."³⁸ Vosloo may not have legitimated his Cape-born children as Arnoldus Basson the Elder and Olof Bergh did, but they were part of settler society nevertheless. **22**

Cross Reference:

Antoinetta Campher's story and family tree are another example of a slave's descendants making space for themselves in settler society.
(chapter8.html#p11)

Colonial Personas: Khoisan and Mixed-Race Communities

Other indigenous and mixed families, however, were clearly described outside the settler orbit. Cornelis Koopman and his younger brother Bartholomeus were sons of Albertus Koopman, an immigrant from Utrecht, and Francina Wina van de Caab.³⁹ Although the loan farm ledgers do not comment on Bartholomeus's social status (*gedoopte Bastaard*), Cornelis's mixed-race heritage and Christian conformity were noted along with his loan payment **23**

records. Both sons shared parents of the same origins as the Bassons and the Berghs: a European-born father and a slave or Cape-born mother. Cornelis Koopman, born after 1720, was categorized differently from the mixed-race children born around the turn of the century, and differently from his own brother. It is not possible to reconstruct an identity based on a few lines in the landdrost's loan farm payment ledgers, but the fleeting appearances of individuals like Cornelis Koopman and Jan Swart Jansz testify to the presence of individuals who did not "pass unobtrusively" as settlers or forge an alternative colonial identity such as Griqua.

The different experiences of Albertus Basson Willemsz and Cornelis Koopman might simply have been due to class position. Basson's grandparents acquired wealth that Koopman's parents did not, and the richer family more easily navigated nascent settler family networks. This explanation leaves Bartholomeus out of the equation, though. He had the same modest parents as Cornelis, yet was not described as mixed race. More likely, the Koopmans exemplify the gradual reification of social identities taking place over the course of the eighteenth century. Fluid social boundaries slowly ossified, limiting the range of possible identity performances—but not eliminating choice completely. It is possible that Cornelis chose to emphasize his connections to one part of his family, while Bartholomeus claimed another. Since both men registered loan farms, nascent racial categories—whether asserted or imposed—did not inhibit their access to land claims, which were the basis of subsistence and a fundamental signifier of social identity. Whatever the Koopman's particular circumstances, it became less common for individuals to "pass unobtrusively" into settler society during their lifetimes (though transitions among other groups may have remained more permeable). By the middle years of the nineteenth century, Christianity, education, and social connections would not be criteria enough for full inclusion in the dominant social order, as the mixed-race family of missionary James Read learned with dismay. For them, the color bar descended painfully in the 1830s.⁴⁰

24

Cross Reference:

Read more about Khoisan land claims.

([chapter3.html#p32](#))

25

Other people excluded from settler society—or who chose not to belong to the dominant group—forged alternate possibilities. In addition to well-documented examples such as the Griquas and the Basters, limited independent Khoisan presence persisted within the settler orbit.⁴¹ Increasing colonial land claims along the Olifants River and the surrounding Cedarberg changed the movement and distribution of indigenous communities. Penn documents violent resistance through the 1790s, but not everyone took up arms. References to Hottentot servants in settler households document one path to survival.⁴² Limited loan farm registration in frontier areas indicates another strategy for working within encroaching

colonial economic structures. Although Khoisan and their colored descendants in the Clanwilliam district ultimately were excluded from independent land tenure in the nineteenth century, the option remained viable for over a hundred years.⁴³ Other sporadic archival appearances show people from the Olifants River area who moved to the heart of colonial settlement in search of opportunities. Some found work on settler farms, and one household of three adults and a toddler lived as tenants—not servants—on a Franschoek farm.

Like the fleeting references to Hottentots and Bastaards among loan farm records, the notations in the "Hottentot Register" cannot describe identities, only hint at their existence. The landdrost captured their presence near Stellenbosch in the newly-implemented "Hottentot Register."⁴⁴ In 1812, individuals categorized as Hottentot originally from the Olifants River were living in Drakenstein and Franschoek, far from the frontier. Their journeys and the frequency with which they returned home, if at all, lie beyond the ambit of the archives, despite greater documentation in the nineteenth century. The coming of British rule to the Cape in 1806 changed colonial administration; forms of registration proliferated and the 1809 Caledon Code increased the regulation (and exploitation) of Khoisan labor.⁴⁵ Even with these additions to colonial record-keeping, evidence of individual Khoisan lives remained sporadic. **26**

The traces that survive suggest a Khoisan population inclined toward mobility—much to the chagrin of colonial farmers trying to secure subordinated labor.⁴⁶ The extent of that mobility, whether from one farm to the next or from the Salt River to the Orange, varied widely. The few individual stories preserved and resuscitated exhibit a great range of motion.⁴⁷ **27**

The experience of Titus Valentyn and the others recorded by the landdrost in the early nineteenth century are embedded in the wider experiences of indigenous and mixed-race communities coming to terms with expanding colonial dominance.⁴⁸ Some people pushed off the land near the Olifants River, rather than retreating further from the colonial orbit, went to the heart of it. The format of the "Hottentot Register" that captured their presence indicates colonial administrators thought they were dealing with a stable population—people who had perhaps already moved a great distance, but who had come to stay, not people who were simply passing through.⁴⁹ Repeated attempts by masters to keep laborers on their farms suggest that assumption was wrong at the turn of the century. Legislation passed in the first two decades of the nineteenth century ultimately succeeded in immobilizing Khoisan labor, but the "Hottentot Register" of 1812 does not suggest permanence.⁵⁰ Only five of the 120 entries made between 1812 and 1823 represent a second appearance by the same family group or individual. **28**

The form of the "Register" asks for a list of the men, women, and children living on a settler farm. The "Register" also asks for details about dwelling places and kraals. Some veldkornets making inquiries on behalf of the landdrost commented on family relationships, but most did not, and very few responded to the request for information about residences. Perhaps the veldkornets could not be bothered to collect all the information the state requested, or perhaps they simply did not see houses and kraals they thought merited notation. Although the level of detail is uneven across the "Register," it does document mobility. **29**

One of the individuals identified as hailing from the Olifants River was 16-year-old Anna. She lived on Willem Louw's farm in the Moddergat with her mother, Mietje, and another mother-daughter pair, Efa and Klara. According to Veldkornet Roos, Efa hailed from the Sneeuwberg, but bore her 10-year-old daughter in Hottentots Holland, suggesting that Efa had been living near Stellenbosch for at least a decade. Mietje was born in Hantam, but bore Anna near the Olifants River, suggesting that Mietje had made (at least) two major moves in her life. Only little Klara lived within a day's travel of her birthplace when the "Register" was compiled. **30**

Jacob Rens, also originally from the Olifants River, lived with his wife Caatje Dikkop on J.P. van der Merwe's farm in Franschoek. Though they were born at different places on the frontier, Veldkornet de Villiers described Jacob and Caatje both as Goijman, but whether the couple shared a clan identity prior to marriage or showed a united front in the face of colonial inquiry is impossible to tell. They had three daughters, Roset, 14; Annaat, 12; and Jacomijn, 10. Six years later, de Villiers documented the family still on van der Merwe's farm, but without Caatje and Roset. He recorded the younger daughters now as adult women, aged 18 and 16, without commenting on the death, marriage, or migration that might have taken the other two women from the household.⁵¹ **31**

The farm-by-farm compilation in the "Register" shows mostly small groups of laborers, typically two or three adults along with their children. In cases where two or more adult women lived on a single farm, their respective children were usually identified, as we saw with Mietje and Anna. The "Register" rarely clearly indicates a family; Jacob, Caatje, and their daughters were an exception. Most adult relationships—siblings, other kin, or sexual partners—went unnoticed or unrecorded, so the links binding scattered groups of Khoisan together or the tensions pulling them apart are lost. **32**

Was it only a desperate need for work that kept five adult laborers on a farm in Franschoek? The four men hailed from different parts of the colony: Gert van der Horst was from Gourits River; Arnondustratjies was from Elandsfontein; Carolus from the Zwartkop River; and Africaander was identified as Goijman, but his birthplace was not mentioned.⁵² The lone woman, Caatje Libergete was from the Roggeveld. Were the five children ranging in age from **33**

7 to 14 all hers? What was their relationship to the men on the farm? Did these ten people share a hearth and a household? The "Register" is taciturn, telling us only that they lived, but not how.⁵³

The "Register" is equally selective about the residents on Andries Ziemans Franschoek farm. Though careful to note them as tenants, not laborers, the veldkornet's brief report stops short of explaining their situation. Thirty-year-old Titus Valentijn was born near the Olifants River, the child of a slave and a Goijman woman, as was Elsje Abrahamse, 23. Twenty-year-old Lijs Titus was born on van Schoor's Olifants River farm, the child of a Bastard father and Goijman mother.⁵⁴ Valentijn, Elsje, and Lijs were born near each other; they each had a Goijman mother. Was she the same woman? Or were the three related in some other way? Was Valentijn the father of Elsje's year-old baby Anna? The colonial state, concerned with the registration and regulation of labor, was not interested in life histories beyond ascertaining whether individuals were eligible for labor contracts or other forms of bondage. **34**

Colonial Personas: Settler Communities

Colonial settlers, regulated by both church and state, left a wider paper trail than Khoisan and slaves, though their paths remain littered with ambiguity. As a Christian congregation, the Dutch Reformed Church recorded marriages and baptisms, thereby documenting family relationships. As a merchant company, the Dutch East India Company assiduously filed land claims, tallied annual economic production, and recorded the transfer of assets—including slaves—thus documenting possessions. Significant elements of dominant settler identity emerge in this nexus of belonging and belongings. **35**

Class stratification was evident in settler society, but the distinctions were not rigid.⁵⁵ While the legal and economic difference between a soldier and a burgher were clear, in practice both men could work for wages as artisans or farm hands. The soldier, contracted as a *bouknecht* to a landowner, might apply for his burgher papers and in due time head his own household, thus erasing any previous difference in legal status. In a society continually augmented by migration, this transition from soldier to burgher was common. Hard work or a propitious marriage could narrow or reverse any gap in wealth between these two hypothetical men. In fact, marriage to a propertied woman was the most certain route to fortune for an immigrant man. Three stories detailed in subsequent chapters document immigrant men creating or joining settler family networks and thus establishing themselves firmly within the dominant colonial society. Willem van der Merwe, Barend Burger, and Barend Lubbe d'Oude married women of modest wealth. They survived, some of their children prospered, but none of them approached the levels of wealth attained by Martin Melck and Jan Andries Dissel, men who through marriage became among the richest at the Cape.⁵⁶ **36**

Dissel's case is relevant to the history of the Cedarberg because he was one of the first settlers to claim land along the Olifants River. His presence in the region, though brief, was significant enough to leave his name on a small watercourse, the Jan Dissels River, which joins the Olifants. Until Governor Cradock renamed the village in 1814, Clanwilliam was called Jan Dissels Vlei. **37**

When Dissel claimed Renoster Hoek as grazing land in 1726, he undoubtedly lived with his new bride, the twice-widowed Maria Vosloo, on her farm Kruijshoff. Two years later, Dissel took out another permit near the Olifants River.⁵⁷ Shortly thereafter, Maria died, but Dissel's quest for land continued, which is understandable. By 1731 he had 1,500 sheep, 280 cattle, and 24 horses.⁵⁸ In terms of livestock, vines, and wheat production reported in the 1731 opgaaf, Dissel's return placed him among a small economic elite. Guelke and Shell reckoned there were 882 census households in 1731.⁵⁹ Dissel, at this point a childless widower, ranked seventh among them in numbers of sheep and tenth in terms of cattle. He owned one of the twenty largest vineyards, and was among the top fifty grain harvesters. Given the extensive agricultural production at Kruijshoff, it is no wonder he sought additional land for grazing. **38**

Dissel and the others who pioneered claims at the outer limits of colonial territory in the years between 1725 and 1730 were not struggling *veeboere* (cattle farmers) trying to make a go of it in marginal country. Dissel, Daniel Pfeil, and Jacob Mouton were wealthy men with freehold farms and significant agricultural production. In contrast, Johannes Ras, Johannes Lodewyk Putter, and Jochem Koekemoer had more modest means, but even Ras, the poorest among them, surpassed Guelke's estimate of a household's minimal needs for survival, and he grew a little wheat.⁶⁰ In between, men like Willem Burger, Alewijn Smit, and Pieter van Heerden expanded their established households and farming enterprises into the Cedarberg. They had residential farms in more settled areas, and though their first farms were not bursting to capacity as Dissel and Pfeil's appear to have been, they took advantage of the availability of more land. Gentry, common landed farmers, and poorer stock farmers all participated in the process of expanding colonial territory, but it was the families in the middling tier who shouldered the brunt of conquest. Men like Dissel and Pfeil used the Olifants River region only for necessary grazing, while the Burgers and Smits built on their early claims. They and their children actively settled the Cedarberg frontier. **39**

The gentry's frontier interactions nevertheless shed light on the process of identity formation. Dissel's case is particularly provocative. His exceptionally large herds and flocks, along with evidence presented against two of his slaves who ran away in 1731, raises significant questions about how absentee ranchers like Dissel and Pfeil managed their outlying farms. Although Dissel had abundant agricultural produce, he did not have as many slaves as others with similar opgaaf returns. Pfeil, for example, had less livestock than Dissel, though he reported more vines and a larger grain harvest. But Pfeil had three knechten and 41 slaves, while Dissel **40**

claimed to work without an overseer and with only 14 slaves.⁶¹ Dissel was childless; his wife's daughters and sons-in-law were busy running farms of their own. As many as 76 households at the Cape had more slaves than Dissel did, but only nine had more cattle. Who besides Dissel and his 14 slaves did the work implied by his *opgaaf* return? He clearly relied on labor he did not report.

Another source mentions several of these servants without comment, however, accepting as commonplace that a man of Dissel's wealth would have many subordinates.⁶² When Dissel's slaves Moses van Angola and April van Bengal ran away in the company of nine other slaves from two neighboring Drakenstein farms, a commando pursued them and confronted the gang near the Olifants River. One deserter was killed in the melee; one commando member was shot for his trouble. Two other deserters avoided capture, but Moses, April, and six others stood trial. The sentencing records provide a detailed account of the deserters' journey from Drakenstein to the Cedarberg, including encounters with two men described as *knechten* working for Dissel, and a Khoisan shepherd named Dol tending to Dissel's beasts on one of his Olifants River farms. The deserters recounted another interaction with an unnamed Hottentot on Dissel's distant farm. We will never know if this individual worked for Dissel, belonged to a nearby *kraal*, or was simply passing through, but his presence in the deserters' testimony is a gentle reminder that the Cedarberg frontier was a site of ongoing engagement among many communities. The deserters' testimony thus documents the presence of individuals not otherwise enumerated in other colonial sources, such as the *opgaaf*. This mention of an anonymous shepherd shows that significant labor evaded capture in the *opgaaf*, even if the workers themselves did not avoid the work. **41**

The question of who provided labor is slightly less mysterious—though still opaque—for the households that settled in the Cedarberg. Among the early families who homesteaded along the Olifants River, only the Smits had many slaves at the time they made their first land claims there.⁶³ Alewijn also went on to have 24 children, another important source of labor for frontier families. Both single adult and married children circulated among their relatives' farms, staying and working with aunts, uncles, and cousins—a practice evident in the Burger, Lubbe and Campher family stories. And, of course, these families would all have employed (or coerced) Khoisan labor. Although the details and disposition of that work were never recorded, oblique references surface, a mention of Dol the shepherd or Hans the wagon-driver taken in stride, not needing any explanation at the time their presence was noted. **42**

Although both gentry and ordinary families made early loan farm claims in the Cedarberg, the more affluent farmers did not stay in the area. It was the prosperous middling households whose initial claims anchored generations of settlers, forming the basis of an identity that included neighboring families but excluded subordinate laborers and independent Khoisan. The social network that sustained these early land claims and supported subsequent **43**

expansion from the Olifants River Valley into the mountains had important roots in Stellenbosch and Drakenstein. Prior to making claims in the Olifants River area, Alewijn and François Smit farmed together, as did brothers Willem and Andries Burger. Willem Burger and Alewijn Smit also claimed neighboring farms in the Twenty-four Rivers area. Surely it was no accident that two of Burger's sons married two of Smit's daughters. Johannes Lodwyk Putter and Jochem Koekmoer were brothers-in-law, and Andries Kruger was Putter's stepfather. François Smit's wife, Maria van Staden, was a cousin of Willem Burger's wife, Elsje van der Merwe; Maria was also related to Jürgen Hanekom's wife, Maria van den Bosch. The wealthy claimants like Dissel, Pfeil, and Jacob Mouton did not feature in this web of overlapping relationships, though Mouton's children married into the network, firmly planting their family within the emerging orthodox settler orbit.

Cross Reference:

See the Smit sisters' connection to the Burger family tree.

(http://www.gutenberg-e.org/mitchell/detail/genealogy_charts/6-2BurgerFamily.pdf)

Family relationships entwined with land claims; both elements were significant components of settler identity. The ability to claim a freehold or a loan farm was not in itself sufficient to assert membership in the settler community. Although land was an important precondition for economic production, as well as a marker of social status, claiming one parcel of land was not the same as claiming another.⁶⁴ In addition to resource considerations, social geography was a significant factor. Even the most geographically distant loan farms were not "in the middle of nowhere," but were instead claims that complemented existing family land holdings. Nigel Penn shows seasonal connections across five geographical and climate areas in the Northern frontier region.⁶⁵ Farmers like Jan Dissel exploited multiple climate zones, not unlike the seasonal migration practiced by indigenous hunting and herding Khoisan. The settlers' ability to make and sustain disparate claims depended on social relationships, so their decisions about when and where to claim land were predicated on both practical and affinal considerations.

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Cross Reference:

The Lubbes provide a clear example of these familial spatial relationships, which are also mapped in Figures 6.3 and 7.4.

([chapter7.html#p20](#))

Fig. 4.2. A Path Into the Cedarberg

Consequently, frontier land claims located settlers physically in the landscape and metaphorically within colonial networks. Land owning and family connections were not the only signals that farmers shared a wider sense of identity, however. Over time, families in the Cedarberg increasingly owned housewares, furniture, and specialized tools that represented

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increasing wealth, and, significantly, demonstrated conscious affiliation with dominant material culture, a process documented in Chapters 6 and 7. These tangible cultural markers, along with other traces of contested colonial communities, took many paths into the Cedarberg.

Notes

Note 1: CA RLR 14:3, Cornelis Koopman permit for Doorn Bosch, *over de Olifants en Doorn rivieren*, 25 Oct. 1754–25 Nov. 1777 (per L. Guelke data); CA: 1/STB 11/19, folio 5, LFL, Bastaard-Hottentot Frederik Diederiksz payments for Kogelfontein, *over de Olifants rivier*, 12 July 1787, 31 Aug. 1792; CA: 1/STB 11/18, vol. 3, LFL, Bastaard Jan Swart Janz payments for Holle Rivier, *in de Hantam*, 20 Feb 1795, 25 Apr. 1798.

Note 2: CA: 1/STB/11/19 folio 10 p 5, LFL, Hottentot Adam Kok, for Stinkfontein, 31 Aug. 1792; Robert Ross, *Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

Note 3: H.F. Heese, *Groep sonder grense: Die rol en status van die gemengde bevolking aan de Kaap, 1652–1705* (Bellville: Institute for Historical Research, 1985; translated by Delia Robertson as *Cape Melting Pot: The Role and Status of the Mixed Population at the Cape, 1652–1795*. Johannesburg: self-published, 2006), 137.

Note 4: Pamela Scully, "Indigenous Women and Colonial Cultures: An Introduction," *JCCH* 6:3 (2005), http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_colonialism_and_colonial_history/toc/cch6.3.html.

Note 5: Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992). Though criticized by both Guelke and Penn for misunderstanding local conditions and South African history, her analytical insights show ways in which culturally embedded preconceptions shaped how European visitors could understand the people and landscapes they encountered in Africa and Latin America. Leonard Guelke and Jeanne Kay Guelke, "Imperial Eyes on South Africa: Reassessing Travel Narratives," *Journal of Historical Geography* 30:1 (2004), 11–31.

Note 6: Gyan Prakash, "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," *AHR* 99:5 (1994), 1475–90.

Note 7: Peter Kolb, *The Present State of the Cape of Good Hope* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968).

Note 8: Shula Marks, "Khoisan Resistance to the Dutch in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *JAH* 13:1 (1972), 55–80.

Note 9: The clearest articulation of this premise remains Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee, eds. *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652–1840*, 2nd ed. (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1989). Subsequent research has enriched the level of detail, but not overturned the conceptualization of Cape history as best understood through "intergroup relations."

Note 10: Russel Viljoen, *Jan Paerl, a Khoikhoi in Cape Colonial Society, 1761–1851* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Alan Barnard, *Hunters and Herders of Southern Africa: A Comparative Ethnography of the Khoisan Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Richard Elphick, *Kraal and Castle: The Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

Note 11: Kerry Ward, "Knocking on Death's Door: Mapping the Spectrum of Bondage and Status Through Marking the Dead at the Cape," in *Contingent Lives: Social Identity and Material Culture in the VOC World*, ed. Nigel Worden, 391–413 (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2007); James Armstrong, "The Estate of a Chinese Woman in the Mid-Eighteenth Century at the Cape of Good Hope," in *Contingent Lives: Social Identity and Material Culture in the VOC World*, ed. Nigel Worden, 75–90 (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2007).

Older literature includes: J.S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1957); W.M. Macmillan, *The Cape Colour Question: A Historical Survey* (Cape Town: A.A. Balkema, 1968); I.D. du Plessis, *The Cape Malays: History, Religion, Folk Tales* (Cape Town: A.A. Balkema, 1972); F.R. Bradlow and Margaret Cairns, *The Early Cape Muslims* (Cape Town: A.A. Balkema, 1978).

Note 12: Newton-King, *Masters and Servants*; Ross, *Status and Respectability*; Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier*.

Note 13: James Armstrong, "The Slaves, 1652–1834," in *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652–1840*, eds. Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee. 1st ed. (London: Maskew Miller Longman, 1979); Robert Ross, *Cape of Torments: Slavery and Resistance in South Africa* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1983); Nigel Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Robert C.-H. Shell, *Children of Bondage: A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1838* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England for Wesleyan University Press, 1994); Elizabeth Eldredge and Fred Morton, eds., *Slavery in South Africa: Captive Labor on the Dutch Frontier* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994); John Edwin Mason, *Social Death and Resurrection: Slavery and Emancipation in South Africa* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003); Pamela Scully, *Liberating the Family? Gender and British Slave Emancipation in the Rural Western Cape, South Africa, 1823–1853* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1997).

Note 14: The conference *Contingent Lives: Social Identities and Material Culture in the VOC World*, held at the University of Cape Town, 17–20 Dec. 2006 is a case in point; see the conference volume *Contingent Lives: Social Identity and Material Culture in the VOC World*, ed. Nigel Worden (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2007). Also see Herman Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (London: Hurst, 2003); Nigel Worden. "Forging a Reputation: Artisan Honour and the Cape Town Blacksmith Strike of 1752," *Kronos* 28 (2002), 43–65; Susan Newton-King, "For the Love of Adam: Two Sodomy Trials at the Cape of Good Hope," *Kronos* 28 (2002), 21–42; Ross, *Status and Respectability*; Viljoen, *Jan Paerl*.

Note 15: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Leroy Vail, ed., *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

Note 16: Thomas V. McClendon, *Genders and Generations Apart: Labor Tenants and Customary Law In Segregation-Era South Africa* (Portsmouth, N.H. Heinemann, 2002); Joan Scott, "Gender as a Useful Category of Analysis," *AHR* 91:5 (Dec. 1986), 1053–75.

Note 17: Kairn Klieman, "(Re)Constructing Histories: Central African Societies and the Burden of Myth," Chap. 1 in *"The Pygmies Were Our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Times to c. 1900 C.E.* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003).

Note 18: David Gordon, "History on the Luapula Retold: Landscape, Memory and Identity in the Kazembe Kingdom," *JAH* 47 (2006), 21–42.

Note 19: Amin Malouf, *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* (New York: Arcade, 1996).

Note 20: Rachel Sarah O'Toole, "Castas y representación en Trujillo colonial," in *Más allá de la dominación y la resistencia: Estudios de historia peruana, siglos XVI–XX*, eds. Paulo Drinot and Leo Garofalo (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2005), 50–51; Cecilia Morgan, "'A Wigwam to Westminster': Performing Mohawk Identity in Imperial Britain, 1890s–1990s," *Gender and History* 15:2 (Aug. 2003), 319–41. On mimicry, see Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

Note 21: Julia Wells, "Eva's Men: Gender and Power in the Establishment of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–74," *JAH* 39 (1998), 417–37. Though not couched in the language of performance, Wells evaluates Eva's choices in fulfilling colonial or Khoisan social expectations.

Note 22: Pamela Scully, "Malintzin, Pocahontas, and Krotoa: Indigenous Women and Myth Models of the Atlantic World," *JCH* 6:3 (2005), http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_colonialism_and_colonial_history/toc/cch6.3.html. Wells, "Eva's Men," V.C. Malherbe, "The Life and Times of Cupido Kakkerlak," *JAH* 20:3 (1979), 365–78.

Note 23: Russel Viljoen, "Khoisan Labor Relations in the Overberg Districts During the Later Half of the Eighteenth Century, c.1755–1795" (MA thesis, University of the Western Cape, 1993), 41–43; Fred Morton, "Slavery and South African Historiography," in Eldredge and Morton, eds., *Slavery in South Africa*, 3; Susan Newton-King, *Masters and Servants on the Eastern Cape Frontier* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 57–59.

Note 24: Newton-King, "The Enemy Within," 233.

Note 25: Penn, "Droster Gangs," 147.

Note 26: CA: M 142(a), *Laws Respecting Hottentots and Bastards at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–c.1823*, Art. 9.

Note 27: On Khoisan forced labor in the nineteenth century, see Wayne Dooling, "The Origins and the Aftermath of the Cape Colony's 'Hottentot Code' of 1809," *Kronos* 31 (Nov. 2005), 50–61; Barry Morton, "Servitude, Slave Trading, and Slavery in the Kalahari," in Eldredge and Morton, *Slavery in South Africa*, 167–88.

Note 28: Viljoen, "'Till Murder Do Us Part': The Story of Griet and Hendrik Eksteen," *SAHJ* 33 (1995), 13–32.

Note 29: On the incorporation of mixed-race children into "white" colonial society, see Heese, *Groupe sonder grense*. Scant information suggests that settler women did not have as much mobility across social groups as slaves or Khoisan. Maria Mouton committed adultery along with transgressing race and class boundaries when she had an affair with her slave, so it is difficult to untangle the implications of her punishment. For an account of this case, see Nigel Penn, "The Wife, the Farmer, and the Farmer's Slaves: Adultery and Murder on a Frontier Farm in the Early Eighteenth-Century Cape," *Kronos* 28 (2002): 1–20.

Note 30: O.F. Mentzel, *A Geographical and Topographical Description of the Cape of Good Hope (1787)*. Trans. G. V. Marais and J. Hoge, ed. H. J. Mandelbrote (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 1925), Vol. II: 114.

Note 31: CA: MOOC 8/4.48, Estate Inventory of Arnoldus Kruijsman, 5 Dec. 1722.

Note 32: Leonard Guelke and Robert Shell, "An Early Colonial Landed Gentry: Land and Wealth in the Cape Colony 1682–1731," *Journal of Historical Geography* 9:3 (1983), 265–86; Ross, "The Rise of the Cape Gentry," *JSAS* 9:2 (April 1983), 193–217.

Note 33: J. Hoge, "Personalia of Germans at the Cape, 1652–1808," *AYB* 9 (1946), 442. dv&P, 1966, 1082.

Note 34: "*geen kinderen nog maagde...an wie hij volgens regte iets behoofd vermaken.*" CA: CJ 2650:118, *Testamenten*, 1714; CA: CJ 2652:71, *Testamenten*, 1726.

Note 35: CA: CJ 2603:9, *Testamenten*, 23 Aug. 1725. CA: CJ 2603:28, *Testamenten*, 18 Mar. 1726.

Note 36: ARA: VOC 4096 *OBP*, 1725 opgaaf; VOC 4100 *OBP*, 1726 opgaaf; VOC 4103 *OBP*, 1727 opgaaf; VOC 4152 *OBP*, 1742 opgaaf.

Note 37: Carohn Cornell and Antonia Malan, "Household Inventories at the Cape, a Guide for Beginner Researchers" (Cape Town: UCT Historical Studies Department, 2005), 25–26.

Note 38: Penn, "Fugitives on the Cape Frontier," 94.

Note 39: H&L IV, 408, 410

Note 40: Elizabeth Elbourne, *Blood Ground: Colonialism, Missions and the Contest for Christianity in the Cape Colony and Britain, 1799–1853* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 368–70. Racial identity did retain a measure of fluidity, however; some of Read's family members regained white status in the twentieth century. Robert Ross, personal communication, April 2007.

Note 41: On independent mixed-race communities, see Ross, *Adam Kok's Griquas*; Elbourne, *Blood Ground*.

Note 42: CA: CJ 785.28, *Crimineel Sententie*, Case against Moses van Angola and others, 10 Jan. 1732; ARA: VOC 4158 *OBP*, 1743–1744, Vol. 2. Testimony in the case against Willem van Wyk, 1743, ff. 928–43; Viljoen, "Khoisan Labor Relations."

Note 43: Dawn D'Arcy Nell, "Land, Land Ownership and Occupancy in the Cape Colony During the Nineteenth Century With Special Reference to the Clanwilliam District," (BA Honours thesis, University of Cape Town, 1997).

Note 44: CA: 1/STB 16/139, *Hottentot Register* 1812. This register records Anna, Jacob Rens, Titus Valentijn, Lijs, and Elsje Abrahamse all as Hottentots originally from the Olifants River area then residing in the Stellenbosch magisterial district.

Note 45: Wayne Dooling, "The Origins and the Aftermath."

Note 46: Viljoen, "Khoisan Labor Relations;" Malherbe, "Diversification and Mobility of Khoikhoi Labor in the Eastern Cape Districts of the Cape Colony Prior to the Labor Law of 1 November 1809," (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 1978).

Note 47: Viljoen, *Jan Paerf*; Malherbe, "Cupido Kakerlack." In addition, relevant archival material remains unexploited, for example CA: CJ 785.28, *Crimineel Sententie*, Case against Moses van Angola and others, 10 Jan. 1732; and other cases of desertion, including ARA: VOC 4010, f. 88r, 16 Aug. 1673. ARA: VOC 4011, f. 69v, 16 Nov. 1674. ARA: VOC 4013 f. 164v, 16 Jan. 1677; f. 245; f. 252; f. 318v–319r. ARA: VOC 4014, f. 537r, 1 Sept. 1678; f. 386, Dagh 14 Mar. 1678; f. 391 Dagh 25 Mar. 1678. ARA: VOC 4015, f. 225, Dagh 16 Jan. 1679; f. 227, 228, f. 235. I am grateful to Jim Armstrong for sharing his seventeenth-century references with me.

Note 48: This process persisted for a century; for a later version, see Charles van Onselen, *The Seed is Mine: The Life of Kas Maine, a South African Sharecropper, 1894–1985* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995).

Note 49: CA: 1/STB 16/139, *Hottentot Register*, Compiled According to Proclamation of 23 Apr. 1812.

Note 50: Dooling, "Origins and Aftermath," 51.

Note 51: CA: 1/STB 16/142, *Hottentot Register*, 1818.

Note 52: Elandsfontein was Griqua elder Cornelis Kok's farm in the Copperberg (CA: 1/STB 11/18, LFL; 1/STB 11/19, LFL, f. 8, p 25; RLR 24:144, 5 May 1776 new permit). A possible connection to Arnondusmatijs, though tantalizing, is probably coincidence, since Elandsfontein was a common name, given to at least eight other farms in addition to Kok's (L. Guelke RLR data).

Note 53: CA: 1/STB 16/139, *Hottentot Register*.

Note 54: Jan van Schoor held the permit on Hendrik van der Wat's Gat from 1778 to 1790 (CA RLR 35:116 4 Apr. 1787–30 June, 1790, per L. Guelke data), and on De Caffres Kraal from 1790 (RLR 6:231, 29 June, 1790, per L. Guelke data). Both farms were near the Olifants River.

Note 55: Mentzel II:107.

Note 56: For a brief discussion of Martin Melck's life, see Shell and Guelke, "Landed Gentry," 279–80.

Note 57: CA: RLR 6:85, Renoster Hoek to Jan Andries Dissel, 15 July 1726–16 Aug. 1728. Renewed through 31 Oct. 1732, CA: RLR 7:54, Grootte Zeekoe Valleij to Jan Andries Dissel, 14 Apr. 1728–14 Apr. 1729. Renewed through 5 July 1732, CA: RLR 9:205 (per L. Guelke data); ARA: VOC 4100, *OPB*, 1726 opgaaf, Drakenstein p. 8.

Note 58: ARA: VOC 4100 *OPB*, 1731 opgaaf, Drakenstein p. 11.

Note 59: Guelke & Shell, "Landed Gentry," 265, 273–75.

Note 60: Ras reported 30 cattle and 70 sheep in the 1731 opgaaf. Guelke's minimum estimate is 20 cattle and 50 sheep, see "Freehold Farmers and Frontier Settlers, 1657–1780," in *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652–1840*, eds. Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee, 2nd ed. (Johannesburg: Maskew Miller Longman, 1989), 87.

Note 61: Daniel Pfeil's 1731 opgaaf return: 30 horses, 156 cattle, 450 sheep, 60 swine, 30,000 vinestocks, 350 *muid* wheat harvested, 10 *muid* rye, and 90 *muid* barley.

Note 62: CA: CJ 785.28, *Crimineel Sententie*, 10 January 1732, the case against Moses van Angola and others.

Note 63: ARA: VOC 4118 *OBP*, Francois Smit's return, 1732 opgaaf, Drakenstein p. 6.

Note 64: Ross, *Status and Respectability*, 80–83. Moreover, the social and symbolic importance of the ability to claim land is embedded in South Africa's colonial history and historiography: P.J. van der Merwe, *Trek: Studies oor die mobiliteit van die pionersbevolking aan die Kaap* (Cape Town: Nasionale Pers Beperk, 1945); Guelke, "Early European Settlement of South Africa," (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1974); Norman Etherington, *Great Treks: The Transformation of Southern Africa, 1815–1854* (London: Longman, 2001).

Note 65: Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*, 19