

**The Decline of Agriculture in Rural Transkei
“the case of Mission Location in Butterworth”**

**A thesis Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree of**

Masters in Rural Development

Of

Rhodes University

By

Siyanda Vincent Ngcaba

November 2002

Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
Chapter One: <i>Introduction</i>	
1.1. The Study area.....	1
1.1.1 The Transkei.....	1
1.1.2 Butterworth.....	3
1.1.3 Mission Location.....	5
1.2. Methodology.....	6
1.2.1. Primary Sources.....	6
(A) Sources used.....	6
(B) Problems encountered.....	7
1.2.2. Secondary sources.....	8
(A) Sources used.....	8
(B) Problems encountered.....	9
1.3. Chapter Outline.....	10
Chapter Two: <i>Betterment and Rehabilitation Planning in South Africa</i>	
<i>“A Brief Overview”</i>	
2.1. Introduction.....	13
2.2. The Socio-economic context of Betterment and Rehabilitation.....	13
2.3. The Betterment Scheme.....	15
2.4. The Rehabilitation Scheme.....	19
2.5. Implementation difficulties and policy-embedded solutions.....	22
2.6. The Tomlinson Commission and subsequent Government Reserve Policies.....	24
2.7. Conclusion.....	27
Chapter Three: <i>The Rehabilitation Scheme in Mission Location</i>	

3.1. Introduction.....	29
3.2. The planning Committee’s Report: findings and Recommendations....	30
3.2.1. Population and Settlement.....	30
3.2.2. The Physical condition, distribution and use of the land in 1945.....	32
3.2.3. Implementation of the Committee’s Recommendations.....	33
3.3. Implications of the Report for Agriculture in the area.....	34
3.4. Conclusions.....	41

Chapter Four: *Agriculture in Mission Location Today*

“A case of decline”

4.1. Introduction.....	43
4.2. A Summary and Analysis of Results.....	46
4.2.1. Access to land and the nature of tenure.....	46
4.2.2. Extent of cultivation.....	50
(A) Cultivation of Amasimi.....	50
(B) Cultivation of Iigadi.....	58
4.2.3. Livestock ownership.....	59
4.3. Conclusions.....	61

Chapter Five: *Summary and Conclusions*

5.1. From the Rehabilitation Scheme to a decline in Agriculture: “the story of Mission Location in Butterworth, Transkei”.....	62
5.1.1. Conservation Planning and the Reserve Policies in South Africa.....	62
5.1.2. Mission Location and the Rehabilitation Scheme.....	67
5.1.3. The Story of a decline in Agriculture in Mission Location today.....	70
5.2. Concluding Discussion.....	76

Bibliography

Glossary

Maps for: 1) The Eastern Cape Province; 2) Butterworth Municipal area; 3) the town of Butterworth and Mission location with all its residential areas (including Bhongoza).

Abstract

The following dissertation sets out to investigate the decline of agriculture in Mission location at Butterworth, Transkei, using the Rehabilitation Scheme as a benchmark. The scheme was introduced in 1945 to combat soil erosion and improve agriculture in the African reserve areas, as the South African government claimed. The dissertation argues that this claim by the government served to mask the real intentions behind the scheme namely, to regiment the migrant labour system by depriving as many Africans as possible of productive land so that they were unable to fully subsist by means of agriculture. This is further shown by analysing the impact of the Rehabilitation scheme in Mission location in which a substantial number of people lost arable land as a result of the implementation of the scheme in 1945. These people were consequently denied the wherewithal to subsist by agriculture. Moreover, the efforts of the government resulted to a modernisation of agriculture by making it more cash-based- for example through the introduction of fencing, the need for tractors as a result of a decline in stock numbers (in part as a result of stock culling). Most people could hardly afford this type of agriculture and were consequently forced off the land. The dissertation concludes that indeed the decline of agriculture in Mission location can be linked to the changing agricultural and land-holding practices brought about by the government- especially the introduction of the Rehabilitation scheme.

Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1. The Study Area

1.1.1. The Transkei

The people of the Transkei, which is the stretch of land situated in the south-eastern part of the Republic of South Africa, were ruled by independent African chiefdoms until the beginning of the 1870's when white rule was extended beyond its borders through annexation (Saunders, in Saunders & Derricourt, 1974: 185). First it was the extension of control, and not necessarily formal annexation, which saw the Cape Province that had been granted responsible government, bringing the Transkei within its bounds (Saunders, 1974). Though it was a lengthy and often difficult process, Transkei was annexed, bit-by-bit, and this was finally accomplished in 1894 (Saunders, 1974). The result of this was that, by 1894, the whole of Transkei was brought under white magisterial rule, with government-appointed location headmen that reported to the district magistrates comprising the local leadership.

Annexation of the Transkei served a number of purposes for the Cape administration and its white citizens. Firstly, it allowed white land seizure especially in the Ciskei, then called British Kaffraria, since it became possible to dump Africans in this part of the Cape in the Transkei (Saunders, 1974). To accomplish this, Transkei had to be kept separately from the Cape colony proper; that is, it had to be ruled differently from the Cape Province, and land grabbing by whites in the area was prevented at all costs. Secondly, if Transkei was fully incorporated into the Cape Province, the white population, which by then was only one third of the Cape population, could have been outnumbered (Saunders, 1974). Consequently, it was agreed upon by the Cape politicians that Transkei should not only be ruled more autocratically, but also should be made a "reserve" to protect it from white farmers' inroads, it was claimed. But Saunders rightly points out that this was also going to make it easier to turn the area into a labour pool. The danger of Africans outnumbering whites was that, given their qualification to vote if they earned an annual salary of fifty pounds or possessed landed property to the value of twenty-

five pounds, they could have had more say in the government of the day (Mbeki, 1964). So Africans were not only going to be ruled separately from the Cape, but were also going to be disenfranchised; this being done by means of successive legislations culminating in the passing of the Bantu self-Government Act of 1959 that eliminated the representation of Africans in both the House of Assembly and the Senate, and also put in place the Bantu Authority system (Mbeki, 1964). Consequently, the only place for Africans in the white areas of South Africa (comprising 88% of the total land surface of the country and containing practically all the natural resources and advanced development) has been roughly that of those who provided their labour to the white economy (Mbeki, 1964). Moreover, this has been made worse by the state of the reserves, which according to Mbeki (1964) were South Africa's backwaters, primitive rural slums, soil eroded and underdeveloped.

Comprising a total of 3 855 692 hectares or rather 4, 5 million morgen in extent, Transkei is bounded by the Umtamvuna river in the north, the great kei river in the south, the Indian ocean in the east, and the drakensberg mountains in the west (Prinsloo, 1976: 5-6). Historically, the area has been occupied mainly by two different ethnic groups namely, the Cape Nguni (mainly Xhosas though there are other immigrant groups such as the Mfengus and the Bhacas), as well as the South Sothos.

Of the 4, 5 million morgen total area of Transkei, 1 million is suitable for arable farming according to Leeuwenberg's (1977) research findings, and this state of affairs might have changed by now as a result of a number of factors including soil erosion. According to Leeuwenberg, climatically the rainfall is nowhere less than 20 inches a year. Though unreliable, rain falls during the summer season between November and February. With fairly good rains, many perennial rivers, and a fairly high quality of the soil, Transkei has a fairly good agricultural potential (Prinsloo, 1976: 6). But this is in contrast to a regression in the economy of the Transkei that has taken place over the years. Such a regression is best illustrated by two processes; in the first place, there has been a decline in food production over the

years and consequently more maize, the staple food, has been imported than is locally produced. In the second place, there has been an isolation or extrusion of large numbers of people from subsistence farming, and this inevitably brought about a large-scale dependence on migrant labour remittances (Leeuwenberg, 1977: 7). Poor agricultural development (for instance as a result of most of the ploughing that was-in the past- done by ox-drawn ploughs that lightly till the soil), as well as overstocking that inevitably led to soil erosion, are said to be responsible for a decline in food production (Leeuwenberg, 1977). Overstocking and the resultant soil erosion led the government to introduce soil conservation through the Betterment and the Rehabilitation schemes not only in the Transkei, but also in all the reserve areas. But as an African reserve area in which large numbers of people were concentrated on too little land, Transkei could become nothing but an area where human and livestock populations were congested, and consequently an area where it was virtually impossible to have a piece of land large enough to provide a family with full subsistence.

1.1.2. Butterworth

According to McGregor (1977: 1), on the banks of the Gcuwa river, where the supreme Xhosa paramount chief Hintsa's great place was located when Reverend William Shaw, the only ordained man who came with the British settlers, came to ask for permission to build a mission station in the area, lies the town of Butterworth. Butterworth is one of the 28 districts that made up the Transkei. The Methodists founded it in 1827 as the first Mission station in the Transkei (Sampong, Owusu-Acheampong & Musampa, 1991: 10). In effect, it represented the first Missionary infiltration in the Transkei. Though with a humble start, the settlement slowly grew into a center of commercial activities especially when the impetus was provided by the selection of the town as the headquarters of the British troops during the Kaffir wars of the 1870's and 1880's (Sampong et al, 1991: 10).

Butterworth lies 120 km from Umtata, the capital city of the former Transkei, and 110 km from East London, the nearest harbour town (Sampong et al,

1991). It is only 30 km from the Kei River, the former border between the Transkei and the Republic of South Africa. The area of the town in 1991 was recorded as 1 989 hectares.

Economically the development of the town can mainly be divided into two distinct phases. Phase one is the period before 1970 during which the development of the town mainly depended on such advantages as its location on the National road and its rail connections. During phase two, that is the period after 1970, the town changed a great deal as a result of its selection as one of the growth points in the of the industrial decentralisation policies of the South African government (Sampong et al, 1991: 11-12). Moreover, though very little or nothing has been written about agricultural development in Butterworth per se, it is asserted here that, the description of the state of agriculture in the entire Transkei as provided above here includes Butterworth.

One of the most important parts of districts in the reserve areas is what is called 'iilali' (locations) especially since the bulk of the population in these areas is to be found there. In Butterworth there are twenty-five of these. Iilali (singular) is the crux of what makes up rural areas and according to Leeuwenberg (1977: 5) can be defined as a fairly well defined cluster of homesteads that is a basic unit of settlement with its local name, its own grazing and agricultural lands. The average size of an iilali can be anything between 3 and 12 square miles, and a government appointed headman, who is answerable to the district magistrate, is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the area- such as the allocation of land (Leeuwenberg, 1977). Today, especially with the advent of democratic rule that saw the Transkei being made part of the Eastern Cape Province, headmen work alongside Local Government councilors- as in terms of the new Local Government dispensation that was established in 1999. Two types of iilali are found in the reserves; these are, first, the ordinary locations and second, the Betterment areas (that is, areas which have been declared in terms of the government conservation schemes for the purposes of reversing soil erosion and improving agriculture, as it

was claimed in government circles). Mission location, which is the subject area of this dissertation, is one of the locations that make up the rural part, or rather the countryside, of the Butterworth district.

1.1.3. Mission Location

Mission location, which encircles the Butterworth town in the shape of a letter C, bounding it on the NW, SW and SE (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946: 1), has one of the most interesting histories both in Butterworth and in Transkei as a whole. To illustrate this, it is the home of the first Missionary station in the entire Transkei, namely, the Ayliff Memorial Church originally set up in 1837, as well as a missionary junior secondary school founded in 1853.

The location has three well defined sectors, namely, Ngxalathi, Mission central and Mabinza's or Mzantsi (meaning South), which together divide into nine separate residential areas, eight of which are in Mission central and Mabinza's (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946: 1). Mainly four headmen have ruled the area since the introduction of the Rehabilitation scheme in 1945. These are Mr. C. W. Monakali, whose headmanship saw the introduction of the scheme; Mr. Dabula Mampofu; Mr. Mzoli Zitumane; and Mr. Mtsibeli Tsipa who was appointed by the government in 1998 and is still in office at present. With the 1999 local government elections that brought about a new dispensation in this sphere of government, Mission location now has Mr. Kholisile Mpeluza, a former sub-headman, as its first councilor working side-by-side with the headman. Mission location has a total area of 4 906 hectares, and for the purposes of this dissertation Mission central, which the researcher is more familiar with, was chosen. Out of the four residential areas that make up Mission central (namely Mmangweni, Sigingqi, Jekete and Bhongoza), only one (Bhongoza) was chosen as the actual study area. The reason for choosing only one residential area is that the area is now too large (up to 600 or 700 dwelling sites and, because all the four areas exhibit the same characteristics, at least as far as agriculture is concerned, choosing one randomly was considered appropriate and generalization was thought of as possible.

Bhongoza has 118 dwelling sites. Like the rest of the location, something particular would strike any visitor to the area. This is the abandonment, or rather absence of cultivation, in the lands that were demarcated for this particular purpose in terms of the Rehabilitation scheme that was introduced to the area in 1945. It is this absence of cultivation, characterized here as a decline in agriculture, that is the subject matter of this dissertation, especially in view of the fact that the introduction of the Rehabilitation scheme had the specific aim of improving agriculture in the area.

1.2. Methodology

1.2.1. Primary Sources

Primary sources are sources that provide data collected at first hand; that is to say, they are original sources of data produced by the people responsible for the actual collection of such data (Mann, 1985: 67). There can be quite a number of problems with the definition of primary data sources. Firstly, a purist definition tends to suggest that the writer has personally collected data him/herself, a proposition that is falsified by the case of many writers who might be involved in the writing up of information collected by for example many other people such as in the case of a census (Mann, 1985). Secondly, the author might have made use of research assistants in the collection of data (Mann, 1985). But, despite these problems, what is important in the description of primary sources is that they provide original data, that is, data that has not existed before.

(a) Sources used

The main source of data collection used in this dissertation is the interviews conducted on a one-to-one basis. It is true that the subject matter of Sociology is interaction, and that one way of achieving this is by verbal conversation between the Sociologist and the party who is the source of the sought-after knowledge in order to gain systematic knowledge of social reality, [or rather what is thought of as social reality] (Benney & Hughes in Bulmer, 1977: 234). Moreover, since every

conversation has its own balance of revelation and concealment of thought and action (Mann, 1985), one-to-one interviews were chosen in order to get an insight of the peculiar experiences of each different respondent. The interviews were based on a pre-arranged interview schedule containing 14 questions and the responses were recorded by means of a tape recorder. A total of two tapes were used to record the interviews. The main advantage of this arrangement is the uniformity it accords to the interview process, or that it allows the interviewer to ask the same questions in a pre-determined order as well as to record the responses in a standardised way (Mann, 1985).

But who was interviewed and how were these chosen (that is, what method of sampling was used)? Basically, 21 homesteads were targeted for an interview, even though in the end only 17 were successfully interviewed (the other four being absentee landlords). The method of sampling used was however a mixture of both cluster sampling, a method by which sub-units (in this case households) are grouped together and work is therefore concentrated on them, and focus group sampling because, though no group interviews were conducted, those selected all had the same characteristics or interests as Mann (1985) defines a focus group (and these were peculiar to them throughout the area). These were chosen because they commonly had the same privilege of being the only ones with access to arable land in the area and, since it was felt that they could all be possibly interviewed successfully, all 21 of them were therefore targeted for an interview.

(b) Problems encountered

Three main problems were encountered in the process of conducting interviews. Firstly, there was a communication problem arising from the fact that most respondents could not respond to the questions as a result of them being scheduled in English. Most of the respondents were however illiterate to semi-literate, and they spoke Xhosa as a first language. To overcome this, the interviewer, who himself speaks Xhosa as a first language, improvised by translating the questions into Xhosa, thus facilitating communication and making possible the interview process.

To ensure that there was no departure from the original meaning of the questions, the interviewer, using his knowledge of both English and Xhosa, did translated the questions word for word. Secondly, the interviewer had to grapple with the question of what the respondents were going to get out of both their time spent in response to the questions as well as the outcome of the research itself (a question that was constantly asked throughout the interviews). For instance, it was asked whether the interviewer is a government agent attempting to revive agriculture in such an area where the latter has declined considerably. This is not an uncommon question in research situations since Benney & Hughes in Bulmer (1977: 237) make it clear that, for the interviewer, the benefit is clearer as the time given up by the respondents accounts for this, but for the respondents, the benefit is less apparent. Thirdly, as mentioned above that only 17 out of 21 households were successfully interviewed, there was a problem of absentee landlords. These four were eventually not interviewed as a result of their absence.

1.2.2. Secondary Sources

This category of data collection sources differs from primary sources in that it consists of sources of data gathered at second hand; that is, it is made up of sets of data collected from other people's original data (Mann, 1985: 67). Mann makes an interesting example to illustrate this definition. He talks of an author who for instance claims that about a third of dukedoms in Britain have been divorced, and says that, if this information was obtained from a book or journal by someone else, then it constitutes secondary data, and the book or article that is the source, a secondary data source.

(a) Sources use

The main secondary data source used in this dissertation are the South African government records that document the planning as well as the subsequent implementation of the Rehabilitation scheme in Mission location, Butterworth, in 1945. All these reports were obtained from the Cape Archives in Cape Town and have formed an integral part of Chapter three of the dissertation.

(b) Problems encountered

If any serious problem was encountered in the course of this dissertation, it is to be found in this particular subsection. The major problem here was to find the actual place where the government records were located. The initial belief was that these records are housed in the department of agriculture in the Bota Sigcau building in Umtata, which was the headquarters of all government departments in the independent Transkei. With this view in mind, a visit was made to Umtata in July 2001. On arrival, the researcher had to move between the department of agriculture, its Registrar's division as well as the department of Local government without even finding a trace of the said documents. What was so humiliating was the fact that even the staff members in these departments knew virtually nothing about both the Rehabilitation scheme as well as the location of documents about it. This was made worse by the bureaucratic structure of the department of agriculture, which meant that the researcher had to deal with someone who was appointed shortly after 1994 and had never worked there before. Poor record keeping also meant that these records were difficult to trace systematically. Eventually, one person who had worked there for some twenty years advised the researcher to go to Butterworth since, as the headquarters of the Fingoland region, it was possible that these documents were there as a result of transfers that came up with the establishment of the region.

In Butterworth, however, the same problems of poor knowledge by staff members, staff reshuffling and bureaucratic tendencies repeated themselves. Other problems in Butterworth included (i) the location of the department of Agriculture and Land affairs on a flood plain, and the fact that the heavy rains that hit Butterworth in 1985 did not only drown the buildings, but also destroyed most of the documents in them. For example, the map of Mission location the researcher was shown was in pieces; (ii) there were also problems with staff members who were reluctant to give a helping hand to the researcher. In this connection it was not uncommon to find most offices locked and most staff members in one office either

chatting with the sun shining through the window or even napping. It was also humiliating to be told that the planning officer (who would have been the most suitable person to attend to the researcher) had gone to attend a course in the Northern Province without even leaving a replacement. To complain about this an attempt was made to contact the MEC for Agriculture in the province, but to no avail. So Butterworth, too, was not of any help to the research. While still in Butterworth, numerous phone calls were made to the similar departments in both Bisho and East London, but even this did not bear any fruits.

Then it was thought that the Transkei government Archives in the back of the Nelson Mandela Museum building in Umtata might help. This meant another trip back to Umtata. On arrival there, with the sincere help of friendly staff members, the search for the documents continued, but still nothing was forthcoming. This, too, was given up and it meant the end of 2001 without the required documents.

It was only in March 2002 that the researcher was advised to visit the Cape Archives in Cape Town. This did not only result to a week stay in Cape Town that ended with the recovery of all the sought-after documents, but also shown staff and organization in contrast to the Transkei government departments. The staff in Cape Town were very friendly and helpful, had a clear understanding of most of the needed documents, and record keeping was of an amazing professional level. This ended the nightmare and the researcher went home with the necessary documents.

1.3. Chapter Outline

This dissertation, which mainly seeks to investigate the decline of agriculture in rural Transkei through the case of Mission location and using the Rehabilitation scheme as a benchmark, has five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction. Chapter two provides a discussion of the introduction and course of the Betterment and Rehabilitation schemes in South Africa in line with the reserve policies of the South African government. The highlight of the chapter is the historical dispossessions of

Africans' lands and their subsequent confinement to the reserve areas with the result that the practice of agriculture was not only impossible and soil erosion inevitable in these areas, but also that majorities were left with no choice but to seek wage labour. This was not even overhauled by the introduction of soil conservation. In this chapter, this state of affairs is treated as the actual intention behind the reserve policies of the South African government through to the forced removals of Africans into the reserves that were carried out through to the 1980's.

In chapter three, the impact of the conservation schemes is examined with particular reference to Mission location, the study area, where the introduction of the Rehabilitation scheme took place in 1945. Central to the chapter are the land dispossessions of scores of families in the area resulting specifically from the scheme and their inevitable consequence of forcing those families out of agriculture as a source of livelihood.

Chapter four is very much based on the present state of agriculture in the area, and can be treated as a long-term evaluation of the progress of the Rehabilitation scheme. The remarkable decline in both arable and livestock agriculture in Mission location is the main subject of this chapter. The situation is not only that of exclusion of large numbers of families from both arable and livestock farming (measured in the smallness of the total number of families with access to both arable land and livestock), but also that even the majority of those with access to land are not using it for arable purposes. This is a result of changing agricultural and land ownership practices over the years especially brought about by state intervention that resulted to agriculture being a cash-demanding undertaking. Consequently, only three out of 21 households with access to arable land currently make use of it, and thus the decline in agriculture that is central to this dissertation.

In the summary and conclusions, that is, chapter five, all the arguments presented in the preceding chapters are tied together to show linkages between

them. The chapter also refers to alternative tenorial arrangements (such as leasehold) as well as the three current land cultivators (and the dynamics of their accumulation) as possible issues of future research interest. The chapter sums up the agricultural situation in the area as follows: the Rehabilitation scheme, and conservation planning in general, were nothing but attempts by the South African government to get as many Africans as possible out of agriculture as a source of livelihood [and alternatively into wage labour in the white areas] as evident in the case of Mission location in which agriculture has declined in spite of the so-called intentions of the scheme to improve it.

Chapter Two

2. Betterment and Rehabilitation Planning in South Africa:

“A brief Overview”

2.1. Introduction

The following chapter briefly introduces Betterment and Rehabilitation Planning in South Africa as, according to claims by the South African government, embodiments of soil conservation. It is argued here that beneath the conservationist surface of these policies was the historic policy of preserving the reserves as the providers of cheap labour on a migrant basis by: denying Africans the wherewithal to subsist fully from the land; denying them full urban citizen status; and relocating large numbers of them in the reserves so that they remained there for both political reasons as well as at the disposal of the white economy. This is shown first by how the government responded to land deterioration in the reserves because in the first place it threatened this system of labour. Then the Betterment scheme is discussed with a view to showing how it denied people more land and cut down on their stock numbers in order to hamper the rural economy that was primarily based on agriculture. This is followed by the Rehabilitation scheme that sought to cut down on the number of Africans in urban areas by pretending to be enlarging the carrying capacity of the reserves in a way that further reinforced the migrant labour system. It is further shown here how the government's determination to pursue this system of labour through the so called conservation schemes saw it altering its policies by making them more stringent and co-opting tribal authorities in response to widespread resistance of the people. Finally, the chapter shows how between the 1960's and the 1980's millions of Africans were removed from urban areas, white farms and black spots into the reserves in spite of the Tomlinson Commission's recommendation that the reserve population be cut down for the purposes of viable agriculture, in a way that further reinforced the migrant labour system.

2.2. The Socio-economic context of Betterment and Rehabilitation

The social history of South Africa is characterised by the transition of rural Africans from peasants to wage earners. This is best put by Bundy (1979: 1) who argues that “at the core of SA’s social history lies a transition of a majority of her rural African population- from their pre-colonial existence as pastoralist-cultivators to their contemporary status: that of sub-subsistence rural dwellers, manifestly unable to support themselves by agriculture and dependent for survival upon wages earned in ‘white’ industrial areas or upon ‘white’ farms”. The term sub-subsistence denotes a state whereby the type of agriculture that the land in the reserves permitted fell far short from being able to fully meet the subsistence needs of the people.

The transition is a striking one, and its external aspects have been described often enough: the diminution of Africans’ lands by conquest and annexation, the creation of the ‘reserves’, and the deterioration of these into eroded, overstocked and overcrowded rural ghettos that function as a supply source of migrant labour. Clearly, this state of affairs in the reserves was a deliberate creation of successive colonial regimes that sought to secure a steady supply of cheap labour for both the mining and the farming capitals. In fact, the reserves were not only to supply cheap African labour on a migrant labour basis, but were also to house the dependents of such migrants so as to supplement their low wages by some rudimentary agriculture. But this role of the reserves- that is: housing the dependents of migrant labourers, contributing a proportion of the means of their subsistence, keeping migrant wages low, minimizing the growth of a settled urban proletariat, [as well as the overall reproduction of cheap migrant labourers]- was being threatened by the reserve agrarian decay as magistrates and officials, commissions, academics and employers not only observed, but also urged immediate state intervention (Beinart & Bundy in Klein, 1980: 297). It is exactly due to this erosion that the Native Economic Commission (NEC), among other observers, warned that: “unless precautionary measures are taken... denudation, donga erosion, deleterious plant succession, destruction of woods, drying up of springs, in short, the creation of desert conditions would ensue (UG 22/1932: 73 cited in Hendricks, 1990: 94).

In response to these comments the South African government established the South African Native Trust (SANT) which, among other things was tasked to adopt ‘remedial and redemptive measures for the existing reserves and for land to be acquired as ‘it is notorious that the existing native locations are congested, denuded, overstocked, eroded, and for the most part, in a deplorable condition’ (Statement of Land Policy, 1936: xix cited in De Wet, 1995: 40). To this end, the Department of Native Affairs primarily advocated soil conservation and as a first move, it introduced a rescue mechanism known as Betterment (Davenport, 1987: 394).

2.3. The Betterment Scheme

Betterment was a programme designed to arrest and reverse the destruction of natural resources, improve reserve agricultural production and raise the standard of living of the rural areas (O’ Connel, 1981: 44; De Wet, 1995: 39). It was the first concerted state effort to rehabilitate the reserves (Hendricks, 1990: 98). Betterment basically revolved around the proclamation of an area as a Betterment area, the development of a land-use plan which meant the division of the land into residential, arable and grazing areas separated by ring fencing and internal paddocking as well as the relocation of people from their previous (usually widely dispersed) homestead sites into new, village-type residential areas (McAllister, 1992: 3-4). This deplorable state of the reserves was seen as a technical one, and was chiefly due to “bad farming” on the part of the peasant (Yawitch, 1981: 10). More specifically, the increase in Transkei’s herds and flocks was seen as a prime cause, and this does not sit comfortably with the critical role that livestock played in the rural economy- as draught animals, in ceremonies, and in marriage transactions (Beinart et al in Klein, 1980: 300). As the state authorities maintained, what was needed, therefore, was more effective control if ‘Native agriculture was to improve (De Wet, 1995: 41). Clearly, therefore, the control of livestock threatened the survival of the rural economy. What was grossly ignored was the land shortages that have plagued the reserves since their establishment.

To put these conservationist intentions of the central government into practice enabling legislation in the form of ‘Improvement and Control of Livestock in Native (African) areas’ Proclamation No. 31 of 1939 was provided, and basically designed to combat overstocking (Proclamation No. 31 of 1939: 3 cited in De Wet, 1995: 41). The 1939 Proclamation, commonly called the Betterment Proclamation, enabled the authorities, after consultation with people residing in that area, to declare an area a Betterment area, where after they could ‘assess the number of cattle units which that area is able to carry’ and a count would be taken of all stock within the Betterment area. If the number revealed cattle in excess of the assessed carrying capacity, officials of the Department of Native Affairs (DNA) were empowered to conduct a cull of the excess stock. Despite the slow acquisition of land by the SANT, and the fact that up to 30% of families in the Transkei had no livestock, the Betterment officials were so determined to combat overstocking (Hendricks, 1990). Again, this is evidence of trying to avoid facing the real problem of the reserves- namely: shortage of land for both man and livestock, as well as declining levels of livestock- on the part of the government authorities.

Though in theory Betterment could only be implemented after obtaining the consent of the local population, consultation with the people was so minimal that they had very little say on whether they wanted Betterment or not (McAllister, 1992: 4). In fact according to Hendricks (1990: 97): “ when the scheme commenced, Betterment areas were declared by agreement between the district magistrate and headmen without consultation with the residents themselves, or where such consultative meetings did take place, the implications of the scheme were not exhaustively discussed”. Hence, it was not infrequent for the people to object to certain aspects of the scheme, since they had not fully understood their implications, and in the process this meant that the scheme was not being implanted with the consent of everyone, especially that of the people whose conditions it was destined to change; in short, this amounted to delays as far as the implementation process was concerned.

To overcome this delay the DNA insisted on getting the consent of the local resident first, but the Secretary General Mears maintained that it was best to use compulsion over government-recognised leaders. In the same way, the Planning Committee (P. C.) opposed the consultation clause, and its strong influence led the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei (CMT) to recommend the elimination of compulsory consultation since it was believed to hamper uniform planning, a demand to which the central government responded by postponing the contested issue stock limitation (Hendricks, 1990).

In the period when the World War Two broke out Betterment, which had hardly commenced, was delayed for some reasons related to the war effort. With only modest beginnings having been made, state focus on Betterment ceased being one of the top priorities as a result of the war (Beinart et al in Klein, 1980: 298). It is estimated that about half the staff responsible for Betterment took part in the war, and the prioritization of the war resulted to a decrease in the budget assigned to Betterment by about 75% from 125 000 to 50 000 pounds (Hendricks, 1989: 316). This meant a shortage of both staff and material, especially fencing. Consequently, according to Beinart & Bundy in Klein, 1980), the so-called conservation planning mainly became a feature of the postwar years [in the form of the Rehabilitation scheme]. Moreover, contrary to De Wet's (1995: 42) assertion that Betterment was also delayed by white farmers who objected to loss of good land to the SANT, the acquisition of land by the SANT was so slow that by 1974 some 20% of land due had not yet been acquired (Platzky & Walker, 1985: 92). So not much good land was lost to SANT over these years.

In actual fact, according to Lacey (1981) white farmers did not object to the loss of good land per se, but rather to a loss of labour supply since, by enlarging the reserves and resettling illegal squatters as Smuts's South African Party aimed to do, Africans tied to the white farms as labour tenants would have sold their stock and departed to the released land in the reserves- thus depriving white farmers of a labour supply. Moreover, since Africans in the reserves were simply absorbed to

urban areas where conditions of work were better than in the farms, they were not likely to return to the farms. In fact this was Smuts's policy goal as he sought to favour the interests of the mining capital. It was only Hertzog's United Party that came to the rescue of the farming capital by tying down Africans in the white farms to be labourers for at least six months each year and by requiring that to get employment elsewhere, former labour tenants had to be issued with an identity document specifying that they were no longer obliged to do farm work (Lacey, 1981). Thus, even though authorized the release of land in 1936, the United Party ended the fear of white farmers.

Regardless of the already mentioned hindrances to Betterment work, the Young Commission of 1949, appointed by the government during the war to enquire into overstocking in Transkei, recommended the extension of the 1939 Proclamation provisions to the whole Transkei (Hendricks, 1990: 102). Initially these provisions were confined to districts such as Butterworth, which was the first district to experience a Betterment programme in the Transkei, and Libode, the first to be completely rehabilitated (Beinart et al in Klein, 1980: 300-1). Pointing out that the government was already hardly managing to implement these provisions, the UTTGC strongly objected to this recommendation (Hendricks, 1990: 104). For Hendricks, this Commission's recommendations had little consideration for both the prohibitive costs and social implications of a compulsory scheme, and in short were out of touch with reality. Meanwhile, the inability of the state to implement Betterment was evidenced in the fact that very few locations were being affected. Consequently, by 1945, only 114 of the 838 locations in the Transkei were declared Betterment areas, and stock culling had been completed in only three wards of the Gcuwa location of the Butterworth district (Hendricks, 1990). Clearly, Betterment was having very little, if any, impact towards changing the state of land and agriculture in the reserves, and the bulk of the population was still increasingly being forced into a state of proletarianisation. The reaction of the South African government to this is the subject of the next section.

2.4. The Rehabilitation Scheme

The shift in government's conservation policy, from the Betterment to the Rehabilitation scheme, had more to do with the changes in the economy of the country as well as the role of the African workforce in the face of such changes. An inflationary boom in the 1930's as a result of a rise in the price of gold and an increase in manufacturing industries led to a rapid increase in the number of the African workers in urban areas from 76 000 in 1933 to 149 000 in 1945 (Beinart et al in Klein, 1980: 298). This meant that more Africans were being attracted to towns where wages and conditions of work were better than in the farming sector and, as a matter of fact, would soon demand social benefits such as housing. But the government, which has long battled with the competing labour needs of the industrial and agrarian capitals, influx controls for Africans coming into urban areas, and the political means to control an African working class, was not at ease with this new position of the African workforce. Given that this new outlook of the African worker was in contrast with the long established migrant labour system, and in effect meant that Africans were becoming more politically outspoken and permanent in urban areas, the government thought it necessary to intervene. To this end it was broadly agreed upon that what was needed was government intervention in the reserves so as to make them more capable of sustaining as many Africans as possible (Beinart et al in Klein, 1980).

Accordingly, shortly before the end of the war the Major Piet van der Bly, the Minister of Native Affairs to the Smuts government outlined a blueprint for large-scale 'rehabilitation' of the reserves (Hendricks, 1990). It is clear from the officials' belief that, "if the situation in the reserves was not taken up with new vigour and without delay, the reserves will be rendered incapable of sustaining the natives and their stock, and the phenomenal drift of natives to towns has undoubtedly been accelerated by these conditions" (UTA CMT TPC 11/H, 1946 cited in Hendricks, 1990: 105) indeed the scheme primarily aimed at dealing with the presence of Africans in urban areas. A sweeping effort to combat erosion by an extensive land-use plan, veld conservation, stock limitation, improvement of water

supplies, afforestation, re-grouping of kraal sites where necessary, building up of roads, bridges and railways, and acquisition of farms and through farming demonstrations was envisaged. In terms of this new scheme, it was presumed that some locations had to be planned in advance to serve as demonstration centers.

In line with this new vision, D. L. Smit, Secretary of Agriculture to the Smuts government, announced a new change of direction towards Rehabilitation in a 1945 speech entitled “A New Era of Reclamation”. Smit envisaged, among other things that: (i) land be used in the most advantageous manner; (ii) land be demarcated into separate residential, arable and grazing areas; (iii) and, rural villages be established to accommodate the families of Africans regularly employed in industry and other services who would not be allowed access to neither arable land nor livestock. The claim was that there are ‘good’ and ‘bad African farmers, and that the latter consists of those who, while with access to land, choose to be in the urban areas and leave the land in the poor hands of their female-headed families. But in reality this division of the rural population was a guarantee to employers that there will always be Africans ready to offer their labour. This group, that is the rural proletariat, were to depend for survival on the industrial development that was expected soon after the war, as Smit put it: “the proposal is an important link between the government’s plan for rehabilitation in the reserves and the large-scale industrial development expected soon after the war” (Smit, 1945 in Beinart et al in Klein, 1980: 299). Unlike the Betterment Proclamation that ignored the man-land ratio, the ‘new era’, come to terms with the finding that not all Africans could have a claim in land each due to a shortage of land (Smit, 1945: 4 cited in Hendricks, 1990: 105-6). This division of the rural population represents what have long been the interests of the white regimes and the economic interests they sought to safeguard. On paper it was a solution the presence of Africans in urban areas that was not only growing in numbers, but also threatening to be a permanent phenomenon, and as such a means of entrenching the migrant labour system; this is so because, as long as such villages were created, proletarianised Africans would have no reason to stay in urban areas once their migrant contracts expire because rural villages in the

reserves were their homes. But such a division never materialized due to a lack of opportunities in wage employment, meaning that in effect everyone who had land before this arrangement could not be deprived of such land (Board, 1964: 37).

Regional Planning Committees were to be established in all native affairs zones in order to launch the 'new era' (Hendricks, 1990: 107). These P. C.'s, consisting of: an agricultural officer, an administrative officer, a soil chemist, a surveyor, a draughtsman, clerical staff and the Native Commissioner with an African member of the location, would undertake the collection of information and statistics, draw up comprehensive plans for the rehabilitation of the area and supervise the implementation of the approved plans. Marsberg, the first chairperson of the Transkei Planning Committee (TPC), formed in mid-1945, warned that rehabilitation would always be delayed if comprehensive plans were drawn while there is a shortage of staff to implement them, and accordingly put more emphasis on implementation rather than planning. T. G. Cordingley, who succeeded Marsberg, took this further by adopting a system of loose planning which required very little technical detail, to save both time and resources. Loose Planning took two to three days to complete, as exemplified in Shixini location of the Willowvale district in the Transkei (McAllister, 1989: 350).

Loose planning had its own disadvantages that partly contributed to the failure of rehabilitation. Firstly, it meant less involvement of the planning and implementation processes. Detailed planning did not have this disadvantage since plans made in this way had to be approved by the NAD, thus facilitating centralized control (Hendricks, 1990). Surely the involvement of the central government carried more weight since these schemes were naturally notorious of triggering resistance from the people; it is this resistance that central government was more equipped to deal with (they had the security police, could enact stringent legislation to name but a few). Clearly, this explains why the central government had a bias in favour of detailed planning (Hendricks, 1990).

2.5. Implementation difficulties and Policy-embedded solutions

First of all, conservation works were hampered by the strong emphasis that the NAD put on planning at the expense of implementation. To illustrate this, while the TPC consisted of eight members, the operational team only had three (Hendricks, 1990: 109). There was also a phenomenal time lag between the declaration of an area as a Betterment area, its planning and finally its rehabilitation. For instance out of about 900 locations in the Transkei in 1949, 482 were Betterment areas, the carrying capacity of only 46 had been assessed and culling of stock had taken place in only 26. In addition, the following administrative problems were identified: shortage of (i) agricultural staff; (ii) engineering staff; (iii) surveyors; (iv) equipment and material; (v) lack of cooperation by the residents and NAD having to bear the entire burden; (vi) delays due to centralised authority; (vii) and operational work in the hands of magistrates who were unable to give enough time to this work. It seems that in spite of the administrative and financial difficulties with which the Rehabilitation scheme was fraught, the central government was nevertheless determined to implement conservation planning in as many areas as possible. This puts across the message that there was more in the interests of government to get such areas under its control than to actually conserve the soil and improve agriculture (Hendricks, 1990).

From the 1930's to the 1940's, and again in the 1950's, the history of Betterment is marked on the one hand by fierce resistance on the part of the reserve population, and on the other by the slow evolution of an altered planning policy arising out of the need to deal with this 'native intransigence' (Yawitch, 1981: 10-11). When the Rehabilitation, too, failed the government shifted its policy priorities to the elevation of the position of chiefs and headmen by conferring on them criminal jurisdictions and empowering them to issue orders (Hendricks, 1990: 114). Tightened administrative control over chiefs, however, was a prerequisite for them to become a channel for Rehabilitation. For example, the UTTGC, adopting an attitude similar to that of the NAD that Africans resisted Rehabilitation because of

traditionalism, accepted the rehabilitation scheme behind the backs of the people themselves (Hendricks, 1990).

The acceptance of the scheme by the co-opted tribal authorities saw strong resistance from the people of the reserves. This resistance was spearheaded by the All African Convention (AAC) which had published a pamphlet entitled 'Rehabilitation: the new fraud' which viewed the scheme against the background of government's policy that put Africans at the mercy of white capital as cheap labourers by depriving them of the land (Tabata, 1950). The AAC's influence was so influential that it convinced the people to resist both the scheme and the tribal authorities that accepted it. Consequently, in some locations people formed village committees against their headmen and in the Mount Ayliff district of the Transkei an organization called the Kongo held meetings in the hills, bypassed and even killed some of their headmen (the killing of headmen also took place in other areas as well such as Sekhukhuneland). In other places the reaction of the people was to cut down fences erected in terms of the scheme and to drive in their cattle overnight (Beinart et al in Klein, 1980). The response of the government to this was the usual use of force by means of the army, arrests and imposition of harsh sentences on those who were convicted. But the significance of this resistance was that it put the message across to the government officials that the people realized the real intentions of the scheme, which were not to improve agriculture but rather to regiment the migrant labour system for the white economy.

With this resistance coming from the people, new and more stringent legislative powers were needed if the scheme was to be implemented. To this end, in 1949 the more lenient 1939 proclamation was replaced by the harsher Proclamation No. 116 of 1949 which gave Native Commissioners wide-ranging powers to: (i) appropriate any land unit if such land was required for reclamation; (ii) institute a compulsory cull if necessary; (iii) and could also control the general agricultural progress in the Betterment areas (Proclamation No. 116 of 1949: 403 cited in Hendricks, 1990: 118). To further erode resistance, however, the government used

two pieces of legislation: the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 and Proclamation No. 180 of 1956 (amendment to the 1949 Proclamation) which both stated that Betterment areas were to be declared after mere explanation to the Tribal Authority or the people themselves by the Native Commissioner. Thus, as Bantu Authorities found themselves the sole representatives of the people, consultation gave way to mere explanation.

2.6. The Tomlinson Commission and subsequent Government Reserve Policies

When the National Party (NP) came into power in May 1948, it proceeded to implement its policy of [grand] apartheid that formed the major plank of its election platform (Sachs, 1965: 83). Faced with increased African political activity that was hard to control by the use of force alone, the NP looked to the reserves as its major solution (Platzky et al, 1985). The reserves provided a place where urbanized Africans could be deported and controlled politically. Once again their carrying capacity would have to be ascertained for this particular purpose. But it must be pointed out that Africans would not be sent to the reserves for good, but would remain there as long as their labour was not needed in the white areas. Alternatively, they would be allowed in the white areas for the duration of their migrant labour contracts.

But, as Hindson (1986: i) points out, the belief that Africans could only be allowed in urban areas for the duration of their migrant labour contracts was based on an apartheid fiction- and is fundamentally different from the way things worked out in practice. In his explanation of the development of pass laws and their impact on the urban labour market, Hindson shows how the pass system and influx controls actually resulted in a differentiation between Africans who were migrant labourers and those who were to be allowed in urban areas permanently. This differentiation was based on the rights to urban residence for those born in urban areas, were continuously working and staying there on the one hand, as well as those whose migrant labour contracts prevented them from staying in urban areas when unemployed, and as such maintained links with the rural areas. The result

was that these two groups were also channeled into different labour markets. From the 1970's this distinction has since broken down, and in its place came a replacement of long distance migration by commuter belts on the peripheries of urban areas (mostly squatter camps). Consequently urban Africans were differentiated by both occupational status and class (Hindson, 1986); so there was never such a thing as a complete prevention of African settlement in urban areas.

To ascertain the state of the reserves, the NP government appointed the Tomlinson Commission on 1 November 1950. This commission consisted of eleven persons and its terms of reference were “*to conduct an enquiry into and to report on a comprehensive scheme for the rehabilitation of the Native areas with a view to developing within them a social structure in keeping with the culture of the Native and based on effective socio-economic planning*” (Tomlinson, 1954: cited in Houghton, 1956: 1). It reported in October 1954 with its recommendations entailing a technical solution to the problem in the reserves. Like Smit in 1945, Tomlinson recommended the division of the rural population into two groups, one based on the land and farming progressively in what was termed ‘economic farming units’ (EFU’s), and the other dependent on wage labour with no rights to the land (Tomlinson, 1954). While those in EFU’s were never again to desire to become migrant workers, the families in rural villages were to depend on migrant labour wages on a full time basis (Nieuwenhuysen, 1964: 24).

In its report the commission argued that land shortage was the main problem of reserve agriculture. Having heard that 120 pounds were necessary for an African to make a living out of full-time farming, the commission used this figure to determine the size of arable allotments and concluded that at least 80% of the reserve population will have to be removed from the reserves. After interviewing some 900 Bantu farmers with an average income of 56, 60 pounds, Tomlinson decided to adopt this figure as a basis for determining the size of arable allotments, despite the fact that this figure was based on the currently low productivity levels of

the Bantu (De Wet, 1995). Land was to be held on freehold for the Africans to have pride in farming.

But the South African government rejected these recommendations outright. The idea of EFU's never materialized as neither was the overhauling of the land tenure system from communal to freehold tenure (Hendricks, 1989). Instead of EFU's, land holders were allocated land as small as one-sixth of an EFU, and concerning land tenure, it was tribal authorities, under what was now called the department of Bantu administration and development, who were entrusted with the responsibility over the Africans land tenure. So the same state of affairs of families clinging to unproductive plots in the reserves such that they simultaneously depended on wage labour was favoured at the expense of full time farming. But exactly why did the central government pursue this sort of policy for the reserves is a question that still remains to be answered.

It has been quite rightly pointed that there has always been a correlation between the government reserve policies as pursued by the South African government and the role of the reserves in the South African economy (De Wet, 1987). By this correlation it is meant that the policies that the South African government pursued in respect of the reserve areas were compatible with the role that such a government had envisaged for the inhabitants of the reserves in the white Economy as the following discussion will show. For instance, Mbeki (1964) has pointed out that 'the role of the reserves has always been twofold: to produce and reproduce surplus [cheap] labour for white agriculture, mining and industry on the one hand, and to receive those whose labour was no longer needed in the white economy'. So this in a way explains why full time farming in the reserves was never prioritized in government policies since the reserves only needed to produce a proportion of what Africans needed to survive while the rest of their subsistence would be provided through migrant labour remittances. In this way the reserves were a place where migrant labourers could be picked up, a home for those labourers no longer needed in the white economy and their families as well as a

means of subsidising the low wages which formed the base of the cheap labour system. But the increasing presence of Africans in urban areas surely undermined this role of the reserves. Such increasing African presence in urban areas had also been fueled by large-scale mechanisation and consolidation of white farms that had rendered thousands of farm workers redundant. As such, new policies had to be put in place to deal with this state of affairs.

To this end the NP government, from the 1960's through to the 1980's, embarked on a policy of forced removals of Africans who were then resettled in the reserves. Affecting up to 3, 5 million souls (Platzky et al, 1985: 9), forced removals swelled the reserve population and worsened the deprivation that was already the order of the day. The ideology behind these removals was that of preserving the migrant labour system, and in themselves the removals were a solution to a number of problems. First, they made necessary the removal of Africans from urban areas- a solution to the political threat posed by urban Africans. Secondly they made possible the large-scale removal of redundant farm workers, in a way making it easy for the farming capital to deal with these former workers. And thirdly they were a means of doing away with portions of land under African ownership but outside the reserves (Black Spots). Thus, by denying Africans easy urban access and settlement while simultaneously swelling the ranks of the reserve population, this policy reinforced the system of migrant labour. Moreover, the reserves were not only to become dumping grounds for unwanted Africans in urban areas, but also the places where Africans could be controlled politically, the latter function of which was reinforced by the creation of Bantustans (self-governing and independent states) in which Africans were to rule themselves. As a result of this policy, the white privilege of preserving urban areas for themselves was secured, the problem of what to do with unwanted farm labour was dealt with, and the remaining pockets of land under African ownership but outside the reserves were done away with in ways which entrenched the migrant labour system.

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter it has been shown how the Betterment and Rehabilitation schemes were used to disguise policies that in effect went far beyond mere soil conservation. These were the policies of assembling Africans for the cheap labour needs of the white economy by regimenting the migrant labour system since the historic land dispossessions. The introduction of soil conservation is treated here as a response to the collapse of the migrant labour system caused by the deterioration in the reserve land conditions. By denying Africans more land and further threatening the diminution of their livestock, the Betterment scheme, which was the first government effort to conserve the soil, showed the commitment of the government to the migrant labour system. Moreover, this system of labour was further reinforced by the Rehabilitation scheme that dealt with urban Africans by instituting new land use arrangements in the reserves. These policies, despite their ineffectiveness as far as soil conservation is concerned, were pursued at the expense of policy alteration that was triggered by the resistance of the reserve populations. Lastly, after the Tomlinson Commission of 1954 which urged the cutting down of the reserve population for the purposes of having a full time farming population, the NP government embarked on a policy of forced removals of Africans from urban areas, white farms and black spots into the reserves, in a way making even more Africans dependent on the migrant labour system.

In the following chapter the Rehabilitation scheme in particular will be discussed in relation to one particular area, called Mission location in Butterworth, Transkei, in order to demonstrate how it divided the people of that area by taking away the land from some but not from others, as well as the consequent inability of those deprived to depend on agriculture for livelihood. Needless to say, this will demonstrate that dependence on wage labour in the reserves was however inevitable.

Chapter Three

3. The Rehabilitation Scheme in Mission Location

3.1 Introduction

This chapter dwells on the Rehabilitation scheme as introduced and carried out in Mission location, Butterworth. When Mr. W. Wakeford, the resident magistrate, visited the area to introduce an agricultural demonstrator in 1944, he referred briefly to soil conservation and rehabilitation (Wakeford, 1944: 2/32/5/25). Though the people accepted the scheme, they were nevertheless afraid that some new undesirable things might come up. For instance, they wanted no changes in the location's leadership structure as they stressed that 'the headman must be there with his committee' and that 'agricultural officers must not come and take control'; they also wanted the rights of the people to remain, especially those of land ownership particularly in the face of changes to result from the scheme (Wakeford, 1944/ 2/36/5/25: 1-2). These points were raised by a committee elected by the local residents with the headman as its chairman with the purpose of informing Wakeford about their acceptance of the scheme or, in the words of the committee itself, to 'ask the government to take over their location for the purpose of carrying out complete rehabilitation'. Wakeford, who congratulated the people for what he referred to as a 'quest for improved conditions', soon informed the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei (CMT), Mr. De Villiers, and firmly stressed that the request should be taken at once. The way he urged the CMT- for instance, 'this is too good an opportunity to be missed'- somehow shows that the benefit from the scheme was to be more for the government than the people themselves, a point that coincides with the persistent argument of this chapter.

In line with Mr. Wakeford's persuasive letter, the Transkei Planning Committee (TPC), set up in 1945 by the South African government to survey areas for rehabilitation purposes, surveyed the area in the period between 23 July and 6 December 1945 (TPC 2/36/5/25/ 1946: 1). The seven members making up the committee were: Mr: F. H. Marsberg, the chairman; F. R. B. Thompson, the

agricultural member; W. A. S. Norton, the engineer; H. Klintworth, the soil chemist; W. Wilson, the surveyor; W. Wakeford, the resident magistrate; and C. W. Monakali, the representative of the local people. Guided by the statement entitled “Agricultural and Pastoral Rehabilitation Planning Scheme”, in January 1946 the Committee concluded its thirty-six page report, and in July 1947 Rehabilitation works officially started. It must be pointed out that all the material used in this chapter was obtained from the Cape Archives in Cape Town.

The chapter commences with a brief summary of the Committee’s findings and recommendations, mainly focusing on population and settlement, the physical structure, distribution and use of the land as well as the way the committee’s recommendations were to be implemented. Then it goes in detail to what is termed the implications of these recommendations for agriculture in the area, mainly arguing that to all intents and purposes, the scheme had the overall effect of reducing both the size and extent of land available for cultivation, with the result that more families were to depend on wage labour, a practice that was in line with the policies of making the African reserve areas reservoirs of cheap migrant labour discussed in the previous chapter. Moreover, to make sure that this intention was fulfilled, the scheme had the element of being forced on the people by tightening government control over them, in a way dealing with potential resistance.

3.2. The Planning Committee’s Report: Findings and Recommendations

3.2.1. Population and Settlement

With the purpose of stabilising the African population, by 1920 the Cape administration had demarcated 424 kraal sites for occupation by: (i) registered holders under quitrent title deeds; (ii) by married sons of those registered holders under certificate of occupation; (iii) and by people to whom special permission to occupy was given by the resident magistrate (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946: 9). The difference between these different types of tenure is that those with title deeds had more security over the land they occupied as confirmed by their holding of title deeds- but such security was however subject to their ability to pay annual quitrent.

With the other two forms of tenure, however, there was less security since it was just a permission to occupy with no title deed to confirm registration. The Planning committee made two observations about these kraal sites, and in its view such observations were undesirable. These were: (i) that these kraal sites were too large; (ii) and that they were so scattered that, though altogether they totaled 279 hectares, they were allocated over an area of 907 hectares. The committee then recommended 'the transformation of' what it called 'a crazy pattern of residence into a systematic layout'. As it will be revealed in the course of this chapter, by this the committee meant both the reduction (in size) and the concentration of these kraal sites.

In 1945 there were 616 families, consisting of 2 385 individuals in Mission location belonging to two main sub-groups of the Southern Nguni tribe. The first group is of Xhosa origin and seems to have been the descendants and remnants of one of the clans making up the tribe under Chief Hintsa who lived there in former times. But the assertion that the people have lived there since the former times must be treated with caution especially since the boundaries of the territory occupied by the Xhosas have been expanded almost in every generation as a result of (i) the departure of sons of reigning chiefs who went to find their own chiefdoms; (ii) as a result of wars between rival Xhosa chiefs claiming the same chiefdom (for example between two or more sons of a particular chief or between the rightful son and a regent); (iii) and also as a result of wars between the Xhosas and the colonists who sought to dispossess the former of land and other resources (Peires, 1981). To this end it is best to say that these people finally settled in the area. The second group has no common affinities but seems to be made up of Africans attracted to the Mission seeking asylum under past Missionaries and are generally of Mfengu descent (TPC/2/36/5/25/ 1946: 8).

The missionaries were mainly the Wesleyan Methodists founded in 1837 and who have exercised jurisdiction over an area of 8 000 morgen on which some Africans have over time been allowed to settle, some of which became Christians and acknowledged the authority of the Missionary. With the exception of the

Methodist mission, in 1945 Mission location was trust land (under the auspices of the South African Native Trust), and Mr. C. W. Monakali was the government appointed headman.

3.2.2. The Physical condition, distribution and use of the land in 1945

Table 1: Land distribution and use in 1945:

Distribution:

<i>A. Arable land: Total</i>	<u>No. of families.</u>	<u>With arable land.</u>	<u>Without arable land.</u>
	<u>616</u>	<u>260</u>	<u>356</u>

<i>B. Dwelling sites:</i>	<u>Families with sites.</u>	<u>Lodgers.</u>	<u>On parental sites</u>
	<u>424</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>157</u>

Concerning the physical condition, the committee found that most of the land in the area had been lost to erosion as a result of its being excessively cultivated, very steep in slope as well as being very shallow in depth. In turn it recommended that such land should not be put under the plough anymore.

As a requirement of the land allocations that finally took place in 1920, people had to pay the costs of survey and stamp duty in order for land to be allocated to them despite the fact that they already had land in their occupation prior to this arrangement (CMT, 1912, 57/58 Vol. 12). However, the inability of some people to pay such survey dues as well as the natural increase in population meant that by 1945, of the 616 families only 260 enjoyed access to an arable allotment, 424 were on their dwelling sites, while 35 were lodgers; and a further 157 lived on parental sites (TPC/ 2/36/5/25, 1946: 24). This meant that 57 percent of families (or 356 out of 616) had no arable land.

The 4 906-hectare total area of Mission location in 1945 was used thus: (i) 279 hectares were for dwelling sites and cultivated kraal gardens issued in a disorganized manner (as stated above); (ii) 1 707 hectares were arable lands which were issued regardless of suitability of soil types, slopes, erodibility and limits of cultivation such that most were situated on excessively steep slopes and consequently had to be eliminated from the arable category. Both the elimination of arable lands (the total number of which is stated in the following sub-section) as well as the reduction in the size of cultivated kraal gardens for concentration purposes were the heaviest blows to hit the people of Mission location, as it will be argued below; (iii) and, 2 919 hectares of overgrazed veld accommodated 1 306 large stock which were deemed in excess of the committee's recommended carrying capacity of one large stock unit per five acres (TPC/ 2/36/5/25, 1946). In contrast, in Mission location today the residential areas are clearly demarcated and concentrated in a place chosen in terms of the Rehabilitation scheme, as are the arable and grazing lands. But the clear demarcation of both the arable and grazing lands is now blurred by the absence of fencing that was instrumental in such a demarcation but has now perished.

Guided by what it termed the 'unbalanced diet' of the people that was up to 75 percent maize and shockingly deficient in both protein and vitamin nutrients, the committee went on to design what it termed a future system of farming mainly recommending the: (i) improvement of livestock grades to provide better milk and meat; (ii) growing of green vegetables to supply vitamin nutrients; (iii) creation of a large diversion bank above all lands to dispose of flood waters; (iv) establishment of a three-year system of crop rotation to avoid mono-cropping; (v) creation of artificial pastures and grass leys; (vi) and tremendous use of commercial fertilizers (TPC/ 2/36/5/25, 1946: 17-21).

3.2.3. Implementation of the Committee's Recommendations

Regarding the style of implementing the committee's recommendations, five points are worth mentioning here. These are: (i) Rehabilitation and soil conservation in

general should be incorporated into the education system of Africans; (ii) failure to cooperate with the scheme was to see the people being compelled to do so by an army of officials; (iii) the need for firm administrative control to foster cooperation; (iv) the need for legislative sanction to do away with the few who would want to deviate from the scheme's recommendations; (v) and the inability of the people to question the Department of Native Affairs about its implementation procedures (TPC/ 2/36/5/25, 1946: 32-33). As it will be more elaborately discussed in the course of this chapter, the impression made by these five points is that of strong determination on the part of the government to implement rehabilitation in the area regardless of the extent of resistance staged by the people in objection to the scheme, or parts thereof.

In January 1947 the recommendations of the TPC were approved in respect of the following seven matters: the proposals for: (a) the blocking out of arable, grazing and residential areas; (b) stock water supplies; (c) improved farming methods, land and veld usage subject to such variations as may from time to time be deemed necessary; (d) fencing and other works; (e) afforestation; (f) the provision of additional arable land to replace excised land; and (g) limitation of stock (Secretary of Native Affairs, 1947/ No. 8/432/13.). The approval of these recommendations, especially the one in (f) above, meant that the fact that 14 families were to be left without land despite such new land to be made available was being approved by the central government itself. In July of the same year Rehabilitation works were officially started. By February 1948, the last date from the Cape Archives records, fencing had covered 58 093 yards.

3.3. Implications of the Report for Agriculture in the area

First of all, the observation that excessive cultivation, steepness of slope and shallowness resulted to a substantial portion of the soil in the area being lost to erosion had some adverse effects on the practice of agriculture. To illustrate this, where soil was badly eroded what the committee recommended was that such land should not be put under the plough. This however is hardly surprising given the fact

that the Rehabilitation scheme's architects had a tendency to characterize some Africans as 'good' and others as 'bad' farmers. The former were seen as progressive farmers to whom access to arable land could be confined, while the latter were seen as lazy men and were deemed not fit of having access to land (Yawitch in Cross & Haines, 1988: 106). One implication of this conception was that not all Africans could have access to arable land; and as a matter of fact those who were denied access could only make a living by means of wage labour.

As this chapter will show later, the unavailability of adequate alternative land meant that such people were being driven out of agriculture as a source of livelihood. In this way they were adding to an already existing class of landless people in the area since, as it will be shown below, already about 57% of people had no arable land. So in short, without any land to cultivate, the people of Mission location were deliberately being denied the wherewithal to make a living from agriculture. To use Bundy's (1979: 227) words, this was an acceptance [by the South African government] of a creation of a large class of landless workers.

By 1945, however, already some 356 of the 616 families in Mission location had no access to arable land. From this it can be inferred that already by then landlessness was acute in the area especially due to the fact that the majority of families (57%) had no arable land. Now with the introduction of the Rehabilitation scheme that further swelled this landless group, this chapter does not hesitate in seeing such a scheme not at all in the so-called light of improving agriculture as claimed by its architects, but rather in what is seen here as the scheme's real intentions of minimizing the number of families with access to arable land.

Furthermore, it is asserted here that having such a large number of families without arable land was inevitable in an area that was faced with natural increases in both the human and livestock populations but with hardly any land to make room for further expansion. This was the case in Mission location where it appears that hardly any new arable land was allocated to landless families after the 1908-20

allocations (this is elaborately dealt with in Chapter four). In fact, this is hardly surprising when viewed against the background of the policies of successive South African governments that aimed at minimising the amount of land in the African reserves so as to deprive Africans of an opportunity to subsist fully from the land. The historical conquest and dispossessions, the parliamentary legislations that brought about the historic land Acts of 1913 and 1936, as well as the so called conservation schemes that form a central part of this chapter were very instrumental in bringing about this state of affairs. In this connection De Wet (1987: 102) is right when he argues that Betterment and Rehabilitation schemes must be understood within the context of broader historic South African government policies of minimizing the amount of land for blacks and when he says that the failure of these schemes is based on their reluctance to question the unequal allocation of land brought about by such historic policies.

Having observed that ‘the original survey of arable lands was carried out without any technical guidance in regard to suitability of soil types, slopes, erodibility, natural features in some cases, and limits of cultivation’ (TPC/ 2/36/5/25, 1946: 13), the committee proceeded to make recommendations which, it is asserted here, had the most far-reaching implications for the few people with access to arable land in the area. To be more specific, in its report, the committee asserts that: ‘every land in the location has been thoroughly examined in loco with the result that the committee recommends the elimination of 53 whole lands and portions of 60 others from cultivation’ [out of the 260 total arable lands]. Hence, the number of families without access to arable land was increased from 356 to 409, meaning that more families were being completely denied the wherewithal to practice agriculture. This is so in view of the fact that if these people have been using this land as a source of livelihood from the land, surely taking such land away from them amounted to a complete denial of their such means of livelihood. Again, once more this serves to show just what the real intentions of the Rehabilitation scheme were: dividing the rural population into those with, and those without arable land. As if this was not enough, 60 more people were to have their allotments reduced. Though a

recommendation was made in the committee's report for 24 new allotments of 5 acres each and 12 more of the same extent to be purchased from the Methodist Mission in the area, this was still to leave 14 more families who had land before the scheme landless. Surely the future of these families was not at all in agriculture but, as Smit had envisaged, in wage labour (Statement of Land Policy, 1945). But, as Board (1964: 37) has pointed out, "the changeover from the traditional rural economy, where there was theoretically room for every family, to an economy where farming and wage earning in secondary and tertiary industries is typical, has been held up by the lack of opportunities outside of part time, semi-subsistence farming in the African sector of the economy and wage earning in the white economy". In fact, the committee does acknowledge its uncertainty as to future industrial development in South Africa as a whole in its report, but what is so striking about its recommendations is the way it proceeds to force more people out of agriculture as a source of livelihood. The argument put forward in this chapter about such a decision to go ahead with forcing people out of agriculture is that: such a decision was always going to be inevitable in a scheme that was guided by the ideology as well as the practice of maximizing the supply of cheap labour whose supply was based on the abundance of Africans in the reserves. So rather than creating opportunities for the people of Mission location, the Rehabilitation scheme prioritized the cheap supply of migrant labour by depriving as many families as possible of land.

To cover up the loss of land, the committee haphazardly encouraged some form of cooperative farming, by which it did not make clear whether land holding and use were to become joint ventures or some were to become servants for others. The committee made this recommendation in view of the observation that arable land in the area was held on the basis of individual quitrent tenure and because it intended to 'use the land as a composite and to seek the greatest benefit of the greatest number of people' (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946: 25). But all in all, in the case of Mission location, the kind of relationship that was to develop was to be characterized by a group of those with access to arable land on the one hand, and

that of those with no land whatsoever on the other, especially since no real change was eventually made in the nature of tenure. Changing tenurial arrangements surely was not in the interests of the government since that could have tempered with the role and position of chiefs in land allocation, and this was not desired in government quarters because chiefs were very instrumental in the success of the entire scheme. The failure to overhaul the nature of tenure meant that what the committee merely did was to encourage those few who were lucky enough to still have arable land to try and accommodate those without land, but the way this was done was so vague that it is not clear how it was going to work. Furthermore, this in no way did cover up for the loss of land than just making the landless the burden of those with land.

Regarding the size and location of kraal sites, the committee recommended that, 'in view of the largeness and the scattered nature of some building areas, there is no doubt that from the grazing point of view, greater concentration is advisable so as to open up grazing areas' (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946:17). This recommendation had a negative impact on the size of kraal gardens since in effect concentration went along with reduction. Such gardens, though serving as a supplementary source of livelihood from agriculture in the case of families with an arable allotment, were the only such source for families without an arable allotment- that were a majority in the case of Mission location. In effect their already limited land was being reduced, and as a result their source of livelihood from the land was considerably being diminished. In this connection I tend to agree with McAllister (1989: 362) in his assertion that 'one of the deficiencies of Betterment schemes is the smallness in the size of gardens available in the new residential areas (about 46 square meters or 0, 25 hectares) and that such smallness is particularly severe in the case of families without an arable allotment'.

Though the committee went as far as recommending a future system of farming for the people of the area, it nevertheless left unanswered some of central questions that are here deemed essential in the improvement of African agriculture.

To illustrate this, the report went a long way in recommending diversion banks and contour ploughing that indeed can reclaim the physical structure of the soil, but still failed to tackle the question of affordability of quality inputs into agriculture to which it made strong reference. It is a well known fact that the quality of one's technology, seed and fertilizer is essential for the best results from agriculture, and that the more improved these are, the higher the cost of affording them. In actual fact Africans (as it will be shown in chapter four) were not in a position to afford the best of these since their agriculture did not make any meaningful cash returns. But strangely the committee does not raise this point in its report, even though it strongly recommends the improvement of inputs such as fertilizers to improve African agriculture. To this end, it can be pointed out that more still needed to be done to improve agriculture in Mission location than mere Rehabilitation schemes which focused on reclaiming the soil physically while Africans increasingly found it almost impossible to cling to such agriculture even for their barest subsistence needs.

The committee further raised an interesting point about a shortage of able-bodied individuals who were not available for agricultural work in the area as it was the case in Transkei as a whole. The report put the estimate at 250 000 individuals every year in the whole of Transkei, a figure which had not changed much by 1969 according to Horrell's (1969: 118) finding of 233 000 individuals. Having raised such a crucial point, however, the committee failed to qualify it by acknowledging that more people were being attracted to wage labour because in the first place they were unable to fully subsist by agriculture. For Houghton (1964: 97) this is a result of an increase in population which saw primitive agriculture being unable to feed the people; in short, the exclusion of people from agriculture to use Leeuwenburg's (1977: 7) words.

But this is more complex than it sounds, as according to Wolpe (1972: 433) such exclusion had much to do with the overwhelming success of the economic and political power of the white capitalist sector over the African economy that led to the

latter economy being unable to produce a surplus. The consequence of this was a situation by which the relationship between these two economies was reduced to the provision of surplus labour to the white economy by the Africans. Such labour was provided on a migrant (and temporary, if not periodic) basis. The basis of the migrant labour system was the retention of access to some means of production (land) in the reserves by the migrants and their families so as to subsidise the low wages the employers paid. It is therefore this land that could not be fully utilized in Mission location because able-bodied individuals were away at work. In short, taking part in migrant labour is pre-determined by historical conditions that have resulted in the institutionalisation of the migrant labour system (May, 1987: 124).

The determination of the government to implement the Rehabilitation scheme notwithstanding both its implications as well as the reaction of the people again can be seen as means to guarantee the benefits that were to derive from the scheme on the part of the state, and not that of the people. This is evident in how the state prepared itself to force the scheme on the people and how the local leadership structure was to be co-opted to this end, as the following five points from the report suggest: (i) once the people accepted the scheme, the district magistrate told them that they would not be able to question the Department of Native Affairs about its implementation practices; (ii) secondly people who failed to cooperate were to be dealt with by an army of officials, meaning that they were going to be forced to cooperate; (iii) the headman was vested with powers to inflict criminal sanctions on offenders in what was termed tightened administrative control; (iv) legislative sanction was sought to maintain uniformity of cooperation; (v) and lastly, soil conservation (of which rehabilitation was part) was to form a central component of the African school curriculum. From these points, however, it can be seen how the central government prepared itself to deal with potential resistance to the scheme. Of most concern is the use of the headman of the area against his own subjects. Needless to say, whatever the scheme was to achieve once it was implemented, the government, by using the five points raised above to pursue interests other than

improving agriculture for the benefit of the people of Mission location, had somehow tightened the grip of control over the people of the area.

3.4. Conclusions

In this chapter it has been shown how the Rehabilitation scheme, which was introduced and carried out in Mission location for the so-called purpose of improving agriculture, showed up to be one of the South African government strategies to make as many Africans as possible available as cheap labourers in the white areas. This was shown by pointing out that: the bulk of the arable land in the area was deemed excessively cultivated and consequently badly eroded, and the subsequent recommendation was the curtailment of any further cultivation on those lands. This effectively deprived people of arable land. In this connection an enormous amount of land was eliminated from the arable category with no adequate alternative land for agriculture, and to make things worse the concentration of kraal sites reduced the size of cultivated kraal gardens, in most cases the only hope of eking out an existence from agriculture in the area. As the Committee pointed out in its report, migrant labour already played a central role in livelihoods in the area because, this chapter argued, agriculture was not being able to meet this requirement. In addition, the future system of farming it recommended was to be forced on the people because the scheme was actually intended for purposes other than improving agriculture.

As the next chapter will show, landlessness and dependence on wage labour have been so entrenched on the people of Mission location that when those few with access to arable land were no longer able to make use of it (as a result of old age, death of livestock, etc.), their descendants had already abandoned the culture of land cultivation for a living on the one hand, and had been so accustomed to other means of livelihood on the other, even to the point of finding no use for those arable allotments even though some were entitled to inherit them. The result has been a considerable decline in agriculture dating in some cases back to more than three decades. Such decline was also aggravated by the need for more cash to practice

agriculture, a requirement that was not easily met by the unviable sources financial sources available to Africans (for example, the low wages of migrants that hardly even meet the minimum needs for a family's subsistence).

Chapter Four

4. Agriculture in Mission Location today

“A case of decline”

4.1. Introduction

This chapter throws light on the present state of agriculture in Mission location. Data used here are based on visits made to twenty-one homesteads in the area who, out of a total of 118 households, are the only ones who, in one way or another, happen to enjoy access to an ‘intsimi’ (an arable allotment). 17 of these were successfully interviewed while four happened to be headed by absentee landlords, and as such could not be interviewed. The interviews were based on 14 structured questions and the responses were recorded by means of a tape recorder.

The basic argument of this chapter is based on a finding that there has been a remarkable decline in agriculture (both in terms of land cultivation and livestock ownership) in the area. This was revealed by first looking at the question of access to land and the nature of tenure; what transpired is that, out of a total of 118 households (a household meaning people living in a particular residential site) Bhongoza, which is but one residential area in Mission location, only nineteen are registered holders of an ‘intsimi’. It was further discovered that these registered holders have inherited these ‘amasimi’ mainly from their parents who have held them since the early 20th century land allocations mentioned in chapter three. From this however it appears that very little or no arable land has been allocated to the landless since these historic allocations. This means that some ninety-nine households, however, have no stake in arable agriculture.

Secondly, the chapter looks at the extent of land cultivation in the area- both in amasimi and iigadi. It is revealed that out of the entire population of the area, including the 21 households visited, only three are engaged in some regular cultivation of amasimi, two of which cultivate on land they are renting or simply borrowing from the non-cultivators who are registered land holders. Of the fourteen registered land-holding households who are currently not engaging in any

cultivation, six (despite being roughly between forty and sixty years of age) have not themselves engaged in any cultivation, citing mainly the decline of livestock and the lack of cash to afford the necessary inputs as their reasons. In contrast, the three regular cultivators are on the opposite end of the spectrum; though two are not registered holders of arable allotments, they have managed to get access by means of renting from, and by simply negotiating with some registered holders three and five morgen allotments respectively. In addition, they can afford the necessary inputs which now require cash; all three of them have their own tractors, the services of which are employed by many people in their gardens (and not in the 'amasimi') and significant cash returns (up to R 150 per garden) are made from such an activity, and they also make some livestock sales in addition; they also employ wage labourers especially for hoeing; and, all of them reported that they do sell part of their good produce. In this connection the chapter argues that: as a result of land shortages in the area, a considerable number of people, including those entitled to inherit an 'intsimi', have tended to seek means of livelihood other than agriculture. When the traditional ways of practicing agriculture were no longer viable- for instance as a result of decline in livestock and the resultant need for cash- those who were entitled to inheritance were discouraged from pursuing an agricultural livelihood mainly because they hardly earned enough to invest in arable agriculture, let alone being able to fully subsist from such cash-based sources. The result was engagement in such livelihood sources in order to survive at all, and the prospect of getting back to the land fell apart- thus the high number of uncultivated allotments. Seemingly this inability to cultivate the bigger amasimi is compensated by the cultivation of 'iigadi' which, though about 150 rands has to be paid for a tractor, are regularly cultivated as the only source of an agricultural livelihood.

Lastly, the ownership of livestock confirms the finding that livestock has declined in the area; only 5 out of 21 households own a total of 44 cattle between them, and three of these are the regular cultivators who respectively own the majority of the herds, 32 of the total number between them respectively. With the exception of goats, these three households own all other livestock (sheep, pigs and

fowls) in most cases the majority of herds. (For further illustration, this is tabulated in a special page that contains the tables.)

Seemingly a lot of agricultural activity takes place in the homesteads of these three regular cultivators. They plough other people’s gardens for cash; they can make stock sales and can acquire and maintain more livestock, and in addition can make cash from the sale of agricultural products to the extent that a self-perpetuating cycle of agricultural activity is established, with the availability of cash at its center. Regarding the rest of the landholders, absence of cash and meaningful income is the primary cause of their failure to engage in agriculture- and as such accounts for a decline in agriculture. This state of affairs is in contrast with the findings of the TPC in 1945 that mainly cited poor ways of farming that led to soil erosion as the major cause of poor agricultural productivity. In a way, it shows that the TPC indeed ignored the question of financial backing in the practice of agriculture.

But first it is important to start with a table that illustrates (i) the extent of access to land; (ii) the individual/s who actually holds the land at present; (iii) the extent of cultivation of ‘amasimi’; (iv) cultivation of ‘iigadi’; (vi) and the total number of livestock and its distribution between families as discussed throughout the chapter.

Table Two:

(i) <i>Total No. of:</i>	<u>Households.</u>	<u>Access to land.</u>	<u>Registered holders.</u>	<u>Unregistered.</u>
	<u>118</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>2</u>
(ii) <i>Holder:</i>	<u>Widows.</u>	<u>Heirs.</u>	<u>Unconfirmed.</u>	
	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>	
(iii) <i>Allotments:</i>	<u>Total No.</u>	<u>Cultivated.</u>	<u>Uncultivated.</u>	
	<u>21</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>18</u>	
(iv) <i>Gardens:</i>	<u>Total No.</u>	<u>Interviewed.</u>	<u>Cultivators.</u>	<u>Absentees.</u>
	<u>21</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>4</u>

<i>(v) Livestock:</i>	<u>Cattle.</u>	<u>Sheep.</u>	<u>Goats.</u>	<u>Pigs.</u>	<u>Fowls.</u>
(Total No)	<u>44</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>100-105</u>
(Families-18)	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>

4.2. A Summary and Analysis of Results

4.2.1. Access to land and the nature of tenure

The first issue in this sub-section was the question of access to an ‘intsimi’: that is, how did people acquire such allotments and have managed to keep them in their names to this day. There are four ways by which people can enjoy access to an arable allotment in Mission location. The first one is by inheritance, meaning that people acquire land that already belongs to their respective families. This is as far as the registered holders are concerned; that is, those who were given land by the Cape Administration and were therefore registered with that authority. This brings us to the question of the nature of tenure and, as it transpired from the interviews, these ‘amasimi’ were allocated early in the twentieth century by the then Cape administration to the parents, and in some cases to grandparents of the people who are presently claiming their possession. Except where the interviewees were too young to know, or just unsure about the nature of such tenure, most indicated that these amasimi have old title deeds (Ezihamba namanxiwa zokhokho- meaning that the allotments were allocated with residential sites for the elders), and the holders used to pay an annual tax for such allotments. Indeed, the association of these ‘amasimi’ with the old generation is evidence which possibly links these allotments to the 260 ones which were allocated between 1908-20 on the basis of quitrent tenure. In terms of such allocations, holders were required to be taxpayers before allocations could be effected and, in addition to this, they were required to make annual quitrent payments for such allotments, failing which they were given three months after which they could have their movable property confiscated or, worst of all, their allotments forfeited (CMT/ 57/58 Vol.12, 1912). According to Haines and Cross in Cross et al (1988: 74), quitrent tenure dates back to 1849 in the Cape Province, of which Transkei was part. Such tenure gave the registered holder permanent possession of the land in return for a yearly payment of a nominal rent

which was previously fixed at one rands per arable allotment (De Wet, 1987: 463). Today, no payment is made at all, and the entire system has broken down. Today the headmen, who were previously responsible for these payments, only act in the allocation of land; they no longer have to chase people who do not pay taxes because, in the first place there are no longer any tax dues.

Secondly, people could acquire arable land through sub-division of the same allotment into a number of portions for various members of the same family. This appears to have been the case with one respondent who reported that the field he cultivated belonged to his father (the respondent was born in 1914) and, like the rest of his four brothers, was given a portion to cultivate for his family's subsistence. Such sub-division however was not officially allowed (De Wet, 1987: 462), but as Cross in De Klerk (1991: 82) asserts, it did take place [unofficially] on a temporary basis. To this end, it is believed here that the case of the individual who cultivated part of a sub-divided allotment must have been one of those taking place unofficially. But what is so crucial about it is that it shows how land shortages have plunged the area into such desperation that some families were even resorting to unofficial sub-division of allotments in order to maximize the number of members who could make a living from agriculture.

The third way by which arable land could be accessed in Mission location is by leasehold. This was confirmed by one of three regular cultivators in the area who, despite having no arable land to his name nor that of his family, has managed to cultivate up to three morgen at some stage by renting the land from the people who have it (that is, making a payment to the a registered holder who is not making use of an allotment) mainly in two ways. Firstly, he accessed land in exchange for tilling a garden lot of the holder of such an allotment for free once every year with his own tractor. Here a very interesting arrangement is entered into between a landholder who has no means to cultivate their land but would like to cultivate at least a portion as small as a garden, and a landless individual who has the means and willingness to put as much land as possible under a plough. Moreover, this does

not only call into question the rigidity of tenure which allows people to hold on to allotments despite having no means to make use of them, but also shows that some individuals are willing to go beyond such rigid bounds of tenure by entering into mutually beneficial arrangements. The second way this respondent gets access to land is by making the annual quitrent payments (when these were still required) for such allotments. Possibly, the purpose of this latter arrangement was to avoid what Cross in De Klerk (1991: 82) calls failure to occupy the land beneficially as well as failure to pay annual quitrent as according as in terms of the 1936 Land Act and, in a way allows the individual to retain possession despite the inability to put the land to good use.

The last way of getting access to an arable allotment in this area is by simply negotiating with the holders who are not making use of the land in exchange for practically nothing. One respondent from the category of the three regular cultivators reported having entered into such an arrangement since he has no land of his own. The argument he put forward was centered on his interest and ability to make use of the land on the one hand, and what he called the availability of land (which lie unused) on the other. However, it must be mentioned that though he does not have to give any immediate payment to the holders per se, he still bears the burden of having to maintain such things as fencing at his own expense. This particular case shows that some holders understand and accept that land must be cultivated if it is available, and that this must not be prevented by the fact that the registered holder does not have the means to do so. But, though cheap, this kind of arrangement was the most fraught with problems from the experience of the individual who is borrowing the land. To illustrate this, it is much easier for the party who gives their land to the borrower to take this land away from the borrower regardless of the motive for doing so as the borrowing respondent reported. Moreover, he believes though the registered holder want their land back, he is not too sure whether they are going to put it into agricultural use or it is just because they are jealous of his progress on the land itself.

The next item in this subsection is that of the individual or party entitled to inheritance of an arable allotment. All the respondents interviewed agreed that, their eldest sons would inherit the allotments they hold, just as it was the case with them, and in some cases their late husbands, when they acquired the same allotments. According to Cross in De Klerk (1991: 82) this has been the administration policy, and it stated that holdings must pass without subdivision to a single male heir. As far as this policy is concerned, only the eldest son is entitled to an agricultural livelihood, and in the case of a family with more than one son- and in the face of land shortages in Mission location- it is clear that the rest of those sons have no stake in agriculture as a source of their livelihood. They surely must seek other sources. Some of these 'amasimi' in Mission location are currently held by widows, and in this connection De Wet (1987: 462) seems to be right when he asserts that "on the death of a landowner, his widow is entitled 'to occupy [and make use of] the land after her husband's death, without actually taking transfer, and that only after the death of a widow can the male heir take transfer'". This however is the case in Mission location with at least seven of the 14 registered holders actually interviewed. But all in all, a registered holder of an arable allotment has to be a male heir, as all the respondents broadly confirmed.

In terms of the actual size of the arable allotments, however, of the fifteen people interviewed and who hold the land in their families' names, fourteen did not know the actual size. This is understandable especially in view of the fact that the actual allocations were made to their parents and that in most cases the present holders exhibit evidence of a long detachment from such lands and their cultivation. Most of these people were not even sure of having seen the actual quitrent titles to the land with their own eyes, again showing that these people are less concerned with both the holding and use of the land. The one respondent who knew that they have four morgen (3, 43 ha) was one of the few who have cultivated at least once in the last seven years (i.e. since 1996). According to the Report of the planning Committee that surveyed Mission location for the purposes of rehabilitation in 1945, the size of all arable allotments in the area was set at an average of 3. 24 hectares,

having been reduced from its 4.05 hectare size (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946: 30). This however concurs with De Wet's (1987: 462-3) estimation of 3.43 hectares as the standard size of most quitrent allotments.

Moreover, in terms of the fertility of the land, most of the respondents reported the land to have been good in fertility as far as they can remember (most of which have done very little or no cultivation themselves). But there were two respondents who correctly stated that land cannot be fertile by itself, but can be made to be so by the person who works it. By this it was meant that the more fertilizers were applied to the land, the more it was likely to be fertile, and vice versa. (the question of the use of fertilizers in the area is tackled below.)

All the respondents who are registered holders of the land reported the land to be still in the name of their respective families, that is, it has not been transferred, sold or forfeited to another family. Of these, three reported their hope of making use of their allotments as soon as they can afford to do so. These three are among those people for whom the problem is the lack of fencing material, and they still strongly believe that they will be able to overcome this and get back to the land.

4.2.2. Extent of Cultivation

(a) Cultivation of Amasimi

Broadly speaking, every interviewee cultivated maize, beans, melons and pumpkins, and one individual indicated that they reserved a portion for potatoes most of which they sold around the location. (This notion of selling only apply to families who have cultivated at least in the past seven years when the rest of the others were no longer cultivating, and therefore in a position to purchase agricultural products.) As McAllister (2001: 45) observed of Shixini location in Willowvale, Transkei, in Mission location one crop of maize, which is the staple, is produced annually during summer. This crop is planted shortly after the falling of the first summer rains, because in any case cultivation in these areas is dry land cultivation, and depends on the right quantity of rain falling at the right time every year (Leeuwenburg, 1977:

7). Other crops- that is beans, melons and pumpkins- are planted after the maize has germinated mainly between the maize plants.

How then do the people cultivate (or used to cultivate in the case of those who have not cultivated for a number of years, if not decades)? To answer this question, focus was made on the issue of labour, traction (technology), seed and fertilizer. To start with the question of labour, it transpired from the interviews that there are three ways by which labour was, and is, acquired in Mission location and, as it will be noted here, the difference between these ways tells of a change in agricultural practices over time- i.e. between those who cultivated in the past and are no longer doing so at present and those who are currently cultivating. The first way of acquiring labour was by means of family members (and in some cases extended family members). The fact that family members were available for agricultural work reveals the significance that was then attached to agriculture as part of a family's means of subsistence. Secondly, in addition to family members, the services of (poor) landless families could be acquired in exchange for a payment in kind (usually from the harvest they have helped cultivating). Thirdly, and as for the people who are currently cultivating or have cultivated at least in the last seven years, hiring labour for a cash wage is commonplace today, and five households reported their use of this form of acquiring labour (two of which have not cultivated for at least the past seven years). Labour can be hired at twenty five rands a person a day. This however shows the importance of cash today as people are so desperate for it that they do not even hesitate to take such low paying jobs as hoeing. Moreover, it is characteristic of agricultural practices today as in the past it was not at all a common thing. furthermore, it shows how such factors as education have impacted on the family structure as children, who used to be instrumental in land cultivation are not only unavailable during their school term, but also unlikely to play a role in future as they prefer wage labour on leaving school.

As far as traction is concerned, the responses of the people were again by and large shaped by changes over time. To illustrate this, all the respondents who have

not cultivated their amasimi for at least the past ten to fifteen years indicated that the technology which had been mostly used in land cultivation was that of ox-drawn ploughs; in effect indicating both the importance and abundance of livestock in the past. All of them reported that such oxen belonged to their respective family homesteads. This finding coincided with Westcott's in Wilson et al (1977: 141) finding that oxen were required for the traditional 'ideal' pattern of cultivation as well as Leeuwenburg's (1977: 7) assertion that 'in the Transkei, the land surface is ploughed by ox-drawn ploughs for the most part'. For those who have cultivated at least in the last seven years, however, the picture is different. Though two of these (out of five) are currently not engaged in any cultivation, they all indicated increased importance of a tractor, and four of these used both a tractor and livestock, while two used a tractor only. Of these, four employed the services of their own tractors, while the other two hired a tractor at R 150 a contour (which is roughly about the size of a garden) for up to three contours. These responses, however, in addition to telling of a change in time, also show that for one to engage in land cultivation at present, cash is the basic requirement and that, the more one has cash, the more they are likely to put land under the plough- than was the case in the past.

The importance of cash in land cultivation was further demonstrated in the question of the seed in the cultivation of amasimi. The three individuals currently engaged in the cultivation of amasimi all confirm that they buy both their seed and fertilizer- basically buying what they call 'dipped seed' (imbewu editshiweyo) and commercial fertilizer (igwane) at their own expense. This is in contrast to the rest of the respondents who reported that in the past i.e. when their parents and grandparents were engaged in land cultivation, both the seed and fertilizer were not bought. For the seed they used what was called 'isiswenye', which is basically a selection made from the healthiest- looking portions of a particular maize harvest which are then preserved for use as seed in the next season- basically the cream of the crop. To use McAllister's (2001: 61) description, 'isiswenye' is the quantity of the very best quality cobs [in a particular harvest] from which the next season's seed

is taken. As for fertilizer, all of them reported that kraal manure, which was collected from the homestead cattle kraals, was used as fertilizer. Contrary to the situation at the present time, this reference to the use of kraal manure points to the importance of cattle in the type of agriculture that was practiced in the past; in addition to their role as draught animals, cattle provided kraal manure that was used as fertilizer.

For the three regular cultivators, a further question was asked about whether they have registered an increase or decrease in yield in the last season. One reported that his total yield has decreased as a result of his cutting down in the extent of land he cultivated (from up to ten morgen to only three at present) due to his inability to afford repairing fences in all allotments. The second one, however, believes he almost registered a decrease despite having increased the extent of land under cultivation. The reason he cited for this was that there were heavy rains, which in the end drowned some of his crops. In this regard Leeuwenburg (1977: 7) makes a very crucial point about the dramatic effects of climatic conditions (droughts, heavy rains and wrongly timed rains) on the harvest. This respondent reported that if it was not for his innovation to have some crops grown early in the season (which became good) and some later (which became bad), he could have registered a dismal decrease. This innovation is similar to that described by McAllister (2001) in his account of Shixini people of the Willowvale district. According to McAllister, in Shixini some households prefer cultivating their allotments at two or three different times in a particular season. This does not only guarantee them a continuous supply of green maize throughout the period between the ripening and the actual harvest of the product, but also allows them to take advantage of unpredictable climatic conditions. The third and last respondent in this category was not particularly sure of his harvest since he reported not having enough time to take a close look at it because of being busy with wage labour, which is his permanent occupation. This does not mean that the other two respondents are full-time farmers. Despite not presently being engaged in any wage-paying employment (one being a pensioner and the other pursuing a variety of occupations-

such as collecting and selling bottles), they nevertheless also cultivate during the summer season like any other part-time farming household. The significance of this is that even the people who are regularly cultivating do not solely depend on agriculture for livelihood; they also engage, or have engaged, in other ways of making a living.

Not a single respondent knew the exact quantity of the produce they have yielded in their fields the last time they have cultivated, and can be attributed to the African tradition of consuming a considerable portion of the crops green- i.e. straight from the field (Lipton in Wilson et al, 1977; McAallister, 2001). In spite of this lack of clarity, however, all the respondents knew exactly what they did, or rather was done, with the produce once it has been harvested. For those for whom cultivation has not been an occupation at least for the past ten or so years, the yield was consumed at home (it was mainly for subsistence). The two most notable reasons for this were that: (i) since families were big in the past (extended families), the harvest went a long way towards their subsistence; (ii) and since most of the people were engaged in agriculture, practically no one was keen to purchase maize and the like crops. Those who have cultivated at least as late as 1996 reported having sold a portion of their produce for cash, but this only took place when the harvest was good and abundant, sometimes with great returns e. g. one family sold 3 000 rands worth of their produce and managed to purchase a beast which they used for a traditional ceremony. For the three regular cultivators, however, selling a small portion of the produce does take place on a regular basis. One of these three puts a stall for green maize and beans in the streets of the town of Butterworth and sells to anyone there who is keen on buying. For the other two, selling takes place in the homestead, with willing buyers coming there for purchasing. The fact that only these three individuals engage in these activities makes agriculture in the area not a widespread activity. These three furthermore indicated a willingness to increase their yields in the future but only when given the necessary financial assistance and would then engage in some sort of full-time farming. But all in all the broad similarity across all the respondents is that in the practice of agriculture there was,

and still is, that basic need to subsist. Even where selling does take place, only a portion of the produce is taken to the market, with the rest being left at home for both the humans and livestock of the family to subsist.

On the question of the last time they have cultivated their ‘amasimi’ (a question which was directed to those who no longer cultivate), only four of the fourteen respondents knew the date exactly. For one it was in the 1980’s; two in 1996; and the last one said it was in 1999. For the rest (that is ten of them) it has been such a long time that they do not exactly remember the year and, though they are all fit to have been cultivating, six of them have not actually cultivated themselves.

Regardless, all the respondents were clear about the reasons for not cultivating, and these can be summarized as follows: firstly, death of the parents who actually did the cultivation and the laziness of the next generation to resume such tasks. In this connection it was pointed out that when the parents who actually did the cultivation grew old and sick, with the fields being far away as a result of residential relocation that came with the Rehabilitation scheme, they stopped cultivating. Hence bushes and trees grew out of the fields and the generation that was supposed to take over got lazy to clear these. In this chapter it is asserted that possibly there was no one around to neither continue with cultivation nor clear the bushes that eventually grew out of these fields. Moreover, this was confirmed by one respondent who pointed out that the reason he has not cultivated was because of spending time away as a migrant labour.

The second reason is the perishing of fencing which was erected in terms of government’s conservation schemes (locally referred to as belonging to ‘itrasti’-SANT) and the inability of the people to revive it. It was pointed out that the people are not in a position to afford fencing that is now costly, and that it has been government authorities that have always taken the responsibility. Interestingly, one respondent did point out that people strongly objected to fencing on the grounds

that their children were going to be lazy of attending to livestock since they were to become school goers, a thing he claims has indeed been the case.

The third reason is that of the decline of livestock (from dying, it was claimed) and the inability to afford a tractor. The decline of livestock is further evident in the small number of families that own it now: only five out of the 21 households who are the subjects of this study. Fourthly it was the location of fields far from residential areas as a result of Betterment planning. Though the consequences of not cultivating over time are similar to the reason raised in (i) above (that is, growth of trees and bushes out of the fields), in this particular case residential relocation resulted to demoralization due to the people's long traveling distances to their fields and because they could not look after their crops and this increased the incidence of theft.

Interestingly, all these reasons can be linked to the introduction of conservation schemes that were, as the authorities claimed, intended to improve agriculture. Whether they had been unforeseen on the part of such authorities, their consequences have been so devastating for agriculture that they meant its decline as a means of subsistence; in a way this supports the argument that the consequence, if not the intention behind, these schemes has been to push increasingly more people out of agriculture as a source of livelihood.

The fifth reason has more to do with the cash requirements of agriculture nowadays. The reason is unemployment and subsequent lack of income. In fact from the second reason for not cultivating to this last one, the importance of cash in agriculture can be seen. What these last three reasons serve to highlight is the limitedness, and even complete absence, of cash income-generating activities of some, if not most, of the families included in this study, a point which brings into question the viability of both past and present cash-based sources of livelihood on which the people of the area have had to depend.

From these reasons above it is possible to come to the following conclusions. Firstly, land cultivation in the area has been the main occupation of the original registered holders of land who had access to both land and livestock, but not that of their descendants. Hence it can be observed that when they died their land was left fallow and their livestock died possible as a result of their children not being around to attend to it as the parents did. In this chapter it is argued that, given the land shortages referred to in the previous chapter (chapter three), most of the generation that came after this land-owning class must have engaged in sources of livelihood other than agriculture, and in this way were far removed from agriculture which was a major means of living for their parents. Surely, if some allotments have not been cultivated up to the point of growing into tree forests, quite a long time has been spent not engaging in agriculture for a living. Given that the people needed a source of living in any case, they must have made use of sources of living other than agriculture.

Secondly, as the traditional means of engaging in agriculture were in a state of decline (for example the decline in: the use of livestock, family labour, cultivation of amasimi without fences -which changed as a result of the insistence of Betterment planners, use of locally grown seed and fertilizer), the more cash-based version that was a replacement further made necessary the need for a source of cash. In this way people must have possibly found themselves at the crossroads because, as they had to engage in means of livelihood other than agriculture (and possibly more cash-based), they also faced the need to raise more cash for the sake of engaging in agriculture. Given the limitedness, and in some cases the virtual absence of sufficient income generating activities already discussed above, it is clear that the ability of the people to invest cash in agriculture has been seriously limited.

The need for cash in agriculture was further aggravated by the government's introduction of the so-called conservation schemes that brought about such modern agricultural practices as fencing, thereby relieving herd boys who in turn took to attending school. As fencing perished beyond the ability of the people to afford

reviving it, and because the government hardly took the responsibility, no one could attend to livestock but the people who could be hired at a wage to do so, a practice that costs more than most families can afford. To this end, it can be argued that African agriculture has suffered in the face of changes often brought about by changing land allocation and use practices that saw people being driven out of agriculture (which was now more cash demanding) in order to afford a living particularly in the hands of various government regimes. Even such factors as laziness of the people can be accounted for as a result of the widening distance between the people and the land (and its productive capacity) brought about by such land allocation and use practices.

(b) Cultivation of igadi

Of the twenty-one homesteads visited- seventeen of which were interviewed and four were headed by absentee landlords- there is regular cultivation of 'igadi' in eighteen homesteads, including two from the absentee landlord category. In one absentee landlord homestead someone is specifically employed to look after the homestead and to cultivate the garden at the cost of the family, while in the other homestead the wife and the children do the cultivation while the husband (who knows about the family's agricultural history) is away as a wage labourer. For clarity, a garden in the African context is the small tract of land immediately adjacent to the homestead (May, 1987: 131). The one exception was one of the respondents in the category of regular cultivators. He has opted for a conversion of his garden lot into an area for keeping his livestock and is cultivating in the 'intsimi' only.

Basically all eighteen households cultivate the same crops in their gardens as they did, and some still do, in their 'amasimi'. But in addition to these crops, six indicated regular cultivation of potatoes and a further ten that of vegetables such as cabbage (which is by and large the most commonly grown), spinach, carrots and onions. Fourteen indicated that they strictly use family labour for cultivation of igadi, while four reported hiring wage labour (for twenty five rands a day as is the

case in the amasimi) in addition to the limited family labour. All gardens are ploughed by means of a tractor, hired mainly from the four people in their ownership referred to early in this chapter and payable at R 150 a garden. Only four people reported buying their seed regularly, and the rest use 'isiswenye'. As for the fertilizer, only one person reported using commercial fertilizer, while another six who made the effort to fertilize use kraal manure, which they obtain from their own homesteads or that of their neighbours.

Generally the respondents reported the harvest from their gardens to be very small (about two and a half bags on average), and that it is mainly used for subsistence. The exception was two people who reported selling potatoes when a surplus is registered and maize (from one out of three gardens) respectively. Though there is interest in selling, the primary purpose of cultivating a garden from the responses above is to subsist. Even though all the respondents reported that the garden has always been cultivated simultaneously with the field, intense cultivation of them so regularly is taken here as an attempt to try and compensate for the inability to cultivate a field- basically cultivating the smallest portion affordable so as to have even the most minimal part of subsistence from agriculture.

4.2.3. Livestock ownership

Concerning livestock, out of eighteen households, five own 44 cattle between them, the most of which are owned by the three regular cultivators (9, 14 & 9) respectively. The smallness of this total number of families, however, coincides with the finding that indeed cattle have dwindled in the area. It is also an interesting revelation to find that the people who have both the means and interest to cultivate the land regularly own the largest number of cattle. There are 44 sheep in the area owned by 4 families, two of which again are among the three regular cultivators who again claim the largest number of the flocks (12 and 14 respectively). Only one household keep goats, of which there are eight. Pigs are the second evenly distributed stock, and the 17 of them in this locality are owned by 9 households; five are owned by one of the regular cultivators, and the second largest number owned

by a single family is 3. Lastly, since, some households were not exactly sure of the number of fowls they own, the estimate can be put at 100-105 fowls owned between 14 households, the maximum owned in a single homestead being 19.

Cattle and pigs are the most readily sold stock (by the few people who own them) from which some profit can be made. Cattle are bought by people for (i) ceremonial reasons; that is, when a traditional ceremony has to be performed in connection with for example ancestral ceremonies, a funeral, initiation or even to graduate as a traditional healer. They can be sold around the location or people can come as far as a neighbouring district to purchase a beast (and a good beast can be sold for no less than R 3, 000). As for pigs, the common practice is to slaughter it and sell in small portions and, usually the market is provided by people who receive government grants (old age, disability etc) and selling takes place where the pay points are located; for example in the local trading store in the case of Mission location. They are followed by goats of which there is a high demand in traditional ceremonies- this is also the case with cattle though to a lesser extent. Sheep are slaughtered occasionally for domestic consumption, the same as fowls- despite one respondent who reported selling a fowl occasionally when in need of groceries. Pigs and fowls are the most demanding in terms of maintenance as they solely depend on maize and other cash products. They are followed by cattle, which demand immunization though they mainly eat grass from the veld.

That the three regular land cultivators own the most livestock in the locality can be explained in a number of ways. Basically there is more cash flowing into these families particularly from agricultural activities. They all have a tractor each whose services are demanded by the majority of the homesteads in the entire location (which can amount to more than 400 homesteads) and from which enormous cash returns are made. From this cash they can manage to acquire more livestock, which they can maintain at all costs and from which they can make profitable sales. With cash always available there is always the means to cultivate the land more than the rest of the families in the locality can manage, and the

possibility of making more profit from the yield made from such cultivation. In this way a perpetual cycle is established by which cash from agricultural activities is ploughed back into agriculture in an even more profitable manner, thus the three possibly manage to be at the top of agricultural activities in the area.

4.3. Conclusion

The decline of agriculture in Mission location as shown in this chapter reveals a number of factors important in the practice of agriculture today, as opposed to the situation in the past. First it shows that access to arable land does not however amount to maximum use of such land. This was proved by showing that, of the nineteen registered holders of arable allotments in the area, only one still makes regular use of such an allotment. What is important today is cash in the practice of agriculture, as proved by the three regular cultivators who each collect cash from both the services of their personal tractors in the entire area and sale of livestock and agricultural products- not to mention the fact that they have first indulged, or are still indulging, in some form of wage labour. This is different from the old practice of using ox-drawn ploughs and home grown seeds by the elders who had access to both land and livestock, which was not the case with their descendants who had to engage in cash-based livelihood sources that only went as far as their families' subsistence needs- in a way effectively denying them an opportunity to save enough cash so as to be able to make a comeback to agriculture. Consequently they make regular use of their iigadi which, though considerably smaller than amasimi, are a vital compensation to the inability to plough such amasimi. Cash is further obtainable from the sale of livestock, whose ownership in the area is by and large a privilege of the three regular cultivators, and thus their domination of the spectrum of agricultural activity is further entrenched. Perhaps the most unfortunate part of this account of the decline of agriculture in the area is that, in some way the Rehabilitation scheme, introduced to the area as an attempt to improve agriculture, can in some crucial ways be held responsible for such a state of decline.

Chapter Five

5. Summary and Conclusions

5.1. From the Rehabilitation Scheme to a decline in Agriculture

“The Story of Mission Location in Butterworth, Transkei”

5.1.1. Conservation Planning and the Reserve Policies in South Africa

In the social history of South Africa, there has been an unprecedented transformation of the rural African population from self-sufficient peasants to wage labourers. To effect this transformation, the role of agriculture in providing a living was undermined and in turn it was replaced by a dependence for livelihood on wage labour in white industrial and farming areas. To further this, successive white regimes embarked on a process of land dispossessions of the African majorities, confinement of Africans to strictly demarcated and limited areas called the ‘reserves that, due to the smallness of their size, subsequently deteriorated into overcrowded, overstocked and consequently eroded lands primarily serving the purpose of providing labour to the white areas. In addition, access to some land in the reserves was instrumental in the entire process since it served as a home to the families of the migrant labourers on the one hand, as well as a means of subsidizing the low wages paid to migrants with its rudimentary agriculture on the other.

Given the smallness of the land demarcated as the reserves, however, the pressure of the population on it became evident in the form of massive soil erosion. This was observed particularly by the NEC of 1932 that did not hesitate to urge hastened state intervention, in order to halt what it termed ‘the creation of desert conditions’. In response, the South African government resolved to establish the SANT, which it specifically tasked to remedy the ‘deplorable condition’ of land in the reserves. In this regard, soil conservation was advocated first by introducing the Betterment scheme under the auspices of the Department of Native Affairs.

According to the SANT officials, Betterment aimed to reverse soil erosion, improve agriculture and raise living standards in the reserves by means of a new

land-use plan. In terms of this plan, residential, arable and grazing areas would be separated by means of fencing. The keeping of too many stock by Africans was seen as the prime cause soil erosion, and stock limitation was the inevitable solution. This was so regardless of the fact that the problem of the reserves has always been land shortage since their creation and that the SANT, which was also empowered to acquire land for Africans, did so regrettably slower than was expected especially given the land in the reserves. In addition, scores of reserve families (30% in the Transkei alone) had no livestock in the 1940's (Hendricks, 1990). Determined to go ahead, Betterment officials used what was called the Betterment Proclamation of 1939 specifically designed to combat overstocking. In terms of this proclamation, livestock could be culled if the authorities found it in excess of the recommended carrying capacity after they have conducted a count in any area declared in terms of the scheme. But this had to be done after consulting with the people of that area.

Consultation with the people was however only in theory, and the general practice became a situation whereby the district magistrate (as Native Commissioner) declared Betterment areas only in consultation with the headman. This always led to objections on the part of the people and it consequently exposed the policy differences operating in the different echelons of the government. For instance, while the people strongly resisted the issue of stock culling, the DNA insisted on securing the approval of the people before commencing with the scheme; on the other hand, the secretary general threatened to use compulsion of government appointed chiefs. Again, when the TPC influenced the CMT to recommend the elimination of compulsory consultation, the central government responded by putting aside the entire program of stock limitation (Hendricks, 1990).

Betterment was delayed over the WW2 years as the government shifted both personnel and financial resources to its war effort. Indeed so much for a scheme that was instituted as an urgent attempt to arrest soil erosion. Notwithstanding these delays, the 1949 Young Commission that enquired into overstocking over the war years, recommended the extension of the 1939 Proclamation provisions to cover the

entire Transkei, but the UTTGC sternly opposed this. Such a recommendation had disregarded the fact that Betterment was being successfully introduced in, or rather affecting, very few locations in the entire Transkei (Hendricks, 1990), and that this was proving the inability of the government to implement the scheme in most parts of the reserves. Moreover, the fact that it was failing to achieve its aims was evident in the increased rate of proletarianisation that had so worried state authorities to the extent of changing their approach to dealing with the reserve land situation.

Indeed the number of Africans in urban areas had increased enormously especially as a result of being sparked by an economic boom in the country during the 1930's. Such a presence of Africans in the urban areas had socio-economic and political implications in that, as urban dwellers, they would soon need social benefits such as housing, and the government was not prepared to give way to these since in principle they would undermine the migrant labour system. The general consensus in government quarters was towards the improvement of the reserve conditions with the specific purpose of increasing their carrying capacity. This was outlined in the new 'Rehabilitation scheme' towards the end of the war (Beinart & Bundy in Klein, 1980; Hendricks, 1990). The new scheme, that was to be launched by means of Regional Planning Committees that would survey, and draw plans for, the reserve areas, introduced veld conservation, improvement of water supplies and afforestation among other things to add to residential relocation and stock limitation (Statement of Land Policy, 1945). In mid 1945 the TPC was formed as testimony to this.

Outlined more succinctly in what was called 'A New Era of Reclamation' by Smit in 1945, the new scheme centered on the division of the rural African population into two groups, one based on the land and farming on a full-time basis, while the other was to be based in rural villages to be established for this purpose and would have access to neither land nor livestock. Their livelihood was to depend on the development of industries after the war. With this plan the government hoped to overcome the problem of urban Africans on the one hand, while the

migrant labour system would nevertheless be perpetuated through those Africans in rural villages. But unfortunately poor industrial development meant that this plan hardly materialized.

The implementation of the Rehabilitation scheme was fraught with both technical and political difficulties, and it was the latter difficulties that saw the government shifting its policies to make them more stringent. Technical difficulties were caused by shortage of both staff members and equipment to carry out the scheme (Hendricks, 1990). Of the political difficulties, however, non surpassed the lack of cooperation of the local people, and this soon manifested into widespread resistance to the entire scheme. It is this resistance that saw the government shifting its policy priorities to the elevation of chiefs and headmen by empowering them with powers to inflict criminal sanctions on non-compliers, in a way making them entities through which the scheme would be channeled (Hendricks, 1990). This particular move was to see widespread and violent resistance to both the schemes and these coopted leaders particularly spearheaded by the AAC. Chiefs were not only bypassed, they were killed in areas such as Pondoland and such structures as fenced grazing areas were simply vandalized, such as was the case in Ndabakazi near Butterworth (Tabata, 1950; Beinart & Bundy in Klein, 1980). Though the government suppressed these by means of brute force, their occurrence highlighted the widespread opposition to the scheme that was seen as both a means to taking away the land and an attempt to subject the people to migrant labour. In addition, the lenient 1939 Proclamation gave way to a harsher 1949 one that partially eroded the consultation clause. As if this was not enough, the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act as well as a 1956 Proclamation were both used to fully erode consultation by decreeing that to go ahead with the schemes authorities only need to explain to the tribal authorities, and not the people (Hendricks, 1990).

The prospects of any viable agriculture in the reserves were doomed when the NP Government rejected the recommendations of the Tomlinson Commission. The Tomlinson Commission of 1950 was tasked with enquiring into a

comprehensive scheme for the rehabilitation of the reserves [and the covert purpose this was going to serve for the government was that of dealing with unwanted African presence in white areas]. In its 1954 report, the commission reaffirmed the division of the rural population into progressive farmers and wage labourers. It also recommended freehold tenure in African areas.

This policy decision (of rejecting the Tomlinson commission recommendations) has however raised questions as to the real intentions of the NP government. To this end, the argument that, since the reserves have always been viewed as providers of cheap labour on the one hand, as well as home for those not needed in those places of work on the other, bringing about full-time farming in these areas would have undermined this historic role seems plausible. Also as homes for Africans not needed in the white areas either for political (such as those in urban and black spot areas) or economic (such as redundant farm labourers) reasons, the removal of up to 50% of the population was impossible in the face of mechanizing and consolidating white farms, the need to get rid of black spots, and the systematic removal of Africans from the urban areas. This was confirmed through the policy of forced removals of millions of Africans from the above-mentioned three areas to the reserves that the government embarked on between the 1960's and 1980's. The government in addition introduced the Self Governing states in these areas to make the problem of control of Africans in these conditions a burden of African governments themselves. With this move the migrant labour system was fully regimented.

Having discussed the conservation policies of the South African government as part of an overall reserve policy that primarily aimed at regimenting the migrant labour system by limiting the amount of productive land available to Africans, this chapter will now turn to a specific case of an area in Butterworth, Transkei, called Mission location. The purpose of this is to show how the schemes worked in practice.

5.1.2. Mission Location and the Rehabilitation Scheme

In Mission location the Rehabilitation scheme was introduced by Mr. Wakeford, the resident magistrate, in 1944 and the survey of the area by the TPC was carried out between July and December 1945. In its January 1946 report, the TPC found that there were 424 dwelling sites in the area, some of which were occupied under quitrent tenure while others were occupied under certificate of occupation. These were finally issued in 1920. In the Committee's view, these sites were so large and scattered that it recommended their concentration and reduction. When the survey was done in 1945, there were 616 families of both Gcaleka and Mfengu origins in the area, and though the latter group was closer to the Wesleyan missionaries in the area, all Africans were under the headmanship of Mr. Monakali appointed by the government (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946).

Though the committee found that most of the land in the area was badly eroded as a result of excessive cultivation and steepness of slope and recommended its forfeiture, the distribution of arable land in terms of the 1920 arrangements was so skewed that only 260 of the 616 families accessed it. In terms of use, land was available for (i) dwelling sites issued in a disorganized manner as stated above; (ii) arable lands issued regardless of slope suitability such that they had to be eliminated from cultivation according to the recommendation of the committee; (iii) and an overgrazed veld that served as a grazing area. In its future system that was to reverse what it termed an 'unbalanced diet', the committee recommended more vegetable growing, livestock improvement, as well as physical reclamation works such as diversion banks and grass leys. In a bid to have this system of farming enforced on the people, the committee recommended more cooperation of the people that was to be sought through strict state sanctions. The central government approved this plan in January 1947 and the rehabilitation works were commenced in July of that year (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946).

The recommendations of the TPC somehow had some negative implications for agriculture in Mission location that this chapter will now turn to; in fact,

judging by the outcomes that will become apparent in the course of the chapter, the scheme had more negative than positive aspects for agriculture in the area. First of all, the recommendation was that excessively cultivated, and therefore badly eroded land must not be cultivated, and the result was the denial of access to land for those with eroded lands. Furthermore, those denied access to land were in effect pushed out of agriculture as a source of livelihood and, in line with Smit's recommendation that they could not live by agriculture, were therefore to look to sources of livelihood other than agriculture. Worse of all was the fact that the scheme recommended the reduction in the number of families with arable land in an area where access to arable land was already a privilege of only 260 out of 616 families (43%); that is, in area where landlessness was already acute. The practice, however, amounted to nothing more than making increasingly many families cease looking to agriculture for a living.

In all probability acute land shortages were a corollary to population increases in an area with no land for expansion. This however has for long been a state of affairs in South Africa deliberately brought about by white regimes with the purpose of preventing the development of full-time farming in the African areas (the reserves). It was accomplished by nothing other than land conquests and dispossessions, the land Acts of 1913 and 1936 as well as the conservation schemes themselves. In this way the Rehabilitation scheme, as well as its inability to improve agriculture in the reserves, must be looked at in the context of continued denial of land to the ever- growing African populations.

With some arable land in the area having been allocated on unsuitable and erosion- prone slopes, the committee went ahead to recommend the elimination of 53 whole lands and 60 portions of others from arable agriculture. This however resulted to a dramatic increase in the number of families with no arable land from 356 to 409, and in addition to this 60 more families found their allotments being reduced. Despite attempts to acquire new plots, 14 more people were nevertheless to be left landless as a result of the scheme (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1945). If this was guided by

Smit's optimism that industrial development will absorb this class of landless people, the bleakness of opportunities in the country's industrial sector as a whole made this almost impossible (Board, 1964). The committee itself acknowledged this in its report, but nevertheless proceeded with land dispossessions. This however shows just how the scheme guaranteed the labour supply to the white areas by making sure that, irrespective of employment opportunities at the time of dispossession, those without land were ever going to be unable to live by agriculture, and therefore always readily available as wage labourers.

To further the dispossession of as many families as possible, the concentration of kraal sites was inevitably accompanied by their reduction. This reduction put the size of kraal sites, which have been much bigger, at 0, 25 hectares. The effects of reduction in particular were negative, in that they implied the reduction of cultivated gardens integral to these sites. This was a heavy blow especially to families who looked to these gardens as their only source of livelihood from agriculture. In fact, this was not only peculiar to Mission location, as in the rest of the areas where the schemes were implemented it did take place.

For the minority who still had access to arable land, the future system of farming they were expected to practice in terms of the scheme nevertheless left them at the crossroads as far as improvement of agriculture was concerned. To illustrate this, though diversion banks and other physical structures could be created with some success, the question of the use of fertilizers and improved stock grades that require financial backing was left unanswered. Thus, the improvement of agriculture through these means remained a dream for the majority who could hardly afford them, and its supplementation with other sources of livelihood could hardly be expected to cease by any chance.

The fact that agriculture was not being able to fully to support the people who practiced it in Mission location is evident in the committee's observation that the area experienced an absence of able-bodied men who in turn made difficult the

cultivation of the land still available. Those absent were not anywhere else other than in the white areas where they worked for wages as the Committee states in its findings.

In spite of the implications discussed above, the government resolved to have the scheme implemented in the area forcibly if necessary. This was going to be the case if the people failed to cooperate, and it was going to be achieved by means of administrative control as well as strict legislative sanction (TPC 2/36/5/25, 1946). In this process, the very same policy decision of elevating the headman to a position of being able to punish non-compliers was adopted in the area. Thus the headman was not only to become a channel for the Rehabilitation scheme, he was also assigned to deal with potential resistance to it.

As the next and final section of this chapter will show, both landlessness and the inability of the type of agriculture practiced in the rehabilitated Mission location to meet subsistence needs of the people have resulted to a situation by which large numbers of families (including the few who still have access to arable land) have dismissed the idea of clinging to agriculture for a living. Today, the picture is that of a decline in agriculture evident in both arable and livestock farming. To prove that the people have not lost interest in agriculture per se, the small garden portions in the kraal sites are still cultivated regularly with amazing enthusiasm. Clearly there are reasons other than loss of interest for not cultivating ‘amasimi’.

5.1.3. The Story of a decline in agriculture in Mission Location today

For a complete illustration of the decline of agriculture in Mission location, this section looks at three related issues. These are: (i) access to land and the nature of tenure; (ii) the extent of cultivation in both ‘amasimi’ and ‘iigadi’; (iii) and livestock ownership.

First of all, it must be pointed out that there is a striking rate of landlessness in the area. To illustrate this, out of a total of 118 households in the entire area, only

21 have access to an 'intsimi', and of this 21 households, two are unregistered holders. This brings us to the question of how arable land is acquired in the area. Land can be acquired in four different ways. First of all, land can be acquired through inheritance. Given that the allocation of these amasimi dates back to the early 20th century and was effected through the issuing of quitrent title deeds, they are held on quitrent tenure. Secondly, land could be sub-divided among various members of the same family though unofficially. This has taken place in the area at least as far as one family in this study is concerned.

The third way by which land is acquired is by means of leasehold. For one household this has taken place, and the lessee has paid for land in at least two ways. First he cultivates the garden portion of the household that leases their land once every year with his own tractor and, secondly he used to make the required annual quitrent payments on behalf of the leaser. The fourth way of getting land is by simply borrowing it in exchange for practically nothing, despite having to maintain fences and other things, as one household head has confirmed in the area. These two individuals getting land by leasehold and borrowing, however, are the two unregistered holders referred to earlier. In addition, together with only one of the registered holders, they are the only three who are currently engaged in land cultivation. The case of these two is very important in that it shows that there are ways by which current land holding arrangements can be bypassed to put the land into productive use. This is an avenue that deserves special exploration in future as there might possibly be more individuals like these two in the area. In fact, though not falling within the scope of this respective dissertation, one individual, who is not from Mission location, has entered into a leasehold arrangement with someone from a residential area adjoining the one that is the subject of this study with some interesting results. (But unfortunately the details of the payment in exchange for the land are not known at this point in time, but this does not mean this case is not worth mentioning.) He makes use of the land throughout the year (cultivating maize and vegetables) that he sells and he even manages to employ up to more than ten individuals from the area every season (up to more than 30 a year). So, leasehold

and similar arrangements can be mutually beneficial than simply holding on to land without making use of it.

Fourteen out of the fifteen individuals did not know the size of the land they are holding. In fact, most do not even remember seeing the actual titles to the land, and this confirms their long detachment from both the holding and cultivation of the land in question. Since one individual knows that they have four morgen (3, 43 ha), and as is common that quitrent allotments were of this size, it is possible that these plots are more or less of this extent. Though all the respondents report the land to still being in their names, only three were optimistic about making use of it in the near future. Needless to say, those who did not report this again give more muscle to the argument for the encouragement of leasehold to capable individuals.

If only 3 out of the 21 arable allotments are regularly cultivated, and if two of these are cultivated on the basis of a negotiated settlement by people who have no land in their names, then it can be seen how much land is not being put into agricultural use. Similarly, the extent to which agriculture has declined in the area can be observed. Broadly, people cultivate, or rather cultivated in the case of those who no longer do so, maize, beans, melons and pumpkins once every year. The interesting question was that of the way people cultivate or cultivated especially since it revealed striking differences between past and present agricultural practices. Concerning labour, in the past the family was the main source of labour, and no payment was made in return for the service. But at present, that is, at least as late as 1996, given the schooling of children as well as the absence of some family members who work elsewhere, labour is generally hired and paid for in cash. This is also necessitated by the fact that nowadays extended families are less abundant than smaller nuclear families. So more cash is needed in agriculture today. The need for cash in agriculture today was further demonstrated in the question of the traction, seed and fertilizer. Contrary to the past during which oxen, home grown seed and kraal manure were not only abundant, but also the main means by which agriculture was practiced, today the hiring of a tractor (for cash), buying of the seed

and commercial fertilizer are not uncommon. Given that the costs of a tractor are high (up to 450 rands a field in the past season), it is not surprising that the three regular cultivators own their own tractors.

For the three regular cultivators, the knowledge of whether their yield has increased or decreased in the past season depended on the extent of land they have had access to, the unpredictable climatic conditions, as well as the amount of time they had devoted to looking into it personally. For instance, one reported a decrease because he has cut down on the extent of land as a result of his inability to repair fences, while the other got a portion of his harvest so badly damaged by heavy rains. The third one, who still works as a wage labourer on a full time basis, had not devoted enough time to register the exact quantity of his yield.

The most difficult question to answer was that of the exact amount of yield, possibly due to the traditional practice of consuming crops straight from the field throughout the period between the ripening and the actual harvesting. But the interesting thing was that of what was actually done with such yield, as again it showed stark differences between the those who are currently cultivating and those who are not. To illustrate this, in the past the largeness of families and the involvement of most families throughout the area in agriculture meant that the yield found its way into the subsistence needs of the respective families. This contrasts with the current practice by the three regular cultivators of selling a portion of their produce in the area and even in the town of Butterworth. In spite of this motivation to sell, however, a large part of the yield nevertheless goes into subsistence even in the families of these three.

Table three: knowledge of the last time of cultivation by registered holders:

<u>Interviewed.</u>	<u>Those who knew.</u>	<u>Those who do not.</u>
<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>

Though only 4 of the 14 registered holders interviewed who currently do not cultivate knew exactly when last did they do so, they were all (14 of them) very clear as to why they are no longer engaging in cultivation. Firstly, it was the death of parents who were the original allottees and the failure of their descendants to resume cultivation with the result that fields have now developed into tree forests and bushy areas that was the reason. The big distance between the fields and residential areas brought about by the government conservation schemes aggravated this. This distance in some cases resulted to the demoralization of those who had to do cultivation as such occurrences as theft were not uncommon in the distant fields, which is the second reason for not cultivating. Thirdly, the perishing of fences erected in terms of the schemes and the inability of the people, as well as the failure of the government, to revive them that caused a failure to cultivate as livestock, which used to be attended to by children who are now school goers, could not be kept out of the arable lands. Fourthly, the decline in livestock, also evident in the smallness of families in its possession today, also contributed. The interesting thing is that all these reasons can be directly linked to the conservation schemes initially intended to improve agriculture. But as is shown here, the result has been the opposite; a decline in agriculture. The fifth and last reason is that of unemployment and subsequent lack of income to invest in a cash-demanding agriculture.

Seemingly, agriculture ceased to be a widely practiced activity when those who had land and livestock became unable to engage in it (as a result of both old age and death), and their descendants, who had preoccupied themselves with other means of livelihood, as they could not wait to inherit land from their parents, never had this opportunity. Also because agriculture became a very cash-demanding undertaking especially with the decline in livestock (which meant hiring tractors), as well as the need to fence one's allotment to name but a few, it became virtually impossible for the majority to invest in it given the absence of viable cash-generating activities they could engage in. as such, land poverty and changing agricultural

practices especially brought about by state authorities can to some extent be held responsible for the decline of agriculture in Mission location.

As far as gardens are concerned, generally there is widespread and regular cultivation in the area. Of the 21 homesteads visited, 18 cultivate their gardens regularly. The exception was two of the four absentee landlord households and one of the three regular cultivators who have converted his garden into a cattle-keeping area. Basically the same crops as in the fields are cultivated in the gardens, except that there is also some cultivation of vegetables. Only four of the 18 households use hired labour, and the rest use family labour. This shows that these gardens are so small that most families manage to cultivate them without outside help. All gardens are ploughed by means of a tractor, but the seed used the most is that grown from home. The harvest is said to be very small and basically going into family subsistence. Moreover, the regularity with which these gardens are cultivated somehow proves them to be a means of compensating for the inability to cultivate the bigger fields.

As for livestock ownership, two points are worth mentioning from the very onset. The first is that both the total number of livestock and that of families owning it is so small that it confirms the finding that indeed livestock has dwindled in the area. Secondly, given that the largest number of both herds and flocks are owned by the three regular cultivators, it can be seen that even this component of agriculture has generally declined in the area and is a privilege of mainly these three only. The fact that the three regular cultivators own most of the livestock categories often in the majority (for example, they own 32 out of 44 cattle, 26 sheep, and no less than 3 pigs and 15 fowls between them), and their ownership of tractors that are hired by many households in the area, put them at the center of agricultural activity in the area. Their sale of both livestock and returns from their tractors' services as well as their selling of agricultural products put them in a good position to re-invest cash in, and therefore to perpetuate, agriculture. That they have managed to be in this position not because of their involvement in agriculture but through accumulation

from elsewhere (mainly in wage labour) makes them a special case that deserves closer analysis. Surely they have come a long way to being where they are and analyzing them can give an idea of one of the ways by which people can get back to agriculture in an area where it is accounted for as a case of decline. This sort of accumulation is what other households are unable to do, thus they characterize the decline in agriculture in the area which has not only formed the subject of this subsection only, but is also that of the dissertation as a whole.

In sum, the story of agriculture in Mission location, characterized by a decline, once again shows just how the Rehabilitation scheme in particular, and conservation planning in general, became not only dismal failures in the improvement of agriculture, but also practices in line with the reserve policies of the South African government that primarily sought to diminish the extent of arable land available to the people in such a way that the majority were rendered incapable of making a living by agriculture.

5.2. Concluding discussion

The case of Mission location as discussed in this dissertation provides a good example of the impact of colonial and apartheid regimes that have comprised the government of South Africa especially from as late as the end of the 19th century. Since around 1894, the year when Transkei, of which Mission location is part, was formally annexed into the Cape Province (Saunders et al, 1974), there have been quite a number of changes in the area especially in respect of land tenure and agriculture. For instance, by 1920, the Cape administration had already penetrated Mission location to the extent that, for the first time, regular payment of taxes had become a prerequisite for access to land. Every family therefore had to be registered as taxpayers. One adverse effect of this was that for some families, as it happened in Mission location, access to land became virtually impossible in the absence of cash. In fact, this was the time when a large number of families lost access to land in Mission location.

To this end, therefore, it is fair to argue that there was a correlation between the introduction of these new tenurial arrangements and the insatiable need for labour in the white economy, especially with the discovery of minerals that took place around the same period. In fact, this was the only way Africans, who were seen as the potential providers of labour, could be forced into wage labour. The policy itself was a double-edged sword in that it made possible the acquisition of services of both landed and landless Africans since a cash wage became a prerequisite for both those with access to land (in their payment of taxes) as well as those with no land since this was the only way they could subsist. In mission location, about 57% of families fell into the landless category. Furthermore, the labour needs of the white economy give an answer to the decision that was taken by the Cape administration to make Transkei a 'reserve' and to prohibit white land seizure in the area (Saunders, 1974). Transkei was to become a labour reserve; that is, a place where labour would be reproduced and could be accessed as per needs of that economy. This is the basis of the migrant labour system that was favoured in South Africa. For this to become possible, both the extent of land to be accessed by the few who were lucky enough as well as the size of the entire reserve areas were strictly limited.

But the very basis of this policy- that is, that Africans were seen as providers of labour for whites- was fundamentally flawed. Population increase, among other things, saw to it that more and more families were becoming landless, and this undermined the very basis of the migrant labour system. Thus we see the government introducing soil conservation in the late 1930's. More specifically, it was such policies as the Rehabilitation scheme of 1945 that had the most impact in Mission location. The scheme was designed to reverse the accelerated migration, and potential permanence of, Africans in towns by means of land-use plans specifically designed for the reserves with a view to maintaining the migrant labour system. Thus in Mission location, as in other areas where the scheme was introduced, the scheme was deliberately designed to exclude some, but not other,

families in terms of land access. In Mission location this ultimately affected about 53 families, and as such increased the number of landless families from 356 to 409 (out of a total of 616 families). This policy in all probability guaranteed the labour supply to the white economy by the landless people of Mission location.

Moreover, the maintenance and regimentation of policies that favoured the white economy at the expense of its African counterpart are further explained by the determination of the state to pursue its reserve policies (especially those pertaining to soil conservation) irrespective of the opinion of the Africans themselves. To illustrate this, right from the introduction of the scheme, very little if anything was required of the people's opinion, and in most cases the headmen were the voice of the people. For instance in Mission location the scheme was introduced through the headman, Mr. C. W. Monakali whose task it was to make sure that the people cooperated. Furthermore, it also became his task to make sure that those who acted against the will of the government were dealt with accordingly. This shows that the government was determined to go ahead with these schemes whatever the will of the people was. In addition, because the will of the people was always against these schemes as is exemplified by the actions of the All African Convention (see Tabata, 1950) that mobilized people against the schemes, it made sense for the government to co-opt such entities as headmen; that is, so as to further its interests (of maximizing the supply of labour) in the face of local opposition (that was rightly convinced that the government meant to drive them into wage labour).

The commitment of government to improving African agriculture was further proved to be a myth when the government rejected the recommendations of the Tomlinson commission of 1954 and decided to act to the contrary. These were the recommendations that the population of the reserves be cut down by 50% to allow for sizable land portions (called Economic Farming Units) to be issued to the remaining half for full-time farming as well as that land tenure be based on freehold. The rejection of these recommendations and the subsequent policy of forced removals of people into the reserves was the final nail in the coffin of viable

agriculture in the reserves. Furthermore, it explains why areas such as Mission location never saw the improvement of agriculture specifically as a result of a government initiative; the South African government has never been interested improving agriculture in the reserves, and Mission location in particular, and this is contrary to claims by the architects of the Rehabilitation scheme. Instead, its interest has been in the political, social as well as economic control of Africans' movements especially into urban areas (white towns and cities). As such, there still remains an analysis of the actual consequences of the conservation policies of the South African government.

More specifically, the point of departure for such an analysis is the finding (pertaining to Mission location in particular) that agriculture has declined since the introduction of soil conservation and white rule in general. But how has this come about in the face of such massive efforts as the Rehabilitation scheme? Regarding white rule, Mission location saw the changes in land tenure that resulted to only 21 out of 118 households being able to access arable land. The rest were not only left landless, but were also put at the mercy the white economy for them to subsist. With the introduction of the Rehabilitation scheme, there were changes in agricultural practices as the scheme introduced the notion of fencing, livestock limitation, re-allocation of land for different uses to name but a few. Though such things as fencing were initially done at the expense of the state, it became clear in the course of time that for subsequent repairs and re-fencing, the people themselves were to bear the cost. This meant that for the first time people had to pay for fencing. Payment in cash was also necessitated by the decline in livestock (partly as a result of stock limitation that was integral to the Rehabilitation scheme) that in turn meant the decline in kraal manure that was used as fertilizer; and hence fertilizer had to be bought in the form of commercial fertilizer. So, partly as a result of interference of the government, people in areas such as Mission location had to put up with new cash-demanding agricultural practices. As a result, people had to work for a cash wage in order to practice agriculture, let alone for their actual subsistence needs.

Therefore, it can be seen that agriculture was in fact becoming a cost that was virtually impossible to afford. That it was impossible to afford can be seen in the present state of agriculture in Mission location. To illustrate this, out of the 21 households with access to land, only 3 are currently practicing agriculture. Most revealing about the need for cash in agriculture is the fact that these three stand out as the most well-resourced for this undertaking; each of them own their own tractor, they make available the services of these tractors in gardens throughout the area, they have saleable livestock, and are therefore in a good position to invest cash in agriculture. As for the other 18 households, absence of viable cash-income sources is the reason why they do not practice agriculture.

So, indeed agriculture has regrettably declined in Mission location in the face of government initiated strategies and schemes claimed to be intended for its improvement; and the consequence of this has been an unavoidable dependence on wage labour for subsistence, an unforeseen consequence at least as far as the South African government officials would have liked to claim.

Bibliography

Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. in Klein, M. A.

1980. *Peasants in Africa: historical and contemporary perspectives*. Newbury Park: Calif: Sage.

Benney, M. & Hughes, E. V. in Bulmer, M.

1977. *Sociological Research Methods: an introduction*. London: Mcmillan Press.

Board, C.

1964. "The Rehabilitation Programme in the Bantu areas and its effects on the Agricultural practices and social life of the Bantu in the Eastern Cape". South African Journal of Economics. Vol. 32.

Bundy, C.

1979. *The Rise and the Fall of the South African Peasantry*. Cape Town: David Phillip.

Cross, C. R. in Cross, C. R. & Haines, R. J.

1988. *Towards Freehold: options for land and development in South Africa's black rural areas*. Cape Town: Juta.

Cross, C. R. in De Klerk, M.

1991. *A Harvest of discontent: the land question in South Africa*. Cape Town: Idasa.

Davenport, T. R. H.

1987. "Can sacred Cows be culled? A historical Review of land policies in South Africa with some questions for the future. Development Southern Africa. Vol. 4, No. 3.

De Wet, C. J.

1987. *Betterment Planning in South Africa: some thoughts on its history, feasibility, and wider policy implications*". Journal of Contemporary African studies. Vol. 6, No. 1/2.

De Wet, C. J.

1987. "Land Tenure and Rural Development: some issues relating to the Transkei and Ciskei". Development Southern Africa. Vol. 4, No. 3.

De Wet, C. J.

1995. *Moving Together, drifting apart: Betterment planning and Villagisation in a South African homeland*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Hendricks, F. T.
1989. "Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: the politics of conservation and control". Journal of Southern African studies. Vol. 15, No. 1.
- Hendricks, F. T.
1990. *The Pillars of Apartheid: land tenure, rural planning and chieftaincy*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International.
- Hindson, D. C.
1987. *Pass Controls and the urban African proletariat in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Horrell, M.
1969. *The African Reserves of South Africa*. Johannesburg: SAIRR.
- Houghton, H.
1956. *A Summary of the findings of the Tomlinson Report*. Johannesburg: SAIRR.
- Houghton, H.
1960. *Men of two worlds: some aspects of migratory labour in South Africa*. South African journal of Economics.
- Lacey, M.
1981. *Working for Boroko: the origins of a coercive labour system in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Leeuwenberg, J.
1977. *Transkei: a study in economic regression*. London: the African bureau.
- Lipton, M. in Wilson, F., Kooy, A. & Hendrie, D.
1977. *Farm labour in South Africa*. Cape Town: David Phillip.
- Mann, P. H.
1985. *Methods of Social investigation*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- May, J.
1987. "migrant labour in Transkei: causes and consequences at the village level". Journal of contemporary African studies. Vol. 6, No. 1/2.
- Mbeki, G.

1964. *South Africa: the Peasants' Revolt*. Baltimore: Penguin books.
- McAllister, P. A.
1989. "Resistance to Betterment in the Transkei: a case of the Willowvale district". Journal of Southern African studies. Vol. 15, No. 2.
- McAllister, P. A.
1992. *Development planning and land use practices in rural Transkei*. Rhodes University: ISER.
- McAllister, P. A.
2001. *Building the Homestead: Agriculture, Beer and Labour in South Africa's Transkei*. Ashgate: Aldershot.
- McGregor, A. M.
1977. *Butterworth, the first Mission in the Transkei: the story of one hundred and fifty years (1827-1977)*. King Williamstown: South African Missionary review.
- Nieuwenhuysen, J. P.
1964. "Economic policy of the Reserves since the Tomlinson Commission". South African journal of Economics. Vol. 32.
- Peires, J. B.
1981. *The House of Phalo: a history of the Xhosa people in the days of their independence*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Platzky, L. & Walker, C.
1985. *The Surplus People: forced removals in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Prnsloo, D. S.
1976. *Transkei: birth of a state*. Pretoria: Foreign Affairs Association.
- O'Connel, G.
1981. "Resettlement and Development in Transkei". Africa Insight. Vol. 11, No. 1.
- Sachs, E. S.
1965. *The Anatomy of Apartheid*. London: Collins.
- Sarpong, E. K., Owosu-Acheampong, K. & Musampa, C. M.
1991. *Manufacturing industry in the Transkei: the case of Butterworth*. Durban: University of Natal.

Saunders, C. in Saunders, C. & Derricourt, R.

1974. *Beyond the Cape Frontier: studies in the history of the Transkei and Ciskei.*

London: Longman.

Tabata, I. B.

1950. *The all African Convention: the awakening of a people.* Johannesburg: People's Press.

Westcott, G. in Wilson, F., Kooy, A. & Hendrie, D.

1977. *Farm labour in South Africa.* Cape Town: David Phillip.

Wolpe, H.

1972. "Capitalism and cheap labour in South Africa: from Segregation to Apartheid".

Economy and Society. Vol. 1, No. 4.

Yawitch, J.

1981. *Betterment: the myth of homeland Agriculture.* Johannesburg: SAIRR.

Yawitch, J. in Cross, C. R. & Haines, R. J.

1988. *Towards Freehold: options for land and development in South Africa's black rural areas.* Cape Town: Juta.

Government Publications

CMT, 1912. Butterworth Mission land matters: Location No. 13. Vol. 12, No. 57/58 (Cape Archives).

Eastern Cape (South Africa) Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism. Strategic Economic Plan: Green Paper, 1997.

Native Commissioner, Butterworth 2/32/5/25 1944 (Cape Archives).

Native Commissioner, Butterworth 2/36/5/25 1944 (Cape Archives).

Proclamation No. 116 of 1949.

Proclamation No. 31 of 1939.

Report of the Native Economic Commission UG 22/1932.

Secretary of Native Affairs No. 8/432/13. 1947 (Cape Archives).

Secretary of Native Affairs. D. Smit. A New Era of Reclamation 1945.

Tomlinson Commission UG 61/1955.

TPC 1946. 2/36/5/25. Native Settlements and Rehabilitation Reports (Cape Archives).

UTA CMT TPC 1 1/H 1946.

Electronic Sources

<http://www.demarcation.org.za>

Glossary

- 1. Ilali (Ilali-prural)- a well-defined cluster of homesteads that is the basic unit of settlement with its local name, headman, grazing and arable lands.**
- 2. Ookhokho- ancestors.**
- 3. Amanxiwa- dwelling sites.**
- 4. Amasimi- arable lands.**
- 5. Iigadi- cultivated lands adjacent to homesteads (or rather integral to dwelling sites).**