1. Introduction: The Meanings of Trophy Hunting in South Africa

It is the details of people’s existence that makes up the process of class formation, stratification, and class conflict. (Beinart & Bundy, 1987: 29)

Tracking an Invisible Great Trek explores shifting power relations and notions of belonging of farm workers and commercial farmers in the Eastern Cape Karoo in the context of private farm conversions. Increasingly commercial farmers engage in land uses based on on wildlife utilization such as the Karoo farmers in this study who exclusively focus on trophy-hunting business. This ethnography tracks the position of farm dwellers in these conversion processes, i.e resident farm workers, tenants and their families who consider the commercial farming landscape as their home. Referring to the category farm dweller instead of farm worker is a deliberate choice as it assumes people’s historical attachments to land despite their lack of legal entitlements. Farm dwellers, an estimated three million South Africans nationwide, have been recognised as an invisible group in South African society attached to isolated and remote places in the countryside (Hall, 2007:95). They have been referred to as a “forgotten” people (Rutherford, 2001:1) marginalised due to their vulnerable position in histories of land dispossession and forced labour on commercial farms (Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007; Ross, 1999; Terreblanche, 2002). This thesis aims to track their journeys and stories in the changing commercial farming landscape of the Karoo Midlands.

Private farm conversion processes involve the introduction of wild animals onto commercial farms whereby farmers gradually expand property boundaries and erect high fences profoundly demarcating their territories. In the Karoo conversions have been long-term process that sometimes began during the 1970s and resulted in immense tracks of land solely dedicated to the accommodation of various wildlife species and activities of foreign hunting
clients. Conversion processes accelerated during the early 1990s when both political and economic reforms were implemented by South Africa’s first democratic government lead by Nelson Mandela’s African National Congress (ANC). Conditions for farming communities drastically altered due to measures that deregulate and liberalized the agricultural sector. Commercial farmers cannot longer rely on generous state subsidies and struggle to compete in global markets (Zyl et al., 2001). A substantial proportion of the commercial farmers give up farming and move to the cities (or abroad) while others have been able to scale up and diversify their activities on the land. Tourism has become an important growth sector. Incorporating some form or degree of game farming has been one way for some commercial farmers to remain on the land. In the Eastern Cape Province wildlife utilization on private land occurs in 2008 on 90% of the commercial farms in combination with other agricultural activities and as single activity on 7% of the farms (Van Niekerk, personal communication 2008). Game farming comprises several economic activities based on the utilization of wildlife for ecotourism, game-meat production, breeding of wild animals, and hunting. South Africa has the largest trophy-hunting industry on the continent generating considerable revenues from hunting permits and lodging fees (Lindsey et al., 2006b). The Mail & Guardian reports in 2012 that breeding rare species, a practice closely related to hunting, brings in ‘big bucks’ for game ranchers whose commercial wildlife ranches occupy 16.8% of South Africa’s land of which 12% are situated in the Eastern Cape. Statistics generated by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth indicate that “the province’s wildlife industry generated R392-million in income in 2009 compared with the R274-million generated in 2005”. Within the Eastern Cape’s growing wildlife sector hunting is the biggest income generator.

The farm conversions to wildlife occur nearly a century after the commence of the epic ‘Great Trek’ of the 1830s. The Great Trek consisted of Boer emigrants who moved out of the Cape Colony to retain their independence from British colonial rule. They packed all their belongings on ox wagons and travelled with their servants and livestock towards the north where these trekboers searched for ‘empty’ lands suitable for their farming activities. During 1

1 Online source: http://mg.co.za/article/2012-01-06-big-bucks-for-game-ranchers/ (accessed 7 October 2012)
the era of the Great Trek British settlers occupied Karoo territory, including properties formerly occupied by Boers, and turned it into prime sheep-farming country. Over centuries, these settlement patterns have displaced and dispossessed Africans whose mobility was increasingly restricted by the subsequent violent and oppressive regimes. As a result black South Africans have moved a great deal in their lives in order to retain some form of independence, to support their families, to seek better labour conditions, and to escape violent relations inscribed in life on the commercial farms. Stories about their travels and life trajectories entering post-apartheid landscapes unfold an Invisible Great Trek.

This study is embedded in a research programme titled: ‘Farm Dwellers, the Forgotten People? Consequences of Conversions to Private Wildlife Production in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape’ that seeks to explore conversions to wildlife-based production in the provinces of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape to address the role of the private wildlife sector in nature conservation and development. The aim of the programme is to explore the consequences of these conversions for farm dwellers because little attention had been paid to the social impact of land-use changes and the few existing studies pointed to different impacts on the lives of farm dwellers. On the one hand, a self-administered survey research among managers of wildlife production farms indicates an increase in labour opportunities and higher wages after conversions (Langholz and Kerley, 2006). On the other hand, rural advocacy NGOs such as Eastern Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP) and the Southern Cape Land Committee (SCLC) tend to link the conversions to increasing farm evictions and threatened livelihoods for farm dwellers (AFRA, 2003; SCLC, 2010). Furthermore, the conversion processes take place in the context of land reform and poverty alleviation programmes introduced by the post-apartheid state. Several PhD projects probe different aspects of the farm conversion processes in different geographical and historical contexts (Mkhize, 2012; Snijders, 2012). In the following I present the problem statement central to this specific PhD project.

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2 Integrated NWO-WOTRO Programme.
Problem statement

To a stranger the Karoo Midlands initially appears rather peacefully and orderly with quaint rural villages centred around impressive churches surrounded by vast farmlands where residents live seemingly remote and quiet lives. The lingua franca is Afrikaans though there has always been a strong presence of British settlers and their descendants on the farms. As soon as one moves away from the town centres or farm manors into the living spaces of black populations the language spoken is either isiXhosa or Afrikaans depending on a person’s life trajectory and family background. The impoverished townships hugging the rural villages and workers’ houses on farms are a far less attractive sight to the visitor. Since the frontier wars between indigenous people and European settlers during the 19th century the land has been predominantly owned by white commercial farmers whose land rights have been firmly secured in constitution. The farms have been worked by both black and coloured workers who have been toiling and living on the farms without tenure security or access to land rights. They stayed on farms until they were expelled or decided to leave and find employment, with better working conditions, elsewhere. For decades rural black families have moved across the semi-arid plains struggling to secure a home and a livelihood. They formed a rural labouring class whose mobility was severely restricted due to the rigid spatial engineering that served apartheid ideology in general, and white agriculture in particular. This reality was radically challenged when apartheid was abolished during the early 1990s and South Africans elected their first democratic government.

To address and restore inequalities and injustices inherited from the past the post-apartheid government introduced new labour policies and a minimum wage for farm labourers. Despite these changes in legislation an alarming Human Rights Watch report was published in 2011 on the conditions of farm workers on South-African wine and fruit farms in the Western Cape. The report concludes that farm workers are among the most vulnerable people in South Africa. They earn the lowest wages, lack access to facilities, work under tough conditions, are denied benefits to which they are legally entitled, lack unionization, have insecure land tenure rights, are subjected to eviction and displacement processes, “in some cases from the land on which they were born”
Both government representatives and farmers’ organizations lashed out to the writers of the report accusing them of presenting subjective and selective experiences of farm workers. These defensive responses signal the explosive nature of debates on contemporary power relations on commercial farms.

The post-apartheid government introduced a land reform programme aimed at altering ownership patterns in the country. Land restitution, redistribution and tenure security policies question the legitimacy of land ownership by the ‘previously advantaged’ white minority that owns most of the agricultural land and promised a better future for the ‘previously disadvantaged’ black majority. The land question in South Africa, almost two decades after the political transformation, is far from resolved and the bureaucratic and costly redistribution process has failed dramatically according to various observers. The farms handed over to land claimant communities are often perceived and labelled as failed projects because the land is no longer used ‘productively’. Economic indicators are applied to measure the success of land transfers whereas land provides more than economic capital to its owners. It also “represents a source of identity and a symbol of citizenship” (Hall & Ntsebeza, 2007:8). Exactly because the meanings of land ownership are emotional, and personal, the land reform process is a highly sensitive and controversial topic in society. In the Karoo Midlands there are relatively few land or tenure claims legally contesting, or altering, the status quo of land-ownership patterns in the area. This should not be interpreted as if there is no need to address the land question or labour/class relations in this part of the commercial farming sector. Conflict over land and resources is often ‘hidden’ in routinized behaviours, covert forms of resistance, institutionalised inequalities, and seemingly mundane decisions related to work or family matters. Besides material aspects the fabric of class struggle also includes contestations over justice, morality and manners (Beinart & Bundy, 1987; Scott, 1985). Contestations about the establishment of trophy-hunting farms touch on topics of nature conservation and the ‘original’ status of land and people that belong in this landscape.

Anthropologists have focused on the meanings of hunting beyond those linked to its economic value. It can be a source of identity and citizenship, just like land is more than a material asset to its owners. Trophy hunting provides a
form of leisure characterized by rituals and rules of the game that make it an expressive activity from which we can learn something about the relations between humans and nature, and humans with each other (Dahles, 1990:18). In the Karoo trophy hunting is strongly associated with wealthy farmers and foreigners who can afford to enjoy this expensive form of leisure. The Karoo trophy-hunting landscape relates to the formation of the South-African commercial farming sector and its makers. The economic potential of game farming has been a potent explanation for its rise during the second half of the 20th century (Nell, 2003). Livestock farmers in arid and semi-arid areas facing economic downfall due to increasing costs of labour and declining wool prices converted to game farming as it was perceived more profitable, economically and ecologically, than stock farming. Alongside this economic logic attributed to game farming developed the notion of game farming as distinctive form of land use employed by wealthy farmers, and non-farmers, who perceived a game farm as an excellent investment opportunity.

Ownership of a game farm was also becoming a status symbol in South Africa. Wildlife-related activities such as safaris and hunting were associated with affluence, and by the 1950s, owning wildlife land was still a badge of exclusivity and social standing (Nell, 2003: 106).

Wealthy farmers have been at the forefront of the wildlife industry. As private landownership was almost exclusively reserved for white South Africans as a result of the implementation of the Native Land Act of 1913 and subsequent apartheid legislation, the wildlife industry today is typically spearheaded by a class of white and/or affluent South Africans.

The rise of private game farming accompanied the foundation and merging of organisations representing and legitimizing the interests of game farmers on national and provincial levels. Wildlife Ranching South Africa3 (WRSA) has been established in 2005, merging existing provincial bodies representing game farmers that had been operational for thirty years on regional level, and represents 1500 members of 9000 registered game ranches in the country. There are also specialised organisations in the wildlife sector such as those focusing on

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hunting. In 1978 the Professional Hunters’ Association of South Africa\(^4\) (PHASA) has been founded to:

> be the **leading professional hunting authority**, optimizing the wildlife and professional hunting potential of South Africa to the benefit of all stakeholders and the community at large in an appropriate and sustainable manner, thereby conserving the resource base for generations to come.

Although sports hunting is an activity associated with the elite, it is presented as an activity with potential to benefit people in other classes of society as well. PHASA states their aim is “to promote and facilitate the empowerment of all South Africans wishing to participate in the hunting profession, conservation and related activities”. This discourse is articulated across the wildlife sector. The Eastern Cape Game Management Association\(^5\) (ECGMA) came into existence in 1980 and “hosts all role-players in the safari industry”. Their current membership “counts at well over 1200 members, of which the majority are recreational hunters”. These wildlife-based organizations present themselves as all-inclusive bodies embracing shared values such as ‘wildlife’ and ‘nature conservation’ that bind people together. South Africans actively promoting nature conservation and hunting reflect a specific group in society rather than a general public: the boards of these organizations and their membership profiles are predominantly male and white. Private trophy-hunting farms nurture particular cultural values and attachments to land held by its inventors\(^6\). I this these I regard game farm as places imbued with cultural meanings besides functioning as economically viable production units. Unfolding these meanings, and the value system attached to it, gives insight into social formations in post-apartheid society.

So far, most explorations into game farming have focused on their contribution to nature conservation or to rural development in South Africa. The economic benefits from tourism, especially through trophy hunting, are assumed to significantly contribute to social upliftment of poor communities through job creation and skills training on game farms (Langholz & Kerley,

\(^4\) Source online: phasa.co.za (visited 28 April 2012).
\(^6\) Carruthers made a similar argument for the establishment of National Parks (2003: 256).
2006; Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2003). How these assumed benefits trickle down in specific empirical contexts is hardly addressed and therefore poorly understood. Local power relations and interdependencies shaped through long-term processes on commercial farms are not taken into account. The wildlife sector has successfully appropriated the “language of transformation” to articulate and legitimise its existence (Snijders, 2012), but this is not the same as transforming everyday practices and interactions in the commercial farming landscape historically shaped by extremely imbalanced power relations and a culture of distrust and fear. In the Karoo, the prevalence of game farming as land use is contested most vehemently within the farming communities as farmers argue over the environmental and economic sustainability and compatibility of game farming alongside livestock husbandry in the district. Meanwhile, the rural townships are crumbling as result of the steady influx of farm dwellers who leave the commercial farms as employment opportunities diminish and labour arrangements become increasingly casual and temporal.

Research questions

This thesis is premised on the assumption that conversions to trophy-hunting landscapes affect relationships between farm workers and hunting farmers and their sense of belonging in post-apartheid South Africa. The objective is to describe and understand the mechanisms at work in the re-configuration of belonging in the Karoo. The central research question is:

*How do commercial farmers and farm dwellers in the Karoo re-configure power relations and their sense of belonging in the context of farm conversions to trophy-hunting activities?*

The Karoo farming community perceive post-apartheid reform politics as a major threat to their existence, forcing them to re-assert their position on the land. The research focuses on the ways contemporary social and racial categories are legitimised on trophy-hunting farms and how power relations are articulated through hunting rituals and the hunting game. It pays a great deal of attention to the ‘side-effects’ of the conversion processes that displace, replace, and divide people in the rural working classes. The local contestations about who belongs to what (class) position in the commercial-farming landscape signify the
complicated formation process of a social order that lives up to the promises of the post-apartheid era. Three sub-questions direct the explorations into these topics throughout the dissertation.

1. How do farm conversions to trophy hunting in the Karoo affect the lives of farm dwellers living and labouring in the area?

2. How do conversion processes shift power relations in the post-apartheid Karoo?

3. What do these conversions mean for attachments to place and belonging of commercial farmers and farm dwellers in the commercial farming landscape of the Karoo?

Essentially this study is about rural class struggle and the way it is experienced in present day interactions on trophy-hunting farms in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Signs and warnings have appeared on farm fences to notify people of the electrified wires or dangerous animals that roam the enclosed semi-arid plains of the Karoo. The gradual transformations in the landscape are noticeable for visitors who regularly travel the area known for its extensive sheep farming. Yet, the visible evidence of the landscape alterations still conceal the social processes that take place in relation to it. There is a story to tell about how a ruling class of local landowners retain power in the countryside through claiming belonging and recreating empty lands in the Karoo Midlands. The perspectives and experiences of black farm dwellers who have been continuously present in the area are presented to explore their place and position on the trophy-hunting farms. Farm dwellers’ perceptions, decision-making processes and challenges reveal their ways to belong in the contemporary commercial-farming landscape.

**Research Design: Ethnography and Interpretation**

To understand power relations and feelings of belonging we need to grasp how farmers and farm dwellers in the Karoo view the world position themselves and ‘the other’ in it. The exploration of meanings requires an ethnographic research design. Ethnographic research derives from the idea that human attitudes and
behaviours are best understood in their “natural setting” or in other words in
their own context (Walsh, 2001:217-220). Humans express this through everyday
manners and relations that give meaning to their existence. And to understand
how to interpret behaviour of humans one needs to become familiar with the
social context in which they take place. Geertz makes clear that “doing
ethnography” is not just a matter of methods. It is a particular manner of
knowledge generation that works within the ontological paradigm of
constructivism and an interpretative epistemology (Yanow, 2006; Yanow &
Schwartz-Shea, 2006). In Geertz’ words this means that:

The thing to ask about a burlesqued wink or a mock sheep raid is not what their
ontological status is. It is the same as that of rocks on the one hand and dreams
on the other – they are things of this world. The thing to ask is what their
import is: what it is, ridicule or challenge, irony or anger, snobbery or pride, that,
in their occurrence and through their agency, is getting said (Geertz, 1973: 10).

Ethnographers search for meanings and meaning-making processes and write
down social discourses. Doing ethnography is engaging in the practice of
providing through “thick description” an account of people’s daily practices and
how they produce, perceive and interpret what they are doing (Geertz, 1973: 6).
In terms of techniques, doing ethnography involves among other things
establishing research relations, selecting informants, mapping the field, writing
field notes, transcribing interviews and keeping a diary. In terms of an
intellectual enterprise, thick description is sorting out “structures of
signification” by interpreting research subjects’ interpretations of what they and
those around them are doing (1973:8-9). Accessing and analysing of these
constructions permits enhanced understanding of their actions (Yanow, 2006).
Interpretations of empirical realities presented in ethnographic texts can clarify
what happens in particular places and “bring us into touch with the lives of
strangers” through thick description and the power of scientific imagination
(Geertz, 1973: 16). Interpretive ethnography, in other words thick description of
an empirical case, generates knowledge about complex specifics rather than
general regularities of social life to contribute to social theory.

The construction of landscapes, and their representations, express different
things at different times. Landscapes are embedded in social processes and
unfolding their meanings requires an understanding of the particular context in which they exist. A South African exhibition and publication called “The Lie of the Land: Representations of the South-African Landscape” informs that landscapes are encoded and pregnant with meaning and power (Godby, 2010: 9). Meanings, and the workings of power, can be explored through creative expressions such as ethnography, or art. The life and work of painter Joan Miró (1893-1983) examplifies how landscape representations reveal personal attachments to place and struggles of belonging. Many of his paintings signify his affinity with the Catalan rural landscape where the Miró family farm was situated and where the artist dedicated ample time to painting7. His surreal and extremely detailed depiction of various characteristics of rural life - the farm house, the animals, the vegetation, the peasants, the hunter – represent his identification with the landscape and Catalonia. His paintings are a response to devastating events of his time, the First World War and later the Spanish Civil War, that fuelled his political concerns that made him retreat in isolation and creativity. This proces of detachment and involvement towards societal upheaval is communicated through his pictual language. The ladder, visible in ‘Dog Barking at the Moon’, is a “ladder of escape” symbolising the possibility to use creativity as means to temporarily rise above empirical tragedies. Creativity for Miró is nevertheless always anchored in realities on the ground in which the ladder of escape, and the painter, was firmly rooted. Moving up and down between empirical realities and scientific abstractions to analyse social life, in other words engaging in the sociological imagination (Mills, 1959), is the thrust of this ethnographic account on rural life in a commercial farming area inhibited by communities struggling to belong in post-apartheid society.

In this ethnography landscape and land-use are viewed in the context of social and political dynamics shaping relations and interdependencies between farmers and workers in the process of asserting a legitimate place to belong in post-apartheid South Africa. For this study, I did ethnographic fieldwork during 2009 in the trophy-hunting landscape of the Karoo Midlands which enabled me to make detailed observations that generated understandings of everyday

interactions taking place on the commercial farms and in places beyond the farm fences. I observed and participated in various hunting practices, a ‘Game Guides Course’ with the Eastern Cape Game Management Association, and activities in the rural Townships. I conducted formal interviews with 40 research participants, of which 16 were recorded and transcribed, and engaged in numerous brief and extensive conversations (‘informal interviews’) while being in the field. In this process I have been ‘hanging out’ and talking with farm workers, ex-farm workers, game farmers, livestock farmers, professional hunters, taxi dermists, accountants, estate agents, consultants, civil servants, local politicians, and NGO members who allowed me to scrutinize the details of people’s everyday existence vital to understand the workings of social formation and stratification processes in post-apartheid South Africa. How I derived at the knowledge claims presented in this ethnography is discussed at the end of the monography where I elaborate and reflect on my personal experiences on the path of ethnographic research and how they relate to the emergence of an Invisible Great Trek. The fieldwork accounts serves two purposes (see for another interesting example De Vries, 2012), namely accounting for methodological choices as well as tracking how personal fieldwork experiences and reflections on them provide empirical, theoretical and methodological knowledge.

Theoretical assumptions

To unfold and understand the mechanisms on trophy-hunting farms employed to maintain or resist power/class relations the figurational perspective of Norbert Elias is pertinent. This approach to the sociology of power insists that in every empirical context interdependent individuals develop particular patterns of behaviour with each other over time and that the actions of individuals can only be understood within the dynamics of the social configuration process that they are part of. This means that individuals alone cannot alter a configuration of individuals, or a particular power configuration. Interdependent individuals are to some degree “trapped” in relations that are not of their own making. Individuals are thus bounded by figurational interdependencies and therefore we should always seek to understand individual decisions and behaviour in relation to others. An important assumption in figurational sociology is that individual
agency is shaped by relational dynamics and long-term social formation processes.

Particularly the *Established and Outsiders* framework introduced by Elias and Scotson (1994 [1965]) provided a useful start for my interpretive framework to understand the shifting power relations between farm dwellers and farmers and their sense of belonging in the Karoo. An important social mechanism discovered by these sociologists is that processes of inclusion and exclusion are shaped by the belief of the established that they are superior, or more civilised, than others in the social configuration.

The established group attributed to its members superior human characteristics; it excluded all members of the other group from non-occupational social contact with its own members; the taboo on such contacts was kept alive by means of social control such as praise gossip about those who observed it and the threat of blame-gossip against suspected offenders (Elias & Scotson, 1994 [1965]: xvi).

Inherent to social configurations is a constant fluctuation of power relations due to specific tensions and conflicts that produce struggles between the established who strive to preserve the structures that enable their dominance, while outsiders who lack access to power resources will put pressure on the disabling structures impeding on their empowerment (Elias, 1976). In this ethnography I propose a more constructivist approach to the concepts established and outsiders as well as a more dynamic application of the model. Another contribution to the established and outsiders framework consists of the attention for the workings of race and space constructions in social configuration processes. This addition was inevitable in the context of South Africa’s past and present racial and spatial politics. Beyond the horizon of Mandela’s envisioned rainbow nation, and its promised non-racial society, drifts an ocean of fears and uncertainties that obstruct transformation processes by reinforcing racial categorizing and spatial engineering. Social change is undesirable for people who dread the future and who perceive the past as a time of stability, integration and cohesion. South Africa’s political transformation disrupted rather than transformed the social order for those who were either comfortable under the
wings of apartheid, or those who have not experiences improvements under post-apartheid conditions.

The Established and Outsiders framework thus permits investigation of shifting power relations in which non-economic power differentials, such as stigmatization and ‘we’ and ‘they’ images, support and reinforce systems of social stratification. The level of social cohesion within groups is recognised as a power differential in itself within established and outsiders figurations. This consideration of immaterial resources comes close to Bourdieu’s work on social stratification in which he argued that aesthetic and cultural dispositions are used as power sources in ongoing contestations within configurations of power. These dispositions help in legitimizing hierarchical positions as a “natural order”\(^8\). Although we should not forget that ‘representations’ and ‘discourses’ of power do have material realities and that the dichotomy between symbolic/cultural and economic/material explanations of domination is a false one (Mbembe, 2001a: 5), the work of sociologists like Elias and Bourdieu is refreshing as they moved away from the pervasiveness of economic forces in social life and demanded attention for other, symbolic, forms of capital assets (Paulle et al., 2012). Therefore, the established and outsiders frameworks combines well with the work of anthropologists who have studied the symbolic construction of community (Cohen, 1985) and the relation between landscapes and people’s sense of belonging (Ballard, 2005; Hughes McDermott, 2010; Lovell, 1998b; Rutherford, 2008). In the next chapter I elaborate further on the ways these theoretical concepts are related.

The process of symbolically constructing and reasserting community boundaries is politically explosive in post-apartheid South Africa where individuals, and communities, have to radically re-define their position in a changing economic and political context. Humans respond to the meaning they ascribe to a given situation, regardless the ‘objective features’ of that situation’ (Merton, 1948: 194). The famous Thomas theorem captures this sociological insight (quoted in: Merton, 1948:193):

As men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.

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\(^8\) Source Rudi Laermans: symbolic expression of class position.
This implies we do not see all configuration dynamics by attending to material realities only. The belief systems of people shaping social configurations need to be understood too. The attention to perceptions, feelings and emotions in the process of shifting power relations enables insight into the ways humans assert a sense of belonging and community in the context of societal transformation and uncertainty.

**Ontological and Ideological Concerns**

One of apartheid’s legacies is a great discomfort with the issue of race which produced a theoretical gap in the understanding of the workings of race in South Africa. Academics used apartheid racial categories “but the ambiguities of their ontological status were flagged by means of inverted commas” (Posel et al., 2001:vii). The racial categories imposed by the apartheid regime are often rejected at the expense of accepting that these same categories have become constitutive to lived experiences of South African people (ibid, vii). In other words, not only the apartheid state ‘thought’ in terms of racial categories, also the state’s subjects started classifying people according to these categories, and still do. Simply for this reason the racial categories black, white and coloured are ‘meaningful’ categories that South Africans think with to make sense of themselves and the people around them. Combating or rejecting these classification systems as an academic scholar writing on contemporary power configurations in the Karoo is problematic for two reasons. The first reason is the relevance and reality of racial categorization in the field. In this thesis I mention racial categories, among other categories, as they were used by research respondents whose stories, behaviour and experiences I interpreted and represent in text. This resulted in multiple descriptive expressions in the text – categories based on race, language and nationality - ranging from ‘white farmer’, ‘English-speaking farmer’, ‘Afrikaans-speaking worker’, ‘Zimbabwean worker’, or ‘bantus’. Moreover, the use of racial categories is also an actual subject of analysis derived from empirical findings. It will be made clear in the text when racial categories are merely descriptive attributions copied from their usage in the empirical context, and when they are the topic of debate. The second reason why it is hard to reject or oppose racial categories is derived from an observation of
Derrida that explains that “every choice for opposition is a choice for a certain type of contamination” (Spierenburg & Wels, 2004: 137). This means that in opposing apartheid classifications the very system is reproduced through condemning racial classification systems as immoral and wrong. It does not change the system, it does not resolve racism or discrimination, and it does not provide insights on the actual workings of these classification systems in human relations.

This brings me to another point. This thesis presents stories about the ways in which South Africans make sense of themselves and others in post-apartheid society that struggles with its violent history. I want to understand the ways in which commercial farmers and farm dwellers assert their position on the land and how power relations shape life trajectories and ways to belong. Due to my long term engagements with farmers and farm dwellers in the field I have developed sympathies for different perspectives that are presented in this ethnography. At the same time I had complex and ambivalent relations with respondents to whom I felt less sympathetic. It is possible these emotions are noticeable in between the lines of the text, although I aimed to limit this as much as possible. As the power ratio in the commercial farming landscape is still very uneven it would be easy to label commercial farmers as ‘oppressors’ and farm dwellers as ‘victims’. But in order to understand mechanisms of power configuration processes “it is crucial to construct its regime of truth, not to subject its representations to a normalizing judgement” (Bhabha, 2004:95-6). Without claiming that I am politically neutral or that I was never tempted to judge, something I will reflect on in the final chapter, it should be clear that in principle there are no ‘good’ and ‘bad’ categories of people in this academic account on the re-configuration of power in the Karoo.

For the sake of anonymity I have chosen fictional names for all research participants in this study. Although there is one female game farmer and professional hunter in Cradock I gave her a male name so that she cannot be identified by her sex. Furthermore I tried to stay as close to the original name as possible, meaning I use fictional English names for original English names and fictional Xhosa names for original Xhosa people. Probably the meanings of names have been lost and not transferred to the fictional names. This is unfortunate, but an unavoidable consequence of using synonyms.
Thesis outline

The explanation of the research design in this introduction is followed by the theoretical underpinnings of this research that informed my analysis and interpretations of social configuration processes in the Karoo. I propose a constructivist and dynamic use of the established and outsiders framework by Elias and Scotson (Elias & Scotson, 1994 [1965]) to provide the conceptual tools to study power dynamics and their relation to people’s sense of belonging. This perspective is linked to literature exploring the relation between landscapes, ways of belonging and mobilities. Chapter 3 presents a historical context of established and outsider dynamics that developed from the 18th century in the heart of the Karoo, notably the area where the Fish River, or in isiXhosa ‘Inxuba’, flows through. It focuses on the fact that this area has been a border region where humans have shaped particular social figurations, in which black mobilities were increasingly restricted, during the process of colonial occupation. During the 20th century increasing economic liberalization in combination with political developments under apartheid paved the way for farm dwellers’ inevitable departure from the white-owned commercial farms. Finally the post apartheid reform policies that aim to provide redress for the formation of an extremely asymmetric power balance in the commercial farming districts of the Eastern Cape are introduced.

This introduction of the theoretical and historical context of the Invisible Great Trek is followed by five empirical chapters in which I present a detailed account of the ethnographic material generated during fieldwork in the Karoo. Chapter 4 explores the farm conversion process and the ways commercial farmers legitimize their place in post apartheid society through this particular land use. I illustrate how established and outsider categories permanently shift in the Karoo and the ways game farmers re-assert their power as a response to their perceptions of their threatened position on the land. In chapter 5 I look at the position of farm dwellers in the conversion process through exploring their settlement decisions that reveal ambivalent attachments to the commercial farms around Cradock. Next, I zoom in on the activities on trophy-hunting farms with
a focus on the performances and experiences of farm workers in the hunting game. Through my interpretation of rituals I discuss the relations between farm dwellers and the other participants expressed in the hunting game. The argument is that the social order in the world of hunting contradicts the ideals of social transformation in the countryside. Moreover, the experiences of farm dwellers illustrate that they have very mixed feelings about commercial hunting and wildlife landscapes. They increase the social distance between farmers and the rural working class. In chapter 7 the institutional environment linking to interdependencies between farmers and farm dwellers is discussed. In particular the way paternalistic habits are transformed and local institutions align their work with farmers’ discourses on security show that the permeable farm fences mainly push farm dwellers away from the farms. Farm dwellers’ outsider position in multiple configurations disconnects them from local institutions which puts them in a structurally precarious situation. The last empirical chapter presents the trajectories of two professional hunters whose experiences reveal the workings of class and race boundaries in the trophy-hunting sector. The exceptional story of a black farm dweller trained as professional hunter is illustrative of the limits to social mobility in the Karoo’s power configuration.

In chapter 9 I present my conclusions and the political implications of farm dwellers’ Invisible Great Trek. My interpretation holds that four established and outsider dynamics shape the contours of mobility patterns and the ways power and belonging are re-configured by game farmers and farm dwellers in the Karoo. After I answered the research questions I reflect on my constructivist application of the established and outsider framework and the theoretical insights this generated. Last, but not least I give a transparent account how the research path developed that led me to see and understand the meanings of farm dwellers’ contemporary mobilities.
2.

Interpretive Framework: power configurations and belonging in the commercial farming landscape

A rather neglected aspect of the dangers human groups constitute for each other deserves some attention here – their emotional aspect. Human groups seem to take a strange delight in asserting their superiority over others, particularly if it has been attained through violent means. The area one enters here has not been much explored. In referring in the pleasure people derive from the feeling that one of the groups to which they belong is superior to other groups, one touches on the emotional aspects of group relations and the dangers inherent in them (Elias in Goudsblom & Mennell, 1998: 89).

This chapter elaborates the theoretical assumptions and concepts that have shaped the processes of data generation, interpretation and representation. In particular the sociology of Norbert Elias has been a source of inspiration throughout the process of unravelling the dynamics of the relations among commercial farmers and farm dwellers in the Karoo trophy-hunting landscape. The concepts established and outsiders figuration and balance-of-power offer a meaningful lens to understand changes in human relations when groups enter new positions in society. Interestingly, and importantly, such shifts in the configuration of power do not only relate to material concerns like the distribution of land or the means of production; it directly concerns group perceptions about their position in relation to other groups, their identity, and their sense of belonging. The advantage of Elias’ approach to human group relations is the study of emotions and feelings in configurations of power. The first section introduces the concept of established and outsiders figuration and the
original case study from which the main ideas were generated. Then I recount
the rootedness of established and outsiders figurations in civilization theory and
the relevance of taking into account state-formation processes when studying
group relations. A review of the critique from anthropologists on civilization
theory demands discussion of the conceptual applicability in the South African
postcolony. As a result of this assessment, several adjustments to the original
established and outsiders model are presented to make it fit the post-apartheid
context and specifically the legacies of racial and spatial formation processes
carried into the present. What is proposed is to include the workings of racial
categories into the analysis of group relations. A social constructivist approach to
race moves beyond the race-class debate to the ways individuals and groups
categorize humans in order to make sense of themselves and the people around
them. The final sections of the interpretive framework deal with the relation
between power configurations and communities’ sense of belonging in
landscapes. Landscapes and the images constructed of them generate processes
of inclusion and exclusion through which established groups can belong whereas
outsider groups can be rendered invisible. It shows how the power to belong is
unevenly distributed in established and outsiders configurations.

Established and Outsider Figurations

Figurational sociology, and in particular the theory of established and outsiders
relations, offers an appropriate framework to study the Karoo commercial
farming landscape as a social figuration where farmers and workers shape, and
are shaped by, the relations they have formed with each other over time.
Norbert Elias explains figurations as a social dance in which dancers depend on
each other to lead and be led in the configuration of individuals.

What is meant by the concept of figuration can be conveniently explained by
reference to social dances. They are in fact, the simplest dances that could be
chosen. One could think of a mazurka, a minuet, a polonaise, a tango, or a rock
’n roll. The image of the mobile figurations of interdependent people on a dance
floor perhaps makes it easier to imagine states, cities, families and also capitalist,
communist and feudal systems as figurations.[...] One can certainly speak of a
dance in general, but no one will imagine a dance as a structure outside the individual or as a mere abstraction. The same dance figurations can certainly be danced by different people; but without a plurality of reciprocally oriented and dependent individuals, there is no dance (Goudsblom & Mennell, 1998:131).

Social figurations, as well as dances, are constantly in flux and have their particular dynamics in which individual agency plays a role, but the motives and intentions of individuals alone cannot explain the processes in the figuration (Goudsblom & Mennell, 1998:130-1). In the commercial-farming landscape the mobility of different actors depends on their relations within the social configuration of which they are a part. Both settlement and displacement patterns in the Karoo are outcomes of relational dynamics that were not designed by anyone in particular. They are the outcome of constant shifting power relations among individuals and groups. The concept of power is used here as a relational concept. This means that power is not seen as something someone can possess or obtain, but rather that power constitutes a relationship. The theoretical question that interests Elias is what happens to power relations when groups enter new positions. He assumes that in changing figurations there is a “fluctuating, tensile equilibrium, a balance of power moving to and fro” and it “is a structural characteristic of the flow of every figuration” (Elias as cited in Emirbayer, 1997:292). Power is “unthinkable outside matrices of force relations; it emerges out of the very way in which figurations of relationships are patterned and operate” (ibid, 292). Figurations can be configured, and studied, on different levels: the nation state, the family, the city, or the neighbourhood. In *The Established and the Outsiders* Elias and Scotson (1994 [1965]) describe shifting power relations between groups in a small urban locality in England after the Second World War. It is the first empirical example of an established and outsiders figuration emphasizing the importance offigurational aspects of communities, notably non-economic layers of conflict, in explaining power differentials between groups (Elias, 1976). Since then sociologists and geographers have added new dimensions to the framework of established and outsiders relations to enhance its theoretical relevance. Before going into these
debates the following section presents the key theoretical insights derived from the original Winston Parva case study.

The theory of established and outsiders relations is based on an empirical study in a small English community in the Midlands in the 1960s. The case was fictionally named Winston Parva, where established residents excluded and stigmatised a group of new residents in order to preserve their dominant position in the neighbourhood (Elias & Scotson, 1994 [1965]). The established and outsiders were similar in terms of social class, ethnicity, religion, education and nationality. The principal difference Elias and Scotson found was that some residents had been there for generations, and others were newcomers. The group of established residents had a high degree of group cohesion and integration which served as a power source that enabled them to close ranks against the newcomers in the place. More specifically, they asserted that the established create a positive self image which strengthens their bonds through various associations and family networks. At the same time they stigmatize the outsiders by saying things about them like “they have got low morals” that brands their inferior status. Such stigma affects the self image of the outsider group negatively and disarms them to change or reverse the uneven balance of power (Elias, 1976). The empirical evidence from Winston Parva asserts that in every established and outsiders figuration there is a constant balance-of-power struggle between groups in which the established act to preserve or increase their power over outsiders through processes of stigmatization and exclusion. These processes take place alongside economic deprivation of outsider groups (Elias, 1976; Wouters, 2008). A contribution of the established and outsiders framework to the understanding of power differentials in social figurations is the attention for the workings of emotions and feelings, the construction of ‘we’ and ‘they’ images, and the mechanisms of stigmatization that produce divisions in society.

Elias and Scotson show how the established in Winston Parva claim social superiority over outsiders to protect their dominant position. This relational dynamic also shapes dynamics within the established group. Belonging to the superior group comes with a price, namely strict social boundaries and behavioural codes one has to adhere to in order to be included. To protect one’s status group members need to preserve emotional distance to outsiders because
“close contact with outsiders might cause suspicion of breaking norms and
tabooS of the established group” (1976: 9). This fear of closeness to, or
“pollution” by, outsiders reinforces “we” and “they” images and feelings. The
meaning of “we” and “they” becomes more salient when the social order is
challenged by changes in society that affect these group boundaries. The
Winston Parva study illustrates how belonging to a community serves as a power
differential in relation to outsiders who are perceived to threaten the social
order. The inherent tensions and conflicts in an established and outsiders
figuration are not always immediately visible. Balance-of-power struggles “range
from silent-tugs-of-war hidden beneath the routine co-operation between the
two groups, within a framework of instituted inequalities, to overt struggles for
change of the institutional framework which embodies these power differentials
and the inequalities that go with them. Which ever is the case, outsider groups
direct tacit pressure or open action towards the decrease of power differentials
responsible for their inferior position, and established groups towards their
preservation or increase” (Elias, 1976:22). In the Established and the Outsiders
Elias and Scotson elaborate extensively on the ways the established assert
superiority over outsiders, and relatively less on the ways outsiders challenge
their domination.

Other scholars have focused specifically on coping mechanisms and
resistance of dominated groups in social figurations. The “tacit pressures” are
part of the “details of people’s existence that make up the process of class
formation, stratification, and class conflict” (Beinart & Bundy, 1987: 29). Day-to-
day struggles are part of long-term conflicts and involve ‘hidden’ forms of
opposition to subordination.

The way in which rural people organized their household economy, interacted
with local markets, tried to influence the terms of their employment, and
generally sought out defenses in a coercive environment are not separate from
class struggle and resistance, but part of its fabric (Beinart & Bundy, 1987: 29).

In a similar vein, Scott (1985) stressed that it is exactly the banality of class
conflict that is often poorly understood. He highlighted the normal, often
undramatic, context in which the class struggle and conflicts over land and
resources occur. Where peasants work the system to their “minimum
disadvantage” rather than revolt, and resort to everyday forms of resistance that might not always be identified as an act of resistance as such.

Everyday forms of peasant resistance make no headlines, but multiple acts of insubordination and evasion create political and economic tensions...and when conflict becomes overt; or when it is recognized that the sustainability of the relations have come to an end we should look to the aggregation of petty acts that made it possible (Scott, 1985:xvi).

The struggle over land, income, work and power is accompanied by struggles over definitions of justice (moral economy) and particular behaviours. The established and outsiders battle over material and symbolic realities that shape interdependencies. Especially for the established in society social change is undesirable when they perceive the past as a time of stability, integration and cohesion. In this light, the transformation to the ‘new’ South Africa should be viewed as a disruptive process shifting (local) power dynamics that increases tensions and conflicts inherent to social figurations shaped by colonial history, apartheid, and democracy.

**The Workings of Race and Space in Established Outsider Figurations**

To fit the South-African context the established outsider framework has to include the workings of racial and spatial aspects of power configurations. Elias is convinced that race was subordinate to figurational power dynamics in explaining particular established and outsiders figurations. This supposition has been contested as postcolonial situations demand recognition for constructions and meanings of race and ethnicity in social figurations (Ballard, 2005). Particularly South-African society is “so centrally involved in ‘race’ as a category” (Distiller & Steyn, 2004:2-3). In the context of South Africa it is crucial to take racial arrangements into account, and relate these to spatial arrangements because they configured power relations in specific ways in specific places. This section reviews theoretical debates about race in South Africa and promotes a constructivist approach to provide understanding of the workings of racial and spatial constructions in established and outsiders formations. Moreover, I argue
that processes of stigmatization, exclusion, categorization, discrimination, and domination intersect on different levels (May, 2004) which requires attention for multiple layers of relations in established outsider figurations.

Race Matters

Within South-African scholarship the study of race as subject has been “repressed” during the apartheid era. During the 1970s and 1980s the “race-class debate” developed as dominant theoretical perspective of race in apartheid, with an empirical focus on the relationship between apartheid and capitalism (Posel et al., 2001:ii-iii). Various scholars have engaged in the debate about the interface of politics and economics under apartheid (Magubane, 1987; Ross, 1999; Terreblanche, 2002). Magubane has argued that racial stratification shaped class structures under settler colonialism. This created a rigid capitalist class structure featured by a white elite class with wealth, power and status and at the bottom of society black poverty-stricken, marginal, powerless, and subordinate people (Magubane, 1987:9) The capitalist mode of production in settler societies is inherently racist because it blended race oppression and class exploitation into one social system founded on “race relations” (1987:10-12). This racial formation was based on the premise of black inferiority and white supremacy which became regarded as “part of the natural order of things” (1987:27). In line with other Marxist scholars, Magubane sees an essential complimentarity between the exploitation of black people as cheap labourers that served the interests of the dominant class of white capitalists. The mechanisms of racial discrimination are “understood as instruments of class domination; designed, promulgated, and monitored with that basic purpose” (Posel et al., 2001: v).

Another position among academics, commonly referred to as “liberals”⁹, is that there existed a contradiction between apartheid and capitalism. Racial stratification and the state’s efforts to keep African labour “cheap” ultimately undermined processes of capitalist accumulation and economic growth. Consequently, liberals think that apartheid would be battered by the "colour-
blind” logic of the market (Posel et al., 2001: iv). A problem with the various Marxist and liberal views on “racial capitalism” in South Africa however, is that neither strands of thought really illuminate the workings of “race” under capitalism or engage in a theoretical debate of what “race” actually is (ibid, vi-vii).

According to Elias racial difference is no explanatory factor for group formation and feelings of belonging; he primarily regards it as a state formation problem (1990: 215). About race relations in America he states that the state formation process “placed the control of a significant segment of the means of violence into the hands of one of the traditional subgroups of its citizens, and virtually excluded from access to this control members of another subgroup” (ibid, 215). He views racial categories as “second-order” categories, subordinate to the discussion of power.

..the configuration of their social relationships, and not their characteristics per se explain the domination between groups....of fundamentally explanatory importance is the difference in power ratio between groups, itself determined by the way they are bonded together, their different degrees of organization and cohesion...The discussion of power is prioritized over other conventional sociological taxonomies invoking class, race, religion, nationality etc. The latter are instead deployed as second-order categories that ‘take on force’ or explanatory significance when seen in relation to the former (Loyal, 2011:188).

This reasoning seems to suppose that power relations are configured without intervention of ordering principles based on race, class, ethnicity, religion etc. This contradicts the process described in the Winston Parva case study where stigmatization and exclusion of outsiders was only possible as result of social cohesion among the established group. “Elias thus turns the explanation of the established–outsider figuration with respect to larger groups upside down” (May, 2004: 2164).

Different mechanisms of exclusion and stigmatisation, and modes of cohesion, are at work in large scale figurations that change figurational dynamics altogether. In other words, it matters a great deal in defining who holds an established or outsider position which relationship is examined; face-to-face relations or the relation between a citizen and the state for example. Loyal found that overt racism is more likely when different groups share a geographical
space (2011:193). The recognition of multiple layers in established and outsiders figurations and the inclusion of the role of the state (and the market) enable the study of more complex figurations divided along lines of ethnicity, religion, class, gender, etc (May, 2004:2161). May (2004) distinguishes three levels of established and outsiders figurations that overlap in an deprived inner-city neighbourhood in Germany:

At the societal level, the legal system assigns to immigrants the position of outsiders. At the city level, Nordstadt is stigmatised as a neighbourhood for workers and immigrants. At the neighbourhood level, immigrants can, thanks to their greater internal cohesion, establish themselves to some degree, while the Germans attempt to implement the established–outsider figuration of the societal level.

Figurational sociologists have called attention to the role of the state and the media in facilitating stereotypes and negative attitudes towards groups in society and suggest recognition of the role of politicians, business and economic elites, state policy, and state qualifications to identify multiple stratifications within established and outsiders figurations (Loyal, 2011: 195).

The established and outsider groups are both differentiated by various internal strata. Established groups are stratified according to class, whilst outsider groups are hierarchically differentiated according to class and ethno-national characteristics. This means that we need to examine multiple established and outsiders figurations, entailing groups that are established in some contexts and outsiders in others (Loyal, 2011: 192).

Loyal speaks of “class-mediated racism” in Ireland when asylum seekers are discriminated by other marginalised groups, or the violent hostility of poor Irish working-class people towards migrants in their communities. In South African context Matsinhe asserts that Afrophobia, meaning fear of foreign Africans by black South Africans, is shaped by the history of colonial group relations. Drawing on the work of Elias (and Frantz Fanon) he argues that race mediates the relation between established groups (black South Africans) and outsiders (African foreign nationals). He reasons that African migrants remind black South Africans of their outsider position in relation to white South Africans with a established position (Matsinhe, 2011). In other words, the violent attitude against
fellow black Africans is shaped by the inferiority complex imprinted in society by the legacy of white supremacy.

By now it should be clear that race as a category is crucial in the context of South Africa; a country that has been identified as one of the most racialised societies in the world where, especially during the 20th century, “every facet of life in the country was saturated with the effects of racial thinking and practice” (Posel et al., 2001:i). Brubaker et al. (2006) promote a constructivist and categorical lens to “race” because categories invite attention to “processes and relations” and showing how people “do things with” categories like race and how such categories “channel social interaction and organize commonsense knowledge and judgements” (2006:11). Sallaz affirms this and claims it is important to gain insight in the socially constructed nature of race as well as the real material and political consequences of racial classifications through revealing “the mechanisms through which obdurate racial identities generate new organizational practices and institutional forms” that perpetuate discrimination and exclusion based on racial classifications (2010: 295).

Recent studies on race in South Africa increasingly view identity as relational construction whereby the notion of “self” as formed by material and ideological contexts “in which the self finds itself” comes into existence through acting and performing identity (Distiller & Steyn, 2004:4). These performances are embedded in a certain societal structures and forms of social stratification. The advantage of the established and outsiders framework is that is does not just take into account the relations of production or material aspects of power relations; it focuses on feelings and emotions of individuals. Non-material explanations of social stratification focus on the “life worlds of individual actors and their embeddeness in constraining structures where power is exercised and reproduced in everyday interactions” (May, 2004:2176). In such interactions race manifests itself in dynamic and complex ways. Established and outsiders figurations provide a useful and relevant framework to capture these complexities in studying how racial categories work in social figurations.
Space Matters

South Africa’s spatial ordering intertwines with the history of racial formation in society. Space is a social product that “serves as a tool of thought and of action” and “in addition to being means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power” (Lefebvre, 1991: 26). Essentially, apartheid was a geographical process that “sought to exercise a system of social control and discrimination of racial groups based on geographical separation of social spaces” (Durington, 2006:149). Before the emergence of the South-Africa state in 1910 the country was divided in two British colonies and two Boer republics in which there were separate territories assigned for African occupation (Ntsebeza, 2011b:75-6). These African territories were spatially separated from the settler dominated areas in the rest of South Africa (Beinart & Bundy, 1987:7). In 1913 the infamous Natives Land Act was implemented by the Native Affairs Department (NAD) through which white settlers appropriated more than 80 per cent of the colony’s surface (Terreblanche, 2002:250-260). The position of African tenants on white-owned land in the Eastern Cape deteriorated as they were classified as “squatters” under the Land Act (Bundy, 1972). Land dispossession and a system of influx control measures and pass laws severely restricted the mobility of Africans and gave the Apartheid state power to control the distribution and allocation of African labour (Ross, 1999; Terreblanche, 2002). It left a particular spatial legacy imprinted in the land and the minds of the Eastern Cape’s inhabitants. I will briefly describe them here.

The spatial inequalities inherited from this engineering are perpetuated on different levels in the commercial farming landscape of the Eastern Cape. On the provincial level the poorest population is concentrated in the two former “bantustans” Transkei and Ciskei incorporated into the borders of the Province in the post apartheid era. In the commercial farming areas apartheid’s spatial structuring has produced vast tracks of enclosed uninhibited land reserved for agriculture and rapidly growing rural towns. These picturesque towns attract tourists from all over the world. On the fringes townships rapidly extend their borders to facilitate housing needs for, often poor, rural populations. Within the fences of commercial farm properties spatial differentiation materializes visibly in the place and conditions of living spaces for the farm owners and the farm
workers. White farmers live in multiple-roomed mansions while black farm dwellers live at some distance from the main house in one or two-roomed brick dwellings roofed with corrugated iron sheets. For white South Africans these “iconic tin-roofed farm house besides its windmill, worker cottages located deferentially off to the side” represent a nostalgic image of the old rural order that still “stir the emotions” (Walker, 2010:16).

The relevance of spatial formations is increasingly recognized in established outsider figurations as social hierarchy and power differentials become inscribed in physical spatial structures:

Because of the inertia of physical spatial structures, the social spatial structure of the established and outsiders figuration is prolonged, maintained and reinforced. The residents of Nordstadt—like those of other deprived neighbourhoods—are not deprived simply by virtue of living in Nordstadt. They are doubly deprived because society concentrates its deprived members in less desirable neighbourhoods, thus creating circumstances that cause even more deprivation (May, 2004: 2177-8).

The “inertia” of spatial structures depends however on who holds the power to arrange and manipulate space. Both in South Africa’s past and present it is clear that physical structures can be manipulated and engineered to serve the interests of powerful groups. The farm conversions to wildlife presented in this thesis are an illustration of this process. According to Walker (2010:24) “strongly racialised settlement patterns still dominate post-apartheid landscapes” and undoing this legacy is one of South Africa’s biggest challenges. Market-driven land redistribution and flourishing property markets complicate spatial re-arrangements based on ideas of restoration and social change. As the new South Africa is doing away with old frontiers and racial borders, new boundaries proliferate in private property geographies that divide space along class lines (Lewis, 2001: 2102). Groups who are able to invest and mobilise resources are capable of designing spaces where they feel comfortable. “Through privatisation of residential, retail, and occupational spaces, the ‘underclass’ is kept at bay” (Ballard, 2004:64). “In the free market of the free South Africa land redistribution has come to be as much about foreign opportunism and property speculation as it is about housing the homeless” (Lewis, 2001: 2105). There is an
intimate relation between spatial structures and social difference as “the control of space is an inherently political process with the capacity to confirm identity and convey ideology” (Durington, 2006: 149). Walker (2010:16) argues that farm histories for most white South Africans are memories of the recent past as they are nowadays linked to urban sources of wealth and suburban residential spaces. Nevertheless, farms are still inhabited, owned, and constructed by residents of rural areas. Explored in this thesis are the ways in which landowners, as well as farm dwellers, shape spatial structures and rural landscapes in which they can belong.

**Civilising processes in established and outsiders figurations**

The theoretical insights associated with the established and outsiders framework are closely related to Elias’ ideas presented in *The Civilizing Process* (Elias, 2000 [1939]). Civilization theory relates long-term formation processes of social figurations to the development of the human habitus which are explored through shifting perceptions of socially accepted, or “civilised”, behaviour. Elias pays particular attention to manners, feelings and emotions to explore shifting power relations in social configurations ranging from state societies to family formations. Civilization processes concern chains of interdependencies, social cohesion, self-restraint of drives and affects, behavioural codes, and claims of status superiority (Loyal, 2011:188). Winston Parva represents a small-scale study of such civilizing processes of discrimination and domination, and the sociology of power in social figurations. In this section I discuss civilization theory and some of its contested aspects and related to the South-African context.

Elias’ magnum opus *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* was published in 1939 and only decades later the English translation appeared under the title *The Civilizing Process: sociogenetic and psychogenetic investigations* (Elias, 2000 [1939]: revised edition). In this work his main observation is that “civilizing processes”, in the form of changing manners and increasing levels of self-restraint among individuals, are linked to processes of state formation, in particular the concentration or monopolization of the means of violence by pacified Western state societies. Elias focuses on “how perceptions of selfhood and society along with standards
of behaviour with respect to bodily functions and the management of human feelings have been transformed in the course of Western history” (Smith, 1999:81). He draws on specific “empirically demonstrable changes” to examine and illustrate changing social landscapes such as the transformation from “castle landscapes” to rich and large feudal estates. This process of feudalization shifted the Western medieval power configuration (Elias, 2000 [1939]:366):

It was shown how the compulsion of competitive situations drove a number of feudal lords into conflict, how the circle of competitors was slowly narrowed, and how this lead to the monopoly of one and finally – in conjunction with other mechanisms of integration such as processes of increasing capital formation and functional differentiation – to the formation of an absolutist state. This whole reorganization of human relationships certainly had direct significance for the change of the human habitus, the provisional result of which is our form of “civilized” conduct and feelings.

Elias regards historical processes “consisting of nothing but the actions of individual people, nevertheless give rise to institutions and formations which were neither intended nor planned by any single individual in the form they actually take” (Elias, 2000 [1939]: xiii). In the process of centralization of state power “people were connected with more people in more ways” which gave rise to the “national habitus” where citizens experienced “we-feelings” linked to state boundaries (Kuipers, 2012: 6). In Western state-formation processes chains of interdependencies were lengthened and intensified through the proliferation of institutions like the military, justice, education, care, social security and media that connected more people to more places. Both through and outside these institutions there was a process of vertical diffusion of cultural taste, standards, and practices trickling down from the higher social strata in society to the lower classes (Kuipers, 2012: 7). Linked to Elias' writing on changing manners and habitus is the work of Bourdieu who elucidated how distinctive cultural dispositions work as power sources in social stratification processes (Paulle et al., 2012). The construction of cultural dispositions or what is perceived as socially accepted behaviour concerns the way we eat, sleep, leisure, dress, decorate our houses, raise out children, speak to each other, love, and it is all these facets of social life that we can study to trace configurations of power.
Civilisation theory focuses attention to the relation between civilising processes and the legitimization of power through cultural distinctions. In terms of established and outsiders figurations, the established claim the right to determine what is considered civilized behaviour. Social superiority and domination are often expressed through stigmatizing outsiders, or “the other”, as behaving in “uncivilised” ways meaning lack of self constraint of drives and affects associated with animal-like behaviour. Although such behavioural codes occurs in all human societies, anthropologists have criticised the use of civilization theories (Blok & Brunt, 1982: 196).

Anthropologists critical of civilization theory regard the theory as ethnocentric and question its applicability in non-western contexts. The first problem is the normative connotation of the concept of “civilization”. According to the critics civilization theory implies a general standard of civilization suggesting Western superiority in relation to primitive societies. The distinction between “civilization” as empirical concept based on Western European case studies, and “civilization” as analytical construct is blurred and charged with normative associations. Accusations of ethnocentrism and racism cause anthropologists to morally disqualify users of the civilization theory (1982:581). The concept of civilization “has always led an odd sort of double life in Western social and political thought, at one and the same time an organizing principle and an object of ongoing critique” (van Krieken, 2011:24). Up to today the work of Elias is avidly debated among critics and adherent scholars (see for example Dunning, 2002; Goody, 2002)10. The ethnocentric connotation of

10 During the 1980s this lead to personal frictions among academic scholars in Amsterdam who argued about the use of the civilization theory. The main contours of this debate were published in Dutch in the Sociologisch Tijdschrift as result of a conference organised by the figuration sociologists from the University of Amsterdam (see Israëls, 1983; Maso, 1983; Wilterdink, 1982; Zwaan, 1983a, 1983b). From the subsequent writings on the conference proceedings it becomes clear that the debate was highly charged and its participants engaged in sometimes tense relations. A substantial amount of text was dedicated to blaming and shaming of academics perceived to be part of, or against, the Elias school of thought. Stephen Dunne argues that the reluctance of Elias and his followers to engage with others schools of sociological thought contributed much to the resentment towards the work of Elias. “Too
civilization processes are rooted in the Western origins of the theory. Anthropologists claim that in non-Western contexts institutions and behaviours should be interpreted according to specific cultural systems of meaning. Ethnographies provided descriptions of ritualised and institutionalised violent behaviour that required high levels of self constraint in the absence of a state monopoly on violence (like in Western societies). Contrary to the idea of self-constraint as civilized habitus, anthropologists argued that the occurrence of violence among members of “tribal” societies did not signal a lack of self control or uncivilised behaviour (See Blok, 1982).

The concepts and ideas from civilization theories (especially established and outsiders figurations) are adapted to the South African context. Concepts like “civil society” derived from the study of processes in European history “cannot be applied with any relevance to postcolonial African situations without a reinterpretation of the historical and philosophical connotations that it suggests...” as it does not capture the “indigenous categories for thinking politically about conflictual and violent relations” (Mbembe, 2001a: 39). An example of this would be Elias disregard for racial categories in established and outsiders relations while in South African context racial categories are important for people to make sense of themselves and others. An understanding of the context in which established and outsiders relations are shaped are crucial as figurational dynamics are always linked to the process of state formation.

*Colonial state formation processes*

In the Western context, civil society institutions legitimised and justified particular forms of social stratification that were accepted by the state’s subjects. Civil society in this the Western context refers to (Mbembe, 2001a: 38):

A pacified and policed society where, with affects and passions controlled, self control and the exchange of good manners gradually replace raw physical violence; subsequently, there would no longer be pressing need for vulgar brute force (the distinctive feature of, for example, the colonial regime) in the arrangements for maintaining domination to ensure subordination.

often, the idea that there is an ‘Eliasian sect’ gets in the way of the ideas themselves, thereby blocking sympathetic access to them’ (Dunne, 2009:32).
In Africa, and South Africa in particular, state formation processes interlocked with colonialization that subjected Africans to processes of land dispossession and forced labour. The colonial state formation process in South Africa produced, after the Union in 1910, an established group of ‘Whites Only’ that enjoyed citizenship rights and state protection; and non-white inhabitants of the land without citizenship rights and whose mobilities were strictly controlled by the state. White settlers constructed a little Europe away from Europe where they eradicated or subjugated the “natives” (Adedeji in Matsinhe, 2011: 301) so that they could belong in the colony. With such great power differentials, non-white groups were effectively pushed into outsider positions.

This formation process created an authoritarian state structure in which the use of violence and coercion assisted in denying colonized individuals rights as citizens. But the state structure was not just an external model enforced on Africans by colonialists, it was “quickly re-appropriated by Africans” (Mbembe, 2001a: 40) and produced ambivalent positions and postcolonial identities (Bhabha, 2004). Different regimes of power emerged from colonial encounters. In the “native reserves” the British extended colonial control by introducing white magistrates and headman that undermined the authority of the chiefs (Bundy, 1972; Ntsebeza, 2011b). This form of “indirect rule” worked with African intermediaries who assured control, instead of direct land dispossession of Africans (Beinart & Bundy, 1987:7). The colonial political culture has “perpetuated the most despotic aspects of ancestral tradition, themselves reinvented for the occasion” (Mbembe, 2001a: 42).

The postcolonial potentate was thus in itself a form of domination that, while using universal techniques (state and its apparatus), had its own internal coherence and rationality both in the political-economic realm and in the imaginary (Mbembe, 2001a: 44)

As a result of the colonial state formation process, and liberation, the relationship between African states and African citizens is different from the European (welfare) states. African citizens do not have a direct relationship with the state, and basic protection - work, income, security - is firstly provided through communal ties. Citizenship in postcolonial African states is mediated
through social networks based on ties with kin, lineage or religious groups (Mbembe, 2001a: 54).

South Africa’s political transformation into a democratic state structure during the early 1990s had a major impact on the relationship between the state and its citizens. For the white establishment it meant they could no longer rely on institutionalised privileges and exclusive protection. Since 1994 “the protection of the state security forces and the use of state violence to ensure white control of the land has been exchanged for a government commitment to land redistribution and laws protecting farm residents from arbitrary eviction” (Manby, 2002:86). However, there are still double standards in the way rural crime is talked about. There is an overrepresentation of attention for farm attacks on white commercial farmers and hardly any references to violence or crime affecting farm workers. White commercial farmers increasingly employ the services of private security companies, boom gates, and farm watch schemes to organize their own safety. Scott et al. (2012: 2-4) comment that fear of crime and crime-talk are grounded in the social order of a locality. Concerns about crime often represent concerns of the established about unwanted social change. They determine what is considered “civilized” behaviour and what it is not.

Political and economic transformation and social capital

Besides specific state structures the relations among the state, market and civil society are also shaped by their integration into the global economy (Mbembe, 2001a: 41). South Africa’s political transformation went hand in hand with economic transformations. In the agricultural sector this does not benefit (small) farmers who can no longer compete on global markets and farm workers whose labour becomes redundant as result of a bias towards capital-intensive production (Zyl et al., 2001). Against the backdrop of worldwide forces of deregulation and globalization, social networks are increasingly seen as a “social capital” enabling or disabling economic efficiency and growth outside the framework of the state (Meagher, 2005). There is a tendency to regard African social networks and institutions, particularly those associated with rural people, as inadequate for facing neo-liberal market structures (Bryceson, 2002:726).
Another reality argued is that in absence of provisions by the state African social networks have to bear economic and institutional responsibilities that are actually beyond their capacity. This overburdening of social networks has lead to the breakdown of social relations, violence, and adverse economic effects (Meagher, 2005: 231-232; Stiglitz, 2001 [1944]: x-xi).

The idea that market liberalism destroys social relationships is not new. Polanyi (1944, 1977) studies how economic systems affect the ways in which individuals relate to one another (Stiglitz, 2001 [1944]). Polanyi highlighted that the capitalist market destroys relations of “kinship, neighbourhood, and profession”, replacing these with the pursuit of personal wealth by persons who become “atomistic and individualistic”. The utopian image of market liberalism was a society where “instead of the economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system” (Block, 2001 [1944]: xiv; Polanyi, 1944: 57). This never happened due to the way people are bonded in social formations; an assumption shared by Elias who writes that “in fact, economic plans often fail due to non-economic aspects of relations that bind people together in society” (1972: 163). Polanyi observes that principles of social order in African societies are based on the idea of “reciprocity” and mutuality that traditionally organised the economy. He contrasts this to the more Western principle of “exchange” that is based on rational self interest. The economist concluded that because patterns of social organization are not everywhere traditionally adapted to the organizing principles of capitalism, economic systems can be dangerous for the integrity of society. Block asserts that “the more fundamental point learned from Polanyi is that market liberalism makes demands on ordinary people that are simply not sustainable” (Block, 2001 [1944]: xxxiv). The point is that market liberalism shapes power relations and notions of belonging in social figurations.

**Belonging and Power in the ‘new’ South Africa**

South Africa has passed through colonial history, formalized apartheid, and its official demise. It is now a ‘new’ nation working to forge something that is informed by the past, and that seeks to transcend it. Different communities within the country are responding differently, both within themselves and in
relation to other communities with which they share physical and discursive spaces, spaces for living and identity (Distiller & Steyn, 2004:1).

Research on South-African suburbs in urban areas, gated communities and eco-estates illustrate the proliferation of walls, fences, and private-property boundaries that create spaces where the regulation of access provides means for inclusion and exclusion (Ballard, 2005; Ballard & Jones, 2011; Lewis, 2001). Whereas a discourse of racial exclusion has become hard to legitimize in South Africa’s non-racist democracy, articulating a discourse of social qualifications necessary for inclusion is acceptable and delicately suits existing power differentials in South-African society (2005: 83).

Having displaced indigenous people as original inhabitants of a place and installed themselves as the established group, the discourse of establishedness is used by some to claim the right to determine their environment. Thus one of apartheid’s astonishing paradoxes, in which Europeans turned indigenous people into foreigners and installed themselves as the established group, continues into democracy. While this logic was previously used to justify universal exclusion of all racial others under apartheid, it has become the basis for qualified inclusion under democracy.

Ballard notes that power differentials are not necessarily always about the exclusion of outsiders, power is also about being able to determine the conditions of inclusion in space. There is “a particular rationalisation used by some white people in post-apartheid South Africa in order to justify their claim to the right to regulate ‘their’ neighbourhoods” (2005: 82). Such claims of establishedness “sit at the interface between place, identity, and power” (2005:65). The rationalisation of the white suburbanites is that newcomers, of all races, are welcome into the neighbourhood, as long as they “fit in”. They claimed that they “got there first” and thus others have to conform to their standards and values to be included. Questions of how they got there first and why others should adapt to their regulations are ignored and “establishedness and outsiderness are presented by individuals as neutral facts of time and space” (Ballard, 2005: 82). To protect their space, a claim of establishedness is deployed as effective tool to sustain and legitimise the power to determine the environment (2005:66). In eco-estates in particular:
Suburbanites seeking to escape the increasingly mixed and threatening post-apartheid city are offered a chance to reconnect with nature in eco-estates. Where largely white elites often feel a precarious hold in the new South Africa, natural heritage offers attachment to place (Ballard & Jones, 2011: 131).

The conservationist ethic claimed by white South Africans naturalizes inequality and exclusion (ibid, 2011 144). The spatial divisions, marked by remote-controlled security gates, are further legitimised through the “subtext of crime” (Lewis, 2001: 2106). In response to the high incidence of crime, and sense of insecurity, in the country property developers market their projects as highly secured and protected spaces that have to be exclusive in order to be safe.

In an Australian mining town situated in a remote area in the countryside “crime talk” is a way of the established community to mark indigenous people and migrant labourers as outsiders in town. The following explanation of the workings of crime talk illustrates how the established and outsiders figurations in a rural setting literally make Aboriginals an invisible group in society.

It is no small irony that Indigenous Australians, who, historically, have been violently displaced from their lands and culture, have been repeatedly characterized as an uncivilized presence in the landscape from which they have been displaced. One mark of this incivility is a perceived capacity for social disorder, especially violence. What links Aboriginals and the ‘outsiders’ who were blamed for crime in Walcha, is that both do not conform with an imagined sense of ‘community’ which pervades the rural spaces they inhabit. Aboriginals are, again with some irony, regularly marginalized to the status of ‘outsiders’ in rural and isolated settings. This noted, the historic segregation of Aboriginal people to the margins of rural towns has placed real limitations on their presence and visibility in many rural settings (Scott et al., 2012: 151).

The Aboriginals in particular do not conform to the image of the traditional native, nor do they belong to the white community in town. They simply do not fit the rural idyll of the established Australians and so the outsiders stimulate fear because they are not “part of the landscape; not its past or the future” (ibid, 151). Elias and Scotson (1994 [1965]: 127-9) observe exactly the same dynamic in the Winston Parva working-class figuration where the outsiders are said to breed delinquents and criminals who destroy the “old peace” of the place, as
nostalgically imagined by the established. The complaints about crime and disorder are not so much supported by quantitative evidence, but have everything to do with the detrimental living conditions of the outsiders. The established stigmatised outsiders based on a “minority of the worst” as they threatened their sense of belonging in Winston Parva.

**Re-imagining communities and landscapes**

In the uncertain post-apartheid era communities re-imagine landscapes that position them in the world. The ways landscapes are imagined reveal social interactions and the workings of power in a particular community (Gunner, 2005: 281-2). Imagined communities are always bounded as they do not include everybody in the world (Anderson, 1991 [1983] Revised edition) but it is increasingly argued that under global conditions they do not have to be limited in terms of geographical spaces marked by farm fences or state borders. The symbolic construction of communities can be expressed through geographical spaces or landscapes, or other symbolic markers such as language, ethnicity or religion (Cohen, 1985). Boundaries are re-enforced through language, dress, terminology, family ties, or rituals that are shared by the community members. “The reality of community in people’s experience thus inheres in their attachment or commitment to a common body of symbols” (ibid, 16).

An example of community construction through landscape is the construction of National Parks in South Africa. National Parks have been debated as cultural landscapes that particularly nurture settler’s values and in particular their attachment to land (Carruthers, 2003). Another example is the Afrikaans language that has been a potent symbol in the process of community building and Afrikaner nationalism (Giliomee, 2004). Afrikaans is inscribed with vocabulary and meanings that articulate paternalistic relations between farmers and workers (Ross, 1995). The lingua franca on farms expresses racial community boundaries “with a richness of vocabulary in this field to approach that of the Zulu on cattle or the Inuit on snow” (1995:47). According to Giliomee the abolishment of apartheid has endangered the survival of the Afrikaans language and the cohesiveness of the Afrikaner community as it no
longer enjoys exclusive protection from the state as South Africa now has eleven national languages.

In many ways Afrikaans is a victim of its own successes. Afrikaans developed as the symbol of an Afrikaner identity deeply wounded by the South African War (1899-1902) and the cultural arrogance of the much wealthier English-speaking community (2004: 54).

Clearly, Afrikaans lost its established position in the nation which leaves the speakers in uncertainty about their place in the new South Africa. When boundaries of a perceived community are disrupted by external influences (media, politics, marriage), “the symbolic bases are strengthened through meaning and significance” (Cohen, 1985: 44). The symbolic construction of community serves to aggregate its members more than that it integrates them (1985:20). Although members might give different meaning to shared symbols, “an effective display of these symbolic markers provides much of the foundation of social order” (1985:30).

In the political context of postcolonialism and globalisation one’s positioning in a place remains a topical issue because access to territory and locality are associated with identity and a sense of belonging (Lovell, 1998a:1-2). Nature and landscape shape local understandings of belonging to a place (Lovell, 1998a: 10). Landscapes produce and reproduce interrelationships between human and nature, and between humans in social and situated communities. Hughes for example argues that Zimbabwean whites found a sense of belonging in the intersection of white identity and the project of nature conservation and in this process they turned “away from the native African people and focused instead on the landscapes” (Hughes McDermott, vii). Whites engineered landscapes with irrigations dams and vast tracks of land dedicated to “nature” and “wilderness” freed from of human settlement. The foundation of this belonging lays the construction of a sense of entitlement by colonial settlers who initially seized African land (Hughes McDermott, 2010; Said, 1994). Settlers had to come up with convincing reasons why they were the “right” people to settle and develop the land. “While excluding the natives from power, from wealth and from territory, oversees pioneers must find a way to include themselves in new lands” (ibid,2010 1). Such legitimizations have been enforced and constructed in the
writings of settlers, adventures, missionaries, and other white Africans who through texts ‘forged a sense of belonging’ more enduring than empire” (ibid,2).

Importantly, landscapes do not constitute fixed geographical sites permanently belonging to a community; “the sitedness of belonging is constantly re-enacted in order to transcend (and simultaneously allow) the vagaries of migration, of movement and of existential uncertainties” (Lovell, 1998a:10). Ethnographic stories on the relations between place and identity increasingly approach the concept of place as a site of contestation linked to local and global power relations (Feld & Basso, 1996:4-5). The idea that identities or cultures are fixed in a place or linked to a territory has been contested especially under conditions of globalization characterized by interconnections and mobility (Okely, 2003). Several problems arise with the assumed isomorphism of space, place and culture (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992:7). The disjuncture between place and culture is evident in cases where people inhabit borderlands and live mobile lives characterised by continuous border crossings. Implicit mapping of cultures obscures cultural differences within a locality; “conventional accounts of ethnicity, even when used to describe cultural difference in settings where people from different regions live side by side, rely on a unproblematic link between identity and place” (ibid,7). Lastly, the condition of postcoloniality raises the question to which places hybrid cultures that resulted out of the colonial encounter belong. Cultural difference should be rethought through connection:

Keeping in mind that notions of locality or community refer both to demarcated physical space and to clusters of interaction, we can see that the identity of a place emerges by the intersection of its specific involvement in a system of hierarchically organized spaces with its cultural construction as a community or locality (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992:8).

Transformations of space, power and subjectivity under the postcolonial condition have been placed in the context of fluctuation, mobility and extreme spatial polarization. Networks and social relations are transformed and institutionalised in new ways. These forms are a combination of “a complex reworking of old, historical social relations”, and the result of changing external conditions (Mbembe, 2001b: 1-3).
The process of “reworking” social institutions in the commercial farming landscape as a result of changing external conditions is explored in this thesis, especially how land-use conversion and the changing relationship of farmers and farm dwellers with the state have impacted on the way farmers and workers relate to each other, and the way they belong on the farm. Historically farm communities are held together by paternalistic relations constituting “a specific understanding of economic relations and a particular interpretation of dependency” (Du Toit, 1993: 320). Paternalism is a “deeply organic and hierarchical conceptualisation of the relationship between farmer and worker” and “at its most explicit it sees the farmer as the father of the workers and the farm community as a family” (ibid). The system of paternalism on commercial farms has been described as “micro-welfare system” (Atkinson 2007:94; John, 2007), focusing on the often informally negotiated private welfare contributions farmers provide for their workers and families. Beyond these seemingly benign aspects of paternalism lies a complex system of dependency relations and power inequalities that simply “smothers any possibility of resistance” (Du Toit, 1993:316). In the Zimbabwean context these interdependencies created certain “modes of belonging” meaning “routinized discourses, social practices and institutional arrangements through which people make claims for resources and rights, and the ways through which they become ‘incorporated’ in particular places” (Rutherford, 2008: abstract). Social relations on European farms are a specific “territorialized mode of belonging” where “processes of identification and their contestations shape access to and control over resources, including labour power” (Rutherford, 2008:79). For Zimbabwean farm workers their mode of belonging provided only a “conditional belonging” with limited access to resources on commercial farms in combination with a marginalised status as Zimbabwean citizen. As a result of Zimbabwe’s violent land redistribution process former farm workers lost access to resources tied to commercial farms and now rely on alternative livelihood options creating other, often more precarious, forms of dependencies (ibid,95). In the shifting balance-of-power in the Zimbabwean commercial farming landscape farm workers’ relations to both the farmer and the state changed the mode of belonging that...produced the public persona of white farmers in colonial Rhodesia as “taking care” of “his” farm workers as an index of being “responsible” settlers. It has
also marked farm workers as being dependent on white farmers with respect to their political personhood, in terms of official doubts raised about their capacity to be farmers on their own in postcolonial Zimbabwe, and in their being seen as people whose moral capacity to improve themselves and “the nation” is subsumed by their loyalty to white farmers (Rutherford, 2004: 147, footnote 18).

This is an example of stigmatization of farm workers and farmers on different levels, namely in their relation on the farm (“taking care of”) and in the media (“loyalty”). With the transfer of power sources the relationships and positions of farmers and farm workers changed together with the ways they belong in the farming landscape, and in the nation.

Proposing an interpretive framework

Interpreting contemporary relations of farmers and workers in the Karoo as a particular established and outsiders figuration enables attention for the emotions, feelings and perceptions at work in the re-configuration of power and belonging in the trophy-hunting landscape of the Eastern Cape. Figurational sociology insists on the study of relational dynamics and processes to understand the workings of power. I propose to include the workings of racial and spatial constructions in established and outsiders formations. With the advent of democracy in South Africa the position of both white farmers and black farm workers has changed and this thesis seeks to trace the shifting interdependencies and balance-of-powers on commercial farms that are increasingly converted into wildlife habitats. White commercial farmers feel they have to defend their establishedness and settlements on the land and legitimise their position in post-apartheid society. The shifting balance of power affects their sense of belonging. Farm workers are integral part of the changes in the landscape and assert their position and settlement patterns in relation to the political and economic processes related to the proliferation of farm conversions. Assuming an intimate relation between landscapes and belonging, the trophy-hunting farms in the Karoo are viewed here as economic ventures inscribed with meanings that unfold particular community responses to the ‘new’ South Africa and the distribution of power chances to belong in the countryside. It is through the
study of interdependencies relations of farmers and farm workers that new social divisions and spatial contestations in contemporary rural South Africa can be understood.
3.

Inxuba Flows: Historical Mobilities in the Karoo

Phumla’s story

Phumla was born in Cradock just before the forced removals of the 1960s where black people were moved to a territory south of town that segregated them from Cradock’s white residents\(^\text{11}\). The territory was called ‘the location’ and during this time Phumla’s parents moved to a white-owned commercial farm where her mother raised her and taught her how to work as a domestic. Phumla narrated that during her youth she and her family constantly changed places: ‘we moved from farm to farm, we just fetched our clothes and unpacked them on another farm’. The family was employed by different white families called Botha or Du Plessis that all farmed sheep and cattle. Her mother passed away when she was still a little girl and her father remained on the farm with her and her siblings. They were displaced whenever a farmer left the property and sometimes they returned to a farm that they had lived and left before. Besides selling his labour Phumla’s father owned persies (kind of sheep), boerbokke (goats) and sybokke (Angora goats) until the harsh Karoo winter endangered the survival of the animals and her father sold them all in ‘The Cape’. Then he soon got sick and the doctor diagnosed him with arthritis; a result of decades of farm labour and irrigating the farmers’ fields with bare hands that must have constantly been wet and cold. Unlike Phumla’s mother, who was buried in the graveyard of Cradock’s location, her father insisted that his grave would be on the farm along the Tarkastad road where he lived. Phumla recalled that every time they visited relatives in town he would be missing on the second day, and they would find him sitting at the road crossing waiting to go back to the farm: ‘He did not want to know anything about town; he just wanted to be on the

\(^\text{11}\) The reconstruction of Phumla’s life story is mainly based on interviews conducted on 5 June 2009 and 8 January 2010.
farm’. Phumla raised two of the farmers’ children after her father’s death before she moved to town where she found employment as domestic worker with a white family. When she married she relocated to a farm again with her husband and they had one daughter. Soon after the birth of their first child Phumla’s husband died in a road accident. She left the farm and went back to town. There, she eventually married another man and moved in with him on another commercial farm. She was not happy there and the couple found, through one of her husband’s relatives, work at the farm where she still resides today. Her daughter met her husband on this farm that took her to the Western Cape where they raise Phumla’s three grandchildren. One of her grandsons occasionally stays on the farm with his grandmother where he does casual fencing work.

In 2009 Phumla lived on a trophy-hunting farm owned by a family of British descent. Though the farm owners are English speaking, they speak Afrikaans with Phumla whose mother tongue is isiXhosa. The use and disuse of various languages results from centuries of cultural encounters and contestations over power and belonging in the commercial farming landscape of the Karoo. The name ‘Karoo’ is derived from the language of the indigenous Khoikhoi inhabitants and means ‘dry’. When the farmer’s mother used to visit the farm and sit on the stoep (sit on the porch) with Phumla the two women would skinner (gossip) in isiXhosa. The farmer however does not speak Xhosa and communicates in Afrikaans with Phumla who he addresses by the name ‘Rose’. With the other resident farm workers Phumla speaks isiXhosa, except the two Zimbabwean workers who are still finding their way in isiXhosa and prefer to speak English. This is the language that most of the hunting clients, notably from the United States, understand although the hunting farm is also visited by Russians or Argentineans who do not speak English. In other words, observing language practices on the farm alone immediately reveals a social figuration characterized by cultural differences. Phumla’s life story illustrates how her family moved around in the region for generations generating different senses of belonging to the commercial farms and to Cradock town. Her father clearly felt that he belonged to the farms and preferred to be there physically during his life, and after. Phumla herself expressed that when she retires on the farm she will move to town and stay with her family there.
In this chapter I present the historical context of social figuration processes shaped by European colonists and indigenous peoples in the area of the Fish River. It maps long-term processes of colonial state formation and the development of capitalist agriculture have shaped and shifted established and outsiders relations in the Karoo Midlands since the arrival of Europeans in the 17th century. Balance of power battles between European colonists and native Africans, as well as between Afrikaner and British settlers produced specific claims of belonging to place and stereotypical images of different groups in the region. The construction of ethnicity/race categories and spatial engineering have been crucial in the formation of power relations in the commercial farming landscape. Various literatures are reviewed to situate the lives of Cradock farmers and workers in historical perspective. These include social history, environmental history, studies of agrarian change, political economy, and also literary texts coming from the region. Together they give an impression of the formation of colonial group relations in the Cradock region as border zone once dividing Xhosaland and the Cape Colony.

The chapter is broadly divided in four parts. The first part discusses long-term boundary-making processes in the geographical area we now know as the Eastern Cape Province. It focuses on the consequences of the colonial encounter and the formation of a colonial order in the Cape Colony and how it was legitimized. The second part looks at agrarian transformation and the place of wildlife farming in this process. It traces the nature of rural enclosures in the Karoo and the changing economic relations in this process. The conversions to game farming are linked to the agrarian question and I review the way this question is debated among scholars of agrarian change. In the third section the post-apartheid land and labour reform policies and processes are outlined to illustrate the reform objectives of South Africa’s democratic governments. In the fourth and final part of this chapter I zoom in on the locality of Cradock and the specific ways in which power relations and notions of belonging have been historically shaped there.
Boundary-making around the Fish River

Geographically the Fish River constitutes a border area where many historical contestations over power and belonging shaped the current relations and group formations in the commercial farming landscape. The emergence and invention of territory has been a means of colonial rule (Beinart & Bundy, 1987:6). Fixing boundaries was an essential element in the colonization of the Cape Colony, and later the Eastern Cape (Ross, 2004: 312). Boundary-making in South Africa has been a violent and contested process. Before the Union of South Africa in 1910 (after the second Anglo-Boer War) the country was divided in the British colonies Cape and Natal, and two Boer republics Orange Free State and Transvaal. Within these territories there were areas assigned for African occupation (Ntsebeza, 2011b:75-6). These African regions resembled “tropical colonies of African peasants” separated from the settler dominated areas in the rest of South Africa (Beinart & Bundy, 1987:7). Cradock’s history and landscape was shaped by both the presence of settlers and the vicinity to these so-called independent homelands.

Maps: Pre-1994 Cape Colony and Bantustans and post-1994 Eastern Cape Province
The first map is an image of South Africa before 1994 showing the Eastern Cape (red line) as part of the Cape Colony including the Ciskei (in brown) and Transkei (in green) homelands. The second map, designed for tourists, shows the Eastern Cape Province as it is today, with Cradock situated in the interior along the N10 highway next to the Mountain Zebra National Park.

The rural town of Cradock constitutes a social-geographical borderland connecting different contested territories from where it received and absorbed various travellers, refugees and settlers. Historically, it is situated west from the historical ‘Xhosaland border’ (Queenstown and King Williams Town) stretching towards the former homelands Ciskei and Transkei; north of predominantly English-speaking Grahamstown and Port-Elizabeth; and it is the eastern neighbour of predominantly Afrikaans-speaking town of Graaff-Reinet. In 1994 the Eastern Cape Province administrative borders replaced the territorial boundaries of the Cape Colony and Xhosaland later turned into the ‘independent’ territories for Africans: Transkei and Ciskei. The Eastern Cape is regarded “the most deprived province in South Africa” (Ruiters, 2011b:1) because it inherited the poorest population, the most difficult challenges and the most structural disadvantages carried over from the region’s violent past (Ruiters, 2011a:29), including the legacies of the Frontier Wars of the 19th century known as the Xhosa Wars (Peires, 2011:42-3).

In 1999 administrative borders were again transformed, this time on the local level, and the rural towns of Cradock and Middelburg were merged into one municipality called Inxuba Yethemba Municipality (IYM). The municipality is named after the Fish River, ‘Inxuba’ in isiXhosa, that flows within its geographical borders. Cradock houses the municipal buildings and majors’ office and is the largest urban centre of the two places connected by about 100 km of tar road. Along the banks of the Fish River farmers with relatively small properties engage in irrigation farming and farmers on the large dry land farms on the Karoo’s semi-desert planes with scattered thorn bushes mainly engage in livestock farming. The population density is only 5 persons per square kilometre and the landscape is characterised by the sporadic silhouettes of rusty windmills and farm houses belonging to a community of around 500 commercial farmers,
mostly white South Africans. In 2007\textsuperscript{12} the IYM population count came close to 50,000 residents of which the majority resides in the townships of Cradock and Middelburg. Administratively Cradock was in the same geographical district as Port Elizabeth, a major port and economic hub 250 kilometres to the south, at the coast. Since the administrative re-orderings Cradock is linked to Queenstown within the borders of the Chris Hani district which reintegrated former white-owned commercial farming areas with former homeland area\textsuperscript{13}. This shift is perceived to have destabilised the region as it disrupted established economic and social ties oriented towards Port Elizabeth\textsuperscript{14}. Agricultural produce from Cradock was processed and shipped in Port Elizabeth and people travelled there to find work. During apartheid, close political ties existed between the African location of Port Elizabeth and Lingelihle (Tetelman, 1997:111). In relation to Port Elizabeth Cradock was benefitting from the relation with the economically more developed city at the coast, but compared to Queenstown (a former ‘independent’ homeland region) Cradock is economically stronger (as part of the former ‘republic’\textsuperscript{15}) which affects the distribution of resources within the district. Ten years after the re-organization a Cradock resident who observed Cradock’s economic stagnation cried out: “Queenstown’s economic activity is now even bigger than Cradock!”\textsuperscript{16} Typically, residents in the former homeland areas are perceived by Cradock’s urban Xhosa-speaking population as people who still live more traditional lives according to Xhosa customs and beliefs; a lifestyle the urban wage workers have long left behind.

\textsuperscript{12} Statistics SA’s 2007 Community Survey report.
\textsuperscript{13} Characterization Chris Hani District partly derived from (Wotshela, 2011) who described the Lukhanji (Greater Queenstown) municipality (close to Cradock) as ‘a classic case of a reintegrated municipality combining former ‘white’ South Africa with pieces of former homelands’ (ibid. 281).
\textsuperscript{14} Field note 8 July 2009, Masizame conversation with Mrs. Goniwe.
\textsuperscript{15} Interview manager Dept Local Economic Development (LED) 17 November 2009.
\textsuperscript{16} Field note 8 July 2009.
During the 18th century the majority of the Xhosa lived around the mountain ranges of the Winterberg and the Amatola that replenish the great rivers of Xhosaland; the Fish, the Keiskamma, the Buffalo and the Kei. Water was the determining factor for settlement patterns and thus Xhosa place names nearly always refer to rivers. ‘The House of Phalo’ appeared as one of the first text on the history of the Xhosa people of South Africa and describes Xhosa society during pre-colonial times, and ends in 1850 when Xhosa independence was finally lost after a decade of conflict with the European colonists (Peires, 1981).

The reign of Phalo, who ruled the Xhosa by 1736, is the first that can be dated accurately. Phalo’s sons Gcaleka and Rharhabe are personifications of a contemporary significant political division among the Xhosa; namely between the Gcaleka of the Transkei and the Rharhabe of the Ciskei. Phalo’s rule was preceded by the reign of Tshawe which cannot be dated, though it is thought to be some time before 1675. Tshawe’s story tells how the once independent “clans” were conquered by Tshawe under whom they became one “nation”. Those who accepted the rule of Tshawe were considered Xhosa (Peires, 1981:15-19/46-47).

Xhosa territory consisted roughly of the area between what we now as Uitenhage in the West and Mbashe river in the East. This coastal strip of land separates the interior highlands of the Indian Ocean and is far more suitable for stock-farming than intensive agriculture. Their beehive-shaped dwellings made of long grass, dung, clay and branches were build in half a circle around the cattle enclosure which consisted the centre of the homestead, symbolizing the crucial role of cattle in the social structures and culture of the Xhosa (ibid. 1-4). Cattle meant many things and played an important role in Xhosa life. It provided meat and milk, it was sacrificed in ancestor-worship rituals, it was a means of exchange and therefore represented wealth, and was used as loba; cattle were exchangeable against women and therefore “served as the key to all future production and reproduction” (ibid. 4). Women were excluded from the domain of cattle and mainly performed domestic and agricultural labour (ibid. 41). Homesteads were headed by a senior male, who was subject to a chief. The patrilineal society traced descent through lineage and clan ties that related people
to shared ancestors. Grazing and herding cattle was done by men communally, as was hunting (ibid. 4-5). Hunting, a neighbourhood enterprise, involved communal rituals and a distinction was made between short hunts and great hunting parties of several weeks. The purpose of hunting was to get rare skins and ivory or supplement the food supply with game meat (ibid. 5-6).

Mobility was part of every life trajectory as sons of Xhosa men left their homestead to settle in other areas and sons of chiefs left the homestead to found new chiefdoms of their own. Inherent to this social structure was the extension of the Xhosaland boundaries over generations and the expansion of the territory under the rule of the king. Xhosa expansion resulted in alliances with Khoi chiefdoms towards the Cape coast, as well as invasions into Khoi territory and their, sometimes involuntary, incorporation into Xhosa society. Xhosa clans originate either from Bantu or Khoi people (ibid. 16). The influence of the cross-cultural interactions between Xhosa, Khoi and San are clearly noticeable in the development of the language; in particular the adoption of the Khoisan “click” (see also Crais, 1992:18) that resonates in one sixth of all Xhosa words (Peires, 1981:24). When the Dutch arrived at the Cape, Xhosa influence vanished and ‘Khoi’ groups disintegrated between the two (ibid. 22). Ross asserts that “certainly on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony, or the Western Frontier of Xhosaland, the distinction between Xhosa and Khoi was heavily accentuated by the Europeans, particularly the English” (Ross, 2004: 296). This contributed to the making of ethnicity in the region which was “often as much the work of Europeans as of Africans”.

The Cape Colony became part of Xhosa politics through the figures of Ndlambe and Ngqika17 around 1800 (ibid. 53). The chiefs west of the Fish River were headed by Ndlambe. This territory was at that time regarded as the border of the Colony by the British. Ngqika formed an alliance with the Dutch boers, who were frustrated with Ndlambe’s presence on good grazing grounds, to help them against the British. When Ngqika wanted to fight his cousin he was stopped by a colonial landdrost who did not want a Xhosa war west of the Fish (ibid. 59-60). In 1811 the colonial government pushed Ndlambe beyond the Fish

17 Ndlambe was Rharhabe’s son who rivalled for power against Ngqika, who was the son of Ndlambe’s father’s deceased elder brother (Peires, 1981:50).
for the first time; this episode is known as the *fourth frontier war*. It was in fact Governor Sir John Cradock who ordered Lieutenant-colonel Graham to drive out the Xhosa west of the Fish. And Graham assured that he would “attack the savages in a way which I hope will leave a lasting impression on their memories” (ibid. 65). It did. After the unprecedented ferocious warfare, cattle-raiding increased (often a consequence of war rather than the cause of political tension, p55) and the colonial government forced a political alliance with Ngqika to control the area (ibid. 61). For the Xhosa, the frontier wars, and especially this one, were nothing like their previous experiences with conflicts among themselves, or with Khoi neighbours. Those were not really bloody and always in pursuit of absorption, rather than mere destruction of the means of production (ibid. 66). The colonial encounter was therefore fundamentally different from other experiences:

The Xhosa succeeded in drawing most of their neighbours into a network of reciprocal social relations. They were not successful with the colonial government or its white subjects who would not intermarry with them, would not share their wealth with them, would not even accept their common humanity. (Peires, 1981:44)

It is a “small wonder” that the Xhosa changed their reference to colonists from “people of another house” to “pale beasts” or “beasts of prey” (ibid. 44). Initially, Europeans were considered uncivilized, animal-like beings, and therefore not part of the moral community of the Xhosa to whom colonial violence was both cruel and incomprehensible. After the war of 1812, political leadership ‘passed from the hands of chiefs into the hands of prophet-figures’ (ibid. 66). The end of the Eastern Cape’s frontier history is said to be marked by the great Nongqawuse cattle killing of 1856-7 when the victory of colonialism, after a 100 years of wars, proved inevitable to the indigenous African people (Peires, 2011:42-3). The prophesy by Nongqawuse that ordered the Xhosa to purify the world of their poisoned homesteads indicated that the emergence of capitalism and colonialism was fundamentally changing the world as the Xhosa had known it so far (Crais, 1992:23).[18]

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[18] Zakes Mda wrote a novel about the contemporary impact on Xhosa society after the notorious cattle killing of 1856 titled ‘Heart of Redness’. In the story the division between the
The political relations, trade, religion and labour between the Cape Colony and Xhosa society all constituted “ambiguous frontiers of contact” (Crais, 1992:100). The societies represented radically different ways of perceiving the world and the cross-cultural meeting caused many misunderstandings. The British participated in an economic system that focused on accumulation of commodities in contrast to the Xhosa, whose society was organized around principles of redistribution and reciprocity (ibid. 100). Soon, the balance of power would be in favour of the newly arrived European colonists who paradoxically positioned themselves as established in the occupied territories and gradually pushed the indigenous people into outsider positions.

West of Inxuba: settlers and master-servant relationships

On the other side of the river emerged the Cape Colony as a “brutal place” (Ross, 1983:1) after Van Riebeeck’s arrival; a place where the ruling class owned slaves and slave labour build the colony and the economy. Slave labour was “used” to colonize and farm the interior beyond Cape Town and the social system of slavery was reproduced by the constant threat of rigorous punishments like flogging, impalement, and other forms of torture, for resistance or escape (ibid. 32). Cape burghers organized commandos of armed farmers to defend stock farmers from attacks by the local hunter-gatherers named the “San”, and this system was also used to capture runaway slaves (ibid. 35-6). The settlers who reached the mountains and plains of the Eastern Cape could often not afford slaves and in vicinity of independent Xhosa territory there was relative opportunity for slaves to escape and find refuge among the Xhosas in the east (ibid. 84). Although it was thus perceived uneconomic at the time to keep slaves in areas like Graaff-Reinet, slave Frederick Opperman worked as a smith for his master in Graaff-Reinet. He was sold, and separated from his wife.

‘believers’ and ‘non-believers’ of the Nongqawuse prophesy is perpetuated with the advent of tourism in the area of Kei-river mouth. Traditionalists fear the potential damage of tourist operations on their territory and are suspicious of the benefits it will bring them. The progressives reason that tourism will bring prosperity and modernity to their community. The story symbolizes beautifully the ongoing perceived threats by Xhosa communities of the intrusion of capitalism and Western culture in their cultural system and way of life.
and 2-year old child, to a young man named Wynand Pretorius in Cradock for whom he made a new wagon every few weeks until he deserted in 1825 (ibid. 92). The story of runaway slave Frederick Opperman illustrates that slaves were present in places as far away in the Cape Colony as Cradock. Historian Jeff Butler reports that in 1824 some sixty Khoikhoi and eleven “slave” adult males lived in Cradock (quoted in Tetelman, 1997:21).

The slave presence in the Cape shaped the relationship between settlers and Khoikhoi from the very start of the colonial encounter. Despite Khoikhoi resistance in the Colony to regain their ancestral lands, Dutch settlers in search for pastures, called the Boer, pushed the Khoikhoi inhabitants out of the Eastern Cape during the 18th century, or “tied” them to their farms where they became “hired slaves”. Inspired by the emergence of a patriarchal slavery in the Western Cape, colonial settlers “enslaved” African communities in the vicinity of their farms by using the civilian “commandos” to capture labour (Crais, 1992:42). Trekboers constructed houses on land they proclaimed was “theirs” and “domesticated” the landscape in which they slowly converted hunting and trading activities to pastoral production (ibid. 44). Boer settlers “not only adapted to their local environment, but also learned how to do so from the people they displaced” (2003:47). The system of kraaling was an adoption from the Khoikhoi pastoral system which protected livestock from predators like jackals. More Khoikhoi critical skills such as tracking, hunting and conserving meat were utilized and copied by settlers to travel and colonize the Cape interior (Beinart, 2003-45). The violent master and servant relationship in the interior also contained ‘reciprocal exchanges’ such as access to land in return for labour or the sharing of food. Africans staying on the farm were considered property of the farmer, subject to beatings and recapture if they escaped, and dept with the

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19 Original source: Jeff Butler (1964) ‘Cradock, a small African Town’ chapter one of Denis Smith (ed.) Cradock 1814-1964, chapter one 47-65. 150th anniversary Brochure 1964 (Cradock White & Boughton).

20 In 1799 there was a major rebellion of Khoikhoi against the whites together with various Xhosa chiefdoms (Ross, 1983:47).

21 Dutch, German and Flemish settlers in the Cape were called ‘Boer’ which is the Dutch word for ‘farmer’. Nowadays the terms ‘Boer’ and ‘Afrikaner’ are used interchangeably.

22 VOC policy determined that Khoikhoi could not be enslaved (ibid. 43).
white master contributed to the serve’s strong “ties” to the colonist’s farm. Patriarchy was further asserted through sexual relations between European men and female serfs or slaves. The offspring of these often irregular unions were called “Bastaard Hottentots” by colonists, and later ‘Cape Colourds’ (Crais, 1992:44-5). As access to land declined towards the 1780s, and the colonist’s labour demands increased, violence and resistance became more pronounced. In the 1790s a number of Xhosa refugees entered the Eastern Cape, fleeing for the power struggles of their rivalling leaders Ndlambe and Nqika, and those who lost their livestock had little choice but to turn to the white farms as labourers. Compared to the Khoikhoi tenants, peons and slaves on the farms these Xhosa seem to have been “better off”. They used their wages “of beads and metals” to obtain cattle in Xhosaland “where they ultimately hoped to return” (Crais, 1992:48). Overall, settlers moving from the Cape into the interior depended on several forms of unfree labour and social relations “constantly” reconstituted the identity of colonist as master (ibid. 52). In the cultural and colonial order founded on racial capitalism black people remained perpetual outsiders (Crais, 1992:150). Land dispossession was not enough for settlers to claim their “right” to the environment because “while the land might be conquered, the minds of the Africans remained uncolonised” and settlers continuously struggled to create an African working class (ibid:121). To naturalise the Cape racial formation Africans were stigmatised as a culturally inferior race and deprived of their individuality. They became the “other” in relation to the white colonizer (Crais, 1992). Xhosa, Khoi, San, and slaves in the Cape were subjected to a consistent process of ‘outsidering’ by the established colonists who legitimized this process by claiming they were a superior race.

*The formation of a colonial order in the Cape Colony*

European colonizers and amaXhosa behaved very different in encountering other groups. The amaXhosa avoided intergroup tensions and conflicts by

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23 South-African novelist Ettienne Van Heerden addresses the (fictional) the complex and taboo relations on a Karoo farm between the De Wet family and their ‘skaam’ family residing on their farm in the book ‘Toorberg’ published in the 1980s.
incorporating “outsiders” into their own reign of power. The colonists, on the other hand, “marked” groups by their skin colour and more importantly, did not let those “others” become part of their own social group. There have been numerous alliances and even children born out of interracial sexual intercourse, but an interesting point Peires makes is that throughout history the distinction between so-called “white” and “black” has produced greater power imbalances, than the distinction between Xhosa and Khoi.

The view that the Xhosa nation is heterogeneous in origin, rather than a genetically defined ‘tribe’ clearly distinct from its neighbours, and that it expanded and incorporated rather than migrated, has important implications with regard of the old problem of the western boundary of Xhosaland. European colonists, keenly aware that they were intruders in the southern tip of Africa and that they had dispossessed the indigenous Khoisan inhabitants, were anxious to prove that the Xhosa had done much the same thing....the Xhosa had as little right as the colonists to the country west of the river since both invaders had displaced the original Khoi residents. This argument fails to consider what became of the Khoi who were defeated by the Xhosa. The Gona, Dama, and Hoeniqua were not expelled from their ancient homes or relegated to a condition of hereditary servitude on the basis of their skin colour. They became Xhosa with the full right of any other Xhosa. The limits of Xhosadom were not ethnic or geographic, but political: all persons or groups who accepted the rule of the Tshawe thereby became Xhosa. (Peires, 1981:19)

Nevertheless the amaXhosa and the colonists were shaping a particular established and outsider figuration of which they were all part. In the following it becomes clear how racial and spatial constructions were crucial in the colonial configuration of power.

For the Europeans cultural adjustment in a colonial society and the formation of a colonial identity was shaped through 1) shared perception of the landscape by the elite, 2) shared economic and social goals, 3) an implicit understanding of the standard of behaviour, and 4) a sense of a common past (Crais, 1992:128). The production of a colonial culture involved transformations of space and landscapes. British settlers tried to anglicize the frontier landscape as some envisioned “England in the miniature” as symbol of “civilization” and promising pursuits of capitalist production (Crais, 1992:88). The “colonial manor”
constituted an important architecture of power in the countryside. The colonial farm house communicated hierarchy and control through its very walls, and formed the ultimate contradiction to the “immoral” huts of the African. “Such houses served as metaphor and instrument of the separation of the domains of social action between the European farmer and the African worker” (ibid. 137-8). The colonial order was based on spatial projections of power.

The British colonial elite ridiculed the Boers in the frontier and the colonial officials worried about their economic misery and the persistent rebellion of black tenants and serfs. Meanwhile social change in England sailed anti-slavery sentiments across the Atlantic Ocean and introduced a new moral sensibility in the Cape Colony. With the beginning of British rule at the end of the 18th century perceptions of the colonial society in the Eastern Cape changed. The Englishmen were guided by Sir John Cradock who entered the Cape Midlands with British soldiers in the early 1800s to fight the amaXhosa in a series of battles known as frontier or Xhosa wars. British 1820 settlers bought land cheap from Afrikaner farmers (Keegan, 1996; Peires, 2011) who escaped their sufferings from the Karoo’s semi-arid “unforgiving landscape” with its draughts, hostile climate, water shortages and cattle theft (Tetelman, 1997:18-19). Something the Afrikaners of the Midlands never forgave the British settlers (Peires, 2011:48) whose “presence converted the Cape Colony from an anachronistic combination of feudal governance and quasislave social relations to an expansionist agent of mercantile capitalism concentrated on cross-border trade and rabid land speculation” (ibid. 46). About the role of the 1820 settlers and their entrepreneurial activities Peires said that “although the earliest capitalist entrepreneurs in South Africa, [they] never succeeded in taking the Eastern Cape economy beyond the realm of trade and land speculation’ (2011:57). We will see later that in the Cradock area the descendants of the 1820 British settlers are associated with entrepreneurial roles still, including farm conversions to wildlife production.

With the arrival of British colonial rule a new concept of power was introduced in the Cape Colony that reflected the 19th century revolution in the way power was conceived and exercised. The British frowned upon colonial masters torturing their slaves and thought the “sovereign-subject” relationship to be ideologically inferior to the notion of the “Rule of Law” popular in London
and Cape Town (1992:58-9). The idea was that power should be exercised, rather than possessed, through policies, procedures and institutions introduced by the state. Ultimately, these ideas proved to be a colonial paradox as Africans were not interested “in becoming the docile and deferential labourers the elite so desired” and the economy remained dependent on unfree labour and violence instead of the idealized opposite (Crais, 1992:95). Although the British’ different perception of power was a clear threat to patriarchy and Boer identity, the new rulers institutionalized and legitimized forms of unfree labour through the Caledon Code and the “Hottentot Proclamation” that entrenched the idea of unfree labour as basis of the colonial economy. “Given the tendency in older South African historiography to contrast the harshness of Boer frontier society with a more liberal, bureaucratic British presence, it is worth emphasizing that British conquest could also be brutal, and it was generally more successful” (Beinart, 2003:49). Certificates and passes regulated settlement patterns of Khoikhoi and the state intervened in the patterns of social life to stimulate economic growth, human progress and social stability (Crais, 1992:58-60). Property rights were assimilated with institutions in England and the state favoured British settlements to great dissatisfaction of Boers who quickly lost access to land and labour. “The world the frontier boers made crumbled” (Crais, 1992:63). Two Anglo-Boer Wars (1880 and 1899) resulted from rising tensions between the British Empire and the Boer Republics.

It was the turbulent turn of this century that famous Karoo writer Olive Schreiner (of British descent) wrote an essay on the “most typically” and “peculiar” South-African present in the Karoo that she regarded as the most characteristic physical feature of the country (Schreiner, 1992). Her observation of ‘The Boer’ illustrates how distinctly different they were believed to be from the British colonist (ibid. 75). Schreiner defines the connection between the Boer and the South-African landscape as a sacred relationship.

Deep in the hearts of every old velschoen-wearing Boer that you may meet, side by side with an almost religious indifference to other lands and peoples, lies this deep, mystical and impersonal affection for South Africa. Not for the land, as inhabited by human beings, and formed into political and social organizations of which he is a part; not for the land, regarded as a social and political entity alone, that he feels this affection. It is for the actual physical country, with its
plains, rocks and skies, that his love and veneration are poured out (absolutely incomprehensible as this may appear to the money-making nineteenth century Englishmen) (Schreiner, 1992: 75).

The British were in the forefront of sheep farming and wool production that implied a “more commoditized approach” to farming due to its utility for export rather than “multi-purpose local consumption of fat, skins, and meat” of the Boer fat-tailed sheep (Beinart, 2003:52-3). Merino farming was introduced in the Albany district (Grahamstown), near the coast, but soon spread into the interior where a British landed presence started shaping the landscape as far as Cradock, Graaff-Reinet and beyond. Here we see the emergence of another established and outsider configuration shaped along the Fish River, namely that of the British and the Boer.

**Agrarian change and wildlife farming in the Cape**

The following section focuses on the development of the agrarian economy and economic relations in South African agriculture. The emergence of the commercial farming landscape was driven by land dispossession and forced labour for Africans in colonial society. Academic debates on agrarian transformation have argued about various “pathways” of capitalist agriculture in South Africa and disagreements exist on when “feudal” or “capitalist” relations existed in what region of the country (Bradford, 1990). The majority of studies tended to focus on the shifts from arrangements like share-cropping and labour tenancy to capitalist relations of production in the northern regions of South Africa and fewer attention was paid to relations between farmers and workers in the Western Cape where capitalist relations had been established much earlier on fruit and wine farms (Ewert & Hamman, 1996: 147). Here, the focus lies on the emergence of capitalist agriculture in the Cape region and specifically the Karoo sheep farming landscape of the 19th century. This landscape proved suitable for wildlife utilization in the Karoo and private conversions to wildlife became more pervasive during the 1970s when the agricultural sector modernized, meaning it became more capital intensive, which made farm labourers redundant. This
period contributed to the Invisible Great Trek of thousands of farm residents moving off the commercial farms in search for a place to belong.

Sheep farming and the Great Trek

British landownership in the Cape Midlands and wool farming, was partly facilitated by another population that was moving out of the region; Boer emigrants (Keegan, 1996:159). After the frontier war of 1834-5 with the amaXhosa, Boer emigrants started to move up north; a movement known as the “Great Trek”. The emigrants often sold their, sometimes excellent, farms for very low prices to land-hungry British settlers who had capitalized on the cross-border trade with Xhosaland. “Once the land left behind by emigrating Boers had been bought up and wool farming had taken off, land prices boomed, …leading to substantial speculative profits” (ibid. 160). During the 1840s and 1850s the wool trade and wool prices boomed incredibly; wool exports increased from half a million pounds in 1838 to 12 million pounds in 1855 (ibid. 53). Despite the constant threat of war in the border region separating the British Colony and Xhosa territory, settler investments in land and sheep were incessant during this period (Keegan, 1996). There was also considerable cultural mingling of Dutch and English settler-farmers in Cradock and Graaff-Reinet districts. The intermarriage between landowning families and the names of farms represented Afrikaans as well as English names like ‘Groenfontein’ and ‘Wellwood’ (Beinart, 2003-61).

The migration of British settlers towards interior places like Cradock and Graaff-Reinet has received little attention from historians. In ‘The Rise of Conservation in South Africa’ William Beinart documented the movements of two British families; the Colletts and the Rubidges who were subject to the same environmental challenges in the semi-arid Karoo as their Dutch predecessors (2003:53-54) facilitating their adaption to local farming strategies and the development of a vernacular culture (ibid. 47). Pete Collett who arrived in the Cape in 1821, moved to Grahamstown in 1823 where he started trading until he could buy his first farm in 1826 after which he bought many more farms from Afrikaners who were “particularly mobile” at that time (Beinart, 2003:54). By 1849 Pete Collett owned 5,000 merinos and about 17,000 hectares of land.
mobility was striking; he moved through three farming sites and found the most stable and suitable site for his merinos at the Fish River in Cradock. This limited commitment to particular farms and the frequent sales of farms were a particular farming strategy in frontier districts, applied by both Boer and British settlers (2003:55). Collett’s “rapidly accumulated capital gave him considerably more power and his decisions had a harder commercial edge” than the frontier Boers in search for new and better grazing lands (2003:56). Whereas Collett purchased new farms to feed his growing number of sheep, Charles Rubidge decided to invest in the improvement of his sheep and existing land that made him one of the leading colonial breeders in the eastern and midland Cape (ibid. 57). On Queen Victoria’s birthday The Rubidge family expressed their loyalty to the British Empire with an annual springbok hunt (ibid. 60). It is in these social circles of landowners that wildlife farming for hunting purposes would soon become more serious business.

The ideas and farming practices of the Collett and Rubidge families are not representative for farming history in the Eastern Cape (Van Sittert, 2004). The focus on the activities of “a few white men” (farmers, map makers, environmentalists) ignores the role of women and Africans in the creation of the settler economy. The “environmentalism lens” is sensitive to the “invisible hand of the environment rather than the market” and obscures the social relations of production (2004:5). In the next section the environmental history of the Karoo is complemented with history on the development of economic relations, resistance and interdependencies among settlers and Africans in the colonial economy of the Cape. After that the advent of wildlife farming for hunting is discussed further.

Economic relations and capitalist agriculture

The massive expansion of settler capitalist agriculture during the 1840s increased the demand for labour, especially on the relatively labour intensive wool-production farms. Skilled labour was needed for building houses and shearing sheds, cultivating lands and herding sheep. Herds of 500 sheep typically needed 1 shepherd and wealthy farmers pastured up to 5,000 animals (Crais, 1992:153).
With the growth of commercial farming, the shortage of workers naturally grew as well. Between December and February workers were needed most as the sheep had to be clipped and wool transported to the market (ibid. 154). Africans started to live on the farms in greater numbers, and farmers gradually restricted the livestock owned by their tenants who used to graze fairly large herds of cattle on the farmers’ property and plant crops such as corn, sorghum and vegetables (ibid. 155).

The increasingly present British rural elite faced constant resistance from landless Xhosa and Khoikhoi peasants which challenged the changing social relations under capitalist farming. The vigorous independence of African labour tenants on wealthy capitalist farms worried both the colonial state and the capitalist farmers. Tenants were evicted and access to land for Africans to farm crops and feed their cattle diminished steadily (ibid. 156-7). The most disturbing forms of resistance to the settler farmers were livestock theft and “as always, the great disinclination to labour” (ibid. 157). With the arrival of British settlers the meanings of economic relations changed fundamentally: “there was little of the patriarchy which so pervaded social relations during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, where relations between master and servant involved complex (however imbalanced) exchanges of food, protection and military service”. So far, workers engaging with Boer farmers had understood the relation to be one of bonds of reciprocity and redistribution, and acknowledged the farm constituted a community (although there was an extreme imbalance of power of course). Thus Khoikhoi often preferred working for Dutch-speaking colonists, receiving larger rations but also being subjected to severe beatings, than for a British farmer who “spurned ties of reciprocity” (Crais, 1992:156). The rural British elite thus reduced the social content of economic relations with the workers they depended on through the “pursuit of social distance and separateness” (ibid. 155). The farm was therefore a “community of misunderstanding” where the issue of identity was played out in the place where capital and labour met each other (ibid. 154). Besides continuous balance-of-power battles on the settler farms, Africans to some extent managed to retain their independence in this period through agricultural production in places where they could still own or work land. They reduced the interdependencies
related to white agriculture and for a while managed to escape the established
outsiders configuration.

In the period 1840-1870 an independent African peasantry had emerged in
the capitalist agricultural market that was involved in a cash-based economy and
who disposed the surplus of their produce (Bundy, 1988:44). At the end of the
19th century Africans produced more wool in certain districts than European
farmers (Bundy, 1972). The discovery of minerals in the 1860s increased the
demand for cheap labour and the colonial government took various legislative
measures to compel Africans into wage labour (Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007: 3). This
contributed to the decline of the independent peasantry who were impoverished
by the shortage of land for an increasing number of people and stock (Bundy,
1972:378). The British extended colonial control to the annexed territories of the
‘native reserves’ Transkei and Ciskei, by introducing white magistrates and
headman that undermined the authority of the chiefs (Bundy, 1972; Ntsebeza,
2011b). This form of “indirect rule” worked with African intermediaries who
assured control, instead of direct land dispossession of Africans (Beinart &
Bundy, 1987:7). Cape colonial governance quite effectively undermined the
position of the peasants through a series of “Location Acts” that enabled the
removal of squatters from farms. An important function of the notorious 1913
Land Act, that demarcated 13 percent of South Africa’s surface for Africans and
the rest for exclusively white ownership, in the case of the Cape region, was to
transform squatters into labour tenants (ibid. 384). The “squatting” community
of African farmers in 1909 consisted probably of more than 40,000 people, and
by the 1930s was reduced to 7,000. Furthermore, only 74 out of 1,990 farms in
South Africa not occupied by whites (though they owned them) were located in
the Cape (1972:386). The overcrowded African reserves did not provide a
subsistence base for Africans who still depended on income from wage-labour in
the mines or white-owned farms. Since the extreme low wages were not enough
either, Africans were drawn in a system of labour migration, travelling regularly
from the Bantustans to the decentralised industries around them and to urban
areas to supplement their livelihood (see Hart 2006). Labour migration became a
key feature of the economy that drastically changed Africans’ perceptions of
rural life (ibid. 18-19). And a “lingering echo of an independent black peasantry”
resounds in the countryside of the Cape (Atkinson, 2007: 26).
Whereas labour tenancy and sharecropping relations persisted in the agricultural economy of Transvaal and Kwa-Zulu-Natal (Van Onselen, 1996), social relations on the Cape’s commercial farms have been shaped by slavery and labour migration from the “native reserves”. Slavery,

helped create a rural landowning class whose sense of itself, and whose relationship to the African countryside of the Cape was profoundly influenced by a discourse of mastery that linked white identity closely with the right to own the land, and assumed that ownership of land conferred on the owner the right to govern the lives all those who worked it (Du Toit, 2005: 13).

Slavery also shaped paternalistic relations between white farmers and black workers that regulated and legitimated “white power at farm level, and locked poor black households into highly authoritarian and deeply racialised relationships of servitude and dependence” (Du Toit, 2005: 14; Ross, 1995). Workers on the fruit and wine farms of the Western Cape depended on the farmer for the provision of housing and they were tied to the farm through the ‘tot’ system: payments in alcohol, more precisely cheap wine. Farm workers “began and ended their day with a ‘tot’ (a tin can of varying size) of crude wine supplied by the farmer” (Mager, 2004: 737). The ‘tot’ system contributed to the association of alcoholism with particular racial groups. Rehabilitation services under apartheid government were for example extended to coloureds and not to blacks which naturalised Africans as alcohol abusers. Cape coloureds living on farms were perceived as not capable of regulating their drinking behaviour which was marked as socially unacceptable (Mager, 2004). Alcohol abuse was linked to farm workers’ lack of morale instead of their chronic poverty and being trapped in paternalistic farm relations.

**Rural enclosures and the privatization of wildlife**

The power configuration in the Cape Colony was entrenched by the gradual enclosure of the farming districts through technological innovations and through privatization and commercialization of private wildlife (Van Sittert, 2002, 2005). Windmills and wire fencing appeared in the Karoo from the late 19th century facilitating the process of enclosure. On the farm the windmill improved access
to water and wire fences changed grazing patterns of domestic stock which in turn altered labour demands on the large sheep farms. Fences allowed higher stocking rates as the farmer could control his stock better in comparison to the shepherd-and-kraal system where sheep could die or disappear easily when herded to or from grazing areas. The enclosed camps for sheep made shepherds and white labour tenants (called bywoners) that often manned the outlying veeposte redundant. Labourers, tenants and sharecroppers were pushed into towns and cities. These developments occurred parallel to progress of land consolidation and ownership concentration in the Karoo (Archer, 2002-127). Enclosure in the Cape Colony was driven by closure of the frontier of the Eastern Cape “which heightened a series of problems internal to the settler pastoral economy in the region” (Van Sittert, 2002:97). Fencing enabled control and management of 1) increasing livestock numbers, 2) negative consequences of kraaling, 3) livestock diseases, 4) vermin, and 5) stock theft (ibid. 98). Moreover, the re-ordering and control of the landscape enabled by fencing was also integral to settler notions of ‘civilizing’ the landscape. Rural enclosures produced social relations that were depersonalised as society was now defined by relations between owners and non-owners of land (ibid. 118). Unsurprisingly, resistance from non owners sprung up everywhere; “wire was weighed down, twisted up and cut off and posts chopped down and pulled out to reassert the right of access and movement of people and animals across the new artificial vertical borders erected over an otherwise flat earth” (2002, 101).

Farm enclosures enabled early privatization and commercialization of wildlife that was driven by the Cape’s rural gentry during the final quarter of the 19th century. Initially, the British colonial government introduced Game Laws that attempted to entrench wild animals as public property accessible for urban sportsmen hunters, but these regulations were not effectively enforced beyond the fringes of Cape Town. Afrikaner landowners in the interior successfully refused to abide by the British rules and were exempted from hunting restrictions on their farms. In the countryside, wild animals remained “a staple of frontier commerce and transfrontier hunting as an engine of colonial expansion” (Van Sittert, 2005:273). In the Cape, the balance of power between town and countryside, “tilted distinctly in favour of the latter” (2005:272). Thus wildlife was incorporated in (and domesticated for) the market first through the
booming trade in ostrich feathers and later through commercial sports hunting. Public access to game was restricted to a vermin bounty to exterminate pest species. The state subsidies for hunting “vermin” species helped to curtail rural white poverty and depopulation. Contrary to regions beyond the Cape, wildlife transformed from *res nullius* into private property instead of public property like in the Kruger National Park. The catalyst for game conservation was hard-nosed economics rather than ideology. Nell (2003) asserts this economic driving force behind wildlife utilization and holds that during the second half of the 20th century the economic conditions for South African farmers worsened as the costs of farming increased whereas wool prices declined. Game ranching was believed to have smaller labour requirements that compensated for the increase in the costs of farm labour during this period (Nell, 2003: 101-2). The increasingly enclosed and large consolidated stock farms in arid and semi-arid areas were ideal for game farming which was perceived more profitable, economically and ecologically, than stock farming (Nell, 2003).

Besides the economic incentives for expanding wildlife farming on stock farms, this land use has been related to particular white ideologies concerning nature conservation and rural development. Histories of public enclosures demonstrate that cultural values of the establishers did play a role in the development of specific wildlife-ownership patterns in South Africa (Carruthers, 1989, 2003). Afrikaner and English-speaking whites formed a political alliance in nature conservation through the establishment of the Kruger National Park (Carruthers, 1989). By emphasizing its sentimental and cultural importance of the protection of wild species and nature to all whites, the foundation of the park legitimized resource exploitation through game viewing by tourists. Meanwhile, the enclosure also effectively enabled control over African populations in the region; either through their employment in the park, or because of increased inaccessibility to farmland and livelihood options for Africans living in the region. National Parks constitute “cultural landscapes”, complementary or contrasted to productive landscapes, that were invented to nurture settler values particularly entrenched in their attachment to land (2003:265). For black residents wildlife enclosures (public or private) have often been disruptive events displacing their communities and destroying their livelihoods. Such enclosures are perceived as “playgrounds for a privileged elite”
(Kepe et al., 2005:7) that effectively exclude black people. Consequently, the construction of private wilderness spaces are not unchallenged, in particular due to the presence of farm dwellers living on privately owned land, and generate contestations over land and land reform (Brooks et al., 2011).

In the Karoo the turn to wildlife farming became more widespread from the 1970s, especially on the large livestock farms that retained a number of antelopes for hunting purposes anyway. Across the road from the Rubidge farm a neighbouring farmer called Walter Smith switched from livestock to wildlife farming in the 1950s induced by “an early fascination with hunting and a trip to central Africa” (2003:386). Personal motivations as Walter Smith’s “fascination” with hunting were now coupled with an economic rationale to invest in wildlife which became perceived as a more efficient and environmentally beneficial land use in semi-arid districts (Dawn Nell in Beinart 2004: 386). The emergence of wildlife farming occurred simultaneously with the intensification of capital in South Africa’s agricultural economy, and set off an invisible great trek of farm dwellers for whom there was no longer a place on the farms.

**Farm worker redundancy and the agrarian question**

Since the 1970s the demand for cheap and unskilled labour decreased in the agricultural economy as a result of capital-intensive, mechanised production. The capital intensification on farms created a labour surplus on the white-owned commercial farms (Atkinson, 2007: 54) and hundreds of thousands of Africans have been evicted from the farms they lived and worked on (Nkuzi, 2005:94). After decades of law enforcements ensuring and controlling a cheap African labour force and strictly directing black mobilities towards agricultural labour, these same workers became redundant as soon as farmers required fewer, and more skilled, labour.

Besides capital intensification other forces have been identified that displaced farm workers from white-owned commercial farms since the 1970s (Murray, 1992; Ross, 1999). In the Free State more than a quarter of farm workers and their families were displaced from white-owned farms during the late 1980s until early 1990s (Murray, 1992; 1995: 10). Reasons were not only economic
difficulties for farmers, but also their fears for the consequences of South Africa’s political transition. Farmers expected new labour regulations to oblige them to offer more secure conditions of employment and higher wages for farm workers, and they anticipated by reducing the size of their work force (1995:10-11). In the Western Cape commercial farmers started re-organising their businesses to reduce the presence of workers on their properties (Du Toit & Ewert, 2002). A particularly significant event for farm dwellers is the transfer of land ownership. Displacement often occurs when farms change hands. In the Free State region, farmers who were forced to sell (due to debts) often sold their farms to local neighbours who incorporated the land, but evicted the people living on it since paternalistic responsibilities are not tied to property titles (Murray, 1995:11). The impact of land owners’ decisions on the lives of farm dwellers reveals the “double edge of the paternalistic relationship” faced by farm workers (Du Toit, 1993; Murray, 1995: 13). The paternalistic relations to some degree protect workers’ livelihood as long as they reside on the farm, but terminates the implicit paternalistic responsibilities of the farmer as soon as their ways part.

The extreme power imbalance and interdependencies were articulated in the answers of Free State ex-farm workers who were asked why they had left the farm. The responses all indicated that it was the farmer (‘the white man’) who had decided they should leave. Farmers argued to workers that they did not have money to employ them any longer; they told people they had to sell the farm; they dispelled a worker whose brother was accused of stirring up a fight amongst workers; one farmer forced a farm dweller to sell him his cattle and when the man refused he was told to leave; and another farmer said to a worker that he was redundant but the worker felt that it was because of his sickness (TB) that the farmer wanted to get rid of him (Murray, 1995:12-13). The ex-workers experienced losing their job and their home (1995:6-7) and loss or dispossession of livestock as well (1995:12-13). These findings resonate with Phumla’s story presented at the beginning of this chapter. Phumla remembered her family packing and unpacking their belongings to leave farms when owners left their properties. Phumla also explained she and her family would sometimes return to the same farm that they left which signals their dependency on agricultural employment in the region.
The transformations in South African agriculture and the predicaments for rural populations are interpreted differently by scholars of agrarian change. Cousins views South Africa’s agrarian question as an “agrarian question of the dispossessed” (2007:227-230). This interpretation is based on the legacies of land dispossession and forced labour formed structural relations of inequality that result in ongoing practices of exploitation and oppression in the countryside. The political implication of an “agrarian question of the dispossessed” is that sole redistribution of land will not be sufficient to redress for centuries of dispossession nor transform the rural economy in favour of the rural poor. Bernstein on the other hand suggests that the struggle over land is actually an “agrarian question over labour” since the demand for land is often driven by the desire to pursue a livelihood in absence of employment opportunities in the formal labour market (Bernstein, 2007:46-7). From this perspective the problem is not that people were dispossessed of land, but that capitalist agriculture is incapable of generating enough and secure employment for rural populations to make a living. Hart (2006:991) suggested that we “need to dis-articulate or de-link the land question from the agrarian question and from individual restitution claims, and to re-articulate it in terms of racialised dispossession as an ongoing process, along with the erosion of social security and the moral and material imperative for a social wage and secure livelihood”. Radical scholars of agrarian change argue that the problem with the way the agrarian question is addressed is that policies envision “greater industrial and non-agricultural employment growth, and diminished peasant demand for land, as well as ideologies which presume the ‘inefficiency’ of peasant production systems and livelihoods” (Moyo, 2007: 61). Agricultural transformation should focus on peasant modes of production and small-scale agriculture, in relation to African modes of social organization through kinship (Mafeje, 2003). This resonates with Polanyi’s insights that economic systems shape interdependencies in society and that market liberalism might damage the integrity of a social order working on principles of reciprocity organized through kinship systems (Polanyi, 1944, 1977). Mafeje urges African government to invest in small producers to contribute to poverty elimination, agricultural expansion, food security, and the reduction of rural unemployment (Mafeje, 2003: 28).
Contrary to investments in small-scale production South African government invested since the 1980s in economies of scale depending on land concentration that increased farm sizes and eliminated producers that lacked capital to follow this trend. The liberalized and competitive farming environment considerably reduced the number of white landowners, but hardly the amount of land still owned by white commercial farmers (Andrew et al., forthcoming). Andrew et al. mention that:

Private game farming provides a graphic example of this process of land consolidation, land use changes and restructuring the rural social landscape, all of which operate against expanding small agriculture and non-commercial food production acutely needed in poor areas of the countryside where many cannot afford prices set by large retail suppliers (p23).

Meanwhile the wildlife sector presents game farming as a solution to the agricultural crisis by providing skilled job opportunities and benefits from the rise in tourism, and notably high-end luxury tourists that are willing to pay exorbitant prices for their African wildlife experience in South Africa. Findings from a self-administered survey among private game reserves in the Eastern Cape claim that the reserves contribute to “social upliftment” of rural people in the area (Langholz & Kerley, 2006). The next section provides an overview of the post-apartheid reform policies that relate to the question of agrarian transformation in South Africa.

**Post-apartheid land and labour reform policies.**

Subsequent post-apartheid governments introduced postcolonial reform policies aimed at drastically altered the legal status and positions of actors in the commercial farming landscape. Land reform was given political priority to change the patterns of land ownership in the country through restitution, redistribution and tenure security legislation (Greenberg, 2010: vii-viii). The implementation of labour legislation had to modernise the paternalistic power relations on farms. Together, these reform policies have to shift the balance of powers in the countryside where land is not just an economic asset, but “crucial to what it means to be a citizen in South Africa” (Ntsebeza, 2011a: 295). Though the state actively proclaims the need to reform social relations in the country, its
economic developments have been characterized by neoliberal policy choices that reduced state intervention in the agricultural sector. This sector in particular experienced profound budget cuts, liberalization and deregulation since the early 1990s (Greenberg, 2010; Zyl et al., 2001). Post-apartheid reform policies often sit uneasy within the state’s neoliberal policy framework.

Post-apartheid land reform and tenure security

The postcolonial reform policies question the legitimacy of land ownership by white South African commercial farmers because they depart from the premise that South-African agriculture was developed through consistent dispossession and exploitation of black Africans. Reform policies seek to redress colonial and apartheid legacies of land dispossession and proletarization of the black population. Farm workers and dwellers have been promised access to land, livelihoods and social transformation. But many of the reform promises have been more symbolic than real (Greenberg, 2010).

Land reform in South Africa was initially premised on the idea of nationalizing land. This principle was outlined in the ANC Freedom Charter (1955) stating that ‘the land shall be shared among those who work it...and be re-divided amongst those who work it’ (Ntsebeza, 2007). The political negotiations of the early 1990s however resulted in a market-led land reform programme informed by a World Bank proposal to transfer 30% of agricultural land from white farmers to black South Africans within the first five years of democratic rule. The state would transfer ownership of land through redistribution (on a ‘willing buyer/willing seller’ basis) and restitution mechanisms and provide tenure security for people, including farm workers, living on commercial farms and in former bantustan areas (Hall, 2007). The reorganization of land ownership patterns should provide redress for centuries of land dispossession and forced labour during colonial and apartheid rule. Land reform should also contribute to the transformation of the economy and the reduction of poverty (Hall & Ntsebeza, 2007:1).

In 2011, only 7% of commercial farmland has been redistributed (Cousins & Hall, 2011). Critics have questioned the potential of market-led land reform to
enable both redress of historical injustices and economic development. They argue it contributes to increasing land prizes and disregards power relations on the land (Borras, 2003; Hall, 2007). Market-led land reform in South Africa means that the state buys land from white commercial farmers to redistribute commercial farming land (Ntsebeza, 2011a: 297). Only 1% of land was redistributed in 1999 and subsequent governments have moved the target forward in time. The slow pace of land reform and the ‘unproductive’ use of transferred land have received prominent media attention. Moreover, academic scholars have extensively discussed the failures of the land reform programme (Bradstock, 2006; Hall, 2007; Kepe et al., 2005; Lahiff, 2005; Ntsebeza, 2007). Inflated land prices (due to the willing-buyer/willing-seller mechanism), bureaucracy and institutional incapacity in the state have been indicated as reasons why the reform policies are not changing patterns of land ownership (Greenberg, 2010). On a more fundamental level the entrenchment of the property clause in South-Africa’s constitution is identified as major obstacle to the transfer of land ownership. Existing land holding patterns are supported through the legal protection of private property rights and they reinforce collective interests of landowners in the country. Vast differences exist between well-established commercial-farming organizations and the relatively weak civil society structures focusing on land and agrarian questions in the country (Ntsebeza, 2011a).

Redistribution and restitution reform procedures pose specific challenges to the land reform process. Restitution for example is complicated by the specific histories of dispossession that result in competing claims for the same piece of land (Walker et al., 2011). Restitution premises on the claim is that particular places belonged to particular people before they were forcibly removed through colonial and apartheid legislative measures beginning with the Native Land Act of 1913. In order to reclaim these spaces ‘communities’ have to ‘prove’ their historical attachment to the land and compete with others who claim belonging to the same place (Walker et al., 2011). One of the unintended consequences resulting from the way the land-claim process is designed seems to be a heightened ethnic awareness and competition over land. Ross argues that central to South-Africa’s history is ethnic competition linked to land alienation that has been carried into the present (Ross, 2004). Land claim dynamics in the Kat River
Valley in the Eastern Cape resulted in ethnic divisions reproduced by some Khoi and Xhosa descendants whose ethnic consciousness increased through the post-apartheid land reform programme. Two tendencies seem perpetuated in South-African history and present 1) conflict and competition between groups is defined in terms of ethnicity and race, 2) groups are not well-defined by themselves and “it is never quite certain to which any given individual belongs” (Ross, 2004:312).

The political rhetoric around land reform contributes to the tendency of ethnic stigmatization in relation to land ownership. Pressure from organised agriculture shelved the ANC’s Expropriation Bill in 2008 that would allow the state to expropriate farms in the national interest24. But after he won the 2009 elections ANC President Jacob Zuma signalled new commitment to rural development and land reform by reorganizing the departmental ministries accordingly (Ntsebeza, 2011a: 306). He formed the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR)25, currently directed by minister Gugile Nkwinti, that launched a Green Paper on land reform in 2011 presenting “an improved trajectory for land reform” (DRDLR, 2011: 5). The Expropriation Act was re-introduced through the Green Paper and the media reported critical publications towards foreign land ownership and game farming26. In its introduction and conclusion The Green Paper contains sweeping statements typed in bold letters like (DRDLR, 2011: 3):

We are in the mess we are today because of these two sets of qualities – political courage and will to make hard choices and decisions, and bureaucratic commitment, passion and aggression in pursuit of those political choices and decisions. We need them now to pull the country out of the mess.

25 Previously there was a Department of Land Affairs and a Department of Agriculture under one minister. The latter has been reformed into the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
Quotes from an old ANC hero, the first ANC president Langalibalele Dube, are employed to place the land question in the context of a colonial liberation struggle and emphasize its current urgency (DRDLR, 2011: 10):

It addresses the hunger and need for land by African people. The situation has not changed much since the 1930s, when the sentiment was expressed by Dr Dube. **We must change it now!**

This vigorous language has been employed extensively by the highly contentious leader of the ANC Youth League Julius Malema. During a national conference he addressed the problematic situation in the South Africa, emphasizing the continuation of white domination over blacks in the country:27:

As things stand, a few white people own 90% of South Africa's wealth and that the country belongs to all who live in it looks untrue. How does South Africa belong to all of us when the majority of our people do not own anything?

And then they face the possibility of being evicted from their land by white farmers everyday, who will, after evicting farm workers and refusing them burial space for their families, cry foul and play victim?

The ANC has for the past 17 years tried to transform the economy through Charters and BEE codes of good practice and if we are all honest, those efforts have failed dismally because those who own the means of production refuse to transfer wealth to the historically disadvantaged. The ANC has, for the past 17 years, tried to transfer land through the willing buyer-willing seller principle and approach and we all know that it has also failed dismally.

When we attained democracy and freedom in 1994, black people owned only 13% of the land and white people owned 87% of the land, mainly because of the 1913 land Act and the Bantustan Act of the apartheid government. The democratic government planned to redistribute only 30% of the land within the first 20 years of democracy, so that after 20 years of political freedom, black people would own 43% of the land.

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In 2011, less than 5% of South Africa's land has been redistributed. The indications are that, by 2014, we will still not have exceeded 5% land redistribution, which will be 20 years since the democratic dispensation. If we continue with this trend and pace of 5% transfer every 20 years, it means we would have redistributed only 25% of land in 100 years.

In other words, in 100 years time, the inequalities between black people and white people will still remain, and this will automatically lead to continued racism and economic subjugation of blacks by white people, like it happened under apartheid.

The current political rhetoric reinforces apartheid race categories in the discussion of transformation. The Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS, 2011) expressed in a commentary paper “great disappointment” with the policy text of the Draft Green Paper on Land Reform. They argued that the document does not answer key policy questions facing land reform and proposed that the Department starts engaging with stakeholders in order to produce a “sensible and coherent” policy document on land reform (2011: 11). One critical aspect of the land reform programme concerns tenure rights of farm workers which PLAAS commented on specifically (PLAAS, 2011: 8).

The Labour Tenant Act (LTA) of 1996 and the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA) of 1997 were passed to secure people’s rights of occupying and using land, prevent arbitrary evictions, and regulate the relations between owners and occupiers, or dwellers (Hall 2007:95). Tenure reform has been the most neglected aspect of the land reform programme (Kepe et al. 2005:7) and evaluated as weak and ineffective by NGOs reporting that farm dwellers are still being illegally evicted from land (Nkuzi 2005; AFRA 2003). The PLAAS researchers identified two major problems with ESTA. First, the claim that ESTA has been highly contentious and has been argued to have had significant unintended consequences such as the reduction of permanent and on-farm employment, pre-emptive evictions and the destruction of on-farm housing (PLAAS, 2011: 8). Secondly, ESTA legislation often “assumed farm workers’ problems as ‘land problems’ when their vulnerability stemmed more from the precarious and exploitative nature of their employment”. Furthermore, the implementation of ESTA stimulated antagonistic relations among workers and
farmers that had disastrous consequences for farm workers. Nkuzi reported that landowners become more skilled in using ESTA to their advantage (2005:15) and more black households have lost access to land through being evicted than have gained land through land reforms (2005:19).

The draft Tenure Security Bill introduced by government in 2010 (DRDLR, 2010) seeks to address the “loopholes” in the existing tenure security policies ESTA and LTA. It aims to prevent arbitrary evictions and create ‘harmonious’ relations between farmers and farm workers. The proposal to establish agri-villages has been received anxiously by commentators on the policy development. In the Mail and Guardian a reporter stated that “the Bill will, in the long term, achieve the separation of farm workers' labour related rights/obligations from those relating to residence on farm land”. PLAAS researcher Ruth Hall blogged in March 2011: “the Land Tenure Security Bill appears to deal largely not with how to secure people’s land tenure, but rather how to manage their resettlement off farms”. The idea of agri-villages is that farm dwellers facing eviction can move into the agri-village where the state provides land and housing for them, without giving ownership rights. People effectively become tenants of the state and remain available for casual or seasonal work on farms. This settlement idea corresponds to Agri-SA’s vision of the rural landscape where farm dwellers move off farm while comprising an available labour pool in the area. The shift in focus from tenure security to resettlement has caused protest from farm worker unions, land rights organizations and farmer’s representational bodies. Farmers however are, according to Hall, not necessarily against the new Tenure Bill, but generally object to the current political rhetoric around land reform. Moreover, existing legislation has worked out beneficially for them as ESTA provided ‘a detailed blueprint for how to legally evict workers (Pahle, 2011). Tenure reform policies,

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notably ESTA, has thus worsened labour relations and tenure security for farm
workers instead of securing them.

Labour Regulations and Unionisation in the agricultural sector

The post-apartheid reform policies separated questions of tenure and labour
rights though for farm workers these are intimately connected. “While labour
legislation is blind to the problems of tied housing, tenure legislation is blind to
its own adverse impacts on workers’ rights” (Pahle, 2011: 30). Though labour
legislation is discussed separately, it is important to recognize the connection to
tenure security issues for farm workers. Until the early 1990s farm workers were
excluded from the provisions of labour legislation and the protection of trade
unionism (Du Toit, 2005: 14). The post-apartheid South African state has
provided for progressive labour legislation although practices on the farms have
disabled implementation and enforcement. They resulted in unintended
consequences that placed farm workers in precarious situations.

Recently (August 2011) the explosive nature of farm relations was evidenced
by the release of a Human Rights Watch publication titled ‘Ripe With Abuse’ on
the conditions of farm workers on South-African wine and fruit farms in the
Western Cape (HRW, 2011). The report identified farm workers among the
most vulnerable people in South Africa because they earn the lowest wages, lack
access to facilities, work under tough conditions, are denied benefits to which
they are legally entitled, lack unionization, have insecure land tenure rights, are
subjected to eviction and displacement processes, “in some cases from the land
on which they were born” (2011:4). Farmers’ organizations like AGRI-SA lashed
out to the writers of the report accusing them of presenting subjective and
selective research findings. Soon after the release of the HRW report a

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(accessed 3 April 2012).
parliamentary meeting\(^{32}\) with stakeholders in rural development and land reform discussed the conditions of farm workers and dwellers on farms. On 19 March 2012 there was a follow-up meeting\(^{33}\) in which stakeholders agreed that there is a problem with the monitoring and implementation of legislation on commercial farms.

An important aspect of the new labour legislation applicable on commercial farms is that negotiations about the new regime were accomplished without significant involvement of a labour union (Theron, 2010: 19). In absence effective unionisation in the post-apartheid era farm workers depend on state provisions regulating labour relations in the agricultural sector (Pahle, 2011: 25). The 1991 Labour Relations Act (LRA) granted employees in the agricultural sector for the first time extensive organizational and collective bargaining rights and gave workers access to mediation through the services of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) in case of labour disputes between employer and employee (Pahle, 2011: 10-11). The CCMA institution is an important vehicle for farm workers to access justice, but in practice it is not very effective in protecting the rights of many farm workers (Pahle, 2011: 33).

Minimum wages in the agricultural sector have been promulgated from 2003 with Sectoral Determinations enabled through the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. Since 2006 the Minister of Labour set the minimum wage standards for the farm worker sector in Sectoral Determination 13 (before it was SD8). SD 13 applies to all farm workers in all farming activities, including domestic workers employed in a home on a farm and security guards employed to guard a farm or other premises where farming activities are conducted (DoL, 2006).


Table: minimum wages for farm workers as determined in SD13, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hourly rate</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hourly rate</th>
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<th>Hourly rate</th>
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<th>Hourly rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>R994,00</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>R1041,00</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>R1090,00</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>R1231,70</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R5,10</td>
<td></td>
<td>R5,34</td>
<td></td>
<td>R5,59</td>
<td></td>
<td>R6,31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: minimum wages are set for March to February the following year.
Note: initially there was a distinction between more and less economically developed areas, but this distinction disappeared in 2008. The table shows the highest wages (applicable in A areas) for the years 2006-7.
Note: minimum wage 2009 adapted from www.labour.gov.za

There is no specific mention of game-farm workers in SD 13, but workers associated with game lodges are mentioned in Sectoral Determination 14 which stipulates minimum wages (that are considerably higher than minimum wages in the farming sector) for the hospitality sector (DoL, 2007).

Scope of Application Sectoral Determination 14 (emphasis by author):

(2) Hospitality Sector means any commercial business or part of a commercial business in which employers and employees are associated for the purpose of carrying on or conducting one or more of the following activities for reward:

a) providing accommodation in a hotel, motel, inn, resort, game lodge, hostel, guest house, guest farm or bed and breakfast establishment, including short stay accommodation, self-catering, timeshares, camps, caravan parks;

b) restaurants, pubs, taverns, cafés, tearooms, coffee shops, fast food outlets, snack bars, industrial or commercial caterers, function caterers, contract caterers that prepare, serve or provide prepared food or liquid refreshments, other than drinks in sealed bottles or cans whether indoors or in the open air, for consumption on or off the premises; and

c) including all activities or operations incidental to or arising from any of the activities mentioned in paragraphs a) or b).
The determination further prescribes that it does not apply to employers and employees who are covered by another sectoral determination (DoL, 2007: Part A,3b). It is thus unclear whether farm workers on game farms (including domestic workers and security guards) are in principle farm workers or hospitality workers. Another difficulty in categorizing farm workers on game farms is the possible incongruence between the job titles of farm workers hired as ‘general farm worker’ while in practice they do all sorts of jobs including tracking, skinning or cleaning that are activities arising from providing accommodation in the game lodge. The minimum wages in SD 14 are higher than those of SD13.

Table: minimum wages for hospitality workers as determined in SD14, 2007

(R.p.h Rate per hour)

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<tr>
<td>&lt; 10 employees</td>
<td>R1480,00</td>
<td>R7,69</td>
<td>R1659,08</td>
<td>R8,51</td>
<td>R1843,23</td>
<td>R9,45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 10 employees</td>
<td>R1650,00</td>
<td>R8,46</td>
<td>R1849,65</td>
<td>R9,48</td>
<td>R2054,96</td>
<td>R10,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: minimum wages are set for July to June the following year. Annually the wage is set on the previous minimum wage + Consumer Price Index + 2%.
Note: SD 14 makes a distinction between minimum wages for employers with less or more than 10 employees. This is included in the table.

Research on farm worker wages from the Eastern Cape indicated that game farming (and dairy) is part of the ‘higher-paying sub-sectors’ whereas workers in the mohair sub-sector earned the lowest wages (together with pineapple sub-sector) (Klerck & Naidoo, 2011: 305). The findings from interviews and a survey of more than 600 farm workers suggest that “while minimum wages may alleviate some of the deprivations suffered by farm workers, their effect on ameliorating working conditions is by no means equivalent to a transformation of the underlying structures” (Klerck & Naidoo, 2011: 308) such as the
dependency on farmers for access to employment and housing. In focus group interviews farm workers described their working conditions and mentioned “non-compliance with labour laws, authoritarian management, unpaid overtime, offensive language and threats of violence” (Klerck & Naidoo, 2011: 303). This lead to the conclusion that labour relations on farms in the Eastern Cape continue to be governed by arbitrary farmers’ rules in the absence of farm worker mobilization or representation for collective bargaining or unionism.

The Department of Labour implements and enforces labour legislation through inspections on farms. Both the quantity and the quality of these inspections are a major concern to unionists and activists (Pahle, 2011: 19-20) who question the inspection procedures that require the presence of the farm owner as well as a farm worker representative during the inspection. Due to the asymmetric power relations on farms and farm workers’ fears for recrimination if inspections cause problems, the integrity of the procedure is considered highly problematic. Access to farms is also one of the major obstacles for unionists to mobilize farm workers in South Africa. Other impediments to recruit and unionise farm workers include paternalistic farm relations, the dispersal of farm workers which makes it costly to visit them, farm workers’ low subscription-paying ability and the increasing casualization and externalization of farm labour (Pahle, 2011: 17-23). Theron (2011) argues that South African workers increasingly rely on non-standard employment arrangements, for example through labour brokers, which places them outside the framework of the Labour Relations Act. In the farming sector the lack of organization among farm workers is a key problem as in the absence of collective bargaining arrangements:

Farm workers are not able to achieve the status of respected partners. Instead they are dependent on the largesse of the state. The paternalistic farmer is displaced by the paternalistic state (Theron, 2010: 20).

Unions themselves on the other hand have underestimated the adverse interplay of tenure and labour by thinking that a network of NGOs would provide advice and legal aid to evicted farm workers. By disregarding tenure rights, as well as casual workers, unions are failing to establish a collective farm community (Pahle, 2011: 30-31).
This thesis describes how the transformations in legislation have worked out in practice in the local context of Cradock’s commercial farming landscape, in particular on trophy-hunting farms.

The formation of power and belonging in Cradock

This section zooms in on the ways boundary-making processes, colonial confrontations, agrarian change and post-colonial reform policies shaped particular configurations of power in the commercial farming landscape of Cradock. Knowledge production on the history of the region has been dominated by accounts of settler’s struggles with the natural environment and their relations with the ‘natives’. Several famous white authors from the region have provided interesting, and arguably biased, impressions of life in the Karoo. Cradock-born (1918) author Guy Butler for example described in his autobiography ‘Karoo Morning’ what a stranger encountered on a farm during the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century:

A stranger on a Karoo farm suffers various handicaps, not least of which is the size of the establishment. In small stone or brick huts of various vintage, and frequently sited at some distance from each other, dwell the labourers and their families, as many as a dozen households with innumerable children. They are likely to consist of two main groups: Hottentots (Khoi-Khoi) with a greater or lesser mixture of white blood, the descendants of peoples who had been here long before the black or the white men arrived. They have lost their language and speak Afrikaans. They have lost their religion and are Christians of various shades. Their features are sharp and wizened, their hands small, their skins range from apricot through dusty yellow to leather brown. Their women are small boned and shrill voiced, and seldom put on weight... Then there are the heavier, handsomer blacks, whose families had arrived in the valley at various times since the Difaqane\textsuperscript{34} of the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Some of them still have links with relatives in the Transkei or Lesotho, and visit them...Amongst the Xhosa themselves there were clear distinctions between Tembu (Tambuki), Gaika and

\textsuperscript{34} Difaqane or Mfecane refers to a series of ‘tribal’ wars related to the rise of the Zulu military kingdom under Shaka during the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century. It changed the political formation in southeastern Africa and set in motion forced migrations of refugees.
other tribes. Most of them were Christians, but they clung to many old customs and believes. They still spoke Xhosa amongst themselves, but the day-to-day business of the farm was conducted in Afrikaans. Indeed, few farmers liked to be addressed in English by a black man: it upset them, signaling a mission background, education, attitudes and expectations which were not suited to their humble, unskilled status on the farms. Most farmers found it difficult to imagine – let alone accept - a black man outside the master-servant relationship. The lingua franca of the Karoo farm is Afrikaans to this day (Butler, 1977:91).

Butler’s description of the ‘natives’ as ethnically divided and ‘traditional’ informs us about the way white Karoo residents perceived and stigmatised Africans. A particular hierarchy of belonging is displayed among the farmers and the two categories of labourers present on the farm. The Khoi Khoi as “descendants of peoples who had been here long before the black or the white men arrived” are paradoxically depicted the “true” natives to the area that lost their language and constitute no challenge to the power of farmers, perhaps also because they have “white blood”. The portrayal of the black, physically “heavier”, people strongly suggests a potential threat to farmers’ dominance as they have not quite lost their language and ‘clung to many old customs and believes’. Moreover, ‘they’ came from other regions and remained ties to other places. In other words, the blacks did not really belong to the Karoo except for their place as unskilled labourer. In this excerpt Butler, who is of British descent, also presents a particular image of Karoo farmers as conservative characters shaped by Afrikaans language and culture that dominated farm life.

The excerpt from Butler’s ‘Karoo Morning’ exemplifies that available and selected sources to write an impression of the formation of power and belonging in Cradock demand critical reflection and interpretation of text. History making as biased process relates very much to contemporary developments in Cradock too. In 2009, Inxuba Yethemba municipality addressed the lack of knowledge on Cradock’s history and published a document titled ‘Cradock, Eastern Cape South Africa: Our history so far’ (IYM, 2009). In over a 100 pages it clearly seeks to insert the experiences and struggles of Cradock’s black population under colonial and apartheid rule. Narratives of (elderly) residents are captured in the text and Cradock’s political history emphasizes the struggle against apartheid.
This knowledge production is closely linked to the town’s tourism development objectives. The process is strongly driven by the local municipality and urban hospitality sector. Cradock’s history is reconstructed and used as marketing tool to lure tourists to visit the area:

The passing traveler may consider Cradock to be just another *platteland dorپ* (country town), somewhat larger than most, with an historic centre and magnificent church, but the traveler would be mistaken, for Cradock has an influence on the South African literary tradition and political history far out of proportion to the town’s size and location (IYM, 2009: 1).

Despite the prominent role of Cradock’s black residents in the anti-apartheid struggle the history of Cradock’s black location has been systematically neglected for a long time. Tetelman (1997) has constructed a history of Black Politics in Cradock (between 1948–85) that was useful for an interpretation of the place of farm workers in Cradock’s history.

*Settler farming and the formation of Cradock’s location*

The frontier wars sent thousands of African migrants into the Cradock district where they looked for economic opportunities on settler farms. Demographics changed radically in the province. Until 1856 white populations constituted the majority in most of the Eastern Cape districts, including Cradock, only Victoria East, Fort Beaufort and Queenstown inhabited African majorities. By 1865 however, every district had a black majority (Peires, 2011:50).

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35 The Department of Local Economic Development for example has two divisions that are perceived as potential growth sectors: agriculture and tourism. Source: Interviews with the manager (17 Nov 2009) and an agricultural extension officer (22 July 2009).

36 One might question the ‘benefits’ for residents of Lingelihle and Michausdal of these kinds of tourism developments. The hospitality sector is exclusively based in town and seems to have finally found a reason to show interest in local ‘black history’ as it suits their own aspirations to attract more visitors. Paradoxically, propertied and landed South-Africans now capitalise on struggle history instead of the people who struggled. On the other hand ‘black’ people’s aspirations and interests to capture their histories are also served by the focus on tourism as it opens up access to resources for history-making.
The Mfengu and Sotho-speaking Mantatee farm workers constitute possibly the first African migrant workers in South Africa (Beinart, 2003:59) who have worked on settler farms in the Eastern Cape. Specialist teams of Mantatee workers (name derived from chieftainess Manthatisi from Caledon river) constructed stone kraals and walls used to establish farm enclosures, also in the Graaff-Reinet area. They were a group of migrants escaping political turmoil in the highveld (ibid. 59). The Mfengu (also known as Fingo) were political refugees who fled the Zulu kingdom in the early 19th century (Bundy, 1988). Some formed alliances with the British settlers and received land as reward for siding with the colonists (ibid. 32-5), other migrated deeper into the interior and ended up as peasants or wage workers on settler farms.

Cradock’s location emerged during the 1830s as an informal non-white location consisting of squatter huts with few residents who supplemented their little income with livestock grazing on the commonages (Tetelman, 1997:21-28). By 1891 the location inhabited more than thousand Africans (amaBaca, amaGcaleka, amaMfengu, amaMpandomis, and amaThembu) and a couple of hundreds of colourds. Most Africans spoke Xhosa (except for some Sotho speakers) and Afrikaans as second language. Colourds generally spoke Afrikaans as their first language and Xhosa as their second (ibid. 21-2). In contrast to white-dominated town, facilities such as electricity and piped water in the location were underdeveloped and absent (ibid. 24). After the implementation of the Natives’ Land Act of 1913, Africans from the overflowing Ciskei and Transkei moved to Cradock in search of employment. Farm labourers also tried to enter the location, often through relatives, looking for educational opportunities and economic opportunities but most location residents were poverty stricken (ibid. 26-7).

An itinerant sheep-shearing community emerged in the Karoo commercial farming landscape. They provided seasonal labour as sheep shearers during the expansion of wool production (De Jongh, 2002). These karretjie people are descendants of the Khoi Khoi and San people who inhabited the Karoo for centuries before the intrusion of settlers and colonialists. Despite numerous pass and vagrancy laws in the Cape farmers battled to keep indigenous labourers on their farm and “coined the pejorative term los Hotnot (loose Hottentot) to condemn those who refused to become tied down and continued to trek from
one farm to another in search of intermittent employment” (2002:448). This problem was partly resolved in the course of the 19th century with the erection of wire fences mentioned before. Mostly farmers used their own workers to fence the farm, some used specialised contractors (Van Sittert, 2002:100). This made full-time shepherds redundant to some extent and labourers who left farms created a wandering group of itinerant sheep shearers. They used donkey carts to travel from farm to farm when shearers were needed and became known as karretjiemense (the people with carts) from the start of the 20th century. The constant presence in the Karoo of these mobile locals enabled them to build beneficial relationships with some landowners to whom they returned season after season. Sometimes they were able to negotiate better payments or other forms of assistance from farmers whom they knew (2002:449). Nowadays karretjiemense are “people who find themselves effectively strangers in the land, confined to the road verges, debarred from private property, subject to insult and humiliation, and forced to trek in search of a meagre sustenance” (2002:459). Their nomadic presence in the Karoo under conditions of dire poverty represents their claim to the land and their local belonging. Karretjie people are not merely strangers in the land; they are strangers in what should be their own land. Nevertheless, such claims to land are highly symbolic and have not materialized in real access to land (De Jongh, 2002).

The proximity of the Transkei influenced the occurrence of resident labour on settler farms (Bouch, 1997:97). By the end of the 19th century labour relations were firmly entrenched on the dominantly wool and dairy farms. In Cathcart seasonal workers from the surrounding ‘homelands’ supplied the necessary labourers for the farms that by then already started mechanising and fencing; processes that reduced the demand for labour altogether. In Nieu Bethesda, a small rural town west of Cradock towards Graaff-Reinet, there was constant movement of farm labourers (Sandell, 1997). Farm workers moved over the farms depending on the best opportunities for employment. And when the Native Land Act of 1913 was implemented Africans started adopting Afrikaans surnames to be classified ‘coloured’ which lifted their status in the now institutionalised racial hierarchy (1997:74-76). In the Karoo farm workers have been reported to frequently move between farms in the district, constantly in search for better wages and working conditions.
In Cradock, English-speaking whites have always had to form alliances with Afrikaans-speaking whites that dominated politics through the Afrikaner bond (Butler, 1987:83). Afrikaners constituted the numerical majority among white residents, but the development of its pastoralist economy and its increased commerce at the beginning of the 19th century is attributed to the British who introduced Merino sheep and Angora goat farming. The town of Cradock, as other Eastern Cape frontier towns, became a farming service centre intimately linked to the agricultural production on the surrounding farms (Butler, 1987:19; Tetelman, 1997:19). Through a railway line finished in 1882 Cradock was economically linked to Port Elizabeth that controlled the wool trade due to its “superior geographical position relative to both wool-producing districts’ and to the Kimberly diamond fields” (Peires, 2011:53). This powerful economic Port Elizabeth/Midlands route was later marginalized with the completion of the Fort Beaufort West railway to Cape Town. By 1885 Cape Town had regained its dominance as port and trading centre. With the discovery of gold one year later Port Elizabeth disappeared to the background in South Africa’s economic powerhouse, ‘a lowly status from which it has never recovered’ (Peires, 2011:55). Cradock’s development stagnated with the absence of industry and only minor commerce serving the needs of the farmers (Butler, 1987:83).

English speakers formed the commercial elite and determined the town’s architecture with straight lined streets, Victorian-styled houses along the river and a church that matched Trafalgar Square’s St. Martins-in-the-Field. From its inception the provincial town served two white communities with their own language and their own newspapers. There was the English-language paper ‘The Midland News’ and the Afrikaans-language paper ‘De Middelandsche Afrikaander’, later renamed ‘Die Afrikaner’ (Tetelman, 1997:20)37. It was in fact Guy Butler’s grandfather John Butler who realized his dream of starting a daily-newspaper when in 1892 the first issue of The Midland News and Karoo Farmer

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37 Currently there are still two newspapers published by (and for) Cradock’s white residents, but they both seemed to have adopted a dual-language policy. They are called ‘Midland Nuus-News’ and ‘Cradock Courant: Mondstuk van die Oos-Kaap Middellande – Mouthpiece of the East Cape Midlands’.
appeared in Cradock (Butler, 1977:22). John’s disapproval of imperialist acts and his articulation of this through editorial comments in the paper not only caused havoc among Cradock citizens, it apparently irritated Mr. Cecil John Rhodes himself, who allegedly tried to buy the newspaper through a local attorney named Mr. Alfred Metcalf who did John a “fix-your-own-price” offer. Despite constant financial struggle, John Butler proudly declined the offer by which he undermined one of Rhodes’ cynical believes that “every man has his price” (ibid. 23). Well, clearly not in the case of the principled Cradock-based Butler. Another interesting anecdote related to Cradock’s British-Afrikaner sensitivities during John’ “pro-boer” publications is the support he received from a “certain magistrate” who was disliked by farmers for always first asking men who appeared in court for stock theft: “What wages do you get?” Butler’s memoirs indicate that there were ideological differences among whites in Cradock reflecting tensions in the social configuration.

Coupled with the growth of the settler agriculture was the emergence of banks, shops and professional businesses in Cradock at the start of the 20th century. In 1921, the Cradock population consisted of 3,275 whites, almost 1,759 Africans and 1,668 colourds, and 114 Asians (Butler, 1987:82). Historian Jeffrey Butler, a younger brother of Guy Butler, wrote that “in spite of [some] spatial intermixture in the municipal area and the location, residents of Cradock engaged in spontaneous segregation of English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking whites from each other, of Africans from colored people, of Asians from everybody else” (Butler, 1987:83). Segregation was manifested in few crosscutting associations and friendships, and non-existent crosscutting institutions (ibid.). An exception was the establishment of a dispensary regulated by a multiracial committee in 1927 that in 1929 changed its name to ‘Joint Council of Europeans and Non-Europeans’, affiliated to the Institute of Race Relations (Butler, 1987:85). Afrikaners and farmers appeared to be absent actors in the joint council that was founded on the assumptions of dominant white society and operated in a paternalistic framework seeking to “help towards the development of non-European races” according to its constitution (ibid. 88). Butler contributes the demise of the council during the 1930s partly to the white participants who were almost entirely English-born and not rooted or influential in the local community (ibid. 95). The council consisted of a liberalist Christian
group that took a defensive and conservative stance instead of an activist one that would have been able to bring about change and support Africans like the Anglican Reverend JA. Calata who believed cooperation with whites would improve the situation for Africans (ibid. 96-7).

The Midland News reported in 1929 how Calata assisted a group of farm workers and sheep shearer who wanted land in the Fish River Valley. They had successfully requested to buy some land from a farmer in the Mortimer area to great distress of other farmers who attacked the scheme and immediately set up a committee to interrogate the matter. The Midland News reported on the outcome that “there is no further cause for concern in this matter”. According to Butler there is no record of how the joint council members felt about the case, except Calata mentioning it in a council meeting (Butler, 1987:91-2). The example however indicates the sensitivity around land ownership in the region and Calata’s involvement through the council with the surrounding farming community.

Similar sentiments in this period are reported in a study into Eastern Cape wool farmers in Cathcart, another Eastern Cape “border” area next to the original Queenstown district (Bouch, 1997). The English-speaking farming community mobilized in 1936 against a proposal that the state (associated with rising Afrikaner dominance) would buy land for Africans, they stressed that “sheep farming areas were unsuitable for African farming” (ibid. 105-6). Such racial and authoritarian attitudes were prevalent in the farmer’s world where state intervention and regulation was perceived to undermine the knowledge of farmers. Farmers themselves had established farmers’ associations and wool cooperations and organized the wool industry towards the state’s desired export orientation (ibid. 103). And “just as farmers” considered themselves the best judges of how their wool should be marketed, so they saw themselves as the best judges of what their labourers should be satisfied with’ (ibid. 104). Farmers neglected the perception of labourers and praised their own practices. Bouch describes the farming community in Cathcart as “a community conditioned to an ethos of prescriptive control over its human and physical environment and with an underlying suspicion of change” (1997:113). Considering the resistance Reverend Calata faced when dealing with farmers, it is likely that such attitudes existed among the Cradock farmers as well.
Halfway the 20th century the balance of power between Afrikaner and English whites in Cradock changed dramatically, mirroring national trends instigated by the victory of the Nationalist Party that won the 1948 elections (Tetelman, 1997). This prelude to the apartheid era created space for Afrikaner political and cultural domination in Cradock’s social institutions like school committees and rugby clubs. Afrikaners rapidly replaced English-speakers in administrative functions at the police the railway services. Afrikaner farmers were able to increase the size of their farms through the availability of capital from a government favourable to them. By 1950, Afrikaners dominated local agriculture and business (Tetelman, 99). Tetelman mentions that “Afrikaner farmers in the district also profited from the Nationalist victory. Through the ‘Volkskas’ Bank and a set of new government programmes, Afrikaner farmers increased the size of their farms” (1997:98). In the following paragraph it is suggested that farm labourers were linked to organized structures in town during the political struggle against white dominance though the main image from that period is that it was very hard for urban residents or activists to connect to the countryside.

Political struggle and the farms

The municipality’s attitude towards mobility control of African farm labourers changed drastically at the end of the 1940s. Farmers had always pressed for influx control measures to prevent African labourers from moving to town, and the National Party government supported their wishes. The municipality targeted African squatters through non delivery of sanitation facilities and destruction of people’s shacks on the outskirts of town (Tetelman, 102). Reverend Calata, concerned with the situation in the African location, urged Cradock’s farmers in 1950 to do something about the “horrific conditions facing Cradock’s African farm labourers” (Tetelman, 103). Calata’s consultative politics failed dramatically and farm worker conditions remained dreadful. Tetelman reports that as a result “as the cold winter whipped over the Karoo, a deep chill had also descended over relations between Cradock’s Africans and whites” (104). This is the period Phumla was born.

F: When were you born in Cradock, what year?
L: Ooeeoe, that I have completely forgotten! Which year? That is a very long time ago! Back then it was still Willie, do you know of Willie? It was the time that Cradock was still under Willie38…. If I still had my boekie I could look in it and tell you what age I am and what day I was born and what year, but this is a long time ago, and I lost my boekie.

‘Boekie’ refers to the notorious pass books Africans had to under the pass laws that were designed to segregate the population and severely limited the movements of non-white people. Black people had to produce their pass whenever they left a designated black area or when any white person asked for it. Willie Lombard was Cradock’s location superintendent in the mid 1950s. “A Nationalist supporter, Lombard bemoaned the inadequate equipment and lack of personnel to control the location, as well as corrupt and incompetent izibonda (location constables)” (Tetelman, 1997:135). Lombard was also the first registration officer of Cradock’s local labour bureau that began operating in 1954 (ibid. 136-7). The local “labour bureaux” were established by the Native Affairs Department (NAD) in agricultural areas to address the labour problems of white farmers and restrict the movement of farm labourers to towns. Kooy (in Evans, 2010:191-192) however reported that during the 1970s in the Karoo farmers rarely required the services of the labour bureaux, as they filled their labour requirements through information networks of farm worker families that were constantly present in the district. Though workers often protested with their feet they stayed in the district for generations and constituted a constant pool of available (cheap) labour. The system of influx control measures and pass laws severely restricted the mobility of Africans and gave the Apartheid state power to control the distribution and allocation of African labour (Ross, 1999; Terreblanche, 2002). In Cradock the influx regulations proved hard to implement. Farm workers, being expelled from the farms, entered Lingelihle and state attempts to banish them failed for numerous reasons. One reason being the overcrowding of the ‘Bantustans’ that made deportation of Cradock residents

38 Interview Phumla 5 June 2009 (my translation from Afrikaans).
impossible, Bantustan officials did not accept the influx violators (Tetelman, 1997:183).

During the 1950s Cradock’s ANC branch started growing with support from working-class Africans. Some of these men had been politicized as migrant workers and joined the ANC while working in the mines (Tetelman, 1997:107). Mlanjeni Hobana, for example, returned to Cradock determined to challenge the state (ibid. 107). Hobana being the son of farm labourers and the concerns of Reverend Calata with the conditions of farm workers indicate that there were linkages between town and the farms. The ‘Congress Choir’ gave concerts in the location and the profits were allocated to causes such as financial support for funerals of farm labourers (ibid. 108). From Tetelman’s thesis it appears that Calata also conducted church services on farms, and that he was refused to do so when farmers felt threatened by Calata taking part in protests against the entrenchment of apartheid laws (Tetelman, 1997:121). Outraged, one farmer closed the Tarka Bridge School on his property and another school on a farm whose owner was a known supporter of the Nationalist Party, closed soon after. The farmer felt that Calata was organizing their labourers against them. Calata also investigated black farm labour abuses by farmers. He ordered the arrest of a farmer who killed a woman picking a prickly pear and he arranged a lawyer for a farm worker who was suspected of killing his employer, but in court the farmer’s own son was eventually convicted for the murder. Some Anglican farm labourers were punished for Calata’s activism through farmers who dismissed them (ibid. 122). Later, also Dutch Reformed Church farmers became agitated by Calata who feared more closures of farm schools (ibid. 129). The happenings in Lingelihle to some extent seem to have influenced attitudes on the surrounding farms, and the situation on the farms seems to have activated people in town. During this time the ANC Youth League emerged in Cradock and another political leader arose who was born on a farm; Msuthu Sonkwala (Tetelman, 1997:130). Both ANC organizers and its youth league members had difficulty though to organize political protest outside of the location. Tetelman explains that due to fear for police and farmers there were “problems organizing the countryside, as farmers exerted tight control over their labourers” (ibid. 134). Despite the oppressive climate on the farms, some organizers managed to gain access through the church choir.
The municipality’s proposal, following the 1950 Group Areas Act, to remove Africans to a new location (with a “buffer” between them and other racially-classified residential areas) and the total separation of so-called blacks’ and colourds, was the most explosive contestation of the 1950s. Even R. R. Collett, an English-speaking farmer, opposed the relocation stressing that it would “undermine” the Christianity of Africans and “expose the hypocrisy of whites” (ibid. 145). Resistance (boycotts that affected whites financially) was crushed by the Nationalists and by the late 1960s the apartheid state proved confident enough to relocate the African residents to their new township ‘Lingelihle’ in 1964. The architecture of this site was aimed at “total control” through monotonous straight-lined streets that allowed easy surveillance (ibid. 179). The colourds were removed to “their” new township in the early 70s; it was called ‘Michausdal’. The two new locations were separated by a national road. Residents in the township were also deprived of livestock ownership by increasing stock fees, diminishing grazing lands and most residents sold their animals (ibid. 181). This is an example of how racial and spatial constructions were entrenched at the local level. The removals had very negative implications for the social relations among Colourds and Africans. Multiple language use became less necessary with Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers living apart and customary practices weakened as established networks were ruptured (ibid. 194-6). Especially older Africans worried about the way lobola and circumcision practices were affected by their deprived situation. This was also experienced in other Karoo villages like Nieu Bethesda were apartheid heightened awareness of ethnic identities in Nieu Bethesda and “very little Xhosa culture remained” (Sandell, 1997:121). Again, ethnic boundaries became more salient during the shift in power balances in local figurations.

Struggle legacies

Cradock residents, in particular the black population, consider Cradock an ANC stronghold that effectively resisted the apartheid regime on local, regional and even national level. Sandell reported that one of her informants, Dora, from Nieu-Bethesda became aware of political issues during her stay in Cradock where political awareness was well developed among the black population (1997:146).
The losses of the struggle were great and in particular the death of the ‘Cradock Four’ in 1985 is remembered as one of the major tragedies during the heydays of the struggle. The lives and political activities of the teacher Matthew Goniwe and his comrade Fort Calata received much attention, and so has their death. The murder of four men from Lingelihle: Goniwe, Calata, Mkhonto and Mhlauli, the ‘Cradock Four’, inspired lawyer Christopher Nicholson to write a book about the murder case (2004) and several scholars selected this event to address questions of politics or justice in South Africa (see Catsam, 2005; Pillay, 2011; Tetelman, 1997). The graves of the Cradock Four have a prominent place at Lingelihle’s graveyard and the names of the comrades still resonate in the mouths and memories of Lingelihle’s residents today. In town, tucked away among municipal offices, the ‘Cradock Four Gallery’ displays the history of the anti-apartheid struggle in Lingelihle. A ‘Cradock Four’ documentary was released for national and international audiences in 2010. In 2008 the construction of a large ‘Cradock Four’ memorial site mainly consisting of four giant pillars representing the four men, was visibly placed on top of a hill in Lingelihle. Various signs were placed throughout town in 2009 to direct tourists to the memorial sites and exhibitions related to ‘The Cradock Four’. There is also an annual Matthew Goniwe Memorial Lecture held at the Port Elizabeth Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University which is attended by Cradock residents partly through efforts by the local ANC to organize transport and accommodation. In sum, the urban struggle, represented through the memory of the ‘Cradock Four’, against the oppressive and violent apartheid regime has received attention from citizens, tourists, businessmen, politicians, researchers, artists and so on.

The place of farm workers in this period remains somewhat unclear. Their ties to the ANC have been disrupted by their isolation on the commercial farms and their paternalistic relations with farmers.

**Emerging established and outsiders configurations in the Karoo**

This chapter provided a description of a history of mobility patterns in the commercial farming landscape around the Inxuba River, and the emergence of several established and outsiders dynamics in the area. The Cradock region is a borderland where for centuries contestations over land and labour shifted the
balance of powers between settlers and displaced inhabitants of the land. Racial
categories and spatial engineering were crucial aspects in this process.
Paradoxically, white commercial farmers have positioned themselves successfully
as established landowning class with a particular claim to land and ‘nativeness’ in
the area. This process was supported by colonial state formation and the
institutionalization of apartheid that firmly entrenched their established position.
Indigenous peoples were subjected to a ‘process of outsidering’ legitimized by
the ‘civilized’ status of the self-proclaimed established. During the colonialization
process Afrikaner and British settlers fought several wars over access to land,
game and independence which produced a particular established and outsider
dynamic characterized by ethnic stereotypes and hostile sentiments that are still
felt today. In the Cradock region the balance of power between British and Boer
has shifted considerably throughout colonial history. Africans resisted colonial
occupation and attempted to reduce the interdependencies with colonists by
farming independently, but eventually their lives were increasingly shaped by a
system labour migration as they were forced to become part of the colonial
figuration. Africans have consistently been restricted in their mobilities and
gradually pushed in outsider positions as wage workers tied up in paternalistic
farm relations. Agrarian transformation in the second half of the 20th century
occurred simultaneously with the conversion of the first livestock farms to
wildlife farming in the Karoo. In the Cradock area it is mainly descendants of
British settlers that have been at the forefront of converting commercial farms
into trophy hunting businesses. Capital intensification, liberalization and
deregulation in the agrarian sector made many farm labourers redundant and
sent them on an unpredictable journey to find other places to establish their
homes and livelihoods. In this chapter I shaped the contours of the beginning of
the Invisible Great Trek.

The introduction of a land reform programme and labour laws by subsequent
post-apartheid governments aims to shift the balance of power in favour of farm
dwellers. Since then white commercial farmers experience their place on the land
as insecure and under threat. The next chapter presents farm conversion
processes in the light of farmers’ responses to processes of agricultural
transformation and contemporary political transformations discourses.