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The Griqua conundrum: political and socio-cultural identity in the Northern Cape, South Africa

Waldman, Pearl Linda

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With historical hindsight, it is possible to see how relations between the missionaries and the Griqua *Kapteins* were mutually beneficial. Missionaries' actions did have crucial consequences for the development of the Griqua states during the following two decades (Legassick, 1969: 436) and the Griqua *Kapteins'* activities did influence the spread of Christianity – although not always in ways favoured by the missionaries.[27] Nonetheless, the Griqua, wishing to retain strong links with the Cape Colony and wanting to expand their domination over the Northern frontier, did seek the missionaries' assistance (Chidester, 1992: 61) and Christianity, backed by guns and missionaries, was used in an attempt to build and strengthen the Griqua state and to extend control over Khoisan and Sotho-Tswana people in the surrounding area (Elbourne and Ross, 1997: 40; Legassick, 1969: 449; Kurtz, 1988: 44).

The first treaty between the Colonial authorities and an indigenous leader was signed in 1834. Waterboer and Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the Governor of the Cape, agreed that Waterboer would safeguard the northern border, send back defectors, assist where possible and predict future threats to the Colony. In return, Waterboer received payment (£100 per annum), weapons, ammunition and a financial contribution towards the mission school. Waterboer was now formally recognised as a 'friend and ally'.[28] The agreement reinforced Griqua authority: Waterboer's standing in Griqualand West was bolstered and, as a result, he created alliances with many Sotho-Tswana Chiefs. Colonial presence in Griquatown was also formalised as Peter Wright was appointed Government Agent (Legassick, 1969: 496 - 497)

Having secured colonial support, Griqua cultural brokers advocated Christianity and mobilised followers. Having achieved a certain success, they then sought independence from the missionaries who had trained them to impart the Christian message. The successes of the 1830s thus presaged the end of the mission's political power. During the previous decades, many missionaries had utilised Khoikhoi as evangelists and religious brokers between Europeans and other people (Elbourne and Ross, 1997:35; Legassick, 1969: 222; Schoeman, 1997: 16). Griqua people, having

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acquired considerable familiarity with the Christian religion, now asserted that they possessed Christian spiritual power and that the missionaries were no longer necessary. They also attempted to use Christianity to expand their monopoly over the area as Griqua evangelists journeyed to, and attempted to convert, the Sotho-Tswana. These evangelists argued for religious and political independence of their Griqua people. Although such plans had to be abandoned in the early 1840s when Sotho-Tswana communities strongly resisted being subjected to a Griqua and Christian rule (Chidester, 1992: 63; Legassick, 1969: 547), Griqua identity has remained strongly Christian which has provided an important source of status and esteem to persons (explored in Chapter Five).

Despite the abortive attempt to subject Griquatown's neighbours to Griqua and Christian rule, things in Griquatown - and for the Griqua monopoly - were not going well:

> John Philip's tour of 1842 was a last unavailing attempt to repair the tattered fabric of his vision for Transorangia. Already Griqua hegemony was challenged from three directions: by Sotho-Tswana groups themselves, by a broad coalition of missionaries, and by the farmers of the Great Trek, who had passed through the Philipolis territory to Winburg and Natal, and who returned in the early 1840's to begin consolidating a white-ruled state in Transorangia (Legassick, 1969: 584).

By 1847 Griquatown was much reduced and agriculture became increasingly unprofitable. Some individuals attempted to return to – or to expand upon existing - hunting and trading opportunities. As the game herds were rapidly depleted, however, this period also marked the end of the wandering lifestyle people had retreated to and had used so successfully in the early 1800s. In addition, as 'their consciousness of themselves as a people, and with it their dignity and their pride, eroded: many, classically, drowned their troubles in drink' (Legassick, 1969: 584, 614). Furthermore, Waterboer was getting old and found himself unable to impose his authority as effectively as before (Legassick, 1969: 615). Given his increasingly weakened Griqua state, Waterboer overlooked Cornelius Kok II's sale of land to white farmers. These processes enabled the Colonial Government to recognise that the Griqua polity was increasingly moribund and, when Waterboer died in 1852 and was succeeded by his son Nicolaas Waterboer, it did not renew the 1834 treaty (Kurtz, 1988: 65).

In a final attempt to resurrect Griqua hegemony and to resist subordination to white control, Nicolaas Waterboer appointed David Arnot as his agent and representative in 1853 (Kurtz, 1988: 65). Arnot, following the long-established pattern, requested

Woodhouse, the British High Commissioner, to grant protection to the Griqua state and proposed the establishment of the Albania settlement.

The years 1820 – 1853, overall, were troubled and turbulent years for the Griqua polity. Social upheaval characterised Waterboer's reign as Griqua *Kaptein*. The period was also marked by mission attempts to entrench their power using Griquatown as a base. Such plans were at times supported, and at times undermined, by the various Griqua leaders' attempts to establish their own autonomy. Griqua leaders' attempts to establish independence, and their accompanying machinations, occurred rather ironically at the expense of the leaders themselves and the wider Griqua polity. As indicated in the following section, the result – prefaced perhaps in the frequent and opportunistic signing of treaties between Colonial authorities and Griqua leaders – was the intrusion of a strong British Colonial presence into Griqualand West; an event made possible by the undermining of both the Griqua polities and the missionaries.

THE ALBANIA SETTLEMENT, GRIQUALAND WEST

As evidenced by the conflicts between Waterboer and other Griqua *Kapteins* in Griqualand West, land was becoming an increasingly scarce commodity. The following decade was characterised by conflicts over occupation and ownership of land. During the late 1860s, Nicolaas Waterboer clashed with hostile trespassers who failed to recognise his authority and encroached upon his lands (Kurtz, 1988: 127). Searching to protect his failing empire, he employed the services of David Arnot who was supportive of the Griqua cause (Kurtz, 1988: 70). Arnot devised the Albania scheme in which white settlers, enticed from the Eastern Cape's Albany to Griqualand West, would be provided with agricultural land by Waterboer and would form a barrier between Waterboer's Griquas and the Boers.[29] Although this was designed to prevent further Boer invasion, it was paradoxical that settlement by non-Griqua people was necessary to prevent trespassing and invasions of Griqua land (Kurtz, 1988: 73). Furthermore, despite the intention that the settlers' presence would safeguard Griqua lands, many Griqua farmers – who had invested labour, time and money in improvements to their property – were removed from Albania in preparation for the settlers. By 1868 all the farms south of the Vetberg line had been leased to Albania settlers. As Waterboer was not able to evict the Boers who had occupied the land north

[29] Arnot had sought to discuss boundaries with Bloem, the President of the Orange Free State, in 1862. This was, however, unsuccessful as neither Waterboer nor Bloem would comprise. Waterboer recognised the Ramah-David's Graf-Platberg line and Bloem held fast that the Orange Free State owned the land as far as the 1855 Vetberg line. Because of this, Arnot recommended the Albanian settlement on the undisputed land south of the Vetburg line (Kurtz, 1988: 72).

of the Vetberg line[30], he and Arnot decided to temporarily overlook their claim to that land (Arnot and Orpen, 1875: 100). This decision was perhaps prescient because although the Albania scheme was designed to protect Griqua land, it was the beginning of a process of land alienation from which the Griqua have not, till the present, recovered.

In addition to the Albania scheme, Arnot sought – according to what was now a long-established Griqua tradition – to gain Colonial protection of Griqua land through British annexation. Colonial authorities were not, however, especially interested until Arnot tempted Southey, the Cape Colonial Secretary, with the promise of diamonds which, by 1868, many Griqua were finding and selling. Annexation was supported by the Albania settlers who were perturbed by the constant wrangling over borders[31] and unhappy with Arnot over the poorly-planned distribution of farms. Waterboer's *Raad* was similarly perturbed by the constant friction and problems and they suggested that they should rid themselves of these difficulties by selling to the Orange Free State.

Clearly things were very bad in Griqualand West and, in 1870, Waterboer again requested annexation as, he said, he could no longer provide adequate government or guarantee protection of persons or property (Kurtz, 1988: 140). The settlers, unable to resolve the differences between themselves and Arnot and incapable of determining whether they were subject to Griqua or Colonial authority, began to evacuate Albania. To make matters worse the LMS, long-time supporter of Nicolaas Waterboer's father, was itself under financial pressure and was no longer able to support the Griquas against encroachment and dispossession. The decision of the LMS to retract Griquatown's independent mission status and to reduce the number of missionaries in residence, further suggests that the missionaries were no longer prepared to assist in political and administrative tasks of government (Kurtz, 1988: 116 - 117).

Thus far this discussion has focussed on Griqualand West. The course of Griqua history, however, was not limited to only the west of the country. Therefore, before discussing annexation in Griqua territory - which has been identified as the final demise of the Griqua nation - it is necessary to turn to events in Philipolis and Nomansland during the nineteenth century.

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[30] The Orange Free State supported their occupation of this land and argued that the British Resident of the Orange River Sovereignty, Major Warden, had granted Boers access to this land (Kurtz, 1988: 112).

[31] Waterboer used the treaties of 1834, 1838 and 1842 to demonstrate his claim to the Campbell lands and to argue that he was *Kaptein* over the whole area of dispute. He argued that the 1868 deed of sale, which the Orange Free State used to support their claim to the area, was invalid.

THE MOVE TO PHILIPOLIS

Adam Kok II had discarded his staff of office and abandoned Griquatown after the Hartenaar rebellion in 1815. He was subsequently recognised as the leader of a group of *Bergenaars* who had left Griquatown in protest over mission involvement and the election of Waterboer (Pereis, 1995: 222). After two years Adam Kok II settled, with the approval of Dr. Philip, at the LMS mission at Philipolis seeking a more stable and respectable existence (Ross, 1976: 21; Legassick, 1969: 384; Pereis, 1995: 222; Schoeman, 1997: 20; Wilson, n.d. 28). After his subsequent retiring from office, his son, Cornelius Kok III, and his son-in-law, Hendrik Hendriks,[32] assumed leadership until 1828 when Cornelius Kok III died unexpectedly. Adam Kok II again resumed the Captaincy until his death in 1835 (Ross, 1976: 33; Legassick, 1969: 388; Schoeman, 1996b).

Even before Adam Kok's death, large numbers of *trekboers* were crossing the Orange River and taking up residence on Griqua land (Kurtz, 1988: 58). Increasingly, as many of the Griqua had difficulty acquiring access to cash needed for agricultural purposes, they began to lease land to these *trekboers*, despite official disapproval of the *trekboers'* presence (Ross, 1976: 31; Halford, 1949: 84). During this period, a number of disputes - over land and rights to the land - developed between Boers and Griqua. These disagreements festered and formed the basis of the 'long process of land alienation that was to contribute to the defeat of the Griqua people...' (Ross, 1976: 32).

As always, internal conflicts between *Kaptein*s threatened to undermine attempts to develop a comprehensive Griqua presence in the interior. Dr Philip's ideal of Griqua hegemony, as mentioned above, relied on the Colonial Government acknowledgeing both Andries Waterboer and Adam Kok II. Waterboer and Sir Benjamin D'Urban had already signed a treaty in 1834. Negotiations for a similar treaty with Adam Kok II were, however unsuccessful and, as Kok died on the return journey, never concluded (Ross, 1976: 36; Legassick, 1969: 526; Wilson, n.d. 109).

As Adam Kok II's eldest son had already died, Adam and Abraham, two other sons, contested the position of leader of the Philipolis community.[33] In 1836 an election was

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[32] Hendrik Hendriks first appears in the historical record as an ivory trader. He learnt to read and write at the mission in Griquatown. As an avowed enemy of Andries Waterboer, who hung Hendrik's brother during the Hartenaar rebellions, he joined - and was soon centrally involved in leadership matters - the *Bergenaars* and he trekked to Philipolis alongside Adam Kok II (Ross, 1976: 35).

[33] These sons represented distinct parties. Adam was supported by the 'new Griqua faction', generally identified as Basters, who had recently joined the Griqua community. Abraham was the chosen candidate of the 'old Griquas' or Bergenaars who had left Griquatown under his father's leadership (Ross, 1976: 34). It is clear that the alliances based on kinship, that had been so important in Griquatown, were also beginning to be broken down during this period.

held at the urging of the Colonial Government, which was keen to negotiate with a formally recognised leader. Abraham Kok was elected, but was informed that an agreement – in the form of a treaty – still depended on an alliance with Waterboer. Ties with Waterboer were therefore strengthened and, in 1837, the two *Kapteins* were allied (Ross, 1976: 39; Wilson, n.d. 156; Legassick, 1969: 547, 552). A strengthened, albeit dual, Griqua authority thus extended over Transorangia (Kurtz, 1988: 58).

Abraham Kok, disgraced after an unsuccessful raid on Mzilikazi, abandoned Philipolis and his brother, Adam Kok III, was elected *Kaptein* in 18[illegible] or early 1838. From 1838 onwards, Waterboer and Adam Kok III co-operated and supported each other in their claims (Ross, 1976: 39; Wilson, n.d. 156; Legassick, 1969: 547, 552).[34] In November 1838 Adam Kok III and Waterboer signed yet another treaty specifying that 'the chiefs and inhabitants of Griquatown and Philipolis will be considered one people, and also stand in connection with each other, having one interest' (Legassick, 1969: 554; Ross, 1974). This alliance was governed by the desire to create a Christian Griqua Republic in Transorangia, as envisaged by Philip since the early 1830s (Legassick, 1969: 557). Whereas Philip had seen the future of this Griqua republic as lying within the Cape Colony, Adam Kok III and Waterboer increasingly saw themselves as autonomous. They asserted the right not only to protect the colonial borders, but to govern over the Kora and Sotho-Tswana communities:

> ... because Transorangia was 'their' country, the country of the Griqua nation, the country of a self-conscious community which traced its descent with pride to the previous Kora and Sotho-Tswana inhabitants of the area who formed a part of their ancestry (Legassick, 1969: 558).

Thus it was that the Griqua leaders came to see themselves as the 'natural' leaders of 'their own country' and not, as suggested above by some historians, as situated ambivalently between British colonial and indigenous South African peoples. The assertion of an indigenous ancestry and of pride in their Kora and Sotho-Tswana ancestors formed an important component of the identity politics that were taking place in and around Philipolis in the mid-1800s. As discussed in Chapter Two, the situating of Griqua identity as an indigenous one remained important throughout the apartheid era and has been used both to refute apartheid definitions of the Griqua as 'Coloured'

[34] According to the Treaty signed between Abraham Kok and Waterboer, the election of Adam Kok III could be viewed as a rebellion which Waterboer should have assisted Abraham to quell. Abraham, having retired to the Modder River, called on the support of Cornelius Kok II and Jan Bloem to raid Philipolis. This proved to be unsuccessful and both Abraham and Cornelius were captured and charged. As a result, Cornelius Kok's captaincy was revoked - although Waterboer had not acknowledged it since the early 1830s - and Cornelius and Abraham were allowed to return to Campbell and the Modder River respectively (Legassick, 1969: 553).

and to assert the autochthonous status of Griqua peoples in the post-apartheid era (also see Chapter Four).

Despite the attempts to assert Griqua domination, the Philipolis State was beset by internal factionalism. The consequences of this were threefold: first, the Church was unable to develop into the powerful institution it had been in Griquatown. Secondly, Philipolis' complications allowed the importance of Griquatown to be inflated. Trouble-makers and associated problems in Griquatown could be exported to Philipolis. Finally, it complicated attempts to achieve Griqua unity in Transorangia (Legassick, 1969: 621). Nonetheless with the election of Adam Kok III internal dissent appeared to come to an end. In addition, by the 1840s, most personal disputes between Boers and Griquas had been settled. The Philipolis government now felt prepared to enter into a treaty with the Boer community which permitted them to lease land in designated areas (Ross, 1976: 32). Although conflicts between the Griqua and the Boers were couched in terms of land alienation, Legassick has pointed out that the crucial issue was actually one of control and administration (1969: 622). As the Boers had already occupied leased land, the importance of this treaty was that it established the Griqua as the owners of – and the authority over – the land. As indicated above, the search for recognition of the Griqua polity also involved the acquisition of land over which the *Kapteins* and their followers held authority. Although they sought to protect these lands with treaties and Colonial intervention, the above case illustrates that it was *authority over land* that was crucial for the maintenance of a Griqua identity. This authority was not, however, to last. The loss of Griqua lands has been sorely felt, particularly in the light of recent South African land reform programs. Because almost all Griqua land was lost before 1913 – which is the cutoff date for land restitution in South Africa – there are few legal grounds for Griqua people to reclaim their historical property. Thus, although access to, and ownership of, land forms a central aspect of Griqua identity and underlies much of the active campaigning described in Chapter Two, there have only been a few isolated land claims that have conformed to these requirements (discussed in Chapters Two and Seven).

The Griqua at Philipolis managed to align themselves with the British and in November 1843 Adam Kok III signed a treaty with Sir George Napier, the Cape Governor (Ross, 1976: 54; Halford, 1949: 84).[35] The 'treaty marked the beginning of serious pressure on the Griquas' lands and independence' (Ross, 1976: 54). Hostility between the

[35] In return for an annual financial installment and a supply of arms, Kok would ensure that the colonial border was guarded, he would assemble information for the Colony and would assist in spreading peace and civilisation to other tribes.

Griqua and the Boers continued throughout 1843 and 1845 in a series of conflicts that threatened to result in open warfare. Both the Boers and the Griqua prepared for war in March 1845. After a short battle and various negotiations, both parties agreed that the Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, should resolve the hostilities.

Maitland suggested that British subjects should be allowed to settle on African Chiefs' and Griqua *Kapteins'* land (Ross, 1976). Despite their ideology of supporting the Griqua, the British had in fact become embroiled in events north of the Orange only because of the Boer advance. Maitland and the Griqua now differed on the question of Boer eviction. The Griqua were concerned to expel as many Boers as possible in order to regain their leased land, but Maitland worried that widespread evictions would prove expensive and potentially dangerous to the Colony. He suggested that only subjects who had performed acts 'of conspicuous criminality' should be displaced and argued that those Boers who had fought against Adam Kok should not be considered criminals (Ross, 1976: 59). The Griqua reluctantly accepted Maitland's solution, despite feeling that the admission of British inhabitants would pose future problems, and pointing out that Adam Kok's sovereignty was being used to extend the authority of the British Magistrate. The Maitland treaty was signed in February 1846 (Ross, 1976: 60 - 61). Ironically British intervention, intended to uphold Griqua authority, operated to weaken their position (Legassick, 1969 :323). Although these numerous treaties were intended to facilitate Griqua autonomy, Colonial interests and the nature of the political struggles for land actually undermined the Griqua polities. At the end of the day, the conditions stated on this and other treaties were overridden in order to accommodate expanding Colonial and Orange Free State powers.

Despite the Maitland treaty, and perhaps because of the new political arrangements, hostilities continued between the Boers and the Griqua. The new British Resident could attempt to mediate the differences but could not enforce his decisions. When Sir Harry Smith replaced Maitland as Governor of the Cape Colony, he was of the opinion that the Boers posed a considerable threat to the order he wished to establish. He was therefore concerned to pacify them and, if necessary, to sacrifice the Griqua. Smith blatantly disregarded the Maitland treaty and, despite Kok's protestations, drew up an agreement distinguishing alienable from inalienable territory. After the leases in the inalienable territory had expired, the Griqua could retain their farms on payment of any improvements made by the Boers. In the alienable territory, the Griqua were to relinquish their farms for the annual payment of £300.

Smith had correctly judged that the Griqua were unlikely to rebel and thus ignored their rights as outlined in the above treaties. The Griqua were committed towards alliances with the British not because of financial considerations, but because 'there was no other way in which they could hope to fulfill their aspirations' (Ross, 1976: 65; Halford, 1949: 85). Nonetheless, they firmly opposed the annual remuneration when they realised that this applied to the whole of the alienable territory, and not, as specified in the treaty, to only those farms that had been leased to Boers (Halford, 1949: 85; Ross. 1976: 81).

During the initial period of wool production, from 1850 to 1853, Philipolis was comprehensively incorporated into the colonial economy (Ross, 1976: 69). The Philipolis farmers became increasingly wealthy through the cultivation of wheat and the farming of sheep, goats, cattle and horses. 'Thus for a brief Indian summer the Griquas of Philipolis achieved their ambition to be a wealthy, Christian, respectable people' (Ross, 1976: 79).

This period of cultural and economic efflorescence was, however, the end of Griqua political and economic independence in Philipolis. The Orange River Sovereignty was annexed in 1848, which reduced Griqua opportunities for self-governance and hegemony in Transorangia. As pointed out by Legassick, annexation was not a result of white occupation, but rather of the economic and political changes which affected the role Britain was to play in the South African interior. Transorangia, since the 1840s, had become increasingly attractive to wool farmers, traders and land speculators and British investors were increasingly establishing themselves at Bloemfontein. This 'English party' was responsible for drawing up the constitution of the Orange River Sovereignty and, in so doing, excluding the Griqua from franchise arrangements and military service. Thus economic, administrative and political activity in the Orange River Sovereignty came to be restricted to whites only (Legassick, 1979: 278).

The restrictions on Griqua entrepreneurship in the Orange River Sovereignty, seen in relation to the faultlines already present in Griqua society, led to social and economic difficulties. The foundations of Griqua society were riven with divisions similar to those that had plagued Adam Kok II and Berend Berends when still in Griquatown. Because of the absorptionist nature of Griqua society and its willingness to incorporate destitute persons, the economic success at Philipolis had served to increase the economic differences between those who were rich - and possessed farms - and those who were landless, poverty stricken, often drunk - and survived on the goodwill off their richer contemporaries (Ross, 1976: 79; Schoeman, 1997: 18).

The parallels with Griquatown were striking: the inclusory nature of Griqua society meant that anyone could associate themselves with the *Kapteins*. This, however, led to class differences and conflicts within the Griqua collectives. As in Griquatown, the solution was a literal attempt to move away from the problems. Thus when Sir George Grey recommended a *trek* to 'no-man's land' - the area between the former Pondoland and Natal and limited by the Drakensburg mountains (Halford, 1949: 93; Ross, 1976: 81) – it appealed to the Griqua who had always resolved conflicts and dissatisfaction in this manner. After an initial foray, the Griqua Government, disgruntled at the terms of the Maitland treaty and burdened by internal conflict, decided to sell remaining Griqua lands to the Orange Free State Government (Halford, 1949: 98). The sale, which took place in 1862, was to have important repercussions. The legal document that accompanied the transaction specified that the Griqua *Kaptein* and his *Raad* were selling the land in Philipolis together with land belonging to the late Cornelius Kok (of Campbell). Eight years later, when diamonds were discovered on the banks of the Vaal River, the Orange Free State was to claim ownership of the diamondiferous land on the basis of this deed of sale (Halford, 1949: 98; White, 1977: 10).

The *trek* was also an attempt, using an old and thus far proven method, to escape increasing external pressures that made it difficult for the Griqua leaders to be recognised as pivotal figures and that undermined the status of their followers. It was, therefore, in order to safeguard Griqua autonomy and independence, to minimise internal conflict and to seek access to land which could guarantee his followers a relatively wealthy existence, that Adam Kok III set off for Nomansland (Legassick, 1969: 623).

NOMANSLAND

The *trek* began in 1861 and early 1862, when an estimated 2000 Griquas left Philipolis for Nomansland. Upon arrival at Nomansland, the Griquas found a country abundant with grass, water, timber and game. According to Halford, however, they found the extremes of climate difficult, the rains too heavy, the distance from the market extreme and the rank grass unsuitable for their stock (1949; Ross, 1976: 104; Shillington, 1985: 7). Many wealthy men were reduced to poverty during and immediately after the *trek*, but others acquired lands and began to build homes and prepare the soil (Halford, 1949). These people experienced favourable trading conditions and wool was a valuable source of income. People also took advantage of other lucrative activities such as wood-cutting and transport riding (Beinart, 1986: 263, Ross, 1976: 109 - 110).

The revival of affluent Griqua society lasted, however, only ten years. In 1874 the Colonial State annexed Nomansland (Griqualand East) without the consent of the Griqua, following various altercations over boundaries and other conflicts (Ross, 1974: Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 203; Beinart 1986: 260). Griqua society further collapsed with the death of Adam Kok III in 1875 (Beinart, 1986: 260, Ross, 1974, 1976: 125; Ranier, 1997: 56). Faced with these political crises, many Griqua sold their land in a panic and it has been estimated that half of the Griqua lost their title to land within five years of annexation (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 203; Beinart, 1986: 260).[36]

Many Griqua were reduced to undertaking manual labour on European-owned farms, although a few were employed in skilled and supervisory posts (Beinart, 1986: 275). Those select Griqua who survived as landowners were adversely affected by the increasing pressure on land. By this stage, very little communally-occupied land was available and, even when sites could be obtained, they were in undesirable areas. Increasingly, as Griqua landowners were displaced from their smallholdings, they sought refuge on the farms of those few Griqua who held substantial amounts of land. These farms were, in time, subdivided and became occupied by Griqua (and African) tenants (Beinart, 1986: 285). Other dispossessed Griqua families who were unable to secure tenancies or who clung tenaciously to their independence survived through semi-independent activities such as woodcutting (Beinart, 1986: 288).

Various attempts to resist this process of land alienation and proletarianisation were embarked upon. In 1878 there occurred a futile rebellion against the Cape Administration during which Adam 'Muis' Kok, a close descendent and successor of Adam Kok III, was killed (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 2[illegible]1; Ranier, 1997: 56; Halford, 1949: 165 - 166). Shortly after this Adam Kok III's secretary and a non-Griqua, Abraham le Fleur - who had been part of the initial investigation into the suitability of Nomansland in 1861 (Ranier, 1997: 56; White, 1977: 5) - moved to Griqualand East at the invitation of Adam Kok's widow (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 201). His move marked the beginning of yet another era in which the Griqua sought to establish their autonomy and independence through Christian religious worship and through repeated *treks* in search of land.

[36] Beinart argues that doubt about their prospects in Griqualand East, stock losses due to disease and difficulties coping with winter grazing conditions, and a fondness for brandy all contributed to this process. Others, in attempting to farm successfully, had become indebted to white traders who pressurised farmers for payment in the form of land transfers (1986: 265).

Le Fleur's concern for the Griqua was taken up by his son, Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom le Fleur who had married Adam 'Muis' Kok's daughter.[37] In this sense Le Fleur can be seen as one of the 'original *inkommers*' (or newcomers) both to Griqua society and to his wife's family. Whereas residents in Griquatown currently have firm beliefs about the roles of *boorlings* (people born in the town and hence into Griqua society) versus *inkommers*, most of le Fleur's followers are not resident in Griquatown and appear not to hold these beliefs. Contrary to the perception that *inkommers* cannot be relied upon to assist Griqua people (discussed in Chapters Five and Six), le Fleur sought to rectify 'the wrongs the Griqua believed had been done against them' (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 203). He made representations to the Colonial Government in Cape Town; in 1896 he sent a petition to the Colonial Secretary in London and he tried, unsuccessfully, to secure a commission of enquiry into East Griqualand (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 204). During the years 1896 to 1898 various non-Griqua people also gathered under the leadership of Andrew le Fleur in order to oppose the settlers' demands for racially segregated farming zones and to rebel against the ever-increasing demands for land (Beinart, 1986: 263). These Chiefs and headmen remained his allies until discussions of armed insurrection were held in 1897.[38] Le Fleur's activities attracted the interest of the authorities who were no longer prepared to tolerate statements about Griqua rule and autonomy. In 1898, he was arrested for the second time and sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 204).

Le Fleur's attempts to revive Griqua independence and status followed the patterns set in earlier decades as he welcomed all supporters and sought to *trek* to new areas of opportunity. As the political and economic character of the interior had shifted substantially with the beginnings of industrialisation and capitalisation, however, he had little chance of success. His *treks* thus consisted of a demoralised and impoverished group of farmers making a final attempt to establish themselves in a country that was becoming increasingly colour and class conscious. Le Fleur returned to Griqualand East around 1915, having in the interim been amnestied in 1903 and having initiated an unsuccessful *trek* from Cape Town to a farm on the edge of the Karoo (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 207). In Griqualand East he persuaded some Griqua to follow him on another *trek* to Touwsrivier (Saks, 1997: 109). A few of the Griqua farmers who joined him had retained land in Griqualand East, but were competing unsuccessfully with whites who had greater access to capital. Other Griqua who accompanied le Fleur were those evicted from European farms or prevented from

[37] Although Edgar and Saunders argue that Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom le Fleur's father was descended from a French missionary and a Madagascan woman, le Fleur's descendants question where this knowledge derives from.

[38] Although provoked by the settlers, they realised that in the likely event of them losing a battle, retribution would take the form of land confiscation (Beinart, 1986: 278).

making a livelihood chopping wood (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 207-8; also see Beinart, 1986: 263). This *trek* to Touwsrivier resulted in the final proletarianisation of the Griqua *trekkers* who became farm labourers or got jobs in road construction, as they could not maintain payments on the farms purchased (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 211-212). Nonetheless, le Fleur continued to mobilise on behalf of the Griqua, to organise *trek*s and to campaign for the establishment of a Griqua homeland. His *trek* to three farms near Vredendal resulted in the successful establishment of a community that was still holding ceremonies on one of these farms in the late 1990s. Later *trek*s saw communities established in Maitland, Elands Drift, Knysna and on the Robberg Peninsula (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 219 - 220). In the mid-1930s this community was moved to Kranshoek where le Fleur died in 1941 (Edgar and Saunders, 1982: 220). Although le Fleur's *trek*s have been labeled unsuccessful by academics, his descendants point to le Fleur's success in maintaining a Griqua identity at a time when no one else assumed leadership. Several specifically Griqua communities, settled by le Fleur, have continued to pursue their Griqua identity and, as has been demonstrated in Chapter Two, to campaign for Griqua recognition throughout the twentieth century.

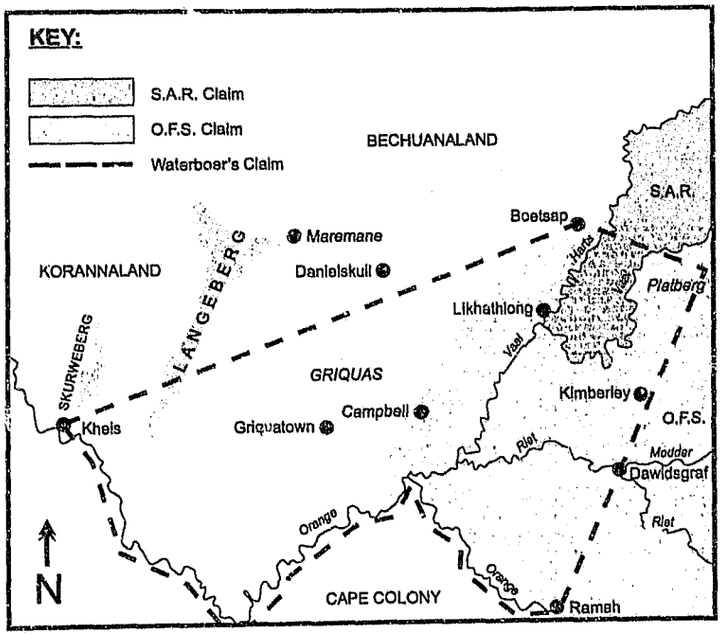
THE DISCOVERY OF DIAMONDS IN GRIQUALAND WEST

By the 1870s, there were still some politically independent Griqua units in South Africa. Amongst these were the mixed societies led by Nicolaas Waterboer in Griqualand West and by Adam Kok in Griqualand East. Both these societies had experienced colonial domination and the pressure of white expansion. Missionaries, traders, farmers and government agents all contributed towards the transformation of these societies (Thompson, 1971: 245). The Griqua were no longer a powerful force on the northern frontier of the colony. Furthermore, for the past 20 years, the financially-strapped LMS had encouraged churches to become self-supporting. This process was completed by the 1870s when almost all mission stations had become independent of the LMS (Elbourne and Ross, 1997: 47; Ross, 1976: 77 - 8) and fell under the Congregational Church (Davenport, 1997: 53; Legassick, 1969: 667). The residents of Griquatown thus lost their influential allies and the associated financial support and status that had come from being a Christian mission station.

Two additional and distinct processes were taking place at the end of the nineteenth century which undermined the political independence of the Griqua: '(o)ne was the subjugation of the African chiefdoms to white control; the other, the establishment of British supremacy' that had earlier resulted in the annexation of the Orange River Sovereignty (Thompson, 1971: 250) At the same time the economy was changing and hunting and trading was no longer profitable in Griqualand West. The discovery of

diamonds in Kimberley, and later of gold on the reef, led to the development of an industrial and capitalist society. Chidester describes the process as follows:

> (a)t the beginning of the twentieth century, as Christian churches turned from frontier missions to church building, South Africa underwent the most rapid period of Christian conversion in its history. Christian conversion in South Africa coincided with the nearly complete conquest of African societies, the expansion of colonial administration, the emergence of a modern state, and the advance of industrial capital. In particular, Africans were increasingly incorporated into new economic relations of power that followed the mineral revolution in South Africa. The discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886 marked the beginning of an expanding, industrial capitalism that came to dominate South African society (1992: xiii).



Map 3.2: Illustrating the three contradictory claims to the diamond fields, c. 1870.

When diamonds were discovered in 1867, the three contradictory claims indicated on Map 3.2 existed: the Orange Free State asserted that it owned all the land to the east

and west of the Vaal River.[39] The South African Republic said that its jurisdiction was bounded by the northern bank of the Vaal River and by the junction between the Vaal and Harts River. David Arnot represented Nicolaas Waterboer and claimed that Waterboer owned the land 'bounded by the Orange River from Kheis to Ramah' and by lines from Ramah to Platberg-on-Vaal, to Boetsap and to Kheis (Thompson, 1971: 254; Halford, 1949: 152).[40]

The first diamond rush took place in 1869 when diggers scrambled to alluvial diggings on the northern side of the Vaal River. Barely two years later the next diamond rush took place to the south-east of the Vaal River (Thompson, 1971: 255). Prompted meanwhile by the diamond discoveries, Richard Southey, the Cape Colonial Secretary, asked Arnot for a description of Waterboer's territory and suggested that Arnot convince Waterboer to request colonial protection. This was because Southey was an expansionist who believed that 'Britain should assume responsibility for law and order throughout South Africa, to curb the Afrikaner republics, protect the African chiefdoms, promote British commerce, and preserve British Paramountcy' (Thompson, 1971: 255). Griquatown was, by this stage, in a moribund state and many non-Griqua had abandoned the mission station. Only a few Griqua remained and, having lost large portions of their land, they eked out a marginal existence (Legassick, 1969: 619).

ANNEXATION

The discovery of diamonds led to a wholesale re-arrangement of economic conditions in South Africa. Diamonds, and shortly thereafter gold, were to be the axis on which the South African economy revolved for the next 100 years. The discovery of minerals thus meant that occupation of the interior assumed enormous importance for determining the power relations between Britain and the Boer Republics. As Britain wished to preserve paramountcy, she had to occupy the interior. In order to do so, Britain took advantage of the depressed state of the Griqua polities and of the Republics' lack of financial stability and administration and ignored earlier conventions sighed by these Governments (Kurtz, 1988: 171).

Sir Henry Barkly, the new Governor at the Cape, was instructed to annex Griqualand West - on condition that this was what the diggers and indigenous occupants wanted. Upon arrival in South Africa, Barkly rode roughshod over the attempts by Brand, Boer President of the Orange Free State, to demonstrate ownership of the land (Thompson,

[39] It had inherited the land to the east as part of the Orange River sovereignty and had, as detailed above, 'purchased' from *Kaptein* Adam Kok III the so-called Campbell Lands to the west in 1861.

[40] These boundaries were determined by various boundaries defined in earlier treaties made by the Waterboers and by the assumption that Cornelius Kok was Waterboer's subject (Thompson, 1971: 254).

1971: 255). Conflict between the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and Waterboer, over who owned the diamond fields, led to the adjudication by the Lieutenant Governor of Natal, R.W. Keate (Thompson, 1971: 255; Broodryk, 1977: 18). Although Keate recognised Waterboer's territory as extending north until Platberg-on-Vaal and hence including the diamond fields, this acknowledgement of Griqua territorial authority was not, ultimately, to assist Waterboer.

Waterboer's requests for annexation, reinforced by his representative, Arnot, provided an appropriate means for Britain to establish control over the interior and, as Kurtz has argued, 'Southey and Barkly were determined to use Arnot's carefully drawn-up case to secure the diamond fields, knowing that they could override his own claims to land' (1988: 173). Although Southey presented himself as Arnot's and Waterboer's patron, endorsed annexation and the preservation of Waterboer's rights; he was to betray the Griquas and to dismiss their claims to land in favour of British occupation (Kurtz, 1988: 173). In October 1871, less than two weeks after Keate's conclusions were made public, Barkly annexed Griqualand West according to the boundaries laid out by Arnot (Thompson, 1971: 256; Kurtz, 1988: 175; Ross, 1974; White, 1977: 19; Shillington, 1985: 53).[41]

After annexation, Waterboer continued to act as though he was *Kaptein* of Griqualand West, he held court in Griquatown and allocated land to his subjects. Kurtz therefore questions whether Waterboer was aware of the implications of annexation and wonders whether Arnot, afraid of Waterboer's impulsive anger, never informed him of the full ramifications. Certainly Waterboer's subjects must have known of the demise of their *Kaptein*. Many Griqua were concerned that British annexation would lead to greater land losses and that they would not, as Griqua subjects, be able to retain the farms they currently occupied. Their fears were well-founded and, coupled with the misunderstandings over the meaning of annexation, contributed to the rebellion in 1878 (Kurtz, 1988: 177; Broodryk, 1977: 16).

THE AFTERMATH OF ANNEXATION

Annexation of Griqualand West was intended to minimise trouble on the Cape's northern border and to bring stability and order to the troubled diamond fields (Kurtz, 1988: 12). Annexation did not, however, resolve the disputes over the diamond lands (Thompson, 1971: 256). In 1875 the Government set up a Land Court, with Andries

[41] Kurtz argues that the diamond fields and Griqualand West, more generally, provided crucial access to the north as the Transvaal republics were blocking more direct routes. The key to expanding trade and commerce, and to fresh labour sources, therefore lay in the route though Griqualand West (1988: 12).

Stockenstrom appointed as Judge, to investigate the conflicting private claims to land in Griqualand West. Whereas some areas had a single, clearly identified owner, other tracts of land had as many as twelve claimants (Kurtz, 1988: 177). Stockenstrom, basing his arguments on early travelers' records, insisted the Griqua were nomads without title to land. Furthermore, within his court, Waterboer and the Griquas were publicly humiliated and disrespectfully treated. In addition, disagreements between Waterboer, the *Raad* and Arnot led to internal disputes amongst the Griqua. In the light of these developments, many ordinary Griqua, who could not afford expensive legal costs, either relinquished their claim to lands or, having presented their claims to court, were faced with crippling legal charges and subsequently lost their land to speculators (Kurtz, 1988: 198 - 9). Finally the Court decided that Waterboer's titles to land south east of the Vaal River were invalid.[42]

Ultimately, however, the Land Court was a failure: many of the submitted claims were not dealt with and completed claims were full of inconsistencies and omissions. Finally, Charles Warren was tasked with resolving the land issue in Griqualand West in 1877 (Kurtz, 1988: 210). His approach - facilitated by the fact that he was not bound by a court of law - was not to determine one legal owner, but rather to mediate between disputing parties.[43] Even though Warren was more sensitive to their claims, by this point the Griqua were beyond relief. In January 1876 Moffat found many of the Griquatown residents sunk in alcoholic depression as their land was rapidly being bought by speculators and other farmers. Waterboer himself was forced to sell the three farms allocated to him by Stockenstrom's Land Court, in order to meet his debts (Kurtz, 1988: 227 - 230). Furthermore, by the time Warren had finished unraveling land claims, most of the land previously owned by Griquas was already held by whites or by the British Empire. At about this time, Moffat reported that he was unable to serve Griquatown from Kuruman and that a permanently resident missionary was necessary. In response, the LMS merely shifted the responsibility for Griquatown from Moffat to Wookey, himself responsible for a huge area and unable to dedicate time and effort to Griquatown. This was followed by yet another misfortune: British officials were coerced into accepting the diamond industry's *de facto* colour bar and licences to mine or to deal in diamonds were restricted to white people only (Thompson, 1971:

[42] The British Government realised that this destroyed Waterboer's claim to sovereignty in the Kimberley area - on which annexation had been based - and awarded £90 000 to the Orange Free State in compensation (Thompson, 1971: 256). This compensation was necessary because, In the process leading up to annexation Barkly had ignored Brand's attempts to demonstrate that the Orange Free State had purchased and legally owned these lands, and had declared them to be Waterboer's territory.

[43] Warren was of the opinion that annexation had included specific liabilities, dishonored by Stockenstrom despite Barkly's written guarantee. Waterboer, Arnot, Raad members, Griquas and other inhabitants of the area had, in Warren's opinion, claims to land occupied before annexation which should have been recognised by the Land Court (Kurtz, 1988: 211-212).

256). As Kurtz has noted '(i)n a country obtained from the Griqua people this is the final cruel irony' (1988: 238).

The indigenous inhabitants of Griqualand West - who were meant to have desired British annexation in order to protect their land and who lost this land in the process - expressed their dissatisfaction through isolated acts of violence throughout 1877 and 1878. These 'rebellions' were suppressed by volunteer forces and in 1880 Griqualand West was incorporated into the Cape Colony (Broodryk, 1977). Although some Griqua people were allocated farms, or access to other land in the form of locations and village erven, they were soon inveigled into selling their land to white people. 'By the end of the century, the people in whose name the territory had been annexed had ceased to exist as an organized community. The survivors worked for white men' (Thompson, 1971: 257).

The final death knell of the powerful Griqua states came at the end of the nineteenth century (Chidester, 1992: 63). The LMS was declining in strength and, as indicated above, had already withdrawn support from Griquatown. At the same time the Dutch Reformed Church or *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk* (NGK) had been building and consolidating its position as a powerful religious denomination. In 1881 it had established the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, or the *Sendingkerk* (NGSK), for people of mixed or coloured origin. In Griquatown, the Griqua Church was superseded by the NGSK and the last bastion of missionary influence fell away. Although this church was strictly separate from the NGK in terms of community and worship, it depended on the NGK for financial support and for clergy (Kinghorn, 1997: 136). The NGK in turn 'accepted financial assistance for clerical salaries and capital expenditure and surrendered power to the state over the regulation of public worship' (Davenport, 1997: 51). The NGK was also to provide the model that influenced the 'doctrine of apartheid' (Elphick, 1997: 5) and, in 1948, when the National Party came to power, the official education policy adopted was Christian Nationalism. Mandatory religious education now took the form of 'Christian Reformed evangelisation' for all South Africans (Kinghorn, 1997: 137). Thus Christianity, under the auspices of the NGK, came to legitimate the political, social and economic order of the apartheid government (Chidester, 1992: 187).

CONCLUSION

The Griqua polities of Griquatown, Campbell, Philipolis and Griqualand East were established on the basis of four principles, all of which contributed both to the establishment and consolidation of the polities and, ironically, to their downfall. First, as amply illustrated in the Griquatown case, there was the use of Christianity as a means to assert independence. This induced leaders to co-operate with missionaries and to facilitate the outward spread of the Christian message from their stations. With time, however, it also led to the development of trained Griqua crusaders who rebelled against missionary authority and asserted their ability to evangelise and rule the neighbouring people. Secondly, as is evident in both the Griquatown and the Philipolis material, there was a need to accumulate a comprehensive following in order that the missionaries and Colonial authorities might recognise the might of the Griqua. In order to facilitate this, Griqua society developed an inclusory nature whereby any person could attach him- or herself to the *Kapteins* as a dependent follower and hence as a Griqua. Although this had the advantage of bolstering the numbers of people settled at Griqua stations, it also led to severe internal divisions and conflicts which undermined the strength and authority of each *Kaptein* in turn. This internal conflict was seldom dealt with directly, since leaders and their followers would simply move away from the source of conflict. This tendency to *trek* away from trouble in search of autonomy, land and independence represents the third principle. Although, on the whole the Griqua adopted the missionaries' demands of a settled existence, each *Kaptein* sought to secure freedom, independence and agricultural wealth through access to land. When conditions were such that autonomy, independence and land were under threat, the *Kapteins* responded by trekking to new, unexplored territory. The largest three of these treks saw the Griqua settled at Griquatown, Philipolis and Kokstad, but smaller treks occurred throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Griqua search for territory in which they could live out their ambitions of economic prowess, political autonomy and social acclaim has certainly fostered and helped to retain a Griqua identity. But the tendency to trek fundamentally undermined Griqua attempts to present themselves as a unified force and to stand undivided in the face of the broader forces that challenged their identity. The fourth tendency, perhaps most detrimental to the Griqua *Kapteins*, was their reliance on the Colonial authorities for the protection of Griqua independence and sovereignty. Not only did this lead to infighting between the various *Kapteins* as they jockeyed frantically with each other to secure treaties, it also meant that they were left with few means with which to defend themselves when the Colonial authorities, no longer seeing any need for the Griqua, disregarded the clauses in their treaties and the recognition of Griqua independence in order to claim for themselves ownership of Griqua land in various parts of the country.

The history of the Griqua has been described as one of a people who 'lost out in the struggle for land, capital and resources in industrializing South Africa' (Beinart, 1986: 260). Nonetheless, despite a long history of dispossession, broken treaties, manipulated and often wronged leaders; the tale of the tragedy described in this chapter has not yet been fully told. Throughout the twentieth century, people have retained a Griqua and Christian identity and have sought wider recognition for themselves. This identity has involved a continued reinvoking of many features - both to their benefit and to their disadvantage - established in the heyday of Griqua nationalism. As demonstrated in the following chapters, ethnic and religious identities are drawn upon, either concurrently or exclusively, in complex ways that vary according to circumstance, but that continue to be embodied in a broader Griqua identity.

CHAPTER FOUR
KLAAR GESNAP AS KLEURLING:[1]
THE ATTEMPTED MAKING AND REMAKING OF THE GRIQUA PEOPLE.

'There are no pure Griqua left here' was a comment I often heard during my visits to Griquatown between 1987 and 1998. The first time I heard it was in 1988, when Sergeant Humel at the local police station told me that I was wasting my time researching the Griqua. He added that during the 1972 or 1974 census he found that there were only two 'true' or 'real' Griqua in Griquatown.[2]

The 1996 census made provision for people to be white, African, coloured, or other. Various Griqua organisations challenged this categorisation and demanded the right of their constituencies to identify themselves as Griqua. The government eventually agreed that people could indicate whatever ethnic identity they wished on the census form and that the census counters would take cognisance of it (DFA, 16/10/1996).[3] *In Griquatown many people recalled the census and the young matriculant who had been employed as the census collector. He, however, commented that when people said that they were Griqua he had indicated coloured on the form, in part because there was no Griqua box to tick and in part because, having grown up in the town, it was obvious to him that these people were coloured.*[4]

In both these anecdotes the existence of a Griqua identity is questioned. Evident in the first anecdote are ideas about racial purity and the survival of a 'biological race' with inherited genealogies. It further concerns the manner in which identity is defined. Here a (white) police sergeant assumes the authority to talk about the identity of people under his jurisdiction. Having paid little attention during the 1970s, by 1988 those same people were anxious to present a different view of themselves. Thus the anecdote poses questions about who decides whether one is a ('pure') Griqua or not; about the basis on which people come to be seen as having a collective identity; and about how, where and by whom the boundaries to this collective are drawn. The second anecdote details an event which brings together actions by the state, the various Griqua organisers and the people who believe themselves to be Griqua. In this instance, the state is seen to be unsympathetic to a Griqua identity and to have retained the old apartheid-style categorisation of people. According to the census, individuals could be

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[1] This translates as 'Already Photographed as Coloured' and refers to the process by which Griqua people came to be known as coloured during the apartheid era.

[2] Conversation, Sergeant Humel, South African Police Force, 4/04/1988

[3] This is not the first time that such a thing has occurred. In 1980, A.A.S. le Fleur had approached the Department of Statistics and requested that people be allowed to represent themselves as Griqua as they 'wanted to break away from the coloured "umbrella"' (DFA, 9/04/1980).

[4] Interview (conducted by A. Williamson), Jerome Moses 17/10/1997.

white or African, but not both. They could be either coloured or other, but any sense of complex, fluid and multiple identities was not entertained by the census enumerators and hence by the state. There is however a second dimension to this anecdote and this concerns the role of Jerome, the matriculant who conducted the census. He commented that when people said they were Griqua, he ticked the coloured box. A literal translation of his words - *ons het gemaak Kleurling* – is 'we made (or indicated) coloured'. It is this *making* of identity with which this chapter is concerned. Three approaches to Griqua identity are examined here: those of the apartheid ideologues, South African academics, and the Griqua people themselves. These different understandings have – through time – fed into each other in complex and often contradictory ways. Through an exploration of the connections between these approaches and their divergences, the chapter aims to arrive at a more accurate understanding of being Griqua that captures the depth of people's identity.

UNDERSTANDING GRIQUA IDENTITY

It has been customary to begin any piece of writing on South African coloured people with a footnote. Such a footnote usually documents that the term 'coloured' is problematic, before the author nonetheless continues to use the term as though it is self-explanatory. This plethora of footnotes indicates a wide acknowledgement of the complexity of dealing with matters of identity, especially that which belongs to people of a 'mixed race', whose sense of self has been overlaid by, and entwined with, apartheid planning and structure for almost 50 years. For example:

> (Footnote 1) The term 'Coloured' is problematic in South Africa. Here I use the word to include all the people living in Griquatown who are neither Black nor White. Hence it is used in its legal and official context and therefore written with a capital 'C'. The Griqua are, by official definition, also included in this category (Waldman, 1989: 100).

Hamilton has argued that a primary part of apartheid imposition concerned the 'creation and maintenance of (ethnic) borders' (1997: 7). Such boundary-making is clearly reflected in the above footnote which defers to the official definition of coloured people during the apartheid years. Note how easily the author (myself, I am embarrassed to admit) accepts the apartheid definitions and assumes that the categories 'Black' and 'White' are not constructed identities and are easily identifiable (cf. Wicomb, 1998). Hamilton further argues that South African identities are perhaps better understood, post-apartheid, in terms of their 'shifting allegiances' and fluidity. This kind of

thinking is evident in the next example, notably also the first footnote, where the author does away with the apartheid capital C and the ubiquitous inverted commas and distances himself from any primordial or apartheid-like thinking.

> (Footnote 1): In this paper, I follow a usage common both in speech and in print and, for the sake of simplicity, use the word 'coloured' without inverted commas; this of course does not mean, as this chapter will show, any adhesion or any support for ideologies and behaviours separating human beings in terms of 'race' or culture (Martin, 1998: 535 – 536).[5]

The recognition that Griqua identity means different things to the different people who consider themselves Griqua, is not new to the understanding of identities (cf. Yuval-Davis, 1997: 10).[6] It is especially not new to South African academics who have sought to understand the nature of such relations in their own country (cf. Sharp, 1980; 1997). This knowledge is, however, often overlooked when discussing Griqua politics and identity and various authors have been guilty of assuming that the kind of unambiguous identification that is applicable, for example, to the members of the GNC is also applicable to the people living in Griquatown and calling themselves Griqua[7] (Cloete, 1986; Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins, 1985; President's Commission, 1983; Waldman 1989). It is thus the intention in this chapter to explore the shaping of Griqua identity and to point to the differences and disjunctures between various meanings. The second part of the chapter concerns itself specifically with the people of Griquatown. Here I draw on the work of authors such as McEachern (1998) and Martin (1998) who have stressed the ambiguous nature of coloured identity. The aim is to explore this in a more contextual manner and to develop the argument that, for the people of Griquatown, the distinction between coloured and Griqua identity is fluid, and that people manipulate, use and rely on both identities simultaneously.

APARTHEID CLASSIFICATION OF GRIQUA AND COLOURED

There were signs, before the beginning of apartheid, that people were no longer identifying themselves as Griqua but rather in other terms. In 1912, Lilian Orpen, daughter of the famous F.H.S. Orpen who recorded Bushman myths (van Vreeden, 1957: 6), argued that the Griquas 'are dying out so fast that in a few years there will be none to be found' (1912: 154). Similarly, in 1938, Rademeyer argued that there was

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[5] For further discussion on these ubiquitous footnotes, see Wilmot James (1996: 41) and Rasool (1996: 54 –5).
[6] Yuval-Davis argues that the 'self is always situated' and that this affects all social relationships. Such situatedness concerns not only the physical body of an individual (in terms of age, ability and so on), nor the gendered positioning of that person, but is also affected by, and affects, 'macro social divisions of class, ethnicity, 'race' and nation' (1997: 10).
[7] Here I refer to both GNC organisations.

only a 'small handful of Griquas' resident in Griquatown (1938: 27). Although apartheid reached its most extreme expression only in the 1960s, heterogeneous populations – such as that of the Griqua -- had already formed by the turn of the century, a time when ideas about coloured identity were being forged and racial segregation was becoming widespread (McEachern, 1998. 501). The year 1948 heralded the beginning of National Party rule in South Africa and, more importantly, the start of a rigid racial classification system that relegated Griqua to a subsidiary of the category 'Coloured'. As early as 1953 it was recognised by government officials that this process of classification would pose many problems and that it would be difficult, in particular, to prove people's 'race'. Another problem was marriage. It was decided that if, despite official disapproval, a white man was married to a non-white woman, he would have to take on her racial identity, but that otherwise the wife would take on the racial identity of her husband (West, 1988; see Chapter Six for more detailed discussion on how this affected the people of Griquatown). The main problem officials experienced, however, and the one which concerns us here, was how to distinguish coloured people from African people. Officials responsible for categorising people may have felt that they had some idea what a coloured person looked like and that their classification was therefore relatively sound, but Griqua people posed a particular problem. The 1957-58 Race Relations Act reported:

> Another group of people who are encountering great difficulties are the Griquas of the Northern Cape, who have mixed White, Hottentot, Bush and a little African blood, but who over the years became a distinctive group with a distinctive appearance, speaking the Griqua Hottentot language. They have little contact socially with the Cape Coloured people. In recent years some of the younger ones have inter-married with Africans, and have adopted Afrikaans as their home language. They have, however, been regarded as Coloured: those who draw pensions are paid at Coloured rates, and most of the men hold certificates of non-liability for Native taxation.
>
> During 1955 a Population Registration official visited Kimberley, near their headquarters, and classified the Griquas as Africans. This was an extremely serious matter for them. As well as having to carry reference books, to register service contracts, to obey curfew regulations, to draw pensions at lower rates and pay poll tax, their children would fall under the Bantu Education Act, and would have to be educated through the medium of one of the African languages, completely foreign to them.
>
> They were, unfortunately, ill-advised by the then local representative of the present Captain, Nicolaas Waterboer II, and failed to lodge objections against their classification within the stipulated period of 30 days. At the time of writing, their position was extra-ordinarily

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> confused. They were not Africans for the purposes of the Representation of Natives Act, yet could not qualify for the Coloured voters' roll. Some of them, while holding certificates of non-liability for Native taxation, had been issued with reference books making them liable to pay poll tax (SAIRR, 1957-1958: 32).

In the mid 1950s there existed a collection of people who called themselves Griqua but who were alternatively classified as either (and occasionally both) black or coloured. Since Griqua society had been associated with ideas of an open society which welcomed others, and with notions of mixed blood and Khoi indigenous origins, this made them particularly difficult to classify. Those individuals who verbalised their Griqua identity to government officials were classified African and were then subject to the relevant legislature and repressive conditions. Although there appeared to be no collective response to this categorisation, many people also qualified for Coloured registration; and they carried both documentation requiring them to pay poll tax and documentation exempting them from paying it. They had received papers classifying them as African and as coloured; whereas they themselves, as individuals, believed in their Griqua identity.

The people of Griquatown, and many other Northern Cape towns, acutely recalled this classification process. Many of them blamed a man named Morgan – the individual responsible who was said to have driven a green panel van in which he stored his official paraphernalia – for 'killing' or 'ending' Griqua identity. If an individual told Morgan that he (or she) was Griqua, Morgan would respond 'no, you're a black man' (or woman) and issue the relevant documentation. The individuals affected in this manner then had to apply for reclassification as Griqua, a process which was, partially, but never wholly, satisfactory as they were then generally allocated Coloured rather than Griqua status. As Mr Koekemoer from Griquatown explained,

> One of my nephews was classified as a black man. Then we had to later apply for reclassification [indicating] that he is a Griqua. But then he came through as coloured. And the coloured was like this, you're coloured, you mixed. So no-one gave the Griqua a chance to be upfront, because if you're upfront, then you're a black man. As a Griqua, they easily identify you as a black man. In those days the black man was very badly treated. The coloured at least had a small chance. If you were coloured, you at least received your pay each month. If you were a black man you only got a pension every second month. And this caused the people to cross over to coloured. Because if you weren't coloured then you could only be a black man. And, as I said, over the pensions in the first place and, in the second place, the fact that you were better treated in the hospital if you were coloured. So the Griqua died out. Therefore they are still here, but they are all coloured.[8]

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who was coloured. Despite Morgan's earlier visit, the Town Clerk wrote repeatedly to the Director of Census and Statistics requesting that the people of Griquatown be classified.[10] Between 1960 and 1964 he reiterated the request six times.[11] He presented his problems of classification as follows:

1. There is a large percentage of people registered as coloured who are born to parents of mixed descent, namely from bushman, hottentot and Bantu blood, and whose manner of living is the same as the Bantu.
2. There are cases where children are from the same household, but some are registered as coloured and others as bantu
3. Coloureds have married bantu women and these women with their children cannot adapt to the lifestyles of the coloureds in the coloured residential area.

If these people, who do not know what race they belong to, chose to stay in the Bantu residential area, must they apply to be reclassified and is there a possibility that they can be registered as bantu?
The races in Griquatown have not been officially classified and my council holds the opinion that many non-white people allowed themselves to be incorrectly registered out of ignorance, if not deliberately.[12]

Clearly, social criteria were not going to assist the Griquatown Council in determining racial classification as there was little difference between coloured and Bantu lifestyles, despite the Town Clerk's perception that Bantu women and their children could not adapt to the lifestyles in the – then non-existent but planned – coloured residential area. There was thus some recognition on the part of the Town Council that artificial boundaries were being drawn between coloured and black residents of Griquatown and furthermore that people were manipulating these categories. The classification of the majority of people in Griquatown as coloured was, however, a pyrrhic victory. They had managed to evade Morgan's classification of them as African and thus to evade the treatment meted out to those people, but, in the process, their own sense of who they were and their ancestry was denied. Their identity was now formally established as 'Coloured'. They have felt their loss of Griqua identity acutely and, as has been demonstrated in Chapter Two, they continuously campaigned for the formal recognition of 'Griqua' as something other than a sub-category of coloured in the Population Registration Act during the apartheid years. Officials of the NP Government, however, argued otherwise:

[10] Letters from the Town Clerk to the Director of Census and Statistics (16/5/1968) and to the Population Register (20/1/1959).
[11] Letters from the Town Clerk to the Rural Representative, Department of Community. 18/10/1963 *et. seq.*
[12] Letter from the Town Clerk to the Rural Representative, Department of Community. 22/8/1963

> The object of the Griquas' dogged struggle has always been the right to register as Griquas without intimidation, but the officials claim that there is no reason to be a Griqua since a Griqua is a coloured and a coloured is a Griqua on the grounds of the definition that 'a coloured is neither white nor Black nor Asiatic', and thus all the other coloureds must be classified in this class. This state of affairs has discouraged the Griquas from applying for reclassification, for even though one's application for an identity document might indicate 'Griqua' under 'Population Group', only one in every ten applications results in registration as a Griqua (President's Commission, 1983: 76).

It can be seen from the above quotation that, having won the battle to be coloured and, with it, the entitlement to better living conditions (cf. Caliguire, 1996: 12), this 'community' was finding it increasingly important that they be defined as Griqua. During the 1970s and 80s various Griqua people and organisations campaigned for official government recognition and the acknowledgement that Griqua was a specific ethnic category. In so doing, they were creating an identity that embraced 'colouredness' with all its associated benefits, but also, transcending colouredness, they drew on their Khoi heritage and stressed similarities with other African tribes. They were essentially saying that the Griqua were different from other coloured people and also distinct from the black tribes of South Africa. As such, they claimed, special dispensations should be considered for the Griqua people. Echoing this view, Griquatown officials described them as a category of 'mixed descent with ethnic blood'.[13] From the government's point of view, however, people's identification of themselves as Griqua was seen as a ploy to help in their quest for land. Such an opinion was influenced by the numerous attempts to claim land for Griqua people during the apartheid era (Waldman, 1989). As one person explained in 1988, 'it is better to be Griqua because you are not going to get a coloured land, (you will) get Griqua land'.[14] During this period, Griqua delegates frequently travelled to Cape Town to present their case and to request access to land in the name of the Griqua people. The government response was that, before it could consider providing them with land, the Griqua should prove that they form an ethnic group. Here official discourse was contradictory and – as a result of a complex intersection of discourses on race and identity -- having first denied the Griqua a separate identity, the government was now insisting that they demonstrate such an identity.

[13] Undated Memorandum submitted to the President's Commission by the Municipality of Griquatown, c.12/04/1983.
[14] Interview, Cornelius de Koker 16/7/1988.

THE POLITICS OF MIXING

Although apartheid regulations drew extensively on primordial ideas of race, such ideas were not plucked from a vacuum. South African anthropologists, although not apologists of apartheid, were also trying to understand and 'fix' the racial and cultural parameters of Griqua identity. As we shall later see, this was often in a way that local people would not necessarily agree with although, paradoxically, they did draw from these ideas for their own purposes. Apartheid functionaries drew some credibility from the findings of academics investigating questions of human difference, 'races' and miscegenation which had developed prominence in South Africa (cf. Dubow, 1995).[15]

Griqua people were closely linked to the Bushmen or Hottentot; but, as one physical anthropologist commented in 1939

> (b)ecause of this racial intermixture of bloods, there is a vast difference between these people and their ancestors... It is, of course, impossible to ascertain at what period the old Hottentot race ceased to exist and the new population came into being: we may consider it as a gradual growth of a more mixed people, and similar decline of the old parent-race, the Hottentots (van Wyk, 1939, cited in van der Ross, 1986: 2, also see van Vreeden, 1957: 24).

The Griqua were seen to represent the first generation of racial mixing – an F1 Cross generation, or first genetic cross – and they attracted academics' interest. In part, this interest was fuelled by the connection with the Hottentots who 'as an icon of otherness' occupied a central place in Western thought (Dubow, 1995: 20). Close to Griquatown, in the village of Campbell, people's continued insistence on their Griqua identity attracted academics' interest. Brink, having done research at 'old Griqua stations' in Griqualand West in the 1930s, concluded that Griqua people were a mix between 'races' who were in the process of evolving into a distinct 'race'.

> In general, the first impression one gains from a survey of the evidence here presented, is the remarkable uniform way in which, as regards the vertebral column at least, the Griqua finds a place intermediate between the Negrito stock on the one hand and the European and Bantu on the other hand (Brink, 1933: 47).
>
> These detailed peculiarities serve to emphasise rather than contradict our general conclusion – namely, that in the vertebral column we find

[15] Dubow has demonstrated how public interest in the Bushmen or Hottentots was sparked by academic scholarship into human evolution (1995: 25). West and Boonzaier (1989) have shown that South Africans generally categorised people into various 'races' by drawing, often subconsciously, on an entire range of factors including physical appearance, class, language, geographic location and so forth.

> evidence that the Griqua is a product of bastardisation intermediate in character to the known parental stock, showing on the whole considerable uniformity, yet exhibiting signs of recent admixture in such features as numerical segmental instability, and signs also of developing 'racial' hallmarks of his own which it is probable are a result of environmental influence rather than of heredity alone (Erink, 1933: 48).

During the 1950s and 60s this particular positioning of Griqua as a 'racial' category in the minds of academics, led physical anthropologists and geneticists from the University of the Witwatersrand to initiate further research programmes in Campbell. Those people who considered themselves to be Griqua experienced the 'new approach', developed by scientists during the 1960s, which investigated gene formations and sought to understand 'race formation as an ongoing process, rather than ... race as a static entity' (Tobias, 1972, cited in Dubow, 1995: 62). The research was initially concerned with the excavation of skeletal material and, especially, the excavation of the bones of 'chief Cornelius Kok (1775 – 1858)' (Fock, 1961, 14).[16] Excavations were followed by surveys of the living population that included 'finger prints, blood groups, haemoglobins, skin reflectances',[17] photographic documentation and the making of facial casts.[18] Such studies of physiognomy were especially attractive because impressions of physical differences could be quantified through 'precise, scientific measurements' and could therefore serve as a way to indicate 'otherness' (Dubow, 1995: 230).

The concern here was with racial mixing, which was supported by underlying theories of eugenics. As ideas about miscegenation and racial degeneration gained prominence, South African researchers sought to demonstrate that sexual intercourse between individuals belonging to different 'races' led to increased biological and mental disabilities in their offspring. Renewed attention was focused on categories of people such as the Griqua and, as Dubow has commented,

> (i)n the literature on racial crossing, the Rehoboth Basters, the Griquas and the mixed-race descendants of the Boer frontiersman Coenraad Buys served as standard points of reference. By far the most important focus of concern were the 'Cape Coloureds', descendants of Afrikaner, English, African and slave communities. More than any other group, they came to embody what Paul Rich has termed, in the British context, the 'half-caste pathology' (1995: 185).

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[16] Because of the high calcium content in the soil at Campbell, bones are preserved for an extraordinary length of time, and it was possible to excavate full skeletons buried without coffins over a hundred years later.
[17] Letter from Tobias to Fock, Director of the McGregor Museum, 18/ 1/1964
[18] People were classified into racial categories according to physical attributes that included the analysis of skin colour, hair texture, bodily stature, head shape and facial proportions (Dubow, 1995: 28). These scientific experiments were recently highlighted in an exhibition entitled 'Miscast'.

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Although the physical anthropologist and anatomist Prof. Tobias was at the forefront of the excavations, he never published any of the resulting material. Instead, the material was processed by a doctoral student in the late 1980s (Morris, 1992; 1997). Systematic research findings concentrated on living people who identified themselves as Griqua. The research, conducted primarily by Nurse and Jenkins (1975a; 1975b) and proceeding from the assumption that races were distinct, sought to test for original Khoi genetic features. Their conclusion was, however, that the Campbell Griqua community exhibited no obvious physical, morphological or biological differences from their coloured neighbours (Nurse and Jenkins, 1975) and that '(t)he Griqua enjoy less biological than social distinctiveness' (Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins, 1985: 224). The social practices they highlighted were the Khoi language. Xiri, which had been spoken in the recent past and young girls' rites of passage or initiation ceremonies.

Similarly in Griquatown such 'racial' differences were hard to document and apart from the occasional practice of girls' initiation ceremonies, occasional GPO meetings and limited economic differences it was difficult to 'know' a Griqua on sight (cf. Waldman, 1989). It is in this regard that Martin's comment is particularly apt:

> It is impossible to operate a distinction between coloureds and other South Africans. Attributed physical, social, religious or linguistic features masquerading as markers of differentiation bind them to, rather than distinguish them from, the South African population as a whole (1998: 523).

This preoccupation with physical difference has been seen as something peculiarly Western that supports the notion of 'races' as bounded and finite. Jackson has argued that as far as academics are concerned, 'one is "in" one category to the exclusion of all other categories. Any familiar phenotypic characteristics have been bypassed and overlooked, focusing on a preoccupation with difference rather than similarity' (1998: 1). Jackson's recommendation to avoid the pitfalls of racial classification schema – 'including fallacious notions of physical characteristics as important and defining criteria of a bounded race' – resembles Hamilton's point about shifting alliances. She suggests we concentrate on the fluid, malleable and non-essentialist nature of characteristics. Such an approach more closely parallels Griqua people's conceptions of their identity. An investigation of local emic ideas shows that considerable manipulation of the meaning of being Griqua has occurred.

During the late 1980s, research in Griquatown led me to understand 'being Griqua' as primarily a matter of socio-economic status.[19] Although physical attributes of Griqua people were not readily apparent, the people who called themselves Griqua also aspired towards a higher socio-economic and more specifically coloured status which was characterised by light skin and the ability to plait one's hair (i.e. to have hair that was more akin to European hair types).[20] As Jackson points out for the Sarsurungan villagers in southern New Ireland, Papua New Guinea, skin colour is not an entirely fixed entity and as people in Griquatown were acutely aware, skin colour – like identity – could be manipulated. In Griquatown, as in Sarsurunga, young girls were kept in seclusion; during this time their skins became lighter owing to the daily application of ochre which was later scraped away (in Griquatown) and to a lack of exposure to sunshine (see Chapter Six for more discussion on ritual). As the following examples demonstrate, these stereotypes are pervasive and, despite their malleable qualities, provide underlying themes to which people respond.

> Example One (Griquatown 1988): Ideas about people's identity were firmly linked to notions of hair. People who saw themselves as Griqua argued that whereas coloureds had smooth hair, they had frizzy, unruly hair. As one informant explained 'Yes, the difference; Griquas look different, the genuine Coloureds have long hair and the Griquas, their hair is frizzy' (cited in Waldman, 1989: 61).

In 1989 I argued that such notions were expressed, in particular, by people who saw themselves as Griqua. It is, however, helpful to recognise that people were able to manipulate their hair styles in much the same manner as skin colour could be managed. And indeed, those people who were wealthier and who tended to identify themselves as coloured had greater access to resources and were better able to manipulate hair and skin colour. Perceptions about hair as a physical characteristic that enabled individuals to belong to certain social categories were widespread and had endured for a long time. In 1975, in an attempt to write about his forefathers, D. Jasper commented on his father's father as 'old rich Jasper, or old White Jasper' who was an albino (hence the reference to being white) and who had 'long hair'. Later on in the three-page document he says 'old White Jasper had long hair (not smooth hair). Their children always played with his hair'. His wife, the writer comments, was 'brown in colour' and had 'pitch black, long, smooth hair' (1975). The purpose of this document is to write about the people and their lives, yet reading it one is struck by the manner in which colour

[19] Griqua people, as a racial category, were understood to be positioned midway between African and coloured identity (Waldman, 1989, also see Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins, 1985).

[20] See Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988) for another example of the manipulation of skin colour in the context of women living in hostels in Cape Town, South Africa.

and hair are stressed. Indeed this stereotype has persisted and in 1997 people pointed out the specific manner of hair growth that indicated that someone was a Griqua, despite their own acknowledgement that such stereotypes did not always apply:

Example Two (Griquatown, 1997):

Speaker One: look, we have, (if) you fill in your identity as Griqua, then your identity becomes Cape Coloured. Now look, my hair is a bit, now of course you can also see, clumps and whatever else it is, you can see (it is) not smooth, that it is not a Cape Coloured. I am a Griqua descendant and I remain so.

Speaker Two: and it (hair) is not actually what makes the difference because many Griquas have smooth hair who were Griqua, you see, such as Jo Little. Joe Little is Griqua through his mother. If you look at him, you would not know that he is Griqua, but his mother was a Griqua and his father was (from) another nation.[21]



Figure 4.1: Griqua hair type (the 'stripes' occur naturally. Speaker One, whose hand appears on this photograph, said they indicated Griqua identity, 1997)

Stereotypes persisted and, as demonstrated in the above example, in instances where people did have 'smooth' or long hair and still identified themselves as Griqua, the 'anomaly' was explained as resulting from a mixing between races. These examples demonstrate that the knowledge that ethnic categories are manipulated and physical

[21] Some of the people partaking in this discussion had attended the Khoisan Conference held in Cape Town in July 1997. There they had met Joe Little who was a representative of the Cultural Heritage Group. Joe was a striking individual wearing an impressive outfit that combined a leopard-skin shirt with a headband and a heavily beaded necklace. He had introduced the various Khoisan chiefs (including himself) on the first day of the conference and had orchestrated much of the cultural side of the conference. To the best of my knowledge, Joe did not represent himself as a Griqua, although he stressed his Khoi heritage and acknowledged the role of Griqua people in the history of South Africa.

appearances malleable does not translate into a lack of interest in such matters. Indeed, both members of the GNC-Ky and the people resident in Griquatown felt that they ought to be able to tell who was, and who was not, Griqua. Rather, it was precisely because of the awareness that physical appearances could be manipulated that particular emphasis was placed on these attributes. Because of the multiple interpretations possible, it was necessary that constant reference was made to physical features.

Given this continual reference to physical appearance and its malleable quality, how did people identify other Griqua people? In a survey conducted among people belonging to the GNC-Ky under the leadership of Anthony le Fleur, I asked how one could tell if someone was Griqua. The question sparked interest among some of the men who completed the survey, and John Cloete, secretary of the organisation, raised it again with me and various men seated at the breakfast table on Christmas Day, 1997. During this discussion people obviously recognised that there was no inherent physical attribute by which they could identify someone of Griqua descent. They pointed to knowing a kindred soul by 'his manner', 'his behaviour', his 'religion', 'handshake' and so forth.[22] In so doing they were classifying their fellow persons not according to 'race', but, in accordance with Nurse and Jenkins' 'social' attributes, in terms of what these people actually did – a Griqua person should demonstrate praiseworthiness, politeness and should not be loud. Similarly, Jackson has written that the 'Sursurungans focus on the performative aspects of classifying humans rather than on some fixed, unalterable and essentialist notion of bounded categories' (Jackson, 1998: 4). John Cloete felt that the only way of knowing if one was Griqua was by talking to that person and finding out his or her background. But, he insisted, one ought to be able to know on sight whether someone was Griqua or not; how was it that one could not recognise one's own people? In addition, he argued, the Griqua had been 'called by God' and as such, they had to be recognisable. The men seated around disagreed by referring to the degree to which the Griqua had become bastardised and to the various groups of people who had collected under the Griqua banner. It was for this reason, they posited, that one could no longer identify a Griqua. Ludewick, however, asserted that he had his own personal proof of being Griqua as his identity number ended in 083'.[23] Here we see how being Griqua, for a certain individual, harks back to the

[22] This was consistent with the survey responses where almost all the 36 respondents indicated that behaviour was important (88.8%). Other respondents indicated other non-physical factors such as identifying the person's leader, of forefathers (8.3%). One respondent suggested looking at a special identity document provided by the GNC (2.7%) and one respondent did not answer the question (2.7%).

[23] During the apartheid years identity numbers reflected one's date of birth, sex, and population group. There were eight 'population groups' and each person who carried an identity book was slotted into one of them. The categories catered only for whites (one category) and coloureds (Malay, Cape Coloured, Chinese, Indian, and so forth). The

apartheid identification of Griqua identity despite, rather ironically, the fact that apartheid authorities had barely acknowledged Griqua identity. More ironic still is Ludewick's opportunistic use of the new South African identification system, which does not categorise people according to race, in terms of an older system in which the numbers '03' identified people as Griqua. In the absence of infallible physical criteria by which to judge social membership, this particular member of the GNC-Ky resorted to an apartheid-governed sense of Griqua identity.[24] In Griquatown a similar process was occurring and the need to be officially recognised as Griqua was often referred to. Gert Meintjies, for instance, argued that 'the only way the Griqua case will come right is if we are photographed again and they give us back our Griqua books'.[25] His disillusioned wife said:

> They'll have to backtrack and re-photograph the Griqua. If you come to me and I say to you I am a Griqua, then I'm re-photographed. Then you must ensure that I get my IDs (identity documents) and stuff right. That I can again be part of my old Griqua *volk*. Then all the Griquas here in the North Cape will stand up, because then they are being made Griquas again. Because they were made coloureds. Because as far as I know, this clump of Griquas that I know were all made coloureds. They now only acknowledge colouredness and they are too scared to say: 'Listen here, we were Griquas and we want our Griqua IDs and stuff back'.

The old coloured identity cards, issued before identity books, indicated a person's population group in red capitals (see Figure 4.2) although, as mentioned above, very few Griqua were actually in a position to receive such cards. The apartheid-issued identity books indicated by means of the 03 number if an individual was Griqua or not. The currently-used identity books issued to all South Africans make no attempt to classify people other than as South Africans. This has been a cause of some concern in Griquatown where few people belonged to specifically Griqua organisations and there was little sense of belonging to a specific group or organisation, such as the GNC (see Chapter Five). Now that identity documents no longer stress ethnic identity, some Griqua people felt that a government sympathetic to their cause ought to officially acknowledge them by stamping 'Griqua' on their identity books and entering it into the computers.[26] Such official 'stamping' was crucial, as those people who saw themselves as Griqua were pretty much the same as everyone else and it was hard for anyone to distinguish who was, or was not, Griqua (discussed in greater detail below).

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numbers '03' indicated Griqua. This categorisation was done according to the Population Registration Act of 1950. In 1986 this Act was replaced by the Identification Act, which did away with the classification of people according to race. All individuals were allocated new identity numbers which used a '08' to indicate South African citizenship (pers. conv. Mrs M.E. Dreyer, Department of Home Affairs)

[24] Conversation, John Cloete, Hans Japtha, Pastor Ludick and others, 25/12/1997.

[25] Interview, 18/1/1998

[26] The South African Government has not, however, been unsympathetic to Griqua demands. See Chapter Two for more discussion on this matter.

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[25] Interview, 18/1/1998

[26] The South African Government has not, however, been unsympathetic to Griqua demands. See Chapter Two for more discussion on this matter.

As Kannie Koekemoer pointed out, if one stressed a specifically Griqua identity, one was liable to be classified as 'Native' and subject to extremely repressive social legislation. It is clear from the above passages that it was no longer easy – or advantageous – to be officially categorised and recognised as Griqua. Given these circumstances, Griqua people – like other Khoi and San descendants – tried to benefit from their categorisation. Categorisation as African, with stringent native and poll taxation and lower pensions, was not a viable option; Griqua people pushed, instead, to be reclassified coloured. Such a choice led, however, to the problem that being Griqua was simply subsumed under the category coloured and no longer existed as a discrete category in its own right. Only a few people were successful in being classified as Griqua and they received identity cards with their racial classification (Griqua) printed in red letters (see page 133). This was in accordance with the Population Registration Act (No. 30 of 1950) which specified that every person in South Africa had to be classified as 'a white person, a coloured person, or a native' and furthermore everyone who could be neither classified as white nor native, was labelled 'coloured'. The effect of this was that the category 'coloured' came to consist of people who defined themselves differently and who made up a heterogeneous category (West, 1971: 9). The category of people officially known as Coloured during the Apartheid era was thus made up of individuals who could not be easily identified as either black (native) or white. As West has suggested, '(a)lthough there have been a number of attempts – mostly confusing - by the South African government to define a Coloured person, it is generally accepted that a Coloured person is a person of mixed origin' (West, 1971: 9, also see Dubow, 1995). [9] By the 1960s the majority of the people in Griquatown were considered to be coloured and this no doubt contributed to Europeans' and travellers' sense that the Griqua were dying out.

In Griquatown then, people were increasingly coming to be seen as coloured. Because of the problems encountered when trying to classify people, especially coloured people, the apartheid government had introduced a social dimension to the above definition and argued that individuals could be registered according to the categorisation of the people with whom they interacted. This emphasis on social interaction only served further to complicate things in Griquatown where, in the *ou lokasie* (old location), a heterogeneous mixture of people of all shades had lived before 1968. This was so in spite of plans initiated in 1957 to separate coloured and black residents. The Griquatown Council was then faced with the tricky task of deciding who was black and

[9] 'The need to determine what 'colouredness' meant and to produce a working definition was influenced by the 'tightening of racial boundaries' at the beginning of the twentieth century and the 'accretion of Social Darwinist thought' (Dubow, 1995: 180).

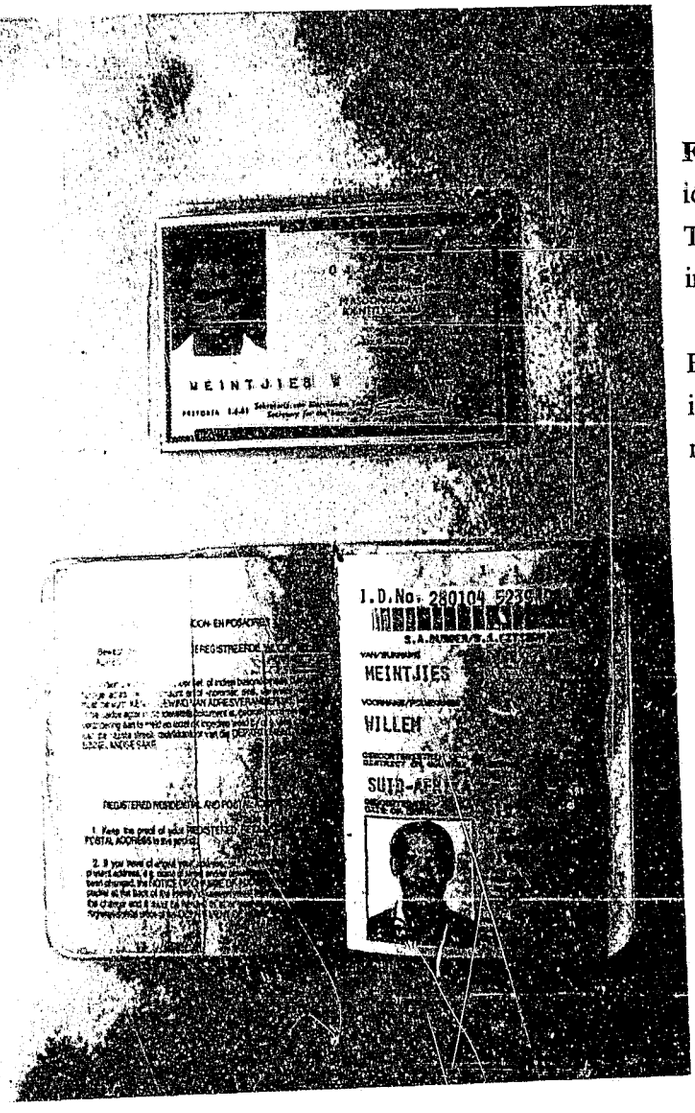

Figure 4.2: South African identity documents.
Top: Coloured identity cards indicating 'Griqua' in red.

Bottom: Identity books issued after 1986 with no racial categorisation.

To sum up, in the literature there is consensus on the Khoi origins of Griqua society and on the mixed nature of Griqua identity (see for example, Schoeman, 1996; Legassick, 1979; President's Commission, 1983; Ross, 1976; Halford, 1949; Morris, 1982; Cloete, 1986; South African yearbook, 1987-1988).[27] Both academics and apartheid functionaries tried – for different reasons – to 'fix' the parameters of Griqua identity. After an early phase of apartheid when only a few individuals stressed their Griqua identity, the concept became considerably more complex. It is evident that there has been much confusion and misunderstanding over what being Griqua meant and indeed who was Griqua and who was not. This confusion has been manipulated by

[27] The nature of Griqua society, and its receptivity towards others, has been variously interpreted. Whereas Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins (1985) assume that entry into Griqua society was relatively easy, Cloete (1986) states that intermarriage had recently been disallowed. Morris (1982) rejects the newspaper report from which Cloete draws her conclusions and argues for substantial integration of others.

both Griqua people and by government officials who played on each others' stereotypes and misconceptions. Misunderstandings and confusion have further created a channel for various people to become Griqua and to be reclassified. This avenue was especially attractive to those people who had been classified African, many of whom had lived in Griquatown all their lives, who wished to take advantage of the 'benefits' offered to those classified as coloured, but who did not fit the stereotype of what a coloured should look like. Whereas officials felt they knew what a coloured person should look like, they could not identify a Griqua person by physical appearance. As discussed above, this was a problem that academics had already experienced, but had resolved by drawing on socio-cultural traits. For local individuals, this 'ignorance' on the part of officials was something to be manipulated. They were more likely to succeed if they applied to be reclassified from African to Griqua than if they had applied for coloured status. There was, however, a corollary to such conversions. Because being Griqua was perceived by officials as being 'more like' an African person – recall Morgan's initial classification and other officials' inability to identify Griqua people – sometimes the authorities were not lenient towards Griquas, whom they would 'mistake' for 'Bantus'. In such instances, officials would refuse to hear any explanations and would implement harsher measures.[28]

Not knowing what a Griqua looked like, and the idea that Griqua people were more like black people, stemmed, in part, from the extensive practice of incorporating newcomers. Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins have said that Griqua people retained 'the receptivity of the Khoi' towards any person who wished to be recognised as Griqua (1985: 227). They argue that the increased numbers of persons identifying themselves as Griqua is not the result of natural reproduction alone, but also reflects the many adult persons who have chosen to become Griqua (1985: 227, also see Morris, 1997: 8). We have already seen some of the reasons for this tendency during the apartheid era. If an individual could be recognised as Griqua or coloured rather than African, it meant that he was exempt from taxes and from influx control legislation. It also meant that he or she could benefit from improved social welfare and that his or her economic position could be marginally improved. In the Northern Cape, which was part of the area governed by the job colour bar, it also meant that one was more likely to be able to find employment. Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins have thus written that '(I)t is to the advantage of many non-Caucasoids to seek Griqua identity; and this has been extended not only to "Coloureds" but to Khoi, San and Negroes' (1985: 228; also see Morris, 1997: 11).

[28] Pastor Jan Balie, public presentation, Thanksgiving Festival, Campbell, 14/12/1997

There were additional benefits to being Griqua. Whereas in the past various Khoi and San people have found it helpful to assert a coloured identity and to associate themselves with this social and political lifestyle (cf. Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins, 1985: 235), the situation has been reversed. Given the politics associated with the United Nations Indigenous People's Forum and the claims for land, recognition, restitution and so forth being made in the name of autochthony and first nation status, it is not surprising that such claims and status have been made. It has become more advantageous to stress an indigenous status as Khoi in the hope of land claims, possible political representation (cf. Sharp and Boonzaier, 1994) and the promise of more tangible economic benefits (cf. White, 1995). Again, the claims made and asserted by people who consider themselves Griqua do not occur in a vacuum. The now highly prestigious Professor Tobias, for example, withdrew his earlier argument and insisted to the media that Griqua people were to be understood as 'a branch of the Khoisan and not a mixture of races as had been earlier thought' (DFA, 21/08/1996). One Griqua leader in the Northern Cape, Martin Engelbrecht, hailed this comment as the first attempt by an academic to take Griqua demands seriously.[29] He further announced that the 'History of the Griqua Territories', produced by the Department of Constitutional Development in 1995, was 'racist and insulting', precisely because it referred to the Griqua as being of mixed descent, as being bastards and illegitimate; and was thus to be rejected. A similar process was witnessed at the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference, held in Cape Town in July 1997, where Alan Morris presented a paper in which he suggested that the Griqua were of mixed origin and that to present themselves as exclusively Khoi was to do themselves an injustice (Morris, 1997; also see Legassick, 1969: 197). The following response came from Kate Cloete, secretary of the GNC-Kr under A.A.S. le Fleur, who said

> Cloete: You say Griqua is a mixed race. We know it, we make no secret of it. You say that we are pure, I differ, ... There were no coloureds, all these people were descendants of the Khoi. Where do you get that name?
> Morris: I am saying there is a rich intermixture and you are putting an over-emphasis on the Khoikhoi. You can claim Khoikhoi, but there is more to it than that.
> Cloete: There were never coloureds, you made us coloureds
> Morris: There is a lot of complexity. Coloured is a bad term, but you can't just bury it in Khoikhoi.

Because of the difficult and sensitive nature of the topic, there was no resolution and the discussion moved in another direction. But what I have been describing is a process whereby people – previously classified coloured – were asserting their own identities. In this regard, Hamilton has commented that, '(o)ld cultural configurations firmly

[29] Martin Engelbrecht, meeting between various Griqua leaders, Douglas, 30/08/1996

centred in single identities have given way to situations of identity flux, an acceptance of hybridity but without any diminution of interest and intensity around issues of identity' (1997: 18). As reflected in the above discussions between Martin Engelbrecht and his peers and between Alan Morris and Kate Cloete, this is only partially the case. Engelbrecht and Cloete were attempting to force the academic community to recognise different levels of knowledge in relation to identity formation. At an international and national level, at events such as the Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage Conference, and in documents for public dissemination, it was crucially important that emphasis be placed on an undiluted Khoi heritage, not on the recognition of Griqua hybridity. At a national level, a specifically Griqua identity has become more significant and many people expressed concern that this should not be lost in a broader South African or Rainbow Nation identity (discussed in Chapter Two).[30] Here a more local knowledge concerning being Griqua was possible, and as Kate Cloete said, 'you say Griqua is a mixed race. We know it, we make no secret of it'. Kate Cloete's and Martin Engelbrecht's actions also communicate an attempt to claim the right to determine, and to articulate, which interpretations were to be put forward for public consumption and which were to be considered inappropriate.

How do these ideas, expressed by these two articulate and politically proactive individuals, resonate with those held by other people? It is worthwhile to examine 'ordinary' people's conceptions of 'mixedness' in different contexts. For the purposes of comparison, I present data from two Griqua communities, specifically the community resident at Griquatown and the GNC-Ky collective under the leadership of Anthony le Fleur, resident in the Plettenburg Bay area, Eastern Cape. In 1997 both these communities were surveyed, *inter alia*, about the Griqua collectivity's receptivity to others.[31]

Under the auspices of the GNC-Ky people have made conscious efforts to incorporate members into their organisation and hence into Griqua society. In keeping with this philosophy 25 (69.4 percent) of the 36 respondents indicated that one could become Griqua (as opposed to being Griqua by birth) by joining the GNC-Ky organisation and the affiliated Griqua Independent Church (GIC). When asked if they knew of anyone who had become Griqua, several people indicated that they did; for example, 'yes, – I

[30] This is contrary to the work of Wilmot James who notes that coloured respondents, more than any other category of people, were more likely to identify themselves as South African, and to place their colouredness as secondary. He further suggests that coloured people are loyal to the state and the representative state institutions as developed after the 1994 elections (1996: 43).

[31] The same questionnaires were used. Although the surveys covered a large range of topics, the following section draws from people's responses to these specific questions

myself. First I spoke to the leader about it, thereafter I was confirmed as a member of the Griqua Independent Church'.[32] Anthony le Fleur, the leader of the GNC-Ky and the GIC, commented that he knew 'hundreds' of people who have 'become Griqua'.[33] Another means of becoming Griqua was through marriage which had provided opportunities for a large proportion of people to enter this particular Griqua community. Just over twenty percent (22.2 percent) of respondents (eight people) indicated that marriage was a means of becoming Griqua and this concerned predominantly, but not exclusively, women who married Griqua men.[34] Pieter Aarons responded 'yes, my wife for example. She was not Griqua but when she married me (who was Griqua), she automatically became Griqua'.[35] Anthony le Fleur commented, in line with the earlier theories of eugenics presented above, that 'Griquas are not encouraged to intermarry among themselves, seeing as there was evidence of people with deformed bodies. Therefore the founder (the *Knêg*) frequently warned the *volk* against this practice...'.[36]

In Griquatown, in 1988, people did not have strong marriage preferences (Waldman, 1989: 54) and this was again borne out in the 1997 survey where 88.6% of respondents (70 out of 79 people) stated that they did not mind who their daughters or sons married. Only 11.3% of respondents (nine people) indicated that they would like their children to marry Griqua, although they would not, or did not, insist upon such a marriage. As Bettie Visser said, she 'wanted them (her children) to marry Griqua, but so what'.[37] A striking difference between the results of the two surveys, however, is that only one person in Griquatown cited marriage as a means to become Griqua. This represents only 1.2 percent of all respondents and compares radically with the 22.2% of respondents who answered similarly in the Eastern Cape survey. Even more surprising are the statistics concerning the question of becoming Griqua. In Griquatown 68.3% of respondents indicated that it was not possible to become Griqua and that they knew of no such individuals (compared with 69.4% in the Eastern Cape survey who indicated that it was indeed possible to become Griqua). Only 16 respondents (20.25%) said that they knew of someone who had become Griqua and a further four people (five percent) thought this was possible, but knew of no particular individual.[38] Whereas in the

[32] Survey Eastern Cape, Andrew Jacobus Gouws, 11/1997
[33] Survey Eastern Cape, Anthony le Fleur, 11/1997
[34] Only 11.1% of respondents (4 individuals) knew of no-one who had became Griqua and 5.5% or respondents (2 people) did not answer the question. (Note that these figures amount to more than 100% as three respondents indicated both marriage and affiliation as means of becoming Griqua).
[35] Survey Eastern Cape, Pieter Joseph Aarons, 11/1997
[36] Survey Eastern Cape, Anthony le Fleur, 11/1997.
[37] Survey No. 55, Griquatown, Bettie Visser, 28/10/1997
[38] Three respondents (3.7%) said that they could not answer the question and one respondent's answer is unclear (1.2%) and cannot be quantified.

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Eastern Cape survey, people had said it was possible to become Griqua either through affiliation to the organisation and the church or through marriage, the answers in Griquatown were considerably more varied. Some respondents said that people could become Griqua if they could 'learn the language'.[39] Five respondents indicated that African people had become Griqua. For example, 'because, how shall I put it, the Bantus transferred to Griqua'.[40] Mr Koekemoer expanded further and said 'now because the law dictated... they (the Town Council) prevented the inflow and outflow of Bantus[41] and this gave direction to many black men (who) classified themselves as Griqua in order to remain in the location'.[42] This concurs with the earlier suggestion that people identified themselves as Griqua in order to escape the repressive legislation applied to African people. Various other respondents, such as Ida George, identified particular individuals who they felt were African and who had adopted a Griqua identity.

> Ida: Yes, I know of people who are from my own family who are now Griqua. They were not always Griquas. Its about how you feel, if you want to be part of that race then you turn (towards it). My one uncle is uncle Jelico Teis, he's now a Griqua.
> Audrey: He was not Griqua?
> Ida: He was not Griqua. But its about how you feel...[43]

Two men, in particular, were identified as having become Griqua: Jelico Teis who, in 1997, was the Griquatown chairman of the Griqua People's Organisation, under the leadership of Bishop Daniel Kanyiles; and Andries Sekuti who had long been recognised as a Griqua leader in Griquatown and who had frequently appeared on television or had met journalists and other interested parties to talk about his Griqua activism (Sekuti's daughter and her complex identifications are further discussed in Chapter Seven).[44] It was perhaps because both these men had assumed such prominent Griqua positions, and were so outspoken about their being Griqua, that they were singled out in the surveys.

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[39] Survey No. 67, Griquatown, Ragel van Rooyen, 26/11/1997
[40] Survey No. 7, Griquatown, Cornelius de Koker, 6/10/1797
[41] Although there is no evidence of forced removals in Griquatown, it appears that the Town Council consciously tried to reduce the number of black people in Griquatown and to further coloured people's opportunities in accordance with the coloured labour preference policy. In 1960, 136 families were classified African in Griquatown and by 1965 this had declined to 125 families. This evidence was submitted to the Magistrate as proof that the number of black families resident in Griquatown was declining (Letter from Town Council to Magistrate, 13/1.1966).
[42] Survey No. 76, Griquatown, Kannie Koekemoer, 29/11/1997
[43] Survey No. 20, Griquatown, Ida George, 10/10/1997
[44] See Chapter Two for more discussion on the GPO and Chapter Five for more on Jelico Teis and Chapter Seven for more on Andries Sekuti

Given the overriding consensus that Griqua comprises an inherently mixed category of people, why is it that so few people in Griquatown – as distinct from the Eastern Cape – knew of individuals who had been incorporated under the Griqua umbrella or considered this to be a possibility?[45] For members of the GNC-Ky it is clear that to be Griqua is to be a member of the GNC-Ky organisation and part of the GIC congregation. It is also clear that while the question may have initiated thought and discussion, they had no difficulty responding to it. In Griquatown retrospective knowledge derived through the process of administering the survey shows that the question was not directly answerable. The following exploration of the nature of Griqua identity, as experienced in Griquatown, provides an explanation of why people were not understood to have 'become' Griqua.

THE AMBIGUITY OF IDENTITY IN GRIQUATOWN

In 1980 Sharp issued a warning to academics not to see an ethnic group as a 'sensible demarcation' for a research topic. He said,

> (t)herefore one should seek to determine the significance of these real differences in South African society, and this cannot, arguably, be achieved if the majority of studies undertaken concern themselves with the situation of members of one, supposedly 'ethnic' group at a time (1980: 2).

Sharp further argued that academics ought to be looking for explanations of ethnicity which incorporate an understanding of competing factors and that individuals may adopt different identities according to the particular social context. He recommended that an analysis of power relations was central to any understanding of ethnic identity. The resulting instrumentalist approach, later known as 'exposé anthropology', sought to provide a critique of apartheid thinking (see Dubow, 1994; Gordon and Spiegel, 1993; for historical reviews of South African anthropology). Almost 20 years later Martin has raised the question of how, given the emphasis on bounded 'races' during the apartheid era, academics can move beyond this and begin to 'define and recognise communities without perpetuating apartheid categories, attitudes and behaviours' (1998: 353; also see Sharp, 1997: 8). He suggests that an examination of coloured culture requires an emphasis on interactions and stresses the need for an exploration of

[45] In Griquatown, my assistant and I conducted household surveys. We surveyed every seventh abode (house, shanty or garden shack) in Rainbow Valley and since many people were not literate, we asked the questions, recorded and taped the answer. In the Eastern Cape, Ria Slinger and Deilia Bernado of the GNC-Ky ensured that the forms were completed, but did not undertake the questioning as people filled in the answers themselves. Only GNC-Ky members were surveyed. The Eastern Cape survey provides the views of members of the GNC-Ky resident in Kranshoek, Knysna and Plettenburg Bay, whereas the Griquatown survey provides a cross-section of the population living in one particular area. There is also a possibility that le Fleur went through the questionnaire 'n a church meeting. This would explain the consistency of answers.

practices located in their historical, social and geographic context. Martin, like Sharp, calls for an examination of the interrelationship between such practices and others performed in different settings (1998: 532). Furthermore, he argues, a perspective in which culture is perceived as symbolic and as forming a structure of signification not unlike a 'web of connections' allows us '...clearly and unambiguously to situate the coloureds of South Africa. Like a continuum, coloured culture can traverse all strata of society' (1998: 532). Such a perspective demands that relationships and interactions be stressed, in preference to separating out specific ethnic categories for investigation.

During the apartheid era there were three distinct communities in Griquatown, one designated white (Griquatown), another African (Itiereleng) and a third coloured (Phillipsville, see Map 1.2 page 14). As Sharp has pointed out, these categories were not always of the people's choosing and they were often imposed upon individuals (1980: 6), despite the difficulties experienced by the authorities when attempting to delineate racial boundaries. Nonetheless, in Griquatown, a significant overlap between the coloured and African communities has remained. Indeed, in 1966 the Town Council described the African community as 'having no ethnic affiliation'. As justification for reaching such a conclusion, the Town Clerk wrote '(a)ll the bantus were born in this Bantu location and grew up here'.[46] The following example of Joseph Mbeka shows why such a position was entirely reasonable. In 1997 Joseph Mbeka, known to his friends as Oupa, had lived in the former white area of town – in the servants' quarters of his employer – for most of his adult life. Joseph lived with my friend Sandra who saw herself as coloured, and whose sister's Griqua initiation had been filmed for a television broadcast. Joseph thought of himself as Xhosa and he has a Xhosa surname, but he spoke only Afrikaans as he had grown up in Griquatown and on neighbouring farms and had attended school along with everyone else in the coloured school.[47] His children, in typically Griqua and Griquatown fashion, spoke Afrikaans at home. However, they studied in English at school and, unlike most Griquatown residents, learnt Tswana as a third language. Similarly at Adult Literacy classes, in both Rainbow Valley and Matlhomola, instruction was in Afrikaans which was everyone's first language. In Matlhomola, however, the educator complained that this had been designated a Tswana township and that he ought to be teaching in Tswana. The reason that he was not doing so was because none of the adults spoke Tswana. They, like Joseph, had grown up in Griquatown or on the surrounding farms where Afrikaans was the *lingua franca*.

[46] Letter from the Town Clerk to the Magistrate, 27/5/1966.
[47] Conversation, Joseph Mbeka, 11/1/1998

No doubt it was these kinds of factors that led the Griquatown Town Clerk to write in 1973 that '(t)here is little difference between the rural non-whites who are registered as Bantus and those registered as coloured. The largest percentage are on the same socio-economic level and many are ... family of each other'.[48] Whereas the Town Council was prepared to recognise relations between coloured and African people, it deliberately disregarded extensive evidence of sexual relations between white men and coloured women. An unusual marriage occurred when a white man married his coloured domestic worker in 1996. His wife had passed away and, as the people of Rainbow Valley pointed out, during her extensive illness the man had turned to his domestic worker for companionship. No-one in Rainbow Valley was surprised by these events and they commented that the man was only formally acknowledging the sexual relations that all other white people kept secret. Thus, although apartheid segregated people into racial categories which were neatly demarcated on the geographical landscape, what was fixed was a physical living area and a government-recognised social categorisation. What was not fixed were the people who, like all people everywhere, were able to move between these spaces and categories. As Magubane has commented

> (t)he clear boundaries between 'black' and 'white' (and all others judged 'in-between') were colonial fictions, the arbitrariness of which is nothing new to the 'subaltern' who know that there have always been people from their communities who 'passed' through what from the dominant perspective were impenetrable boundaries (1998: 15).

Thus, throughout the apartheid era people lived 'across' the two locations. For example, during the 1980s Charles was a school-going adolescent. He was the child of a woman classified 'African' and a man classified 'Coloured'. These two adults and their son lived in Rainbow Valley because Charles' father was 'Coloured'. When Charles' father left his mother she was forced to move to Matlhomola. As there was no school in Matlhomola, Charles continued to attend school in Rainbow Valley. Later he married Marie Julies, a woman who had grown up in Rainbow Valley, and they moved to Johannesburg. When they returned for their annual holidays in December, they divided their time between Charles' mother in Matlhomola and Marie's mother in Rainbow Valley. Charles was not unique and many other families spanned the borders of the racially defined locations. For example, Sarah Kortdom responded to a question about the identity of her people in her house in Rainbow Valley, '(y)es, I am of course Tswana, my husband is Griqua and these children's father is a Tswana and that one's

[48] Letter from the Town Clerk to the Magistrate, 20/7/1973

father is a coloured'.[49] Further evidence of the degree to which people intermarried is contained in their surnames. It is not unusual to find people with the same surnames residing in both Rainbow Valley and Matlhomola. Furthermore, the surnames of some coloured families in Rainbow Valley, such as Sekuti, Gebanemoetse and Teis (or Teise), can be seen as derivatives of African, predominantly Tswana, names. Other non-Afrikaans, and sometimes obscure, surnames such as Wechoemang and Ndlebe are to be found on graves in the coloured graveyard.[50] Similarly Nurse argues that amongst the Griqua population of neighbouring Campbell are to be found Tswana, British, Korana, Jewish and 'slave' surnames (1975: 13 – 14). Thus people not only visited each other across the physical boundaries of locations, they also regularly 'crossed' the social boundaries of apartheid-instituted 'race': they went to school together, helped each other survive, married each other, sinned and mourned together.

The degree to which people had been living across these boundaries was also evident in the manner in which rituals easily incorporated and accommodated people of various cultural backgrounds. Although one might expect rituals to be ethnically exclusive, this was not the case (as demonstrated in Chapter Six). Attending a girl's initiation in July 1999 I was struck by the presence of people who were not Griqua, but who had attended the ritual because their (often long deceased) husband, father or mother etc. had been Griqua. Many children whose parents were not present at the initiation gathered around because of the excitement the event held for them and participated actively in the dancing and singing. It was strikingly evident that they knew what ritual performances were required of them, even though they may or may not have defined themselves as Griqua. This suggests that many people who may not actually practice the rituals themselves know about the various ritual procedures and meanings. This information was borne out in the Griquatown surveys where almost everyone was able to explain what the *hokmeisie* (initiation) and *mokweli* (betrothal) rituals were and how they should be performed. There is, however, more to this than simply the knowledge of how rituals should be performed. The rituals themselves are appropriate for expressing the overlapping of ethnic categories. For example, the marriage of Amanda van Wyk, alias Poppie, and Benjamin Bogoswe was hailed as an opportunity to demonstrate a Griqua wedding to me. Poppie considered herself to be Griqua and Benjamin was seen to be Tswana. Before the wedding, *mokweli* transactions had taken

[49] She was referring to her daughters' children who lived with her while her daughters migrated in search of jobs and money. Survey No. 16, Griquatown, Sarah Kortdom, 8/10/1997

[50] Although possession of a surname does not provide incontrovertible evidence that a person belongs to a particular ethnic category, it does provide some indication of the interactions between people (also see Nurse and Jenkins, 1975: 73). Thus, although graveyards were spatially and racially divided in accordance with apartheid segregationist policy, the presence of these surnames illustrates how impossible it was to implement this policy.

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place and this ritual can be interpreted as both Tswana and Griqua (cf. Breutz, 1963: 69 - 70, see Chapter Six). Similarly, although a Griqua wedding was planned, the bones from the slaughtered sheep were all carefully stored in case Benjamin's family wished that they be burnt according to Tswana tradition.[51]

Being Griqua, in Griquatown, therefore has to be understood in terms of a fluidity of movement between ethnic or racial categories. This is a point that has long been overlooked by academics such as Tobias, Nurse and Jenkins, and more recently by Morris. It has also been ignored by the apartheid and post-apartheid governments. People's behaviour in Griquatown demonstrates that they were able to move between these categories without compromising their own personal sense of self (see Chapter Seven). It was for this reason that the question in my survey concerning a conversion to Griqua identity was, I later realised, inappropriate. Griqua was not something that one became, it was not like becoming a Christian or becoming converted. Being Griqua was more about one's loyalties, associations and commitments to Griquatown (discussed in Chapters Five and Six). It is useful here to recall Jackson's work among the Sarsurungan villagers in southern New Ireland, Papua New Guinea, where essentialist and bounded categories do not form the basis for inclusion or exclusion. Rather the differences between villagers and non-natives are constructed and thought about in terminology and criteria linked to behavioural patterns (1998: 4).[52] Identity for Sarsurungans is not about innate characteristics or physical features, rather it is constructed through people's behaviour, attitudes and personalities. An examination of the Griquatown material demonstrates a ritual and daily co-operation between people differently classified but behaviourally remarkably similar. Such an understanding, contingent on the interactions of persons, stresses the ability people have to acquire a broad range of cultural knowledge that is not restricted by ethnic boundaries. A similar focus has been used by Alexander in examining the behaviour of young black men in East London. Alexander views the range of black identity as 'performative alternatives for a single individual' (1992: 24 cited in Toulis, 1997, 15). His argument is thus that black men construct various alternative identities which they draw upon in divergent circumstances and use to manipulate interaction and negotiate representation. As far as the people of Griquatown were concerned, they were both similar to and different from each other. Both the consistencies and the oppositions provided rich grounds for interpretation and action.

[51] Conversation, Sophie Julies, 8/1/1998
[52] Also see Dlamini's behavioural analysis of identity ties in KwaZulu Natal (1998).

It is in terms of this juxtapositioning of identity in the interstices between Griqua, coloured and African identity that the question of conversion to being Griqua, in Griquatown, needs to be explained. Sonn argues that the apartheid construction of borders took place not only in physical terms (see Map 1.2), but also in the minds of people (1996: 62). In Griquatown, rather unusually, the coloured location was not situated between the black and white residential areas, although this did not prevent people from internalising the message 'white is better than brown, and brown is better than black' (Sonn, 1996: 66).[53] No doubt it is this situated nature of colouredness that has contributed to the many arguments that coloured identity is to be understood as ambivalent and ambiguous (McEachern, 1998: 517). Martin, for example, has argued that

> (t)his ambiguity is well captured in the way some coloureds readily describe themselves as 'inbetweeners'. Sandwiched between the majority of the blacks and the whites who have or who wielded power, they consider their present position in South Africa non-influential (1998: 534).

In Griquatown, read 'Griqua' for 'coloured', and we will find the same situation of contradictory identity. It is useful here to turn to the work of Robins on Nama identity. In a different academic context and responding to a debate on identity, modernisation and the invention of tradition, Robins has suggested that Nama identity should rather be understood as an identity which crosses and breaks down boundaries (Robins, 1997).[54] In Griquatown, as I will argue, it is Griqua identity that mediates the boundaries between white and African communities. To be Griqua is to be both proud and poor. It is to hark back to a past legacy of greatness and of supreme respectability (cf. Ross, 1999) and to be an unemployed, proletarianised worker. As such, Griqua identity is something that was constantly being both affirmed and undermined.

On one hand Griqua identity is considered to be lower than that of coloured people. Mr Beukes, a retired headmaster, insisted that the negative associations of being Griqua were far more numerous than positive associations.[55] Mr Beukes was referring to people's having internalised the idea that high status was associated with white society (Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins, 1985; Sonn, 1996). The wealthiest coloured people tended

[53] Also see Peterson who quotes Du Bois' description of such value systems as the '"public and psychological wage" of whiteness' and who argues that notions of racial supremacy and subordination have continued to inform South African politics and identities (1999: 10).
[54] Robins argues that Nama identity is simultaneously both 'modern' and 'traditional' and these should not be considered independent categories. Like Hamilton and Jackson, he understands identities to be fluid, fragmentary and variable and suggests that as the discourses of modernisation and traditionalism are both important, academics should consider them in conjunction (Robins, 1997).
[55] Conversation, Hendrik Beukes, 20/1/1998

to be those who had most successfully adopted white standards, who were educated and who did have long smooth hair and pale skins. They were also the people who appeared to have adopted their official coloured designation as their identity. These people, like many other coloured South Africans, emphasised their white ancestors and looked down upon their Griqua and Khoi ancestry (see below). Furthermore, at a formal level, the Griquatown Council had largely denied the presence of a Griqua population and tended to refer to all people in Rainbow Valley as coloured. The few occasions on which Griqua identity was recognised related directly to the preservation of historical Griqua leaders' graves or their reburial and, on one occasion, to a visit by government researchers investing Griqua demands. On this occasion, in 1983, the Town Council presented the researchers with a memorandum in which their position on the inability to single out and acknowledge Griqua people was clearly spelt out.

> At Griquatown the so-called Griquas do not exist as a separate population group, but are completely assimilated and integrated in the Coloured group. Some of this group, who contend that they are Griquas, have kin who are completely connected with the Black community, and even live in the black residential area, as a result of intermarriage.[56]

It is not surprising, then, that few people emphasised their Griqua identity to people in formal positions and that many white people believed there to be no Griqua people living in Rainbow Valley. This lack of acknowledgement also provided a means of ignoring the disenfranchisement of the Griqua people. Most whites preferred to believe that there were no Griqua left in Griquatown. This meant that they could also ignore Griqua land claims made in the 1990s. This viewpoint, although already expressed in the 1980s as indicated in the opening quotation of the chapter, has become especially pertinent in the past few years where there has been much talk of Griqua land claims.

Referring to the positive associations of Griqua identity, Beukes pointed to the fact that there were some people who refused to abandon their Griqua identity. For those members of the coloured community who were not elite and were not able to meet their own aspirations towards the symbols of whiteness, identifying themselves as Griqua provided a means of garnering esteem outside of the tri-partite political and social hierarchy of South Africa (also see Ross, 1976:137). Identifying as Griqua meant that pride and admiration came from sources other than the apartheid-dictated signs of whiteness. Nurse, Weiner and Jenkins have commented '(a)s it happens, despite their national destitution, the status of the Griqua, as the heirs to a once independent state, is

[56] Memorandum of the Decisions of the Municipality of Griquatown in connection with the Needs and Demands of the Griquas for the President's Commission, 1983.

marginally higher than that of other "Coloureds"'(1985: 227). Griqua associations with missionaries and their Christianity had provided them with respect and status (cf. Ross, 1996). The Griquas were, once upon a time, an 'independent sovereign state' with close links to Great Britain (Birkby, 1939: 28). Evidence of their alliance with Queen Victoria is still visible in Griquatown, where the two cannons presented to Andries Waterboer in Queen Victoria's name by Lord Grey the Governor at the Cape (DFA, 8/06/1938), guard his grave. The period of historical glory, the famous leaders - Adam Kok, Andries Waterboer, Nicolaas Waterboer - and the products of their leadership form important markers. Indeed in 1957 van Vreeden found that '(t)he management of the Waterboers, Andries and his son Nicolaas, was noteworthy. During their rule the Griqua history reached high points which are still today described by the old Griquas as "the shining period of our nation"' (van Vreeden, 1957: 28). Such histories allowed the Griqua to retain a sense of pride and, as Nurse has argued, cushioned the experience of being classified coloured and its associated deprivation *vis-à-vis* whites (1975: 13).



Figure 4.3: *Kaptein* Andries Waterboer's grave (text: Griqua *Kaptein* 1820 – 1852)

This history has continued to be important to the people who identify themselves as Griqua in Griquatown. Visitors and tourists frequently come to see the *galgboom* (hanging tree) where Andries Waterboer used to hang dissidents (Alpha, June 1985). The first South African coinage, although cast in London in 1815, was stamped with

the name Griquatown and done expressly for the people of Griquatown (Parsons, 1927). As many of these coins were subsequently melted down, a full set was said to be worth as much as R15 000 in 1985 (Alpha, June 1985). Although no-one in Griquatown appeared to own any such coins, they were often discussed and they formed an important part of a heritage that stressed the achievements of their forefathers. Griquatown was also one of the first places in South Africa to benefit from a printing press, which today stands in the Mary Moffat museum in the centre of Griquatown. On occasion visitors have requested to meet Griqua people who act as personal tour guides and show visitors the memorials to their proud history.

In addition, journalists frequently visited Griquatown to write about the place and its people. Whenever this happened, certain people who were identified as key Griqua informants, such as Andries Sekuti (now deceased), were sought out and asked to speak the Griqua language or to reminisce about their history, culture or experiences. Articles about Griquatown and newspaper reports have tended to make their way back to Griquatown where they were carefully stored by the individuals who assisted the journalists. In addition, two film crews have filmed Griqua girls' initiation rituals in the past four years and various people have been paid for this privilege. This, sometimes to the frustration of the museum staff who usually direct visitors to specific people, has led to individuals refusing to provide information without some form of payment. Maria Pieterse, one of the women frequently called upon, commented on the manner in which a sense of being Griqua and ideas about Griqua land could be drawn upon for prestige and status:[57]

> Listen here, do you know what, do you know what coloured actually means? Its a woman who *jolled* (partied) with a white man, *né*. And now the coloureds are more than us. But the coloureds should be beneath us, because we are the nation, because our people had a place. Do you understand, Linda? Understand well how these things work. Look, another yellow woman had sex with, how shall I call him, with an old thing – Englishman. And in that manner the coloureds entered our land. Do you understand? But the coloureds are not above us, we are above them, because we had a land and they have never had a land.[58]

Khoi heritage had a paradoxical status. On the one hand, it has remained an important part of Griqua identity. As Jakoba, Andries Sekuti's sister, proudly insisted when questioned about her Griqua identity 'I am descended from a genuine Bushman' or 'a

[57] Also see Papenfus who argues that Nama land claims are irrevocably tied up with the 'restoration of their identity' (1997: 48). Although I do not advocate an approach that imagines that Griqua identity requires restoration, it is important to recognise the associations between land and identity. Papenfus argues that 'powerful psychological-economic animus' underlies 'the legal symbols of "ownership", "title", "property" or simply "land"' (1997: 49).

[58] Survey No. 27, Griquatown, Maria Pieterse, 14/10/1997

genuine Hottentot' and she illustrates this by making scratching movements in the sand to indicate that her forefathers used to survive off the land; or as Anna Visser casually commented one day, 'I am a neat Hottentot woman'. This has remained an important reference point for people who do consider themselves to be Griqua. On the other hand, there has been a widespread tendency in coloured communities for any emphasis on a Khoi heritage to be seen as a reference to more primitive origins and as a slur on one's descendants (Boonzaier et.al. 1996; Sharp and Boonzaier, 1994; Sonn, 1996). The Khoi component to Griqua identity has, in some ways, contributed to the negative image associated with Griqua people. In Griquatown this was especially the case for elite members of the society who looked down upon a Griqua identity: 'here in Griquatown, the people take it like this, if you are Griqua then you are an opportunist and you are foolish and retarded and all that. They believe that the Griqua is not a person what needs to be counted. The Griqua does not get taken seriously'.[59]

Such a perspective was in keeping with the idea that the Griqua were not formally recognised by either the Town Council or the apartheid state. In the above quotation Lena says that the Griqua 'is not a person that needs to be counted' and this can be seen as a reference to the position articulated earlier, that there was no reason for the government formally to recognise Griqua people. It was also in keeping with the idea that Griqua identity was somehow more ethnic than coloured identity. As such it was extremely unattractive to elites who were striving, albeit with little promise of success, to be incorporated into – or be recognised as equal to – white society. It was therefore not surprising that the more educated, wealthy and successful members of Griquatown society did not wish to identify with being Griqua.

In Griquatown people were simultaneously both Griqua and coloured and sometimes African. Coloured identity provided a means of tapping into an official discourse which favoured certain people over others; it was how white people identified with the residents of Rainbow Valley and it was a useful, official and shorthand version of who they were. Thus Willem commented about the census:

> Willem: No I told them, yes I am coloured (I) said, actually a Griqua but look my mother is Griqua.
> Audrey: Did Uncle Willem say you are coloured or did you say you are Griqua?
> Willem: I simply told them, in short, I am coloured
> Audrey: You said you were coloured?
> Willem: But according to the law, they didn't ask for my photograph (identity book). Look my mother is Griqua, my father is coloured.[60]

[59] Interview, Lena Waterboer, 18/07/1988.
[60] Survey No. 9, Griquatown, Willem Booysen, 7/10/1997

Even in 1997, as the above comments suggest, there was an idea that an official identity still mattered. As Willem says, they did not ask for his identity book, so he simply told the census taker that he was coloured. If, however, one were to delve deeper, one would discover that people's responses were considerably more heterogeneous than the official record stated, and reflected a more compound sense of who they were. Elizabeth, for instance, told the census taker that she was coloured, but when questioned as to whether this was acceptable answered: 'No, my father's tribe *(stam)* was .. Griqua. My lineage (*geslag)* is Griqua. You see, my father's mother and my mother's mother were Griqua.... if they (Griqua organisations or representatives) come here, then I hang my blanket (around my shoulders) and I go join them'.[61]

Elizabeth, in her answer above, makes it clear that she considers herself to be both coloured and Griqua and that she would join any overtly Griqua activities. Naturally, such an understanding of identity, in which people's sense of self is compound, is completely overlooked by the census and census taker. Whereas Elizabeth, in her answer, is aware of the complexities associated with coloured and Griqua identity, a more usual answer to questioning of this nature is uncertainty as to what to reply; and, as Sanah's response below indicates, a hesitation about asserting only one identity:

> Sanah: I don't know if I was born Griqua or coloured, just say coloured.
> Interviewer: But you said your father was Griqua?
> Sanah: Yes my father
> Interviewer: And your mother?
> Sanah: You can say my mother too.[62]

The point made by all these people is that they were simultaneously both Griqua and coloured. It is not that they could become either Griqua *or* Coloured. They were Griqua *and* coloured. Depending on the circumstances and their personal choices, they could emphasise their Griqua identity, their coloured identity, or both, or some other aspect of who they were. This is what, in a different context, Alexander has called 'the art of being black' and refers to the multiplicity of identities drawn upon by young black men in East London. Here, as Alexander has argued, a man's identity is drawn from a variety of possibilities and – at any specific moment – is an expression of his personal choice, his assessment of the circumstances and of his desired ends (Alexander, 1992: 79 - 80, cited in Toulis, 1997: 15).

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[61] Survey No. 13, Griquatown, Elizabeth Runcie, 8/10/1997
[62] Survey No. 72, Griquatown, Sanah Berends, 27/11/1997

CONCLUSION

Being Griqua has never been a fixed identity and although it has been possible for some people to be registered as Griqua, many others were refused official Griqua status and classified coloured. In this process their self-ascription and their own sense of who they were was denied. Whereas some people 'became' Griqua with time, and some saw positive aspects to such an identification, for others it was a category of ascription that they preferred to avoid, while for still others being Griqua carried connotations of backwardness and primitive origins. Moreover, being Griqua is an identity which has, over the years, shifted, changed, been formulated, manipulated and reformulated.

An examination of Griqua identity provides a critique of the instrumentalist approach which has been, until recently, so dominant in South African anthropology. It also provides alternate understandings of the tri-partite structure developed and propagated during the apartheid era. The suggestion that coloured identity is ambiguous and ambivalent fits into a vision in which South African society is seen in terms of a white / coloured / black divide, with coloured society forming the social boundary between white and black society and with a coloured township or location often physically situated between white and black residential areas. But, as argued in this chapter, conceptions of coloured and Griqua identity are considerably more complex than has been suggested by these theories about coloured ambiguity. In Griquatown, the divisions between black, coloured and white society are mediated through various interpretations of Griqua identity. Thus Griquatown society can be seen as being structured as follows: white / Griqua (ideologically) / coloured / Griqua (economically and socially) / black. It is being Griqua that mediates between black society – from whence some of its members have come, especially during the apartheid era – and white society – which forms part of the ancestry of Griqua society and to which many people aspire. An awareness of the shifting, manipulated and constructed nature of being Griqua, coupled with a focus on Griquatown, provides a means of understanding identity in terms of layers of complexity and heterogeneity.

The complex and heterogeneous nature of Griqua identity means that people attach various meanings and values to their Griqua identity. In this regard, a number of academics have recently called for an understanding of identity in an everyday context. Eriksen has argued that the production of ethnic relations in everyday life provides significant reference points in civil society (1994: 554). Similarly Comaroff considers that the 'making of any concrete ethnic identity occurs in the minutiae of everyday practice; most notably in the routine encounters between the ethnicizing and the

ethnicized' (1996: 166). Saunders, however, has questioned the extent to which recent changes in South Africa have affected 'ordinary people' and argues that the changes to the rural areas, brought about by the democratic transition, have still to be documented (1998: 20). The suggestion in the previous chapters has been that Griqua identity is negotiated, recreated and sustained both through state support and leader mobilisation; the leaders – Bishop Kanyiles, Anthony le Fleur, Adam Kok V, Andrew Abraham Stockenstrom le Fleur, amongst others – all exhibit a high degree of involvement with state negotiations and can all be considered to be high-profile, politically-active Griqua persons. It remains necessary to demonstrate how other, less highly-profiled men, resident in Griquatown, mobilise around Griquaness. In the following chapter the minutiae of daily life are explored in order to address this question and to begin to examine how the compound relations that make up identity translate into, and are founded upon, everyday life.

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CHAPTER FIVE:
HERE IN GRIQUATOWN NOTHING HAPPENS:
THE SEARCH FOR SOCIAL STATUS AND ESTEEM

Towards the end of July 1997, five men – all of whom were pastors in the Five Apostles Pentecostal Church – were arrested in Griquatown for stock theft. The central theme, put forward by the pastors in court, was that they had not stolen the sheep. God had provided the animals and, in keeping with Christian scriptures, they were within their rights to take the animals: 'according to the law (it is) theft, but according to the gospel there is no such thing as stealing. You only uphold parts of the law of Moses namely that you may not steal, but the bearing of false evidence against people in oppression and poverty is not upheld'
(Johannes Tulpies, Court Records, Transcription of case 232/97).

INTRODUCTION

Various leaders discussed in Chapter Two claimed to represent 'the Griqua of the Northern Cape' and argued that they had supporters and organisational structures in towns such as Douglas, Ritchie, Campbell and Griquatown. Leaders, such as Kanyiles, A.A.S.le Fleur and Adam Kok, considered their forceful negotiations for government recognition and constitutional accommodation of the Griqua an important means of returning a sense of pride and fulfilment to the Griqua people. But who were the people that leaders claimed to represent and what were their concerns? In seeking to answer this question, Chapter Five shifts the emphasis from high-profiled leaders and national level negotiations to Griquatown. Here men, having no historical claim to Griqua leadership, could not aspire to positions of influence in formal Griqua organisations. Status and esteem were in short supply and the people of Rainbow Valley had to develop ways of establishing themselves as significant beings. The central theme of this chapter thus concerns how 'ordinary' people – particularly men – in Griquatown developed dignity and respect. The manner in which they did so varied over time and, in the 1990s, did not involve mobilisation around Griqua issues: there were no people clamouring to join the organisational structures of the GNC or the GPO (cf. Waldman, 1989) and no young and/or ambitious people sought to organise around being Griqua as a cultural resource (cf. Minkley *et. al.* 1996).[1] Although such mobilisation had drawn considerable attention during the 1980s, by the 1990s the Pentecostal churches and

[1] South African anthropological research on coloured politics has concentrated on intensive face-to-face relations, social stratification and processes of differentiation, accumulation and impoverishment in small-scale coloured communities in the Richtersveld, western Northern Cape, and former South West Africa (Sharp and West, 1984; Carstens, 1966; Boonzaier, 1984; Hoernlé, 1985; Pearson, 1986; Sharp, 1977; West 1971). South African historians tended to neglect the study of coloured politics (Giliomee, 1986; Morse and Peele, 1974) with the exception of Lewis (1987), Marais (1936) and van der Ross (1986, 1993). During the 1980s Lewis traced the causes of this neglect to coloured minority status in South African politics and to the ideological problems associated with treating coloured citizens as a 'separate and identifiable group apart from the black majority' (1987: 1).

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charismatic Christianity had replaced Griqua organisations as focal points of people's activity. Christian leadership increasingly became a means through which individuals accrued status and, as indicated in the opening quotation, in which some people tested the legal system by invoking 'God's laws'. Pentecostal Christianity provided an alternative moral code and means of evaluation. Commitment to these new forms of worship, the development of pride and prestige within these churches and the lack of attention to Griqua organisational opportunities, did not, however, spell a rejection of being Griqua. Rather, as this chapter will show, being Griqua and acquiring status and prestige were irrevocably tied up with being Christian.

Anthropological research on religion in South African society has concentrated on African Independent Churches 'entirely under African control' and without links to white churches (West, 1975: 3; also see Comaroff, 1985; Kiernan, 1974, 1977, 1979,1984; Sundkler, 1961). During the apartheid era, these churches provided important leadership opportunities and were a means of garnering social status in a repressed society where African people were not able to pursue other means for developing social esteem. West, for example, argues that,

> (i)t can be seen that the African Independent Churches provide scope for leadership which includes numerous and varied positions with different responsibilities and degrees of authority. There is wide scope for promotion within individual hierarchies and, with certain provisos about those holding what we have called intermediate positions within these hierarchies, there are usually specific rights and duties associated with specific offices. The average church leader is relatively poor and relatively ill-educated – and it is important to note that opportunities for exercising leadership are available for these people in the independent churches to a degree that is not paralleled in other fields of activity (West, 1975: 75).

Leadership opportunities were not the only important contributions made by these churches. Mafeje, for example, argues that Zionism allowed believers to alter their social position. Whereas other township residents expressed contempt for Zionists, they themselves utilised the sense of difference this implied to mark their unique status as bearers of the spirit (1975, also see Kiernan, 1974). Furthermore, as Chidester has pointed out, African Independent Churches' insistence that there be equality within the religious sphere enabled both followers and leaders to assert themselves as having a particular status (1992: 113). The churches have also been noted for their important healing components (West, 1975: 9; Schoffeleers, 1985).

Independent churches are, however, also characterised by constant disputes and tensions with members frequently branching off to start their own churches (West, 1975: 48). Charismatic leadership has been a central theme of much of this research, based on the work of Max Weber who saw charismatic authority as essentially unstable (1968: 22) and as having both creative and destructive tendencies (Eisenstadt, 1968: xx). Weber argued that charismatic leaders had certain exceptional or supernatural qualities that set them apart and that they were only leaders because their followers believed in these extraordinary qualities (Weber 1968: 48, 1971: 230). In this regard, charismatic leadership is seen to be 'anti-establishment' and outside of everyday, profane relations (1971: 232). Charismatic leadership is also seen by Weber to be 'irrational in the sense of being foreign to all rules' and against all 'rational' economic processes (1968: 52, 60). Whereas Weber predicted that in order for charismatic leaders to be able to develop successful institutions it was necessary for them to overcome the anti-economic aspects of leadership and to create bureaucratic procedures; Eisenstadt has argued that the 'ordinary and the charismatic are continuously interwoven in the process of institution-building' (1968, xxxviii). West has similarly pointed out that most leaders of African Independent Churches have both charismatic and legal authority over their followers (1975: 50).

Despite the emphasis on the leadership opportunities, equality and status, most African Independent Churches have been seen by academics as politically moderate and conservative (Chidester, 1992: 113). Pretorius and Jafta have, however, argued for a reassessment of this opinion, showing that these churches 'had an indirectly political character that contributed to the rise of black consciousness' (1997: 224). African Independent Churches did not engage in active politics, but they acknowledged the political involvement of many of their followers and were highly influential with regard to South African society and the political processes that led to the 1994 elections. Such an opinion is in keeping with Comaroff's argument that African Zionism was not an apolitical religion, but rather that it concealed attempts to address conflict and inequality and, in so doing, succeeded in 'communicating its message of defiance beyond its own limited confines' (1985:262). Similarly, this chapter develops the argument that involvement in religious activity concurrently addresses political issues of status, inequality and Griqua identity.

GRIQUA POLITICS AND MISSIONARY CHRISTIANITY

As discussed in Chapter Three, one of the factors that originally influenced many Khoikhoi and Griqua to turn to Christianity was the search for social standing (Gerstner, 1997: 29, Elbourne and Ross, 1997). In Griquatown, the LMS had been especially active and it was here that the *Kapteins* – in conjunction with the missionaries – came to

acquire a degree of social, political and economic standing (Ross, 1974. Kinsman, 1989). It was through these processes that Christianity came to be central to Griqua identity and Andries Waterboer, *Kaptein* of Griquatown from 1820 till 1852, enhanced his authority through his Christianity and missionary support. These powerful Christian states were not, however, able to survive the political and economic pressures of the twentieth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, the LMS was declining in strength and the NGK consolidating its position and authority in the South African political arena (Kinghorn, 1997: 136). It influenced the 'doctrine of apartheid' (Elphick, 1997: 5), the official education policy and religious education (Kinghorn, 1997: 137). Thus, as demonstrated in Chapter Three, Christianity, as defined by the NGK, came to legitimate the political, social and economic order of the apartheid government (Chidester, 1992: 187) and it is to this era that we now turn.

OPPORTUNITIES DURING APARTHEID:

Ordinary Griqua people had relied on their *Kapteins* and missionaries for leadership and status throughout the colonial era and prior to the introduction of apartheid governance. As discussed in Chapter Three, the *Kapteins'* political prowess did not survive into the twentieth century. Their descendants continued, despite their political impoverishment, to attempt to provide leadership and guidance to their followers. Before turning to examine the role of ordinary people, it is necessary briefly to examine what became of these *Kapteins*. The first six decades of the twentieth century saw a drastic reduction in the role of the *Kaptein*. Their large extended families, which had formed such powerful political and economic linkages, were in the process of becoming proletarianised and had lost much of their power. When *Kaptein* Nicolaas Waterboer II died in 1962, it was reported as the 'end of (an) era' and 'a close in one of the chapters of the history of Griqualand West' (DFA, 4/10/1962). Waterboer was said to have 'played an active role in public affairs' shortly before his death 'when a country-wide effort was made to rouse national pride in the Griqua' (DFA, 4/10/1962). Waterboer's son was, however, considered unsuitable and not appointed *Kaptein*. As detailed in Chapter Two, Nicolaas himself 'broke with tradition' and chose the young policeman resident in Ritchie, Kanyiles, as *Opperhoof* and leader of the GPO [2] Waterboer's death thus signified the end of a period where *Kapteins* lived in Griquatown and encouraged town residents to demonstrate an allegiance towards being Griqua. The *Kapteins*, Nicolaas Waterboer and his forefathers, had fulfilled leadership roles, gathered their followers around them and advocated a Griqua national pride. Waterboer's decision not to elect another *Kaptein* may have been influenced, not simply by his son's weaknesses, but by his

[2] Empowerment Letter, 3/01/1960

foresight that the days of Griqua Captaincy were over and that the Griqua people were under threat. Waterboer thus created the GPO to further the welfare of the Griquas, and to 'try to have the Griqua recognised as a *volk* of South Africa' (GPO Constitution, n.d.: 1).

The decline of the *Kapteins* and their support structures and the implementation of apartheid meant that there were, effectively, only four avenues open to ambitious people who wished to establish themselves as significant individuals in Phillipsville. Financial well-being coupled with education and skills; Christianity; local administrative roles and Griqua political organisation all provided ways for people to develop their social standing (discussed below). Nonetheless, those people who had been born in Griquatown and were known as *boorlings*,[3] did not have access to all these avenues for social advancement. Their lack of education, coupled with the ambivalence associated with organisation around Griqua issues, meant that they were excluded from some of the above-mentioned avenues that indicated social success. As this chapter will later demonstrate, ideas about being Griqua and *boorlings* in Griquatown were associated, in complex ways, with notions of class and social status. These ideas contrasted *boorlings* to *inkommers*, or newcomers,[4] in subtle and unexpected ways that allowed the *boorlings* to embrace Pentecostal Christianity both as a means of establishing their social standing and as a means of sustaining their Griqua identity.

First, in an examination of these four avenues for social advancement during the apartheid era, was the pursuit of financial well-being through either free enterprise or secure, well-paid employment. Under apartheid, however, education and race became primary determinants in the pursuit of economic well-being and, as South Africa evolved into a highly industrialised and capitalist economy, economic opportunities came to be defined in terms of race. As illustrated in Chapter Four, Griqua people were defined as coloured and were subjected to 'coloured education'. As such, these children were not meant to be educated beyond a certain level. They were only to be able to read instructions and to know through which door to enter and exit a building.[5] Not only was their schooling limited by 'coloured education' but, as we shall see below, parents – themselves uneducated farm workers – seldom saw the benefit of sending their children to school. Indeed as Isak Greeff commented,

> ... then my father's employer said to him: no, he should not give me a high (good) education, (... the school principal wanted me to go to him in order to be educated further as he saw I was a clever child). And then my father also worked for two

[3] The people of Griquatown refer to people born locally as *boorlings* whereas the correct Afrikaans term is *inboorlings*.
[4] *Inkommers* translates literally as 'those who have come in' (West, 1971: 12).
[5] Household Survey No. 49, Isak Greeff, 27/10/1997

foresight that the days of Griqua Captaincy were over and that the Griqua people were under threat. Waterboer thus created the GPO to further the welfare of the Griquas, and to 'try to have the Griqua recognised as a *volk* of South Africa' (GPO Constitution, n.d.: 1).

The decline of the *Kapteins* and their support structures and the implementation of apartheid meant that there were, effectively, only four avenues open to ambitious people who wished to establish themselves as significant individuals in Phillipsville. Financial well-being coupled with education and skills; Christianity; local administrative roles and Griqua political organisation all provided ways for people to develop their social standing (discussed below). Nonetheless, those people who had been born in Griquatown and were known as *boorlings*,[3] did not have access to all these avenues for social advancement. Their lack of education, coupled with the ambivalence associated with organisation around Griqua issues, meant that they were excluded from some of the above-mentioned avenues that indicated social success. As this chapter will later demonstrate, ideas about being Griqua and *boorlings* in Griquatown were associated, in complex ways, with notions of class and social status. These ideas contrasted *boorlings* to *inkommers*, or newcomers,[4] in subtle and unexpected ways that allowed the *boorlings* to embrace Pentecostal Christianity both as a means of establishing their social standing and as a means of sustaining their Griqua identity.

First, in an examination of these four avenues for social advancement during the apartheid era, was the pursuit of financial well-being through either free enterprise or secure, well-paid employment. Under apartheid, however, education and race became primary determinants in the pursuit of economic well-being and, as South Africa evolved into a highly industrialised and capitalist economy, economic opportunities came to be defined in terms of race. As illustrated in Chapter Four, Griqua people were defined as coloured and were subjected to 'coloured education'. As such, these children were not meant to be educated beyond a certain level. They were only to be able to read instructions and to know through which door to enter and exit a building.[5] Not only was their schooling limited by 'coloured education' but, as we shall see below, parents – themselves uneducated farm workers – seldom saw the benefit of sending their children to school. Indeed as Isak Greeff commented,

> ... then my father's employer said to him: no, he should not give me a high (good) education, (... the school principal wanted me to go to him in order to be educated further as he saw I was a clever child). And then my father also worked for two

[3] The people of Griquatown refer to people born locally as *boorlings* whereas the correct Afrikaans term is *inboorlings*.
[4] *Inkommers* translates literally as 'those who have come in' (West, 1971: 12).
[5] Household Survey No. 49, Isak Greeff, 27/10/1997

> teachers and they said to him: no, he must not give me too good an education, I should only be able to write my name and ensure that I do not enter through the incorrect door. Yes, a person cannot imagine it....

This ideology was further emphasised at a structural level and, throughout the apartheid era, there was no high school for coloured children in Griquatown. In order for their children to progress beyond Standard Six, it was necessary for parents to send them to either Kimberley or Cape Town. As this entailed considerable sums of money, only wealthier people, that is *inkommers*, were able to afford this. A situation arose where, as no local people were trained or educated, all the skilled positions available to coloured persons were occupied by outsiders. Most of these outsiders had initially been granted short-term teaching posts in Griquatown by the Department of Education. They were obligated to accept their postings in the town in order to pay back their study loans. Afterwards some people chose to remain in Griquatown, accepting permanent teaching posts or moving laterally to some other clerical post. Although the Town Council restricted opportunities for free enterprise, it was generally these teachers and other educated persons who were granted trade licences and were therefore able to establish small shops. Free enterprise, as a route to influence, was thus not an option for local Griqua people.

The second opportunity to develop social standing during the apartheid era concerned Christian worship, Church membership and associated religious status. Only a few people still recalled the LMS Congregational Church in Griquatown (known to them as the *Kong Kerk*). This Church, the last remnant of missionary influence, was replaced by the NGSK, although most people used the term *Griekwa Kerk* or Griqua Church to refer to both these religious institutions, as worship continued for many years in the same building. Only when the reed building was destroyed and a new NGSK Church building was built, did the term 'Griqua church' begin to fall away. By the late 1980s only three religious bodies, all having churches in Phillipsville, received official recognition from the Griquatown Council: the Methodist church, the NGSK and the Anglican Church. Although there were a few Pentecostal churches in Phillipsville, such as the Church of England, the Assemblies of God and the Church of the Province of South Africa, these were not recognised by the Griquatown Town Council and the leaders were not permitted to build churches.[6] As the NGSK was linked to, and funded by, the white NGK, decisions about appointing *dominees* (ministers), *ouderlings* (elders) and other positions within the church were mediated by the NGK and tended to be filled by teachers and other elite, the *inkommers*. These people, seen in relation to locals from Griquatown, had more in common with the whites, at least in terms of social and

[6] Minutes: Monthly Meeting of the Griquatown Municipality, 22/07/1958, 14/09/1961, 21/04/1965, 25/9/68, 20/6/67, 18/10/1967, 20/05/1970.

material standing. Although Kinghorn has commented that the 'largest church in the Western Cape, the NGSK was an anchor of the Cape Coloured community in the decades of apartheid, providing not only social cohesion to the community but self-esteem to individuals' (1997: 151), the case was not as clear-cut in Griquatown. Ideas about Christianity and the role of the NGSK were integrally linked to notions of *boorlings* and *inkommers* and hence to social status. After 1994, as discussed later in this chapter, Pentecostal religious worship and a rejection of the NGSK formed important avenues for developing leadership and garnering esteem in Griquatown.

A third route to social status was engagement in local administrative structures and participation in an organisation known as the *Raad*, or (Coloured Management) Council, established in Griquatown in January 1970. Although this committee assumed the same name as the council that had previously assisted the *Kaptein*, Boonzaier et. al. have argued that such bodies should not be seen as extensions of 'traditional tribal councils' (1996: 127). Six men were chosen to serve on the *Raad* after having been approved by the former Department of Coloured Affairs.[7] These Management Committees were largely ineffectual, with members complaining that the white local authorities did not listen to their suggestions (Cameron, 1991: 54).[8] Although ineffectual from the point of view of the people, the *Raad* was part of a larger system that assisted the Town Council in controlling and dictating living conditions in the township (discussed in more detail in Chapter Six). Those individuals who became committee members tended to be *inkommers*. Because *inkommers* were outsiders to Griquatown society and owned their own property, the *Raad* thus operated to secure and define positions of affluence and status rather than to articulate an alternative vision or improve local people's living conditions.

[7] In order to distinguish between the Griquatown Council - an organisation consisting entirely of whites during the apartheid years - and the coloured Management Committee of Griquatown, I retain the local term '*Raad*' for the Management Committee. Such committees were catered for under the Group Areas Act of 1950 which envisaged the eventual 'introduction of separate local government structures' in coloured (and Indian) areas (Cameron, 1991: 49). Although these Management Committees were not issued with formal powers from the State, Cameron has argued that in many small towns the local authorities fostered an informal relationship in which the Management Committee had extensive powers (1991: 55). In Griquatown the *Raad* members exercised some control and, during the 1970s, the *Raad* committee screened housing applications, was concerned that better-paid community members, such as builders and teachers, built their own houses, and decided who could occupy vacated houses. The Town Council, however, exercised considerable influence over these decisions. Letter to Town Clerk, received 15/01/1970, and a letter replying to the Director of Local Management, dated 25/04/1971, filed under *Kleurlingsake* (1963 – 1975).

[8] White local authorities were obliged to consult with Management Committees, but were not obligated to accept their opinions (Cameron, 1991: 53). This was especially so in Griquatown, where people felt that the *Raad* did very little and that there were always 'problems' with it. In part, this was because of a lack of autonomy. Meetings of the *Raad* were sometimes attended by the Town Clerk or members of the Town Council and minutes were submitted to the House of Representatives. It was thus difficult for the *Raad* to challenge the white Town Council and committee members concerned themselves with uncontroversial issues such as the scraping of the dirt roads, the erection of street lights and the use of the community hall.

In order to secure a well-paying job it was necessary to be educated. In order to serve on the *Raad*, or to be an elder in one of the recognised churches, it was necessary to be literate and this operated to separate the elite from the rest of Phillipsville. For the most part, the *boorlings* were extremely poor, unemployed and with limited literacy skills. They seldom had access to education. Furthermore, they were the children of a generation of parents who had 'accepted' that their children would not benefit from increased education. This resulted in *boorlings* being largely excluded from these avenues of advancement. Whereas a *boorling* might occasionally have been elected onto the *Raad* or as an elder in the NGSK, these positions were, on the whole, reserved for the elite *inkommers*.

The fourth avenue - and the only one that was open to *boorlings* during the apartheid era – was the GPO set up by Nicolaas Waterboer and run by Bishop Daniel Kanyiles. It is against this backdrop that we must see the GPO's recruitment of people. Because Kanyiles did not live in Griquatown, he relied on local people -- who thought of themselves as *boorlings* – to act as leaders and as intermediaries between himself and the rest of the population. An extensive hierarchy of positions could be filled by aspirant Griqua organisers. Rallies, political meetings and campaigns provided opportunities for people to make public speeches and prayers, to undertake journeys to Cape Town to meet with government officials and to organise the local population (see Waldman, 1989: 72). During the 1970s and 1980s men such as Isak Greeff, Paul Pienaar, Andries Sekuti and Jeliko Teis were strongly associated with the organisation. They were all local residents, *boorlings*, and their involvement stemmed from a concern that Griqua heritage and descent should be recognised. For example, Jelico Teis was related to *Kaptein* Nicolaas Waterboer and therefore became immersed in the organisation, Isak Greeff joined in the 1960s because of the importance that he be recognised as a Griqua and because of his father's involvement: 'I think that if a person is a member, then it is like an acknowledgement, because if I just wandered around here as a Griqua child, nobody would know that I was Griqua. And so I felt that I should become a member, for the recognition as a Griqua child'.[9]

[9] Household Survey No. 48, Isak Greeff, 27/10/1997

RAND GPU

Volg; No. 286/Retvale.

Persoons No. 430225 5097 011

Hiermee word Gesertifiseer

Dat; ISAK GREEFF 'n

Lid van Die Griekwa Volks Organisasie is

Die Griekwa Volks Organisasie is nie 'n Politieke Beweging nie.

Adres Kudustraat 315,

Tak GRIEKWASTAD

Hierdie Lidmaats Kaart word op Hoofkantoor uitgereik.

Hoofkantoor; Foon 4885

Liphukolaan 181,

Groenpunt, Beaconsfield.

Datum van uitreiking,

1-5-82

Ellar James B.D.

Edele Opperhoof

Kommissaris van Ede

Figure 5.1: Isak Greeff's GPC membership card (translated in Appendix Two)



Figure 5:2: Isak Greeff repairing cars (1997)

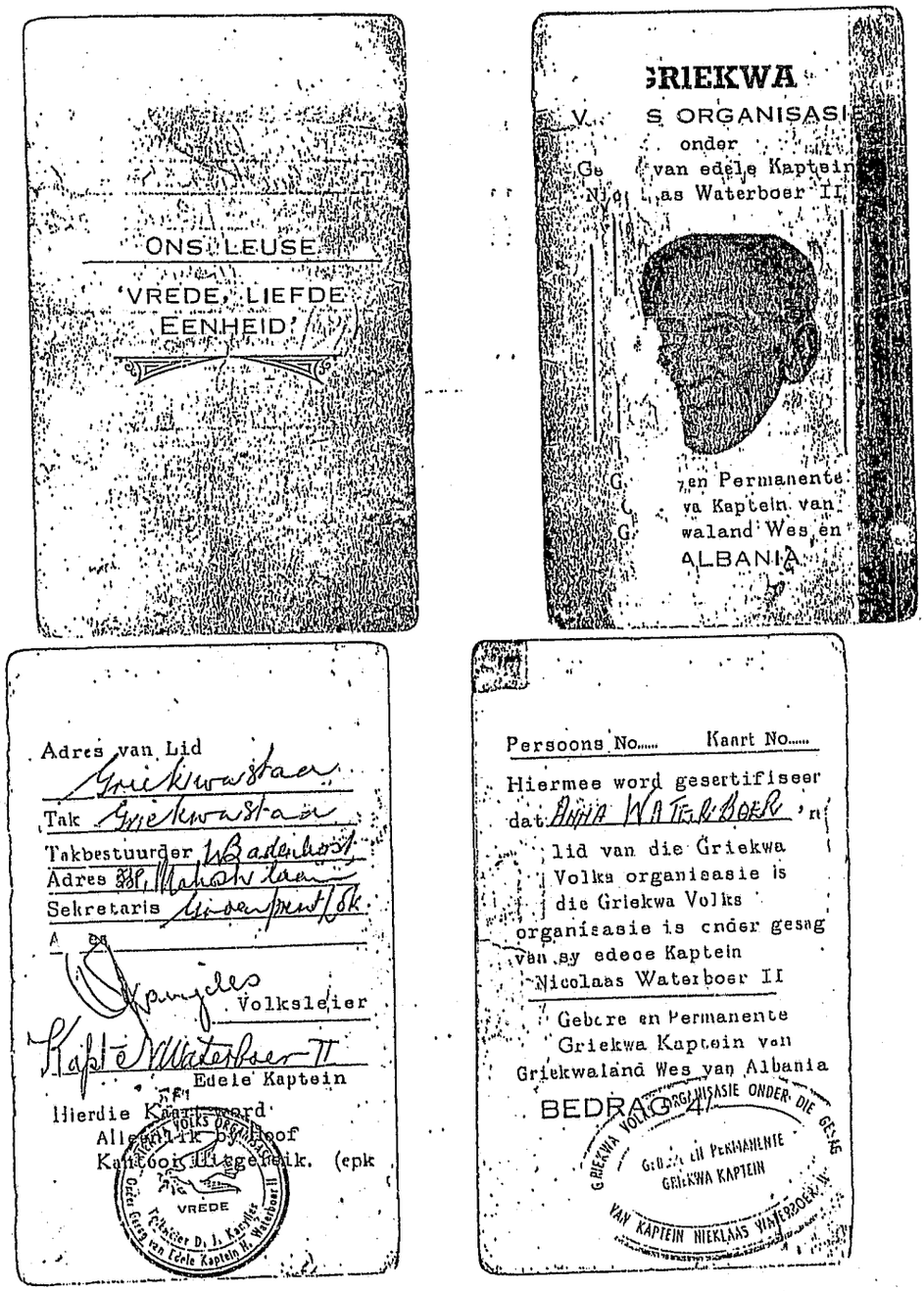

Figure 5.3: Anna Visser's GPO membership card (translation in Appendix Three. Note: here she has used Waterboer, her maiden name).

There was, ironically, a dearth of men to fill the hierarchical positions of the GPO. In part, this was because many men left Griquatown in search of work and only returned home for short periods. In part, it was because numerous men resident in Griquatown drew maintenance and disability grants and were too poor, and often too drunk, to bother with status of this sort. Ambivalence about being Griqua, described in Chapter

Four and discussed further below, also affected men's decisions to avoid overt Griqua mobilisation. To occupy the vacant positions, women had been brought into the men's hierarchical structure of the GPO. Anna Visser, Waterboer's granddaughter, explained that she became secretary, 'because so few people are interested, this branch is actually men's work' and '... there were no men here'.[10] Women such as Anna were similarly concerned that their Griqua heritage be recognised and Liesbet Waterboer commented 'according to tradition, I'm an important person, my grandfather is Nicolaas Waterboer'. Liesbet was proud to be recognised as Griqua and when researchers or interested persons enquired about Griqua activities, she was one of the people called upon to impart information. Photographs of such events were housed in the local museum and she often spoke about these experiences.[11]

The *inkommers* were acutely aware that they were not accepted into the GPO and often voiced feelings of marginalisation by the community as a whole.[12] As I shall show, while being centrally integrated into a cultural system that relied on distinctions between *inkommers* and *boorlings*, they operated in ways that stressed the ambiguity of such distinctions. Within this cultural system, *inkommers* were seen by *boorlings* to be coloured elites of Griquatown, they were the ones whose hair was straight enough to plait and who had light skin colour. In addition, they were educated, had secure employment and generally looked down on Griqua culture which they saw as being primitive. Furthermore, they tended to pursue the other avenues mentioned above for affirmation of a status already obvious by their economic success. Therefore, in contrast to the *boorlings*, who were initiating their daughters according to Griqua custom, the *inkommers* were sending their children to school and acquainting them with 'white and coloured' culture. Being Griqua thus came to be associated with *boorlings* and to be Griqua was to be poor, darker-skinned and with unruly hair but, as emphasised in ritual and discussed in Chapter Six, to continue to aspire towards the values of coloured elitism (Waldman, 1989). At the same time, coloured elites felt excluded by them. The *inkommers'* complaints of being marginalised were accurate: some of them, such as Eddie Fortuin who identified strongly with his Griqua origins,[13] were actively excluded

[10] Conversation, Anna Visser, 14/8/1996
[11] Conversation, Liesbet Waterboer, 24/11/1997
[12] Conversation, Dominee David Isaks, 16/08/1997
[13] A family named Fortuin was centrally involved in the creation of a Griqua polity during the nineteenth century. During the 1830s, Willem Fortuin was a deacon in the church in Griquatown, his son a catechist and school teacher at Hardcastle, a Griqua outpost, and his daughter a teacher in Griquatown. The family was seen to be a 'blessing' both to the mission and to the surrounding area, although a dispute over remuneration was finally to separate Jan Fortuin from the LMS (Wilson, n.d. 105, 137; Legassick, 1969: 416, 612). Eddie Fortuin, who married a woman whose surname was Fortune (the English version of Fortuin) may well be a descendant of this historic family despite not having grown up in Griquatown.

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