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Title: Methods of Mission: The Ordering of Space and Time, Land and Labour on Methodist Mission Stations in Caffraria, 1823-1835.

by: Brigid Lambourne

No. 322

Methods of Mission: The ordering of Space and Time, Land and Labour on Methodist Mission Stations in Caffraria,[1] 1823-1835.

The methodist missionary enterprise in the period, 1816 to 1835, formed part of a broader process of colonial intrusion into the lands and lives of African people beyond the Cape colony. This paper examines the everyday activities of missionaries beyond the eastern Cape in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It takes as a theme their attempts to structure the pockets of land around mission stations into orderly settlements, and to order the lives of station residents according to the rhythms of industrialising England. The paper describes and analyses the ways in which the aims of the Methodist mission were translated into everyday practices. While focusing on missionary interactions with Africans beyond the Colony, the narrative traverses the web spun, by missionaries, from bases in the Colony across the interior.

Historians of mission have often been taken to task for examining the history of South Africa through the eyes of its invaders, in both subject and source material. Missionary records, however, are among the richest sources of historical information on the early nineteenth century colonial encounter. Of the missionary societies operating in southern Africa at this time, the WMMS was the most highly organised and bureaucratic, and the most methodical about the writing and keeping of records.[2] Every WMMS missionary was "peremptorily required" to keep a journal and to forward copious abstracts of "his labours, success, and prospects ...as may be generally interesting to the friends of Missions at home" to the WMMS Committee in London.[3] The content of these narratives was tempered by the Committee's recommendation that its' missionaries

> render the extracts from their journals as interesting as possible:- they may seize and illustrate facts that cannot but attract the attention, and render their communications desirable to, the public.[4]

From missionaries on "different, interesting stations" the

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1 The term refers to the area between the Fish and Mzimvubu Rivers, roughly approximating today's Ciskei and Transkei. I have retained the contemporary appellation, as "Xhosaland" implies an ethnic specificity unrepresentative of the contemporary reality.

2 Mills, W.G., "The Role of the African Clergy in the Reorientation of Xhosa Society to the Plural Society of the Cape Colony, 1850-1915", PhD, University of California, 1975, p.35.

3 "Instructions to Wesleyan Missionaries",p.3.

4 CAD A80 Vol6, WMMS Secretaries' Annual Letter, London, 27 Aug 1829, p.2.

Committee also requested

> correct details of the idolatrous practices of the natives amongst whom they labour, or of their habits and manners; and... sketches or delineations, however rude, of the scenes they witness, or of idols, customs &c."[5]

As self-styled recorders and agents of historical change in African culture and society, missionaries predicted that their texts would "serve as a record of the moral and civil improvement" of Africans beyond the frontiers of civilisation.[6] Ethnographic observations which cast Africans as "true specimen[s] of uncivilised man", and accounts of proseletising, persecution and the occasional conversion, were extracted from missionary letters for publication, and formed the public face of the missionary enterprise. Few WMMS missionaries narrated the methodical routine of running a station in their journals or correspondence in any detail. As routine activities were considered to be of little interest to their audiences, when everyday occurrences predominated, missionaries narrowed their journals to weekly accounts of Sunday services and prayer meetings. On informing the Committee that he was discontinuing his journal, Archbell emphasised the tedium and repetitiveness of writing and reading about the daily labours of a missionary in the African interior, who

> in the history of a week [would] say all that is needful about himself; and upon Nations where the work is preparatory, with the exception of accidental and extraordinary relations, every subsequent account is but a repetition of the first.... [M]any occurrences which strike the observation of a newcomer with an agreeable impression, are to me, unfortunately, the merest trifles. I say unfortunately, as it possibly prevents my contribution to your gratification, and to the increase in certain parts of your knowledge... The many occurrences, and to some, remarkable incidents,... which once exacted surprise and admiration, are now either wholly attractiveless, or not so intrinsically important as to merit a knowledge of them beyond that of their simple being. In this way I account for having latterly discontinued a regular journal... [describing] matters of daily occurrence."[7]

Much of the evidence of everyday events and processes entered missionary texts when daily routine was interrupted or challenged.

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5 CAD A80 Vol6, WMMS Secretaries' Annual Letter, London, 26 Aug 1828, p.3.

6 CAD CO 291, Thomson, Chumie, 13 April 1826.

7 MF 137 Box3\92, Archbell, Thaba Unchu, 21 Dec 1834.

From such interjections, a fairly detailed picture of the everyday running of stations in Caffraria may be pieced together.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMMS) established Wesleyville, its first mission station in what is today the Ciskei, in 1823. By 1830, its missionaries had established a chain of six stations, which stretched from the eastern boundary of the Cape colony to the Mzimvubu River. These stations formed a series of focal points along a line of colonial penetration known as "the high road to the Colony".[8] According to a Xhosa informant, prior to the establishment of Butterworth, which extended the chain to engulf Hintsa, the Xhosa paramount, "the country beyond the Kei was considered safe from the attacks of the Colonists, as from the extreme ruggedness of the country about that river, it was thought no waggons would be able to pass through... the Missionaries, [however], had crossed the barrier", and there "would [now] be a large and well-beaten road" connecting Butterworth to the Colony.[9] While each station targeted a different chief and his people, the string of stations operated as a unit. The Butterworth mission, established in 1827, was considered the central link in the chain, but Wesleyville remained the administrative centre of WMMS stations east of the Fish River.

The ideology and objectives of WMMS missionaries beyond the Cape Colony were mediated by the outcome of their day-to-day activities. The lack of detailed research on the structuring and everyday functioning of mission stations in Caffraria in the early nineteenth century reflects a paucity of such commentary in missionary records.[10] While intentions and ideas are readily available to the reader of missionary texts, everyday activities - the methodical regulation and running of a station - by which WMMS missionaries attempted to realise their objectives, are documented in far less detail. In failing to record in any detail the essence of the everyday, missionaries silently relinquished their grand vision of directing a total transformation or "conversion" of African societies.[11] Yet it was precisely at the level of the

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8 CL MS17036, Cory, G., "Colonial Office Letters 1824-1836", Notebook Vol 2, p.218.

9 MF 137 Box 2\59, W. Shaw, Wesleyville, 4 Feb 1828. The route also became known as "the regular path from Natal", Box 3\84, Haddy Jnl, 19 May 1833.

10 But see Williams, D., "Social and Economic Aspects of Christian Mission Stations in Caffraria, 1816-1854", I & II, Historia, Sept 1985.

11 MF 137 Box 2\71, Shrewsbury, Mt Coke, 30 June 1830.

everyday, that the long term legacy of missionaries was bequeathed.[12]

Throughout the period 1823 to 1835 WMMS mission stations beyond the Colony were small enclaves of British culture. Few Africans made themselves over as God and Empire's sable sheep by living at a mission station and converting to Christianity.[13] Each station formed the centre of a wider circle of influence, from whence people came to exchange news, trade produce, and be entertained at solemn sermons on Sundays. As missionaries were few in number, and widely dispersed beyond the Colony, different personalities made the operation of each station unique. Despite personal and local particularities, however, the recorded experiences and perceptions of missionaries in this period reveal an emerging pattern in the everyday running of stations.

Until 1838, the WMMS had no residential stations within the Colony, and its missionaries in South Africa had come to view these as "Asylums for the extremely poor or incorrigibly idle"[14]. The metropolitan Committee of the WMMS disapproved of the station system as it was thought to swamp missionaries with "worldly" pursuits. In southern Africa, it was nonetheless recognised that words, or itinerant preaching, alone, would do little to transform independent African polities. A constant missionary presence was thought to be necessary if the objectives of Wesleyan missionaries in Caffraria, "the promotion of peace with the Colony - of the arts of civilised life - the education of children - the extension of the English language - and the spread of Christianity" were to be realised.[15]

Throughout the pre-conquest period, missionaries regarded the reordering of African space and time in the image of rural England as concomitant to saving African souls.[16] The structuring of mission stations according to a "regular plan" was intended to set the

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12 Etherington, N, "Mission Station melting Pots as a Factor in the Rise of South African Black Nationalism", Africa, 47\1, 1977, p.592; Comaroff, J & JL, "The Colonisation of Consciousness in South Africa", Economy and Society, 18\3, 1989, pp.267-8.

13 Most of the station residents were not converts. Shrewsbury estimated that in the first seven years of WMMS mission work in Caffraria, only about fifty people were converted to Christianity. Missionary Notices, Vol 6\192, p.564, Shrewsbury, Mount Coke, 31 March 1831.

14 CO 485 W. Shaw, Grahamstown, 2 April 1839.

15 CO 230 W. Shaw, "Cafferland", 18 April 1825.

16 Comaroff, J & JL, "The Colonisation of Consciousness", p.270.

stage for the grand drama of conversion. As William Shaw discovered when trying to establish Wesleyville, this necessitated "the employing of a mechanic with a missionary on each new station."[17] The composition of mission staff reflected the importance attached to the physical structure and temporal affairs of stations as artisans, assistants, and later storekeepers, were employed in greater numbers than missionaries by the WMMS in Caffraria.[18] William Shaw explained that the "many peculiar circumstances connected with missions in uncivilised countries", was thought to warrant a special plan of procedure. This plan emphasised the necessity of building the mission premises as soon as possible, and of collecting together a sizeable community who would agree to reside on the station in order to be "fully instructed in the principles of Christianity". Station residents were to build "decent cottages" and to "be employed in the public works of the institution, and in such other ways as will tend to their future support and comfort".[19]

Unable to comprehend the complexities of African cosmologies, missionaries were not only fixated with difference, but comprehended the differences they identified as absences or defects in African thought and practice. For missionary efforts to establish and preserve that "regular order... so highly requisite to the Prosperity of the [mission] Institutions",[20] the most frustrating "defect" in a perceived collective African intellect was its different rhythms.[21] Out of sync with western clocks and calendars, it was thought to follow that African societies were frozen in time, changeless, and trapped in a long night of static, sensual subsistence.

An integral part of the light of day which missionaries hoped to introduce to Africa's dark multitudes was the constitution of every moment into an ordered place in time. Perceiving no echo of western organising concepts in African language or social structure, missionaries bewailed the impossibility of communicating their brand of "rational" order through the medium of a rudimentary knowledge of African language, let alone inscribing these concepts on minds thought to be without memory and incapable of judgement or

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17 MF 137 Box2\47 W. Shaw, Wesleyville, 10 June 1825.

18 CL, MS 15704, Minute Book, Albany District, 1830, p.15.

19 MF 137 Box 2\47, Minutes of Special District Meeting, Wesleyville, 8 July 1825.

20 CO 208 B.Shaw and J.Whitworth, Cape Town, 14 Dec 1824.

21 Missionary Notices, Vol VI\165, Sept 1829, Shaw Jnl, 1 Jan 1829.

abstraction.[22] Perceived deficiencies in language were seen to reflect, and hence confirm, vacuums in African "customs and habits".[23]

Attending the entry of missions into the "black and unexplored recesses" of the African interior came a burgeoning of definitional knowledge of the African "other".[24] The observations of missionaries resident in Caffraria both reflected and refined changing stereotypes about Africans in the Colony and in England. The initial curiosity, and often open admiration, of newcomers gave way during the early 1820's to dismissal and loathing of African thought and culture. Such abhorrence was also manifested in a perceived deficiency in the mental capacity of Africans, thought to have "generally been much over-rated" by earlier observers.[25]

The everyday running of the station was regimented by the chief missionary, who aimed to "show by example and precept that God created these [African] people to labour", and to labour regular hours for six days out of seven, according to the dictum that "if a man will not work neither shall he eat".[26] These six days were occupied by such tasks as building, cultivation, chopping wood and clearing land, supervised by the missionary or his assistant. To emphasise the contrast between the hard labour on the station and the ubiquitous laziness of the cattle-oriented world beyond, Shrewsbury narrated the following:

> I found the Caffres basking in the sun, I inquired, "As you Caffres have no employment after milking your cows in the morning, until the herd return home at night, what do you think about in the course of the day?" One replied, "We think of nothing; we have no thoughts". To a certain extent this is true; the mind of a heathen, without the knowledge of letters,

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22 MF 137 Box 3\79, Shrewsbury, Mt Coke, 31 Dec 1831; Box 3\31, Haddy, Clarkebury, 16 April 1832; CO 163, Thomson, Chumie, 23 March 1822.

23 MF 137 Box3\80, Shrewsbury Jnl, 21 Jan 1831.

24 MF 137 Box1\18, Kay, Orange River, 8 May 1821; Stuart, D., "Converts or Convicts? The Gospel of Liberation and Subordination in Early Nineteenth Century Southern Africa", ICS Seminar Paper, Nov 1991, p.6

25 CO163, Thomson, Chumie, 23 March 1822.

26 CL, MS 15 554, Ayliff, Diary, 22 Nov 1841; MF 137 Box 1\40 B Shaw, Dec 1824; see also Peires, J, The House of Phalo, Johannesburg, 1983, pp.106-8.

and the word of God, is idle, vacant and unemployed.[27]

As missionaries were under the impression that African people were in possession of gluttonously excessive tracts of unutilised land, and interpreted cattle minding as "a means of subsistence which enabled the people to live in idleness except for the occasional diversions of fighting and raiding", there was much work to be done.[28] Treading a fine line between misperception and deliberate misrepresentation, missionaries represented African cultivation as being marginal to subsistence, which naturally inflated the reported impact of the technological innovations they introduced. As significant to missionaries as the introduction of the plough and other implements, was the regulation and angulation of agriculture. In *enclosing*, apportioning and *ordering* gardens and fields, missionaries spun an intricate web of boundaries around and within the mission village. Where recorded, the division of gardens into neat rows of separated crops was greeted with mirth. Kay, for instance, commented that:

> My black assistants were not a little amused at the order in which I placed them; as they could not conceive of what benefit the line would be, seeing the plants would grow quite as well if put in promiscuously.[29]

Station residents laboured not only to support themselves and their families, but also to contribute to the expense of keeping a missionary. They contributed produce and labour for the upkeep of the missionary and the station, and trade goods to the mission fund.[30] Everyone on the station or attending services was to pay tribute in beads and buttons to the missionary, and at Shrewsbury's first service at Butterworth, those who had nothing were exhorted to cut the buttons off their clothes as a contribution. The Committee's rule that all members were to contribute "ticket money" regularly at class meetings was introduced in 1827, at Wesleyville on a weekly, and Butterworth on a monthly basis. At Wesleyville this was accompanied by the introduction of money as an exchange

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27 Missionary Notices, Vol VI\180, Dec 1830, pp.373-4, Shrewsbury Jnl 10 Oct 1829.

28 Peires, House of Phalo, p.107.

29 Missionary Notices, Vol V, p.246, Kay Jnl, 17 July 1826. See also Ibid, p.231.

30 MF 137 Box 2\62, Shrewsbury, Butterworth, 30 Sept 1827.

medium.[31] Those living on and near the station were also expected to donate "free contributions in labour" on a set day of the week to build the mission premises.

"Workmen and servants" were usually paid in beads,[32] though at Wesleyville in 1825, William Shaw was paying wages with "a kind of tin token - about the size of a sixpence and stamped with a W., each token passes current, on the place and neighbourhood, for five strings of beads, the daily wages of a man".[33] The people here were also encouraged to trade their produce for cash in Albany for "the double advantage of stimulating their industry, and placing within their reach decent clothing".[34] The launch of a trading store at Wesleyville in 1827 was a development on the daily trading activities of all missionaries beyond the Colony which, according to Beck, far outweighed any other legitimate trade beyond the colonial boundaries during this period.[35] In establishing the store, the missionaries at Wesleyville committed themselves to a more directive role in trans-frontier trade, and effectively bypassed the taxes imposed by Ngqika on all who traded at Fort Willshire.[36] The trading store was designed to

> introduce wants amongst the Caffres, who ...will thereby be induced to trade for clothing, sugar, tea, and various other comforts of civilised life, which will have a tendency gradually to wean them from their rude and uncivilised ways of living.[37]

The store, it was hoped, would also communicate what were considered important lessons about the "principles of trading", would bring more Africans within earshot of the Gospel, as well as "make the utility of the Gospel evident to the senses, rather than

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31 MF 137 Box 2\57, W. Shaw, Wesleyville, 11 Aug 1827; Box 2\58, Shrewsbury, Butterworth, 31 Dec 1827. See also, Beck, R.B., "The Legalisation and Development of Trade on the Cape Frontier: 1817-1830", PhD, University of Indiana, 1987, Ch 2.

32 MF 137 Box 2\57, Shrewsbury, Butterworth, 30 Sept 1827.

33 MF 137 Box 2\45, W. Shaw, Wesleyville, April 1825.

34 MF 137 Box 2\48, Kay, Grahamstown, July 1825.

35 Beck, R.B., "Bibles and Beads: Missionaries as Traders in Southern Africa in the early Nineteenth Century", Journal of African History, 30, 1989, p.213.

36 Peires, House of Phalo, p.101-2.

37 Missionary Notices, Vol V, p.298, Shrewsbury 31 Dec 1826.

the reason of the people".[38] Unlike other colonial traders, who had ceased trying to trade with clothing as there was so little demand for it, the Wesleyville store both stimulated a demand for, and principally sold, clothing.[39]

Station residents were also encouraged to seek employment beyond the confines of the station. According to Thomson, most of the residents on stations near the frontier had laboured in the Colony, and were no strangers to wage labour.[40] Prior to the Proclamation of March 1820 which made it illegal for colonists to employ "foreigners" or black Africans, the chiefs near the frontier appear to have facilitated the employment of Xhosa in the Colony. They objected, however, to commandoes who collected people and removed them to the Colony, hence bypassing the chiefs.[41] Despite the legalities, colonists, particularly farmers, continued to employ Xhosa people as labourers.[42]

When missions to Ngqika, Ndlambe and Phato were established, missionaries rather than chiefs began to facilitate such employment, and chiefs were reported to complain that the missionaries would "baptise the people and then send them out of the country".[43] Most of the approximately 1000 Khoi in the "Hottentot Corps" and the Africans who made up the "Caffre Commandos", for instance, came from missionary establishments within and without the Colony.[44] The Wesleyans, it has often been noted, retained the favour of the wealthier settlers as they were so active in obtaining labour for Albany. Wesleyville, in particular, was seen as an excellent example of the utility of

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38 Ibid.

39 Beck, "The Legalisation and Development of Trade", p.280-288.

40 CAD CO163, Thomson, Chumie, 22 Oct 1822.

41 CAD CO163, Brownlee, Chumie, 20 Jan 1822.

42 Crais, C, The Making of the Colonial Order, Cambridge, 1992, pp.96-100; Peires, House of Phalo,pp104-7.

43 Williams, D, "Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony, 1799-1853", PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, 1959, p.327.

44 Missionary Notices, Vol III\68, Aug 1821, p122, W. Shaw Jnl, 25 Dec 1820; on the existence of "Caffre Commandos" in this period see CAD CO208 Philip, Cape Town, 25 June 1824. I am not aware of any research on Africans in the colonial army in this period.

missions in Caffraria.[45]

Africans who came to live on mission stations were thought to need "the courage to brave the frowns of the world, and sustain that loss of their worldly all which would probably follow".[46] Most came to the stations as they had nothing to begin with, forming what Peires terms "pitiful communities of misfits and refugees".[47] The act of moving onto a mission station fitted into existing patterns of movement from the domain of one chief or headman to another, but once there, those who moved began to "learn the habits of industry" of a conflicting world.[48] Those who came to live and/or work on a mission station were regarded as pariahs, "fools and madmen" by their peers.[49] The chiefs seem to have been consistently hostile to the employment of their subjects on stations. Kay noted that the workmen at Butterworth were too scared and embarrassed to receive their wages with Hintsa looking on, and at Chumie those on the station "stopped working, put on their karosses and walked about as if they were merely onlookers, and not mission inhabitants" when Ngqika arrived.[50]

When the WMMS began to establish stations beyond the frontier, there was much debate about the propriety of sending white women into the wilderness, and the dangers of single missionaries residing in the midst of lascivious African women.[51] Regarding the Caffrarian missions, this debate was resolved when the value of the missionary wife as a domestic example became apparent. William Shaw informed the Committee that "the peculiar circumstances connected

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45 Williams, D, "Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier", p.400, p.497. The interconnections of mission stations and the Cape Colony are covered in more detail in another chapter.

46 Missionary Notices, Vol VI\180, Dec 1830, p.371, Shrewsbury Jnl, 25 July 1829.

47 MF 137, Box 2\71, Shrewsbury, Mt Coke, 30 June 1830; Peires, House of Phalo, p.106.

48 Missionary Notices, Vol VI\189, Sept 1831, p.516, Ayliff, 13 Dec 1830; MF 137 Box 3\96, Ayliff, Grahamstown, 12 June 1835; Peires, House of Phalo, pp.106-7; Crais, The Making of the Colonial Order: White Spremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, Cambridge, 1992, pp.102-3.

49 Williams, D, "Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier", p.332.; The Memorials of the Reverend J V E Shrewsbury, pp280-1, 296.

50 MF 137 Box 2\71, Kay, Butterworth, 30 May,1830; Williams, D, Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier", p.324.

51 MF 137 Box 1\6, Thom,G, Cape Town, 8 March 1818.

with our Cafferland missions ...are such as plainly indicate the propriety of all our Caffreland Missionaries being married men".[52] The wives of missionaries are conspicuous in their absence from missionary journals and letters. For the many women who sought refuge at mission stations to escape unwanted marriages, the family unit of the resident missionary provided a glimpse of patriarchy of a more austere kind. The resistance of women to missionary dictates about polygamy, which forced WMMS missionaries to alter the rule forbidding partners in polygamous marriages to join the Methodist Society, suggests that this was not an inspiring example.[53]

Symbolic of the austere intrusiveness of the missionary presence was the harsh manner in which Africans were summoned to the station. The beginning of each working day was announced by the summons of a whip cracking, or a gunshot, from the mission premises. Whip-cracking was the most common substitute for a bell.[54] Symbolic noise at regular intervals during the day was intended to teach Africans the value of time, and to convey notions of when it was considered correct to engage in different activities. By 1830, Shepstone claimed the concept of a time to work was making a little headway:

> for the first time on this side of the Fish River, an intimation was conveyed to us, that the value of time was understood. A woman said one morning "Pay me now for my milk, for it is time; I want to work in my garden". This trifling circumstance speaks volumes, as to the regular and systematic industry of the people... after living seven years in Caffreland, this was the first time he had heard such an expression from a native, whose only care about time, generally speaking, is how to kill it[55].

Conveying the concept of the Sabbath was the starting point for ordering days into weeks. Sundays were characterised by displays of pomp and ceremony which set them apart from days of trade and labour. In addition to the call of the whip, the arrival of each Sunday was marked by ceremonies such as the raising of the

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52 MF 137 Box 3\83 W. Shaw, Grahamstown, 21 Dec 1832.

53 MF 137 Box 3\83, W. Shaw, Grahamstown, 26 Nov 1832.

54 Missionary Notices, Vol IV\97, Jan 1824, p.202, W.Shaw, 28 Aug 1823; Ibid, IV\112, April 1825, p436, Edwards Jnl, 17 Dec 1823. Hodgson earned the nickname "Come-Here-So" for his verbal summonses. Missionary Notices, Vol IV\107, p.356, Broadbent Jnl, 31 March 1824.

55 Missionary Notices, Vol VI\189, Sept 1831, p.520, Boyce 29 Nov 1830.

Union Jack.[56] Travelling, trading and agricultural tasks were prohibited, as the day was to be devoted to compelled to build "colonial style" cottages,[57] huts "constructed after the manner of the natives... were not allowed to form any part of the village plan".[58] Traditional dwellings seem to have been situated on the outskirts, and not considered part of the nucleus, of the station. Shrewsbury's comment in 1826 that Mount Coke and Wesleyville would "soon become pretty villages and form a striking contrast with the smoky huts of the natives that surround them" suggests that the seven "native huts" in the total fourteen which comprised the station were not considered part of the "regular village", but as part of the surroundings.[59] He elaborated that:

> wherever we fix our abode, we do not allow smoky huts, like those which form the Caffre Kraals, to be erected; but any Natives wishing to reside near us, must build a neat wattled cottage, which requires nothing more than his labour, so as to unite cleanliness and comfort in their habitations.[60]

Though these houses were built of mud, their outward appearance disguised this as they were white-washed twice a year. "Colonial style cottages" were plotted along straight lines, and built close together. Missionaries controlled admission to the station, decided where houses were built, planned and alloted gardens and fields, and influenced the choice of crops to be cultivated. While no missionaries in this period recorded African distaste for living in villages, aversion to such settlement was expressed in absentia.

Donning European clothes was regarded as the first step along the glittering highway to christianity and civilisation. Those who walked this road, hoped missionaries, would be made over from the inside-out, and the outside-in.[61] As clothing was recognised as the most visible outward mark of civilisation, the obverse was held to be true of an absence of clothing, which was interpreted as

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56 MF 137 Box 3\84, Palmer, Morley, 31 April 1833.

57 Williams, D, "Social and Economic aspects of Christian Mission Stations in Caffraria, 1816 - 1854 - Part 1", Historia, Sept 1985", p.33, 35.

58 Kay, S., Travels and Researches in Caffraria, London, 1833, pp.32-3.

59 MF 137 Box 2\55 Shrewsbury, Wesleyville, 31 Dec 1826.

60 Missionary Notices, Vol V, 1826-8, p.298, Shrewsbury 31 Dec 1826, my emphasis.

61 Stuart, D, "Converts or Convicts?"

reflecting the wretchedness of the state of uncivilised man.[62] Shrewsbury, the initiator of the mission to Hintsa, responded most violently to manifestations of African sexuality, and male nudity became his special crusade: "[O]f all disgusting practices, none more annoys Europeans than the habit of Caffre men going about in a state of perfect nudity".[63] He was most angered by the amusement with which his opinions on clothing and nudity were greeted. Deeply disturbed by the constant ridicule of his notions of propriety, he informed the committee that nothing could "sooner excite laughter and merriment in a Kaffir than to be reminded by a missionary that while hearing the word of God, it is expected that he will decently draw his kaross around his person".[64] Most WMMS missionaries recovered from the initial shock, and restricted their condemnations of naked sexuality to requests that anyone entering mission space, or listening to the gospel, be decently clad.

English clothing was apparently not to the taste of many African men and women. While the people at Wesleyville were reported to be "willing to conform, in regard to dress, to our feelings of decency", they expressed their distaste at the style of the clothing sent out, preferring draped lengths of fabric to "the pattern of the made up articles". Shaw informed the Committee:

> Strange as it may appear to you, they are not very easy to please in this respect. While the benevolent ladies take the trouble of making up these articles, I know it will not be easy for you to represent it to them as <u>unnecessary</u> trouble, lest they should be discouraged in their good work. But when remnants &c are presented for the Caffre Mission, you need not [go to]... the trouble of getting them made up, as <u>in general</u> they will render greater service <u>unmade</u>.[65]

The rigid distinction drawn between the station and the surrounding social universe, and between African and settler worlds is curiously illustrated by Mrs Ayliff's insistence that the children who attended the Butterworth school maintain an outwardly different appearance while on the station to their appearance without. Mrs Ayliff thought proper to keep all the children's clothes at the school. These were costumes to be donned when the

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62 CL MS 1109 Diary of John Ayliff, 17 Oct 1830.

63 MF 137 Box 2\60, Shrewsbury, Butterworth, 31 March 1828.

64 <u>Missionary Notices</u>, Vol VII\194, Feb 1832, p.26, Shrewsbury, 30 June 1830.

65 MF 137 Box2\58, W. Shaw, Wesleyville, 13 Dec 1827.

children arrived at the station, and removed when they left. [66]

Bewailing that they toiled in vain, missionaries refused to accept defeat in their efforts to remould the African landscape in the image of rural England. Above all they blamed the chiefs and others in positions of power for their want of success, and drew on the mission village model in their suggestions to Government that Caffraria be placed under British rule and the people resettled "not [in] large Native settlements as at Kat River... but [in] small native villages".[67] This visionary utility of the mission village as a colonial settlement plan was a model many years in the making, before becoming government policy. The immediate social and economic influence of WMMS stations in Caffraria was limited in scale, not design, but until more detailed work has been done on the strong economic, social and political links of stations with the Cape colony and African societies, their impact remains difficult to estimate.[68]

The more immediate political impact of Wesleyan missionaries derived in the main from their interconnections with the Colony, particularly their intimacy with Colonial Officials. The presence of the Colony as a back-up and base camp conferred a perceived inexorability to the penetration and entrenchment of missionaries beyond its boundaries, and to the gradual incorporation of African polities within the colonial nexus.[69] The practical efforts of missionaries to repattern the everyday lives of Africans, however, were by no means as inevitable.

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66 CL MS 15529 Transcribed Extracts of John Ayliff's Journal, 9 Nov 1834.

67 CAD CO 485, W Shaw, Grahamstown, 2 April 1839.

68 Williams, D., "Social and Economic aspects of Christian Mission Stations in Caffraria, p.47.

69 MF 3\103, W. Shaw, Grahamstown, 23 Feb 1837.