

## Chapter Three: From Freehold to Model Township: The Making of Mpumalanga - Space, Control and a 'New' Zulu Identity

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter foregrounds the argument that 1987 represents a primary rupture in the politics of Natal. Its purpose is to sketch a historical narrative of the Hammarsdale area in order to understand the way in which the space, Mpumalanga, has been constructed. This historical narrative, exploring the intertwining themes of identity, place, patriarchy (embodying both gender and generation), power, authority, and modalities of governance will demonstrate the totality of this rupture. Furthermore, a history of the locale, detailing the changing configurations of economic and political interests, modalities of governance, ethnic identities, and the politics of gender and generation, establishes a vantage point from which to look forward to the post-1987 period. As this chapter will demonstrate Mpumalanga Township and the surrounding area had been the site of other conflicts and struggles prior to the political violence of the 1980s. Unlike the post-'87 period, these earlier struggles were kept in check, with the state acting as a force of order and containment. Thus my argument is that political violence needs to be located in a place where space had already acquired particular meanings. These spaces have a history; they were not just empty spaces to be inscribed with meaning in the current period.

The chapter will show that while the strong *amakholwa*<sup>1</sup> identity of the founding community dissipated with the influx of new residents into Georgedale, this legacy enabled the formation of the elite in the new township and the existence of (a)

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<sup>1</sup> *Kholwa* means 'believers', most Christian converts lived in communities on mission reserves land know as *kholwa* areas. In many of these areas residents formed themselves into tribes, *amakholwa*, and elected chiefs to govern them. *Kholwa* areas as well as the *amakholwa* themselves fell outside of customary law as inscribed in the Natal Native Code. Many have argued (see Meintjes, 1990:126) that

different version(s) of Zulu identity. If the states' project of herding the African population into urban townships was to be successful then these legacies needed to be disciplined. Transferring these townships to KwaZulu was a key factor in this process. However, the establishment of new forms of governance answerable to KwaZulu was not just about the enforcement of grand apartheid with its racially segregated spaces, it was also about re-shaping the communities' subjectivities as KwaZulu subjects and citizens. Key to this was the establishment of the Inkatha branch in the new township, and its hegemonic project of redefining what it meant to be Zulu and a loyal KwaZulu subject. As the chapter will show this was not without conflict. Yet the conflict in this period is markedly different in both form and intensity from the political violence of the 1980s. Thus, the discussion in this chapter provides weight to the thesis' argument that political violence was an unprecedented form of conflict, that reterritorialised and politicised the spaces of everyday life as well as remaking political identities.

The chapter attempts to periodise this historical narrative. A major project of the South African apartheid state was to organise and racially demarcate both the countryside and the urban areas. State interventions in ordering the ownership of land and living spaces have had, I would suggest, the most marked effect on the lives of ordinary people. These interventions imposed new spatialities on their lives, changed their social relationships, and forced them to accede to new bureaucratic powers and forms of local government. It was in the reordering of these spatialities that new identities were formed.

The chapter begins by providing a brief background to, and history of, the area prior to the 1950s. Government attempts to control access to land and enact systems of local government predate the Nationalist Party government. The first two sections discuss the establishment of Georgedale as a mission area with its attendant form of

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the *amakholwa* culture was a hybrid of Christian modernity and African traditionalism. This was one

*kholwa* governance and identity. I shall give some indication of the socio-economic conditions, class formations, the local political dynamics and power blocs in this period. The later period sees state attempts to bring the *amakholwa* community under control by changing the form of local government.

The early 1960s marks a period of transition. The residents of the Georgedale-Hammarsdale complex were to experience the first of a series of major upheavals in their lives when the area was marked for expropriation. Prior to this residents had some autonomy over their lives and some control of their environment. With the coming to power of the Nationalist Party Government in 1948, this autonomy was slowly brought under legislative control. 1961 marks the beginning of a period of dramatic change and uncertainty. The next decade saw major changes and violent upheavals in their lives as they were removed and relocated into the newly built Mpumalanga Township.

The third periodisation begins in the late 1960s / early 1970s with life in Mpumalanga Township. This section demonstrates that as new political structures, forms of governance and administrative procedures were established it became necessary for residents to adjust to new life-styles and urban cultures. In the process residents acquired (a) new urban identities(y). While the strong *amakholwa* identity of previous decades had dissipated, this history had provided Georgedale residents with a certain independence from both the state and KwaZulu. Now residents found themselves incorporated into KwaZulu with the resulting pressures to become loyal Zulu subjects. These pressures were central in the creation of new political and economic elites. Local traders marginalised by this group formed a new organisation to advance their interests. The chapter concludes by examining emerging conflicts between this group and Inkatha. While these conflicts never assumed the intensity of the political violence that consumed the township from the mid-1980s, they were

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version of Zulu identity available to Natal Africans (see McClendon, 2002:11).

important in challenging Inkatha's hegemonic project and offering a counter-identity to Inkatha.

This narrative emphasises three, more abstract, points. Firstly, it shows that identity emerged in relationship to a range of complexities. Factors that were important in identity formation during this period included land, organisational membership, histories of association, religion, gender and age. Secondly, it demonstrates the interconnections of time and space; the changing forms of governance, power and authority are closely connected to changes in place and space, yet central to the analysis is the need to periodise these shifts. Thirdly, it demonstrates the historical heterogeneity and co-existence of different forms of (Zulu-)identity.

### **3.2 Establishing a Mission: The Roots of Power, Governance and Identity**

The Mpumalanga township was built in 1968 on freehold mission land. These mission roots shaped the character of the area and determined the key features that configured its future. Primary amongst these was the *amakholwa* character of the area. This determined the forms of governance, ethnic identities and the politics of gender and generation that were found in the area. Secondly, the patterns of land-ownership, established at this time, were to shape the economic and political elites of the area.

In 1843 the British authorities in the Cape Colony issued a proclamation annexing Natal. Within a few years Theophilus Shepstone, Natal's Secretary for Native Affairs, began to map out the sections of the colony that would be available for settler occupation and those parts where the indigenous people would live in 'reserves'. In addition to the 'native' reserves owned by the crown, Africans could also occupy land in the mission reserves.

The 'Shepstone system' was a model of 'indirect' rule that allowed the colonial

government to rule African people through the agency of African chiefs. Some of the chiefs (*amakhosi*) had a hereditary claim and others were appointed, nevertheless, they all relied on the continual approval of the colonial government for their positions. African 'customary law' was devised utilising a mixture of indigenous custom and British legal procedure. This ensured that the hierarchical and patriarchal systems of the pre-colonial period were codified in a system enforced by colonial magistrates and the *amakhosi*. Guy (1997) called the Shepstone system an 'accommodation of the patriarchs'; it entrenched patriarchal and gerontocratic power within African societies. However, as McClendon (2002:12) observes African societies were fluid and there were opportunities for women and juniors to challenge and limit the power of senior males.

Throughout the late nineteenth century the colonial authorities continued to codify customary law. According to Berry, (cited in McClendon, 2002:17) both customary law and indirect rule were 'built on a foundation of conflict and change'. Challenges to patriarchal authority were central to these conflicts and changes.

At a time when young men pursued wage labour, homestead women produced grain for the market, fathers demanded inflated and sometimes monetised bridewealth, and young women sought refuge in mission enclaves from polygynous elderly husbands, the ideology of customary law cast the chieftdom and the homestead as timeless, well-ordered bastions of respect, hierarchy and contentment. (McClendon, 2002:17)

In 1891 the Natal Code of Native Law was fully codified by the Natal Legislative Council. Women were subjugated to men and children to their father. By placing women as perpetual minors and requiring all residents of the *umuzi* to 'render obedience, respect, and wages to the *umnumzane*, and through him to the *inkosi*' (McClendon, 2002:18) patriarchal and gerontocratic power was legally entrenched.

In implementing these measures, Shepstone did not always have the support of the Natal settlers. Instead of protecting and reinforcing African patriarchy, the settlers would have preferred a weakening of the system that kept young men tied to the African household. The settlers argued that

The reserve system bolstered the homestead economy and encouraged homestead heads to ignore colonial labour needs. ... Colonial farmers advocated laws designed to undermine homestead heads' control over youths and to compel African sons and daughters to work on the settlers farms. (Carton, 2000:32)

In 1864 the African reserves were placed under the administration of the Natal Native Trust, a government body that safeguarded African rights to hold communal title to their land. The Shepstone system had allowed few instances where Africans could hold individual title to land. However, one opportunity for individual tenure was provided by the mission societies (see Surplus People's Project, 1983b:24). Colonial Natal was the site of intense missionary activity (see Surplus People's Project, 1983b:19). The missionaries were strongly supportive of individual land tenure amongst Africans. Within this they encouraged the development of

self-sufficient, petty commodity-producing units based on the nuclear household and on family labour. The nature of the productive process in these households made them resemble those of settler society, though they also shared aspects of indigenous, kinship-based households in the reserves. (Meintjes, 1990: 132)

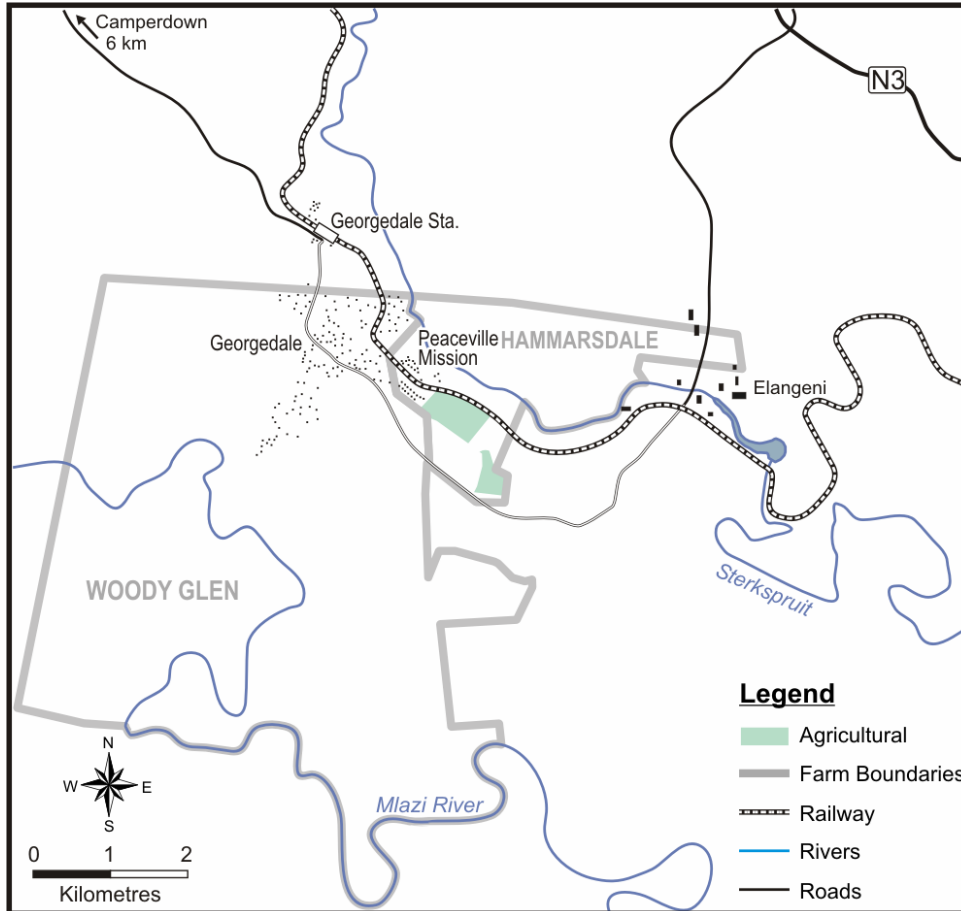
The first mission reserves were demarcated in 1856 and by 1864 there were twenty-one mission reserves (later adjusted to nineteen). A prosperous *amakholwa* group emerged within these areas (see Etherington, cited in Surplus People's Project, 1983b:20).

In 1862 the Reverend John Allsopp of the Methodist Church bought the farms Woody Glen and Georgedale in the Shongweni/Hammarsdale area (see Map 4). He wished to acquire land for African Christians from the Verulum area in order to establish a mission<sup>2</sup> (Laredo, 1968:70). The Mission Society bought the land with the intention that the *amakholwa* who settled there should purchase their land from the Missionary Society. They would acquire freehold rights along with the title deeds to

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<sup>2</sup> Pietermaritzburg Archives Repository (PAR), Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1B, Letter to magistrate 30 June 1951.

**MAP 4: LOCATION OF GEORGEDALE AND WOODY GLEN FARMS IN THE CAMPERDOWN MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT (c1957)**



the land. Besides being seen as a way to finance the establishment of the mission (Laredo, 1968:71), it also fitted with the Christian-mission ideology to improve the conditions of the *amakholwa* (Brookes & Hurwitz, cited in Laredo, 1968). Christian Luthayi was elected leader of the group of people who made the move from Verulum to Georgedale. A section of the Natal Code, promulgated in 1871, stipulated that the leader of the *amakholwa* community would become the chief (Laredo, 1968:71). However, it wasn't until 1880 that a *amakholwa* tribe was formed at Georgedale

under the chieftainship of Christian Luthayi.<sup>3</sup> Membership of the community could only be obtained by conversion or baptism.

As stated earlier this history resulted in a number of distinguishing features. I shall briefly outline them below. It should be noted that these themes will reoccur throughout this chapter. Most significantly, this community owned land. Throughout the twentieth century the right of Africans to own land was contested by the state. The various measures enacted by government (see below) to restrict African ownership of land shaped the community. Furthermore, account needs to be taken of its *kholwa* beliefs and associated values (see Marks, 1989) and privileges not least of which was exemption from the Natal Code. Finally, the membership criteria resulted in a small distinct group of original families. These families formed the basis of the elite in the area. They were to remain amongst the elite until the forced removals of the 1960s.

The Christian-mission ideology of individual land tenure for Africans was not widely accepted in colonial Natal. Soon after achieving responsible government in 1883, the settlers implemented measures to restrict African access to land tenure (Surplus People's Project, 1983b:25). In the 1890s mission reserves were closed to individual ownership and in 1903, the Land Department was instructed to refuse all African bids on the sale of crown land.

The 1913 Land Act, which scheduled land as Native Reserves, continued a process of exclusion that had already begun prior to Union.<sup>4</sup> Much of the scheduled land was based on existing reserves and locations established in the colonial period.

According to the Surplus People's Project (SPP) report (1983) most existing African freehold land was not included in the schedule. Africans were no longer able to

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<sup>3</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1B, 15 September 1949.

<sup>4</sup> In 1910 the Union of South Africa was formed. The former Natal Colony was incorporated into the Union.



acquire land outside that which had been scheduled. The state acknowledged that the 1913 Act had not set aside sufficient land and the Natives Land Commission (known as the Beaumont Commission) was set up to make recommendations for additional land to be included in the schedule. The Commission's proposals were unacceptable to many. After a torturous process watered down recommendations were accepted, in 1921, by the Smuts Government.

Governance proceeded as if these proposals were formally in place; however, the legislation confirming these proposals was only enacted in 1936. According to the Surplus People's Project (1983b:30) the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act was a far more significant and wide reaching piece of legislation than its predecessor. This Act drew on colonial Natal's trust tenure system to create a legal body, the South African Native Trust<sup>5</sup> (SANT), to which ownership of the reserves was ceded. The various trusts already in place in Natal were incorporated into this new body. More significantly for owners of freehold land, the Act created a new category of reserve land, released land - 'land legally opened up for African occupation either through the trust or through individual or group purchase' (Surplus People's Project, 1983b:31). The Act formally legalised 'new' land that had been bought by Africans in recommended areas since 1921 and recognised other areas owned or occupied by Africans for inclusion in the reserves. Most of the land released in 1936 was land that had already been bought but not scheduled in 1913. While much existing freehold land was incorporated into the reserves in 1936 a substantial amount was excluded. These areas were to be known as blackspots - 'privately owned land that was not released' (Surplus People's Project, 1983b:35).

In common with most of Natal's freehold land, Georgedale did not make the list of scheduled land outlined in the 1913 Land Act. However, it was declared a released area (Released Area No 51) by the 1936 Land Act.

Despite these legal uncertainties, Georgedale had become a desirable residential location for many Africans – both landowners and tenants.<sup>6</sup> Besides being a freehold area with legislative protection, Georgedale had other features to recommend it to prospective residents. There were good transport systems and relatively easy access to the city of Durban (see Map 4). Furthermore, it was one of the few available options for those who wished to purchase land. Many moved into the area with this purpose in mind (Laredo, 1968:238). According to Laredo,<sup>7</sup> (1968:74) there was an influx of people purchasing land after 1913 and 1936. Camperdown Magistrate's records show a flurry of sales activity in the early 1930s.<sup>8</sup> Much of the documentation related to these sales and transfers refers to Woody Glen and Georgedale Mission Station as being 'in the midst of a locality almost exclusively owned by natives'.<sup>9</sup> During the early 1930s there were numerous applications and attempts by Africans to purchase land beyond the Woody Glen farm and Georgedale Mission<sup>10</sup> ie outside of the areas indicated by the Beaumont Commission as available for African occupation. The magistrate's correspondence of the time shows that even though many individual white farmers wished to sell their land to African buyers (white-owned land bordering on African-owned land having little appeal to white buyers) few were, in the face of an organised campaign by the Hammarsdale

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<sup>5</sup> This was later known as the South African Bantu Trust and then the South African Development Trust.

<sup>6</sup> By the early twentieth century a landlord/tenant relationship (Surplus People's Project, 1983b:27) was developing on freehold land with African landowners taking on rent-paying tenants rather than cultivating the land for the agricultural market. Two pressures were responsible; firstly, difficulties associated with competing in the market, and secondly; land pressures forcing landless people to look for alternatives. African-owned freehold land being unmediated by government officials was such an alternative. Figures for 1916 show that two-thirds of the population on freehold farms were tenants (Surplus People's Project, 1983b:27).

<sup>7</sup> Laredo, an anthropologist at the University of Natal, did extensive field work in the Shongweni area in the late 1950s and early 1960s. His methodology involved living in a number of areas including Georgedale. I have relied extensively on his 1968 study *Patterns of Socio-Economic Transition. A Study in a Bantu Reserve in the "Three Rivers District" of Natal* for an account of the early period.

<sup>8</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/1/1

<sup>9</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/1/1, 2/3/2

<sup>10</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/1/2, 2/3/92

Farmers' Association, prepared to break ranks and agree to such sales. For example, of the eight applications made in 1931, only one was approved by the white farmers.<sup>11</sup> The chief native commissioner was only prepared to give permission for a cross-race-sale if the majority of farmers agreed.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s the availability of land for either purchase or rent, in what was a restricted property market, attracted both potential landowners as well as tenants to the area. As no 'new' land was available for purchase, the sub-division of the existing land into smaller and smaller plots, a feature of many freehold areas, was increasingly evident.

The *amakholwa* status of the area also influenced these patterns. There were a number of ramifications. Firstly the *amakholwa* were exempt from the restrictive terms of the Natal Code.<sup>12</sup> For women this exception allowed them to escape the status of perpetual minor, it also gave them the right to own property independently (Marks, 1989:226). Secondly, influenced by the church the household structure tended to resemble the nuclear family structure of western society rather than the traditional *umuzi* of the extended polygamous family. Thirdly, the chief was elected by the men of the community instead of being selected by the past chief. And fourthly, there is evidence that throughout the first half of the twentieth century *amakholwa* areas became refuges for those escaping patriarchal authority (see Carton, 2000; McClendon, 2002).

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<sup>11</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/1/2, 2/3/92, Letter from Acting CNC to Native Commissioner Camperdown, 24<sup>th</sup> July 1931. Also an article printed in a local newspaper; 'Sale of Land to Natives: Result of Hammarsdale Discussion' *The Farmer*, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1931.

<sup>12</sup> Legislation was introduced in 1865, which allowed individuals to apply for exemption from customary law. The *amakholwa* viewed these provisions with suspicion as they wished to be exempted as a group. However, changes to customary law which undermined Christian marriages and removed the right of women to property ownership encouraged the *amakholwa* to seek exemption in the 1870s. (see Meintjes, 1990:128)

### 3.3 Georgedale in the 1940s and 1950s

By the 1940s and 1950s Georgedale had changed substantially from its early days as an *amakholwa* enclave. There had been an influx of new residents which had changed the patterns of land-usage; diversified land ownership; and, expanded the elite of the area.

There were two sources of power in the area; that vested in the traditional authority and that held by the economic elite – the landowners. As the period unfolded so the power held by the *Inkosi* declined. At a formal level the state attempted to replace the *amakholwa* leadership with other forms of local government and the landowners (many who were not descended from the founding community) garnered more authority in the area. This period was not without conflict but unlike in the 1980s the conflict was resolved through the accepted traditional authority structures of the area.

#### 3.3.1 The Socio-Economic Conditions

Laredo (1968) in his study '*Patterns of Socio-Economic Transition. A Study in a Bantu Reserve in the "Three Rivers District" of Natal*' provides a rich and detailed account of the socio-economic status of the Shongweni area, and its African residents in the late 1950s (see Map 4).<sup>13</sup> The area of 14530 acres comprised the farms Georgedale, Hammarsdale and Woody Glen and by 1957 had a population of 7457 (Laredo, 1968:35). The power of the economic elite was based on land ownership. In this section I will sketch the socio-economic character of the area indicating patterns of land-usage, changes in land ownership and the foundations of the economic elites. The discussion will also give some indication of the cultural identity

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<sup>13</sup> This section draws closely on the work of Laredo. As explained above he spent some time living in the district during the 1950s while conducting anthropological field-work utilising unstructured interviews and observation (Laredo, 1968:38-39), he also drew upon a socio-economic survey covering ninety percent of the African population in the area conducted by the Department of Economics at the University of Natal (Laredo, 1968:42). This work was to form part of an interdisciplinary project for the Natal Regional Survey (see Laredo, 1968:2). Furthermore, this work is cited by many other studies where Mpumalanga is the object of investigation (see Hofmeyr, 1986;

of the area and the heterogeneous nature of 'Zuluness'.

By the 1950s the Georgedale community was divided into three distinct groups (Laredo, 1968:74). Firstly, there was the small group of original settlers and descendents (these were landowners); secondly, there were other landowners who had bought land since Woody Glen was declared a released area; and thirdly, tenants who rented land from the landowners. Amongst the original landowners there were strong kinship connections, despite them being scattered (depending upon where they bought their land) around the area. The newer landowners and tenants had no kinship connections within the area, and many of them, particularly amongst the tenants, were strongly connected to a 'home' area (Laredo, 1968:163). The tenants constituted the largest group of people (Laredo, 1968:169). These three groups were differentially connected to and embedded in the local power networks (see below). Based on their ownership of land, the landowners formed the economic elite of the area, with those who were both landowners and members of the founding *amakholwa* community forming an elite within an elite.

By 1957 there were 1217 households, of which thirty-six percent were landowners (438 households) and fifty-two percent were tenants (633 households) (Economic Survey, cited in Laredo, 1968:239).<sup>14</sup> Many were newly resident in the area with only nine percent of household heads (116 households) having been born there (Laredo, 1968:72). Prior to moving to Georgedale eleven percent came from urban locations (often smaller midland towns), fifty-eight percent from white farms and twelve percent from the reserves. The majority of tenants were labourers who had left white farms. In the late 1950s labour tenants, unhappy with attempts to tie them

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Motala, 1988; Ramduny, 1996). I felt I was fortunate to come across such detailed data for a specific location and historical period; in the absence of this work such data would not have been available.

<sup>14</sup> The remaining twelve percent were classified as 'others'.

to particular farms,<sup>15</sup> were leaving white-owned farms in large numbers (SPP, 1983, vol 4:45). Furthermore, areas like Georgedale (where land was available to rent from black landlords) became a haven for young men and women fleeing the patriarchal control of fathers who wished to control their labour in order to fulfil labour tenant obligations (see McClendon, 2002). The medium period of residency for landowners was twelve years and for tenants four.

It was not easy for the area of black-owned land to expand. Given the legislative restrictions (primary amongst them the various land acts) the chief native commissioner (CNC) was reluctant to grant permission for the sale of white-owned land to black farmers. Yet, he was happy to allow the subdivision and re-sale of existing black-owned land. Camperdown magistrate's correspondence in the early 1950s<sup>16</sup> shows that with the coming to power of the Nationalist Government applications were scrutinised more carefully. The applicant had to confirm that the subdivision was at least five acres in size. Despite this benchmark many applications were turned down, with the Minister claiming that 'five acres was too small to provide a family with full subsistence'.<sup>17</sup>

Notwithstanding the restrictions on land transfers of under five acres, thirty-six percent of landowners in Georgedale owned less than five acres and twenty-five percent between six and eleven acres of land. Only a couple of the 438 landowners owned sizable amounts of land (Economic Survey, cited in Laredo, 1968:242). In contrast sixty-seven percent of tenants had less than two acres of land (Economic Survey, cited in Laredo, 1968:242).

Land ownership was fraught with difficulties and there were numerous conflicts and

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<sup>15</sup> In 1956 the government amended the 1936 Land Act in order to tighten controls on labour tenants. New legislation provided for the registration of all labour tenant contracts and prohibited farmers from taking on more purely rent-paying tenants after 31 August 1956 (SPP, 1983, vol 4:45).

<sup>16</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/29/3/69.

disputes over land. While land was being bought and sold until the late 1950s, it was not always easy to acquire. Firstly, according to Laredo, people disliked parting with land and secondly, the chief native commission refused to grant permission for the transfer of land that he considered unviable for subsistence agriculture. More commonly land was inherited. And here a whole plethora of problems arose. If a will had been made it was easier to resolve the inheritance issues. But if there was no will then the situation was more complex. The first issue to resolve was if the deceased was an 'exempted Native'. The *amakholwa* were exempt from Native Law, this allowed wives and daughters to inherit property in their own right. If this was the case then the property was divided according to Roman Dutch Law. But if they were not exempted it would be divided according to Native Law and Custom which often meant the senior son would inherit. Frequently these inheritances were not legally transferred, meaning the current owner did not have official title deeds making it difficult to prove ownership if a dispute arose. One of the reasons given was the costs involved. Land had to be surveyed and transferred, with the cost often higher than the original purchase price. According to Laredo (1968:244)

Many people are not unduly worried that they have not got title deeds. They claim that everyone can see they are living on the land, and therefore people know to whom the land belongs. Disputes between landowners are taken directly to the Commissioners Court.

Yet this messy situation was to result in numerous problems for landowners when land was expropriated in the 1960s (see below).

Tenants rented a residential plot from individual landlords. They were expected to build their own homes and could if they wished cultivate a section of the land. Rent varied from landlord to landlord, but each landlord charged the same for his plots even if the size varied. The relationship between landlords and tenants was purely business and there was limited social interaction. There were no communal land rights except for access to water. The area had a number of rivers and springs and

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<sup>17</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/29/3/60-64.

access to them was unrestricted. The land occupied by tenants was criss-crossed by paths and public roads gave right of way over land. However, landowners were entitled to, and did put up fences and stop access to paths.

Agricultural activity in the area was limited, much of it being undertaken by landowners. Only thirty-nine percent of homesteads, primarily landowners, had livestock. Women, organised into groups, engaged in basket-making which they sold in urban areas. The close proximity to transport and urban areas, the good schooling, and the *kholwa* values meant a higher proportion of women were in waged employment compared to reserve areas (Laredo, 1968:306). Most men were employed outside of the area (the majority in Durban) and the homestead was left in the care of the women. Though the majority of men returned home on at least a weekly basis.

The mission background meant that education was given high priority. At least fifty-five percent of the inhabitants had some formal schooling. Samson Mcoyi (landowner, teacher and the chief from 1948-1952) had been very influential in the establishment of schools in the area (pers comm with his son, 29/04/99). There were a total of ten schools (one lower primary school, seven higher primary schools and two high schools), with approximately two and half thousand pupils.

Social networks were limited and gender specific with women having much narrower networks than men. Visiting between tenants was usually restricted to neighbours. Generally men were at work during the week, returning home at weekends. Women were mainly occupied with household tasks. Religion was an important part of community life. Methodism was the official religion of the area. Laredo (1968) found that forty percent of people were church members including most of the old settlers and the chief. There was also a woman's manyano. Other orthodox churches had established themselves in the area, but only the Catholic Church had a church building as well as a primary and high school. Many separatist sects were active and



their services provided a source of social interaction. The tenants were more likely to be members of these small sects. In all these churches women made up the majority of the congregations.

Already by the late 1950s this was an area that was very heterogeneous in character. The tenants and landowners formed two distinct groups with very little social interaction between them. The landowners who were part of the *amakholwa* group formed the economic elite of the area, they owned bigger land-holdings and were more likely to engage in agricultural activity and owned livestock. The *amakholwa* group had kinship networks in the area and were likely to belong to the Methodist church. They also had higher levels of formal education. The landowners who were not part of the *amakholwa* group had smaller land-holdings and it is likely that formal title had not passed to them. Most of them were newly resident and they had few kinship connections within the area. The tenants were economically (and politically – see below) marginal in the area. Many of them were fleeing harsh labour tenancy conditions on white farms. They were likely to have the lowest levels of education and to belong to separatist religious sects. While the founding *amakholwa* group structured the public cultural foundations of the area, for example the emphasis on education; the dominance of orthodox Christian churches; women's involvement in economic activities including the ownership of land; and, the predominance of smaller nuclear family structures, this was being dissipated by the influx of new residents with different cultural backgrounds. I am suggesting that even though many of the new residents were *IsiZulu*-speaking they operated with different cultural codes to those of the founding families. Thus, what we find in this earlier period is a heterogeneous interpretation of Zuluness that was acceptable to the larger community.

### **3.3.2 Power and Authority - Administration and Local Government**

This section examines political power in the 1940s and 1950s. As will be shown the *amakholwa* history determined the form of political power and authority in the area.

More broadly, the economic elite (see above) ie the landowners, were those with access to political power. This period is characterised by two dynamics; firstly during the 1940s there was a chieftainship dispute and secondly, as the period was drawing to a close it was becoming evident that the authority of the *Inkosi* was on the wane. This was as a result of the influx of tenants who did not fall under the authority of the *Inkosi* and attempts by provincial authorities to introduce new forms of local government in the area. These dynamics had the potential to lead to violent conflict and yet they did not. This discussion allows me to map sites of difference in the earlier period, as well as examine other techniques of politics and alternative, non-violent ways of dealing with difference.

The immediate administration of Georgedale fell under the *amakholwa* chief (see above) whose land was about two miles away from Georgedale in Hammarsdale (see Map 4) (Laredo, 1968). The *kholwa* chief, Luthayi and his successors, had limited civil and criminal jurisdiction in terms of Native law and custom (Brookes & Hurwitz, 1957; Laredo, 1968). Georgedale was located in the Camperdown Magisterial District. Administered by the magistrate, Camperdown fell under the Department of Justice with the magistrate also acting as native commissioner (Brookes & Hurwitz, 1957:27).

However, there were major differences in the authority of the Georgedale *Inkosi* and *amakosi* located on reserve land. These differences allow for the particularity of this area. The reasons were twofold; firstly this was an *amakholwa* community and secondly, the land was freehold. What were these differences? Firstly, the chief was elected by the voting male members of the community, rather than a situation of agnatic descent. The election being subject to the approval of the chief native commissioner. Secondly, being a *kholwa* chief meant that there were no *indunas* to assist the chief, instead councillors were appointed by the chief to assist and advise him. Unlike *indunas* these councillors were not attached to a particular area, and did not have any specific duties except to attend the chief's court. Thirdly, as the land

was freehold, the chief had no jurisdiction in the allocation, sale or re-sale of land, unlike in the reserves where the chief was responsible for allocating land held in trust by the SANT. Fourthly, the chief only had authority over those who were part of the *amakholwa* community. Newer arrivals, whether landowners or tenants, did not need to pay homage to him. The market had brought them to Georgedale and it was the market, not the grace of the chief, that allowed them to stay. The *amakholwa* chiefs had encountered this difficulty as soon as the community began selling its land to ‘outsiders’. As far back as 1921 Chief Christian Luthayi had petitioned the native commissioner requesting that the ‘natives from around the area [be brought] under his control’.<sup>18</sup> But as the size of the community increased so a larger percentage of the population fell outside of the chief’s control, dissipating both his authority and the strong *amakholwa* identity of the area. According to Laredo (1968:432) by the late 1950s

there is thus nothing, either derived from a common history, or in the method of allocating land, which gives unity to the Shongweni *kholwa*.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s a chieftainship dispute upset the unity of the *amakholwa*. These divisions had long-lasting effects on the landowners and impacted on their attempts to resist removals (see below). In 1924 Leonard succeeded Christian Luthayi, the first chief of the Georgedale *amakholwa* (see Figure 4). He was the eldest son of Christian’s second wife,<sup>19</sup> the son of his first wife having left the area. Leonard was killed in 1945 in a level-crossing accident, leaving a principal heir (Braveman) who was still a minor. *Induna* Ben Dela was appointed in the interim to act as regent.<sup>20</sup> Despite this being an *amakholwa* community the traditional three-month mourning period was observed.

Male clan members disagreed over who should succeed Leonard. Some members

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<sup>18</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1A. Letter from Camperdown Native Commissioner to CNC, 29 November 1921.

<sup>19</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1A.

favoured a regent until Braveman was old enough to take on the position. But others favoured Clifford Luthayi (Christian's grandson, and son of his eldest son who had left the area some years previously). One of the councillors, Samson Mcoyi, preferred Braveman but the majority of the clan supported Clifford and he was appointed<sup>21</sup> acting-chief and held this position between 1945 and 1949. The councillors soon became unhappy with the way in which Clifford conducted his duties and in particular his overriding interest in the Zionist Church. Furthermore, there were allegations of the misuse of trust funds and criminal proceedings were instituted against him. Samson Mcoyi resigned in protest.<sup>22</sup> Another of the councillors Samson Nkehli (a long-standing councillor who had served a number of chiefs) was also implicated in the fraud. As a result of these irregularities, as well as, petitioning from the councillors, the chief native commissioner, upon the recommendation of the magistrate, decided to remove Clifford from office.<sup>23</sup> A new chief had to be elected.

At first it seemed as if the only candidates for the position were two of the councillors Samson Nkehli and Khanyile. However, the native commissioner favoured Samson Mcoyi who he said 'was respected by all the natives'.<sup>24</sup> In September 1951, the magistrate called a meeting to elect a new chief. The chieftainship election was between Samson Nkehli and Samson Mcoyi – both councillors. Mcoyi was not descended from the original settlers but had lived in the area since a young man and had large landholdings. He was elected by a majority of six votes at a meeting

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<sup>20</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1A.

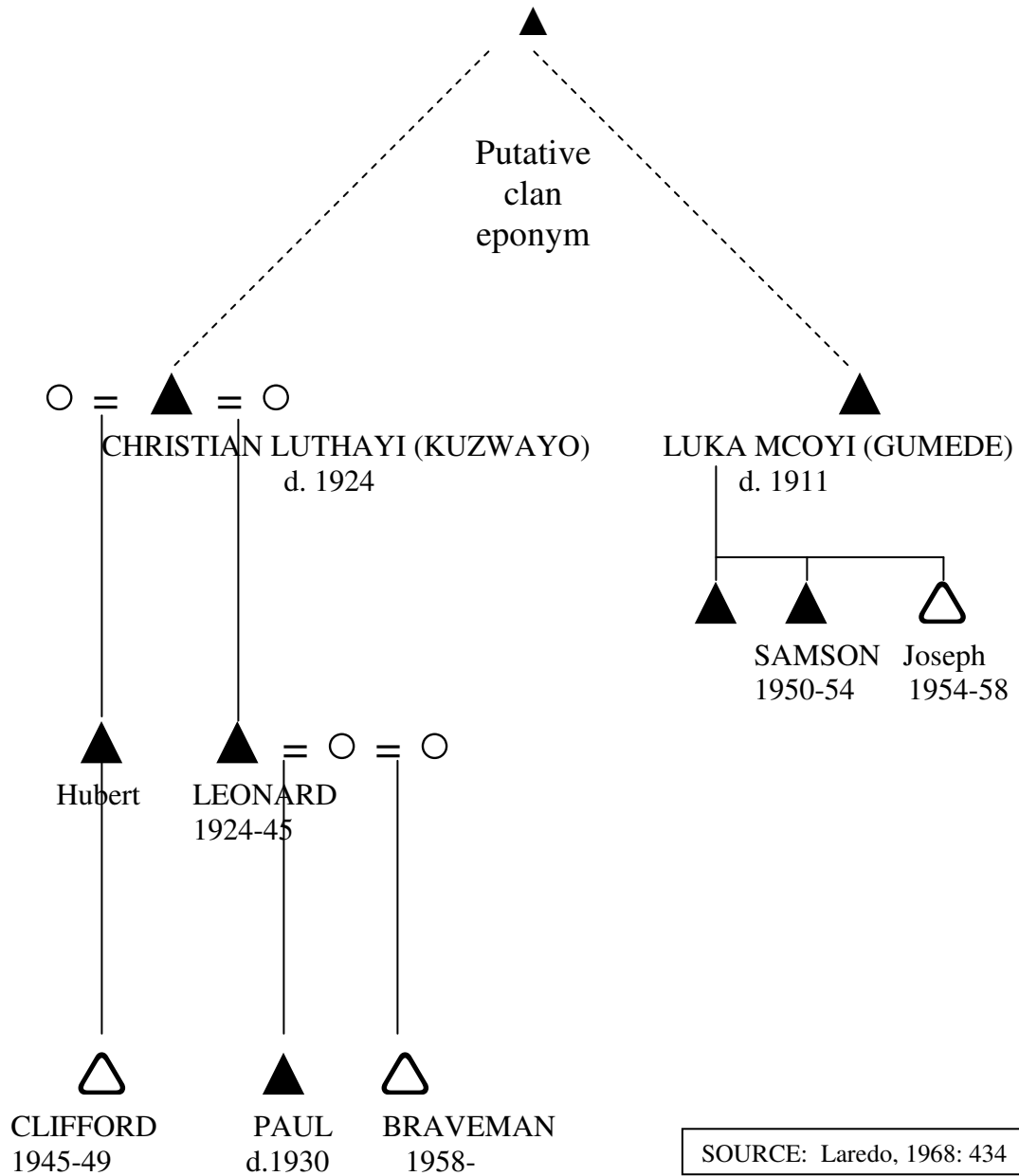
<sup>21</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/1/2, 2/1/2/5/1A, 22/11/48. Minutes of Meeting of the Kuzwayo Tribe, 13 October 1945. Usually *amakholwa* chiefs are elected, it is interesting that in this case that was not followed.

<sup>22</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1A. Statement made by Samson Mcoyi to W.A. Burdon, 10 October 1940.

<sup>23</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1A. Letter from Magistrate to CNC, 30 December 1948. The issue that the magistrate raised with the CNC was related to the fact that Acting Chief Luthayi was not registered as a taxpayer, this necessitated his removal from office.

<sup>24</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, Letter to CNC 27 April 1951. 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1B

**FIG 4: Succession to the chieftainship in the Georgedale amaKholwa community**



attended by 103 men.<sup>25</sup> Nkehli did not accept this decision and began to organise against it. He challenged the native commissioner's acceptance of the meeting's vote and his support for Mcoyi as there were 1000 voting males in the tribe.<sup>26</sup> However, the native commissioner was unconvinced by Nkehli's argument, citing in a motivation to the CNC the respect with which Mcoyi was held in the area as well as his war-record in the Great War of 1914. Mcoyi's appointment was confirmed and he was inaugurated as chief on the 6 March 1952.<sup>27</sup> This dispute became the source of bad feelings between Nkehli and Mcoyi. Mcoyi died unexpectedly in 1954 (Laredo, 1068: 434), according to his son bewitched by his enemies (pers comm, 29/04/99). As will be seen below this antagonism would have repercussions in the future. There were no immediate moves to elect a new chief, and as an interim measure the Administration appointed his brother as acting chief.

There are stark differences between the way in which the conflict was dealt with in this period and in the later period. The dispute was channelled through legitimate channels. The community were prepared to use these channels and accepted the decision. However, it is interesting to note that when Mcoyi died unexpectedly within two years his family attributed his death to this dispute. However, a similarity with the later period is the marginalisation of women from politics. While exemption from the Natal Code allowed women to become property or business owners they were not granted political rights. Voting rights were confined to male members of the tribe.

The second dynamic of this period was the waning authority of the chief. In terms of the regulations Georgedale fell under the authority of the chief. But in reality the chief had little authority in the area. As discussed above the Georgedale population

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<sup>25</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, Letter to CNC, 20 September 1951. 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1B

<sup>26</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/3/2, 2/1/2/5/1B. Letter from Magistrate to CNC, 20<sup>th</sup> September 1951.

had increased substantially, bringing ‘outsiders’ into the community and fewer families now paid him homage. While the chief still conducted his court, by the late 1950s the number of cases were few and attendance was low (Laredo, 1968:433). A potentially more powerful force in the area were the local landowners. These landowners were not necessarily members of the *amakholwa* tribe.

The Bantu Land Owners’ Union, was founded in 1948 (Laredo, 1968:437). Landowners were concerned about the limited land available for freehold purchase, and the threat to freehold land posed by the South African Native Trust (SANT), which had already bought 366 acres of land in the area. The SANT had bought land to the south of the old Georgedale mission (see Map 4). Samson Nkehli was the acting chairperson of the Bantu Land Owners’ Union. Of the nine executive members, elected at the AGM, only two were descendants of the original settlers.<sup>28</sup> The Association represented the interests of its members and attempted to improve conditions within the area, for example it built a well in a section of Zig-Zag Farm (Laredo, 1968:438). It also protected its members from any perceived threat to their tenure.

By the early 1950s government authorities were becoming aware of changes in the character of the area. In the eyes of the authorities, it was in the process of transforming from a rural area to a densified peri-urban village as this extract from a letter from the native commissioner at Camperdown to the chief native commissioner<sup>29</sup> illustrates:

The farm Woody Glen is so subdivided that there are four groups of plots forming villages, but without any local authority. I am not aware of any move at present towards urbanisation. Water is drawn from nearby springs and streams as required by the residents on these subdivisions. There is no laid on water supply. The various occupiers or owners of

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<sup>27</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/3, 2/1/2/5/1B

<sup>28</sup> Tenants were not members - though they were not specifically barred from membership.

<sup>29</sup> PAR, Camperdown Magistrates Records, Letter from the Camperdown Native Commissioner to the CNC, 1/CPD, 3/2/2/13, 2/29/3/69.

these subdivisions mostly work in the nearby cities and their families tend small gardens which can't be classified as farming.

In 1954 the Provincial Authorities claimed that conditions in the area were such that it would be necessary to put in place some form of local government to safeguard the health of what was becoming a heavily populated area. The intention was to establish a local Health Board.<sup>30</sup> Local Health Committees were either elected or appointed, and functioned as local government bodies in rural areas. They were enacted by the Natal Provincial Administration (Ordinance No 20 of 1941).<sup>31</sup> Their primary purpose being to establish

a form of local government control over peri-urban and rural areas in which undesirable living conditions existed as the result of unauthorised or unregulated native settlement. ... Section 4 of the ordinance defined a public health area as 'any area not being or forming part of any local authority area' which in the opinion of the Administrator is such 'that by reason of the density of the population, or its class or character or the sanitary conditions prevailing, it is necessary that special provision should be made for the proper management, regulation and control of matters affecting the public health in such area'. (Department of Economics, 1951:17)

Despite their name Health Committees did not solely concern themselves with questions of health and sanitation. They were given fairly wide-ranging powers of local government. They controlled roads and other public works, health, the acquisition and sale of land, the situating of houses and were entitled to levy rates. As both landowners and landlords these were all issues of concern to the Landowners Association. Given these wide-ranging powers and functions as well as the manner of its appointment the Ordinance encouraged that the co-operation of the residents was sought (Department of Economics, 1951:18).

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<sup>30</sup> This intention was gazetted in the Natal Provincial Gazette, 15 July 1954, Ordinance No 20/41.

<sup>31</sup> The ordinance was amended the following year (Ordinance No 12 of 1942) to enable the Administrator of Natal to constitute the Commission as a Health Committee.



Many landowners saw this development as a real threat to their land. The Landowners' Association, which had sunk into inertia and become ineffective, was reinvigorated by the crisis over the Health Committee. The Health Committee issue brought in some new leaders (Samsom D. Nkehli became the acting chairman) and forced the landowners to make proposals about the 'organisation of local authorities'. Furthermore, a new local authority structure also threatened the remaining authority of the chief. Supporting the Landowners' Association, Mcoyi (himself the owner of large land holdings) came out against the Health Committee. He and Nkehli put aside their differences and the first meeting of protest was held at the chief's house.

Opposition focussed around this being the 'wrong kind of government for the Bantu' with the 'landholders privately fearing that once 'they move in, our title deeds will be worthless'.' (Laredo, 1968:438/9). It soon became clear that mere opposition to the Health Committee would not lead to success. The Association drew up a petition to the governor-general asking for the establishment of a local council as laid out in the Native Administrative Act of 1927.<sup>32</sup> They motivated their appeal by pointing out that these were the same rights as enjoyed by local councils in the Transkei and Ciskei. Furthermore as an area that was almost exclusively African 'it was well suited to having the 'opportunity to develop on its own lines'.'(Laredo, 1968:439). This was followed by a meeting with the governor-general. He agreed not to initiate the Health Committee until a decision had been made about the landowners' request.

In 1955 it was announced that the landowners' request had been denied. The councils constituted under the Act had not been a success and the government was in favour of

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<sup>32</sup> The Governor-General was empowered to govern by proclamation in all African areas (previously this was in certain areas only). The Act made provision for special courts for Africans, and for the recognition of customary law in civil cases in these courts ... Power was given to the Governor-General to issue orders without prior notice requiring any tribe, section of a tribe, or African to move from one place to another, and not to leave any stated area for a specified period. The Act dealt, further, with tribal organisation, land tenure and marriage and succession. It gave the Government wide power to make regulations dealing, inter alia, with the control of meetings and of African villages and settlements. Provision was made for exemptions from the pass laws (Horrell, 1978:4).

implementing the recently passed Bantu Authorities Act of 1951.<sup>33</sup> The Association asked the department to reconsider the decision based on the unique local conditions. They argued that they were an *amakholwa* community and as such it was difficult to institute Bantu Authorities. Furthermore, many people held the land under freehold tenure (Laredo, 1968).

The Landowners' Association was split. A group led by Nkehli and supported by the regent through his son, wished to co-operate with the Administration. They argued that 'unless the people met the government half-way they would be working for a dead horse' (Laredo, 1968:440). Many of the new landowners opposed this move. A break-away association which included a number of the original settlers was formed under Nkehli.

Opposition to the regent coagulated around his tacit support of the Nkehli faction. The Landowners' Association sent individual members to plead with the magistrate to regularise the position of the chief by holding new elections. Braveman, who had now reached adulthood, was elected chief. This seemed to mark a return of the chieftainship to the family of the original chief. Yet it disguised the struggle over land and control of the area. The Landowners' Association's support for the candidacy of the son of the former chief was not only a move against the regent, but also an attempt by them to win the support of the original settlers (Laredo, 1968). The Landowners' Association did not enjoy a close relationship with the chief. He was not a member of the Association and the state did not recognise them. Thus to get the ear of the magistrate the Association had to channel its views either through the chief or through individuals who might be able to interview the Commissioner.

By the late 1950s the Bantu Land Owners' Association had a paid-up membership of 400. According to Laredo (1968:253) 'leadership vests in those organisations which

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<sup>33</sup> This Act began the process of establishing separate political institutions for Africans. It made

are concerned with rights to land'. By this stage the chief's influence had waned considerably (Laredo, 1968). Leadership in the area reflected the basic need for land and the need to protect the land. The chief was never approached by the tenants as they did not recognise him, and those who wanted technical advice about their land often by-passed him in favour of the Land Owners' Association. Many properties were the subject of ownership disputes, adding to the disharmony in the area.<sup>34</sup>

These two disputes – the first within the *amakholwa* community and the second between the landowners and the provincial administration which then divided the community – allow one to understand some of the earlier sites of difference within the Georgedale community. Points of difference were between elites in the community with women and tenants playing no part in these discussions. The chieftainship dispute revealed differences within the *amakholwa* group, and the conflict over the imposition of a Health Committee showed differences between the new landowners and founding members of the community. In this earlier period the community used existing authority structures to resolve disputes. They petitioned and made representations to the magistrate and chief native commissioner. There were no indications of violence and no attempts to resort to violence. But as these various disputes play themselves out over the decade, it becomes clear that the authority of the *Inkosi* was on the wane. This was due to both internal dynamics in the area, as well as, the actions of provincial authorities. As these conflicts and organisational alliances illustrate at this point identity was emerging in relationship to range of complexities; amongst them were land; organisational allegiance and association; and, family history.

In 1958 the first industry, Hammarsdale Clothing, was established in the area (Motala, 1988:52). In order to take advantage of lower wage rates, the owners had

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provision for tribal, regional and territorial authorities (see Maré and Hamilton, 1987:28-29).

<sup>34</sup> Central Archives (CA), Department of Bantu Administration and Development (BAD), Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, p.61

shut down their factories in Fordsburg (Johannesburg) and Durban and transferred operations to Hammarsdale. This was the beginning of industrialisation in the area.

With the establishment of industry, Hammarsdale soon became a centre of trade union activity under the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) (Luckhardt & Wall, 1980). Workers became members of the African Clothing Workers Union (Hammarsdale), which had 500 members by 1960. There were strikes in February 1959 (over wages) and again in February 1960 (over union recognition and the interference of the Garment Workers Union, Natal). This served to militise the workforce and to politically activate the local residents who rallied support behind the strikers in the face of dismissal, arrests and threats to close the factory. The union successfully won its demands in both strikes (see Luckhardt & Wall, 1980:289-291). Unionisation and the strikes impacted upon the area in two ways. Firstly, whereas two years previously Laredo (1968) had commented on the lack of networks amongst tenants and between tenants and landowners unionisation facilitated the development of new networks amongst these groups. Secondly, it opened up spaces for a 'new' politics and identity that was unconnected to land.

To recap on the significant features of this period. The nature of the area changed considerably with the influx of new residents into the area. The original inhabitants became outnumbered both by tenants and other landowners. This paved the way for the emergence of a new power elite. The new elite was still linked to land ownership but was not confined to the original *amakholwa* community and the authority of the chief was diminished. The provincial authorities were also alert to these dynamics, which led them to propose a new form of local government. Linked to these changes was the emergence of a number of conflicts. The resulting cleavages facilitated the emergence of new power elites. The first conflict was between the original *amakholwa* inhabitants involving a dispute over the chieftanship. Two factions, supporting different candidates, emerged. The second conflict occurred between landowners over the Health Committee proposal. The Bantu Land Owners'

Association emerged, with the support of the losing faction in the chieftanship dispute, as one of the most powerful groups within the area. This further diminished the authority of the chief. A third set of conflicts related to ownership disputes over land. The end of the decade sees the development of industry in the area. This allows for the development of new organisations that serve to unite the community against 'outsider' class forces and for the first time linked landowners and tenants in common cause.

### **3.4 The 1960s - Relocation**

At a national level the 1960s are significant for the banning of the ANC, the consolidation of apartheid policy and unparalleled economic growth. For those living in the Georgedale-Hammarsdale complex these developments had major local ramifications. During the 1960s they experienced the first of a series of major upheavals in their lives. The banning of the ANC and the suppression of its trade union wing the South African Congress of Trade Unions meant that worker organisation in the Hammarsdale Clothing factory was similarly suppressed. However, a far greater threat to the autonomy of the area, land ownership and the way of life in Georgedale was to come from the Industrial Development Corporation and the border industry policy. In 1961 the area was declared a decentralisation point. This had enormous consequences for the African inhabitants. Soon after followed an expropriation order to establish a township for the African employees of these industries.

Two concerns motivated the state's behaviour in this period. Firstly, the need to provide accommodation for the workers and their families in the Hammarsdale border industry. And secondly, their horror at the large influx of people into the area (squatters), and the development of 'another Cato Manor'<sup>35</sup> with the attendant 'social

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<sup>35</sup> Cato Manor was an informal settlement on the outskirts of Durban. It was a mixed race area where Indian landowners had rented sites to African tenants. It was known for its political militancy and

and political repercussions'.<sup>36</sup> The dominant discourse was that of public health. It suggested the state was acting in everyone's best interests. Those landowners opposing its plans were exploiting the unsatisfactory situation for their own personal gain.

These policies resulted in the destruction of the existing elite and the creation of new elites. The means by which residents had acquired power and resources - land ownership - was destroyed. State policy ensured that the community, which a few years previously had united in support of the African textile workers strike, became divided amongst itself. Initially landowners united in opposition to the government proposals. They were concerned the development meant not only the erection of factories but that the SANT would buy up land to create a 'rural village' to house the workers.<sup>37</sup> By the middle of the decade there were divisions amongst them with some landowners advocating cooperation with the state (pers comm, Mr Mcoyi). Tenants had different interests. Those who qualified, in terms of influx control policy, were assured of rental accommodation in the newly-built township (albeit at a price), while those who didn't faced eviction with no alternatives in sight. Many women, either landowners in their own right or tenants, were denied access to township housing as a result of the state's policy that formal township housing only be provided to male household heads (Todes & Walker, 1992:117).<sup>38</sup> The creation of

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vibrant cultural life. In the late 1950s it was marked for relocation with those residents who qualified being moved to the newly constructed Indian and African townships around Durban.

<sup>36</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File G52/2/1106/2, part I, p. 16-24

<sup>37</sup> Natal Provincial Gazette, 14 July 1961.

<sup>38</sup> Natal Provincial Notice NO. 383 of 1960 stipulated that rental housing, and thirty year leases should be allocated to the head of household, defined as a male in a recognised marriage, or as a man who was widowed, divorced or deserted. Furthermore, women were constrained by the Natal Code, in terms of which they were defined as minors, with no contractual powers (Todes & Walker, 1992:117). Citing Eagle (1987), Todes and Walker argue that consequently many women were forced into convenience marriages, or to become domestic workers in order to gain access to housing. In the late sixties national regulations governing urban areas were developed. These changed the rules of allocation. The new regulations (R1036 of 1968) incorporated many of the existing rules, but the definition of the family able to occupy public housing was changed from a nuclear to an extended

the township and the new political structures that were put into place ultimately provided the basis for the support which Inkatha was to generate and then fight to maintain two decades later.

### **3.4.1 Establishment of Border Industries**

Border industry policies encouraged, through the use of incentives, industries to locate close to the homeland borders in specified areas within white South Africa. These incentives were of a temporary nature and usually had a lifespan of ten years. Hammarsdale was classified as a decentralisation point under this scheme. Industries were encouraged to apply for incentives and relocate there. Services (ie power, water and waste removal) were made available by the state. The availability of transport and the proximity of labour were important in the selection of Hammarsdale as a border industry. With the national road passing close by and the main Johannesburg-Durban railway line running through the area, transport linkages were already established (see Map 5).

In 1961, Elangeni Estates in Hammarsdale was established by the state-controlled Industrial Development Corporation (Motala, 1988; Ramduny, 1996) (see Map 5). The government decided not to implement any restrictions on the recruitment of 'bantu' labour provided that industries confined themselves to the employment of Zulus.<sup>39</sup> By 1965 four textile firms and five knitwear and clothing manufacturers had established themselves. Nearly 7000 jobs were created (Rumduny, 1996). It was estimated that these factories employed 5600 Africans.<sup>40</sup> By the end of 1971, this had risen to sixteen firms, employing 8500 workers (Motala, 1988:53).

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family structure, while additional limitations were placed on women's independent access to housing (Todes and Walker, 1992:117-118).

<sup>39</sup> CA, Memo to Progress Knitting Mills, 4 March 1963. BAD, Box 5024, File G52/2/1106/2, part 1, p.210

<sup>40</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File G52/2/1106/2, part 1, p.271/2

At the end of 1969 Department of Bantu Administration and Development (BAD) confirmed rumours that in the opinion of the Department of Planning Elangeni was fully developed and it was unlikely that it would be extended.<sup>41</sup> In 1970 Hammarsdale was removed from the border incentive scheme. The department believed that development in the estate had reached a point where it was possible for the area to be self-sufficient. It could now attract development on its own merits. The Development and Services Board of the Natal Provincial Administration took over the management and administration of the estate in 1973.

### **3.4.2 The Need for a Township - Relocation and Construction**

At a meeting held on 14 July 1961, the BAD urged that the development of housing for the workers be given the speediest attention.<sup>42</sup> On the 31 August 1961 a letter<sup>43</sup> was sent to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner<sup>44</sup> (CBC) informing him that a decision had now been taken with regard to the establishment of a township (see Map 5) to house the workers.

It will be observed from the plan that the land required for township and buffer purposes consists of a number of properties some of which fall within and others outside the released area. It is not clear who the owners of the various properties are. In view of the impending large scale industrial development at Hammarsdale as explained in paragraph six of the memorandum it is essential that the Bantu township be developed as a matter of urgency.

A Bantu Affairs Committee was appointed to enquire into and establish the ownership of the various subdivisions of land in the area.<sup>45</sup> A proclamation was gazetted on 13 November 1961 to determine the rights of land ownership.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Letter from BAD to CBC (PN), 05/12/69. Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, part II, p.125

<sup>42</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, p.8

<sup>43</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, p.19

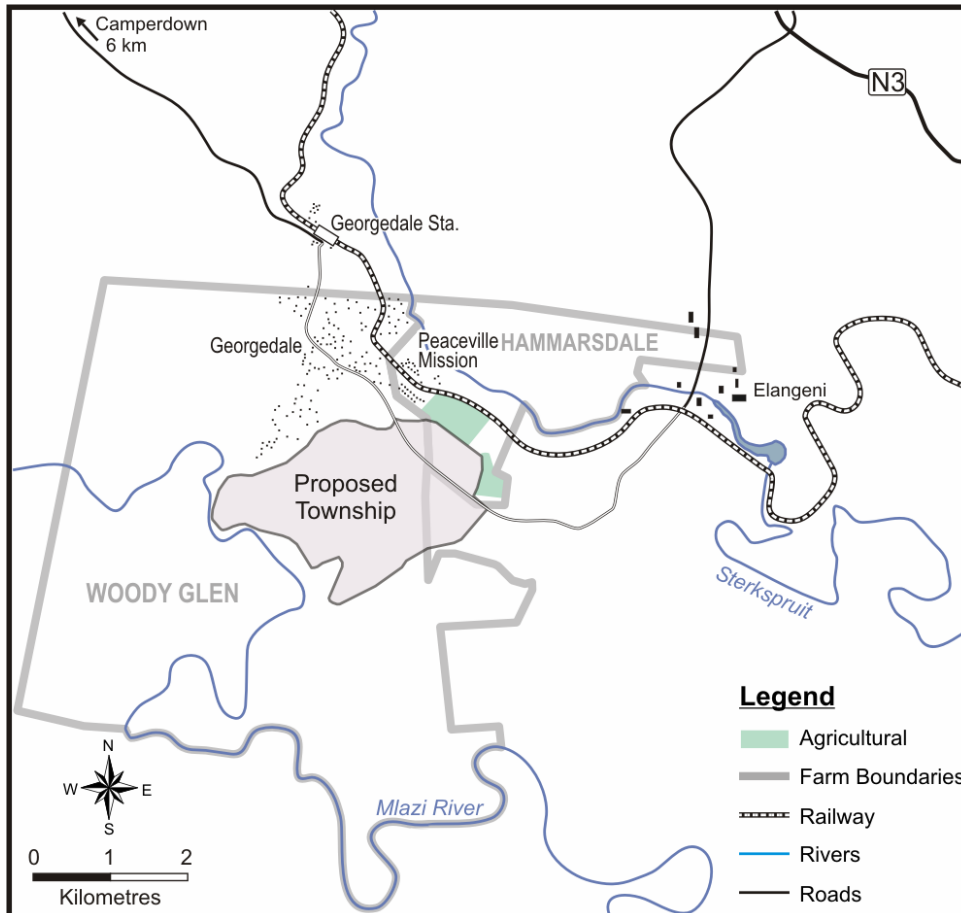
<sup>44</sup> Previously the Chief Native Affairs Commissioner.

<sup>45</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File, G52/2/1106/2, part 1, p.49

<sup>46</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, part 1, p.76/8



**MAP 5: HAMMARSDALE AREA IN THE MID-1960S SHOWING  
PROPOSED LOCATION OF MPUMALANGA TOWNSHIP**



The Bantu Affairs Commissioner from Nqutu was sent to investigate the situation and to gain the co-operation of the various owners with regard to the sale of their properties to the South African Bantu Trust.<sup>47</sup> The initial report claimed there were a total of forty-six owners. The office of the CBC was instructed to ascertain from the Deeds Office

<sup>47</sup> Formally known as the South African Native Trust.

who the registered owners are of the various properties comprising the area required for township and buffer purposes and whether they are Bantu, Indian or European.

An initial foray into the Deeds Office found there were approximately 302 registered owners; eight were white, three Indian and 291 African. One hundred and fifty-two of the Africans owned their land in released areas while 138 owned land outside the released area. Nineteen (eleven in the released area and eight outside) owned over twenty morgen, entitling them to similar land as compensation for expropriation. It was also apparent that some of the land was still registered in the names of the original owners (acquired back in 1881).<sup>48</sup> However, the position on the ground showed the ownership issue was even more legally complex.

Not one of those questioned claimed to have title deeds for the property they occupied. Some said they had purchased the property, some as many as 20 years ago but for some reason had not effected transfer. Several claimed to have come by the property by inheritance also having no transfer to their names. It seems very certain that many of the registered owners had sold out and disappeared or had died.<sup>49</sup>

The CNC was advised that the question of tenure was one of much greater chaos than originally thought. Pieces of unsurveyed land had passed *de facto* ownership many times without title being transferred. These *de facto* owners had occupied their land for varying periods, some for up to forty years. Furthermore, those owners who did wish to sell were able to get prices well above 'fair' market values. As it would take many years to establish true ownership, instead of trying to persuade the owners to sell to the Trust the government should 'expropriate immediately if we want quick results'.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, 'special legislation to deal with this problem would be required'.<sup>51</sup>

The tangle of legal ownership was to haunt the BAD throughout the development and

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<sup>48</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, p.31

<sup>49</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, p.31

<sup>50</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, p.30

construction of the township. From the first it was recommended that the Minister should be done with it and issue an order to expropriate the land. Acquisition of land seriously hindered the development of the township. By December 1965 the situation according to the developers had not improved. In a memo to the chair of the Bantu Township Committee,<sup>52</sup> the Committee was urged to recommend to the Minister that expropriation should be resorted to throughout ie whether an owner can be traced or not as such a step would expedite the acquisition of land.

Nevertheless, the department continued with their strategy of getting the SANT to purchase land from the legal owners alongside expropriation where legal ownership could not be established. The consulting engineers and developers were continually working around pockets of unacquired properties. The following letter from the consulting engineers indicates some of the problems they encountered;

work on the sewer, stormwater drainage and road works have started in unit three but they are hampered because of an occupied house. ... It seems as if an expropriation notice was served on Mr Mncwabe in 1966 but that it contained an error therefore he ignored it. Please arrange the service of an expropriation notice on Mr Mncwabe.<sup>53</sup>

The rapid development of industry attracted people from as far away as Harrismith and Ladysmith to the area in the hope of finding employment. As other squatter areas were cleared eg Cato Manor, those who were not eligible for formal township housing made their way to Hammarsdale. As a result released area 51 and released area 36 mushroomed. By late 1966 a police survey estimated that there were 32000 squatters in the area with new shacks being constructed at a rate of ten per week.<sup>54</sup> According to the report

the seriousness of the situation required immediate action before it got

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<sup>51</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, p.60

<sup>52</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/2206/2, p.271/2

<sup>53</sup> CA, Letter from Horne & Glasson to BAD, 20/02/70. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5114, File 58/2/1106/2, Part 8

<sup>54</sup> CA, Report from senior engineer, 1 September 1966. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, part II, p.10.

out of hand. Funds simply must be made available to ensure the overall economy and avoid the social and political repercussions from without.<sup>55</sup>

Officials saw the 'squatter problem' as posing a serious threat to public health. This fear underlay a moral panic 'to provide for effective control'. Eager to avoid the occurrence of unnecessary costs, the state decided not to upgrade the area by providing water and sanitation, instead they appointed squatter inspectors. But the increased policing of influx control exacerbated the problem, as squatters evicted from one area moved into another until in turn they were evicted from there. In a series of articles in April 1969 a Durban newspaper the Natal Mercury blamed the slow progress in housing development on the mushrooming number of squatters, estimating that in the province as a whole there were now 500 000 squatters (Natal Mercury, 3 April 1969).

The provision of new towns did not necessarily solve the issue. Housing in the new Mpumalanga township was only available to those men employed in Hammarsdale. Of 7000 squatters, only 2000 were eligible for township houses. The remainder, once evicted found their way to Fredville<sup>56</sup> where they again constructed shacks (Natal Mercury, 10 April 1969) only to be removed some years later to Mpumalanga (SPP, 1983, vol 4:109).

A temporary township, Malengeni (see Map 5), had been established in late 1963 to house the workers employed in Hammarsdale. This township comprised ninety-seven wooden houses with communal ablution facilities.<sup>57</sup> In an ironic twist this land was rented from Wakefield Mcoyi (the son of Samson Mcoyi) one of the largest African landowners in the area. Within a couple of years these amenities had fallen

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<sup>55</sup> CA, Report, 5 September 1966, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, part II, p. 16-24.

<sup>56</sup> A nearby black spot.

<sup>57</sup> Report from Senior Engineer to BAD, 1 September 1966. BAD, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, Part II, p.10

into a state of complete disrepair and living conditions in this temporary township were no better than in the squatter areas.

The 'rapidly deteriorating squatting position on the land where the Woody Glen Township was to be established'<sup>58</sup> was the CBC's constant refrain. They urged the BAD to make haste in resolving the land acquisition problems and move ahead with construction of the permanent township. Durban-base consulting engineers Horne & Glasson had won the tender to construct and develop the township which was to be located partly on released area no 23 and partly on released area no 51. In February 1967 the district of Camperdown was excised from the area of the CBC, Natal and included in the area of the CBC, Port Natal.<sup>59</sup> This was as a result of a change in government policy and the decision to move the control of 'bantu' areas from the Department of Justice to the BAD.<sup>60</sup>

At the beginning of the decade the BAD had 'gigantic planning and development schemes of the Bantu areas in Natal'.<sup>61</sup> The Hammarsdale township was only one of a number planned in the area (others were envisaged in Cato Ridge).

The Township in question is intended to accommodate not only the Bantu which will be employed in the Hammarsdale industrial area but also all Bantu squatters in the whole vicinity ...<sup>62</sup>

However, a shift in industrial development policy as well as financial constraints forced a modification of these ambitions. Plans for the other townships were dropped

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<sup>58</sup> CA, Letter from CBC (PN) to Sec for BAD, 12 September 1966. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, Part II, p.2. At first the township was referred to as the Woody Glen Township, Woody Glen being the name of the farm on which it was to be constructed. Later after a search to decide upon a name it was officially decided to call the township Mpumalanga. The name being suggested by Chief Luthayi.

<sup>59</sup> Government Gazette No 201, 17 February 1967.

<sup>60</sup> CA, See various correspondence between the CBC (Natal) and the secretary for BAD from 1962-1964. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File G52/2/1106/2, Part I, p.243/4, 252, 253, 257, 258

<sup>61</sup> CA, Letter from Sec for BAD to CBC (Pmb), 23 March 1962. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, Part I, p.135

and the Hammarsdale township was designed to accommodate only those working in Hammarsdale. It was estimated that the factories would ultimately employ 12000.<sup>63</sup> The master plan for 10400 houses was completed in December 1966 and construction began in April 1967. They wanted to complete 4000 houses as soon as possible in order to relieve some of the immediate health problems in the 'squatter' areas.<sup>64</sup> Unit one was the first area of the township to be complete. By 16 August 1968 the survey of unit one was finalised.<sup>65</sup> Within a month over four hundred dwellings were occupied.<sup>66</sup> By the end of August 1968 the BAD reported that the expropriation of land for unit two would soon be complete.<sup>67</sup> Plans for units two and three were submitted in February 1969.<sup>68</sup> A month later in March the Department decided to abandon the planning of units seven, eight, nine and ten.<sup>69</sup> This was connected to the decision to halt the development of Hammarsdale as an industrial growth point.<sup>70</sup> By February 1970 unit one was complete, unit two was in an advanced stage<sup>71</sup> and work on unit three had started but was being hampered by occupied houses.<sup>72</sup> About 900

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<sup>62</sup> CA, Letter from Sec for BAD to CBC (Pmb), 23 March 1962. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, Part I, p.135

<sup>63</sup> CA, Memo to chair of Bantu Township Committee, 8 December 1965. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File G52/2/1106/2, Part I, p.271/2

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> CA, 16 August 1968. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5099, File G57/6/1106/2

<sup>66</sup> CA, 23 September 1968. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5099, File G57/6/1106/2

<sup>67</sup> CA, 29 August 1968. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5099, File G57/6/1106/2

<sup>68</sup> CA, Letter from Horne & Glasson to BAD, 26 February 1969. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, Part II, p.111

<sup>69</sup> CA, Letter from BAD to CBC (PN), 6 March 1969. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, Part II, p.106

<sup>70</sup> CA, Letter from CBC (PN) to BAD, 14 November 1969. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5024, File 52/2/1106/2, Part II, p.121

<sup>71</sup> CA, Memo from CBC (PN) to Deputy Secretary Housing, 19 February 1970, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 2/1853, File 60/4/1106/2, p.12

<sup>72</sup> CA, Letter from Horne & Glasson to BAD, 20 February 1970. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5114, File 58/2/1106/2, Part 8

houses were now occupied.<sup>73</sup> Unit four was planned in March 1970.<sup>74</sup> By June 1972 the population of Mpumalanga Township was 30000 (see Map 6 and Fig 5).<sup>75</sup>

Construction did not mean that the ownership issues had been resolved. The problems with tracing individual owners and settling ownership in very complex estates had finally led the Minister to approve wholesale expropriation. Yet in a memo written in February 1970, when unit one was complete and unit two was nearing completion, the CBC (PN) claimed that

the various sections in Head Office and the district offices concerned cannot at this stage say with any certainty that only SABB property has been developed at Mpumalanga.<sup>76</sup>

Garden allotments covering about twenty acres were located on the undeveloped boundary stripes.<sup>77</sup> These were allocated to township residents, mainly widows who sold the vegetables grown. The Bantu Investment Corporation (BIC) constructed market stalls in unit one, there was also a beerhall. By 1970 trading had begun.<sup>78</sup> Shopping centres were planned in most units. However, many of the facilities initially planned for the township were never constructed eg a swimming pool in unit two, a hospital and a brewery. The first township manager - Mr R.K. Francis - was appointed in January 1969. In January 1970 the township was transferred to the district of the Bantu Affairs Commissioner of Pinetown.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> CA, Memo from CBC (PN) to Dep Secretary of Housing 19 February 1970. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 2/1853, file T60/4/1106/2, p.11&12

<sup>74</sup> CA, Letter from Horne & Glasson to BAD, 25 March 1970. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 5051, File G57/4/1106, p.165-7

<sup>75</sup> CA, Letter from township manager to Camperdown magistrate, 7 June 1972. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 2/1853, File T60/4/1106/2, p.56

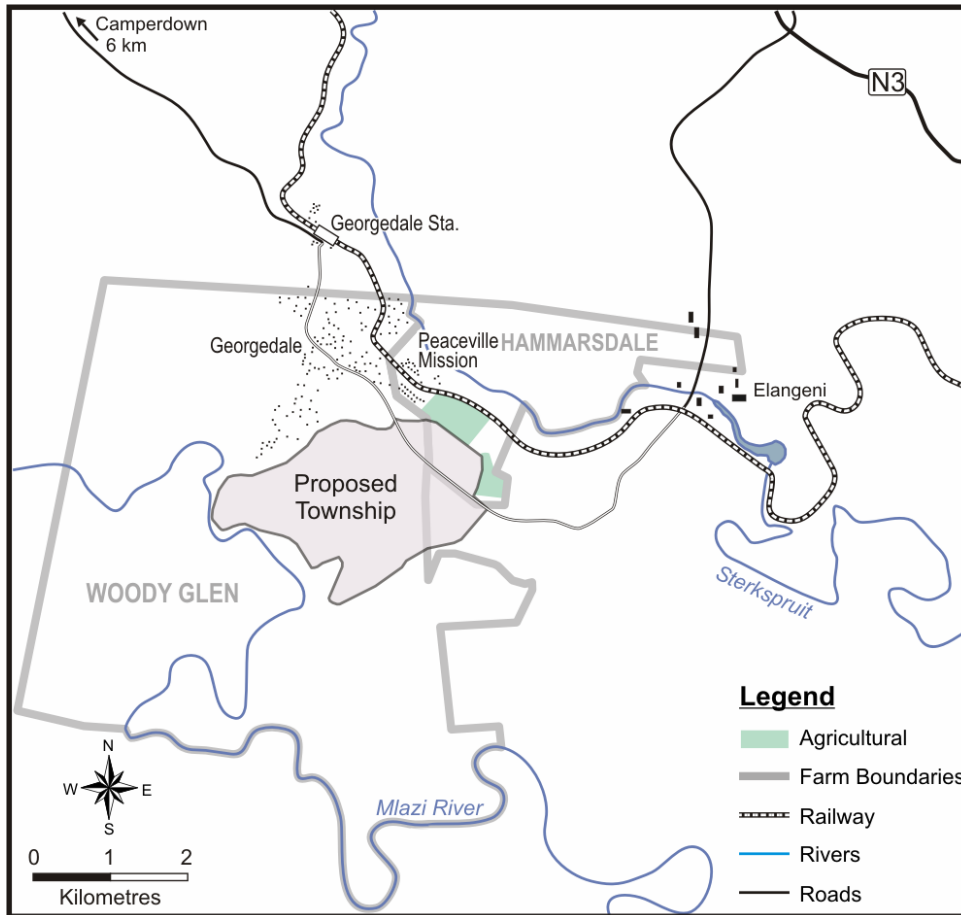
<sup>76</sup> CA, Memo from CBC (PN) to Deputy secretary, housing, 19 February 1970. Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 2/1853, File 60/4/1106/2, p.11 & 12

<sup>77</sup> CA, Memo, 14 April 1970. Box 5051, File G57/4/1106

<sup>78</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 2/1919, File T60/8/1106/2, p.30

## MAP 6: GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF MPUMALANGA TOWNSHIP 1960S – 1980S

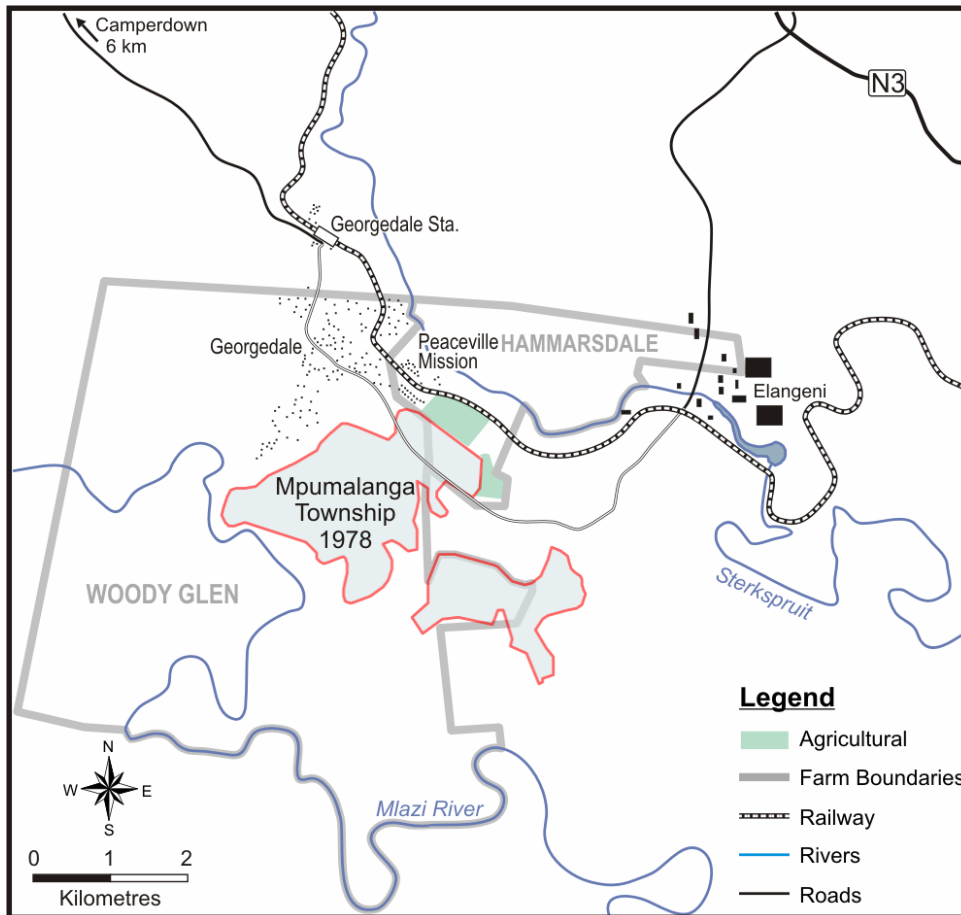
### MAP 6(a): PROPOSED TOWNSHIP EARLY 1960S



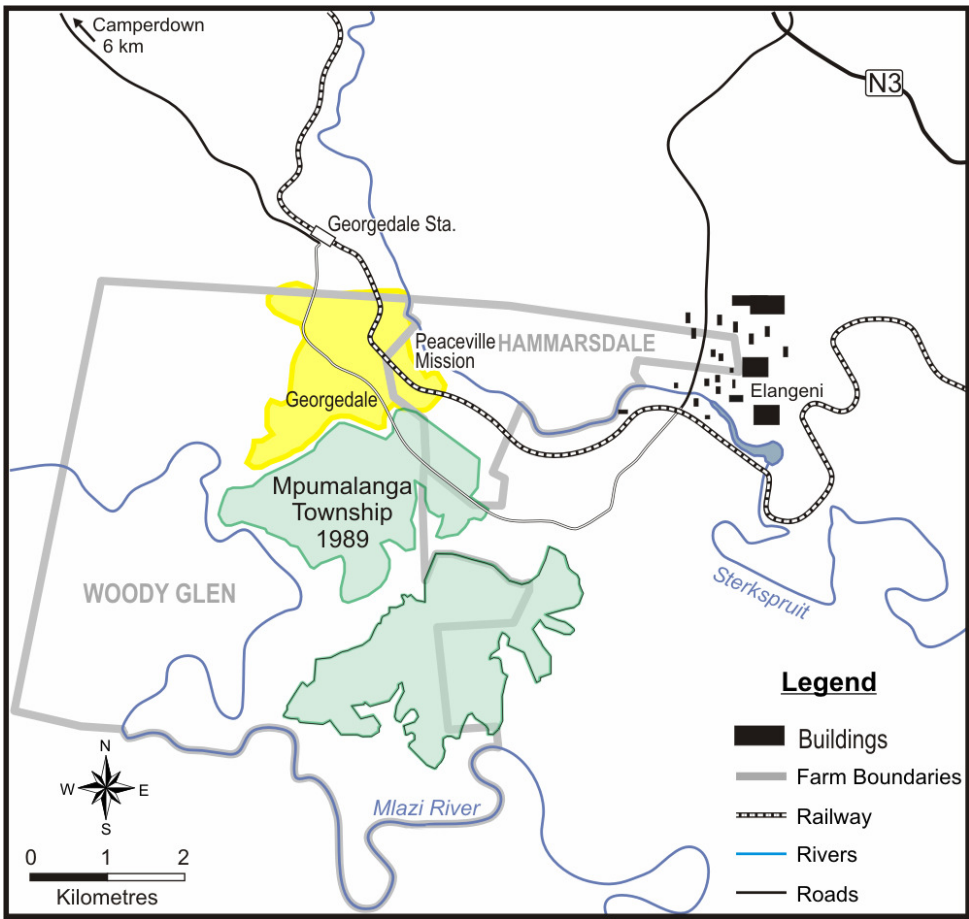
<sup>79</sup> CA, Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Box 2/1853, File T60/4/1106/2, p.29



**MAP 6(b): COMPLETED TOWNSHIP, c1978**



**MAP 6(c): FURTHER GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, c1989**



**Fig 5: Photograph of Construction of Mpumalanga Township – Site Prior to Construction, c1967**



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