Growing People, Growing Barley:

Cultivating Human Relations on Hoëberg Sustainable Farm

Dissertation by Laura Irvine

In Partial Fulfilment of her Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree

2016

Department of Social Anthropology

University of Cape Town

The UCT Knowledge Co-op facilitated this collaborative project between SAB BBBB and UCT.

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

SCHOOL OF AFRICAN AND GENDER STUDIES, ANTHROPOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

ANTHROPOLOGY: COURSE CODE: AXL4400W

ESSAY/PROJECT/ASSIGNMENT COVER PAGE

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Student Number: IRVLAU003 **Due Date: 20 February 2017**

Essay/Project/Assignment: Minor Honours Dissertation

Title: Growing People, Growing Barley: Growing Human Relations on Hoëberg Sustainable Farm

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Contents

Abstract

Farm labour in South Africa has a long history of exploitation, and today workers are still marginalised and not fully recognised for their contribution to the South African market economy. Sustainability programs, such as SABMiller's Better Barley Better Beer attempt to address inequalities and farm for the future, but very little is known as to how or even if sustainability programs have an impact on farm workers. This study aims to explore sustainable barley farming on a farm in the Western Cape, and the ways Better Barley Better Beer influences farm labourers. While the environmental and economic spheres of sustainability are addressed, very little is done for social sustainability and as a result farm workers are still subjected to the neoliberal, capitalist expectations of the farm that requires them to act in a strictly regimented way. Workers are regulated through time, discipline and money, but are able to regain some of their humanity through resisting the system covertly, and adding extra structures like community and interdependency that the system does not cater for. If Better Barley Better Beer would like further success within social sustainability in the future, it needs to acknowledge the humanity in workers, and work together with labourers to find ways to accommodate their desire to be recognised as valuable and human.

Acknowledgements

When starting this project in March, nine months ago at the time of writing, I had a very different product in mind. This is natural for any piece of work, but the journey I have undergone to get to the finish line has been far more mentally and physically exhausting than I could have possibly envisioned, and I definitely would not have reached this point were it not for the team of people behind me, supporting and contributing to this project in a myriad of different ways. I appreciate them all, and will be unable to ever reciprocate adequately the love, advice, support, smiles and well wishes that were given so abundantly to me.

At the UCT Anthropology Department, I am indebted to nearly everyone in some shape or form. Thank you to Kharnita Mohamed for giving encouragement and feedback while under pressure from her own mentees, to Fiona Ross for her initial help in the sketching out of ideas as well as her inspiring work *Raw Life, New Hope*, and to both Chris Machelm and Selma Walters for being the friendly faces always asking how things were and helping with any administration that needed doing. A huge thank you to the best and most capable Honours convenor, Helen Macdonald, for sharing her knowledge, house, and personal experience which kept me sane. I was lucky enough to have two supervisors to coach me through this project: thank you to Susan Levine for her literature input in my proposal, and thank you to Divine Fuh for his endless patience and guidance in the crafting of the final product you now hold.

To both Barbara Schmid and Mpho Phoba at the UCT Knowledge Co-Op: thank you for making this project possible. Thanks also to Jan Coetzee at Better Barley, Better Beer for being so accommodating and flexible with meetings, introducing me to my field-site, and funding my accommodation. I appreciate all the time you have taken to make sure that I was able to work in the best circumstances possible.

Apparently it takes a village to raise a child, and I would argue that it also takes a village to write a thesis. Thank you to all my friends for understanding that I was unavailable for large periods of time, and especially to Anna Allman for her encouraging memes and teas, and Simone Oosthuizen for the writing sessions which forced me to actually *write*. Thank you, Dan and Carl, for overlooking dirty dishes and piles of (clean) laundry. Thank you to my family for your quiet support in not asking too many questions about when I was going to finish this, and the bottomless fridge that I could help myself to. Thank you to Artemis for

keeping me sane through running, and to Lynn Edwards who picked me up, dusted me off, and helped me realise that I actually *could* write this in the first place. Peter, you have been my rock and I cannot exaggerate when I say that this writing is a direct product of your endless patience, love, and support. I love and appreciate you more than you know.

Finally, thank you to every single one of my participants. I have grown so much as a person through getting to know all of you, and am unable to express my appreciation adequately for all of your generosity and willingness to include me in large portions of your lives. I will always hold Caledon dear to me, and its people who have shared so much while I have only my work to give back. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BBBB: Better Barley, Better Beer

SABMiller: South African Breweries Miller

WWF: World Wildlife Fund

WWF-SA: World Wildlife Fund – South Africa

Chapter 1: Introduction

Abstract

This chapter introduces my research on a grain and sheep farm outside of Caledon in the Western Cape. I aim to investigate the sustainable practices implemented on the farm, and whether social sustainability is taken as seriously as it should be. Farm workers the world over are found in an unforgiving, neoliberal economic market that does not recognise them as fully human, instead using them for their resources only. I argue that the farm regulates labour through both time and money, but workers have found ways to reclaim their humanity through community, interdependency and conviviality.

..*

> "When tea becomes ritual, it takes its place at the heart of our ability to see greatness in small things. Where is beauty to be found? In great things that, like everything else, are doomed to die, or in small things that aspire to nothing, yet know how to set a jewel of infinity in a single moment?" – Muriel Barbery, *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*

All stories have a beginning, middle and end: what readers don't often contemplate though is *which* beginning, middle and end was used in the spinning of the tale. There are more possible beginnings to a story than sheep in the Western Cape (and believe me, that's *a lot* of sheep), or maybe even grains of barley used to make beer each year – a number most people find incapable of even conceptualising. I use these comparisons because the story that I would like to tell is about both sheep and barley, but it is also about people, laws, food, rain, and sharing. It begins in the soil of the land we walk on, but can equally begin with an email, a greeting. I would like to start this story with a cup of tea.

Tea is often a symbol for people coming together, sharing in a ritual that has been carried out for thousands of years in various forms. My thesis, in essence, is about this ritual: sharing a sense of togetherness that goes much deeper than quenching one's thirst. My connections to the people involved in this story have often occurred through tea, as well as the sharing of meals, amusement, and pain. People continue to share cups of tea in the face of a system that does not recognise tea as a connection, but rather purely a product that is grown, harvested and then sold for profit.

Farm workers today, both globally and locally find themselves in a rigid, unforgiving system that expects very specific behaviour from them. This system is made up from neoliberal[2] constructs of the Capitalist West today, as well as a growing focus on sustainable development and production: essentially, meeting the grossly exaggerated economic "needs" of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. While this way of thinking is meant to take the future human into account, it does not acknowledge the humanity of today. Although initially my research was meant to ask "how does sustainable farming and its socio-legal requirements impact on conditions for farm labourers?", I soon realised that because the neoliberal agricultural economy and "sustainable" agriculture walk hand in hand, conditions for farm labourers have never been meaningfully addressed. Instead I argue that through subverting this system, farm workers find a way to be human again by connecting with others through community, food, and sharing. I explore the ways that social sustainability and human relations interact with each other in reality, cultivating particular relationships amongst and between people, and the work they do. This story illustrates the desire to be human, even when one is not formally recognised as such.

My interest in farm workers stems two-fold: An excellent lecture by Dr Susan Levine made me first aware of the plight of farm workers in 2013, and my partner's family owns a wine farm outside Worcester, in the Western Cape. Levine's work has largely shaped my thinking of minority and marginalised groups, and the exploitation that is still experienced in South Africa today. Levine wrote her Ph.D. in anthropology on child labour occurring on wine farms in the Western Cape in 1996, and since then has contributed to the general literature on child labour as well as providing links between the history of child labour and the history of agriculture in South Africa. Levine outlines a case of exploitation of migrant child labourers both in her 2011 article *The Race of Nimble Fingers* and again in her 2015 'flash-ethnography' *Children of a Bitter Harvest* that mirrors the kind of exploitation that Jeeves and Crush describe which occurred in the 1950's to adult migrant labourers (Jeeves & Crush, 1997). Inhumane living conditions, working long hours in baking heat without respite and withholding of wages is described first by Jeeves and Crush and again by Levine in incidents that are separated by over forty years (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:25); (Levine, 2011:4-6). Levine

[2] Neoliberalism as referred to in this thesis is a form of capitalism that allows the global markets and economies the freedom to move without much political interference. Capital however was required in order to take advantage of this system, and therefore Western Capitalist societies have had to adjust and compensate, resulting in a far less equal distribution of wealth than in times before or other economic systems operating today (Hart 2010).

argues that child labour can only occur with the perpetuation of adult exploitation as well (1999:140), and therefore even though her focus is first seemingly unrelated to agriculture in general, it provides important insights into the continued oppression and exploitation of the farm work-force.

This work has lead me to ask questions about the nature of farm labour even when supposedly within the bounds of the law, and how the agricultural sector in South Africa works. Exploitation is an explicit way to deny the humane, and my thesis therefore explores other, more implicit ways in which farm workers are denied their humanity, even when they are treated lawfully.

In the more personal realm, my partner's parents own a farm outside of Worcester in the Western Cape some thirty kilometres from Levine's field site, where they farm predominantly wine grapes with a cash crop of sweet melon and watermelon as well. They are audited by Fairtrade[3], and my interest was piqued by listening to conversations of social upliftment programs, an aging workforce and other benefits and problems that expectations from Fairtrade seemed to cause. It was a natural step then after these various catalysts to enquire about the Better Barley, Better Beer program when I saw it listed as a possible project on the UCT Knowledge Co-Op[4] website.

Farm labour in South Africa has a long history closely linked with colonialism and apartheid through the systematic exploitation and oppression of the black work force (Jeeves & Crush, 1997). Industrialisation of the South African agricultural sector occurred over a relatively long period of time between 1910 and 1950 because of a larger, more predominant mining industry (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:2). Without heavy state subsidy and policy bias towards commercial, white farmers, agriculture would not have necessarily seen the successes that it had in the 1930's to 50's. These political forces reduced competition from black farmers (essentially by making it illegal for black farmers to own land outside of the 'homelands' (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:21)) and created a labour force (predominantly comprising of migratory and labour tenancy) that otherwise would not have existed (Jeeves & Crush,

[3] Fairtrade is an international organisation that audits the practice of 'fair trade': a "process of exchange linking production, distribution and consumption with the aim of promoting solidarity and sustainable development" (Fretel and Roca, 2010:107). Ultimately Fairtrade aims to uplift impoverished producers by "improving economic, social, political, cultural, environmental and ethical conditions at all levels of the process." (ibid.)

[4] The UCT Knowledge Co-Op is an organisation that connects community partners to appropriate UCT staff and students, helping bridge research gaps in the community while providing students with topics to write their dissertations on. They facilitate the research process between the student and community partner from inception to the final thesis.

1997:2;21). Competition for labour from the mining sector caused farms to become more and more reliant on migrant, vulnerable populations that had to be heavily disciplined and placed under intense surveillance in order to maintain their production levels. Under these practices, workers were subjected to extremely poor working conditions (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:26); (Marcus 1989:2). From the 1960's onwards there was a shift in production from being labour- to capital-intensive, which resulted in a decline in farm worker populations as well as a shift in social composition with growth of migrant, female, child and prison labour numbers in order to make labour as cheap as possible (Marcus, 1989:2). Modernisation, mechanisation and technological innovation go hand in hand with "continued intense oppression and exploitation of black farm workers" (ibid.).

Post-apartheid South Africa has seen an increase in farms and government discussing and implementing "sustainable" policies and practices, both on a national governmental policy scale (South Africa Dept. of Agriculture, 2004) and through independent organisations such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Fairtrade. Globally, sustainability has been of interest for about thirty years now, and programs or initiatives are largely based on the Brundtland Report that stemmed from the work of the World Commission on Environment and Development, established by the United Nations in 1983 (Mulligan, 2015:268). This 'three sector' model, also known as the 'triple bottom line', "seeks a balance between *economic* development, *environmental* protection and *social* well-being" (Mulligan, 2015:4 emphasis in original).

"Better Barley, Better Beer" (BBBB) is a private initiative run by SABMiller in partnership with the South African branch of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF-SA). WWF-SA, Conservation International and the GreenChoice Alliance developed a generic document that brings together current knowledge on sustainable farm management in South Africa which can then be customised for a particular agricultural sector. SABMiller and WWF-SA subsequently adapted this generic document for the use of barley farming. This set of criteria has been adapted from international best practice guidelines and aims to "empower and support local barley farmers towards a more sustainable future… from economic, environmental and social perspectives" (BBBB Manual). The program wanted specific research done on how their sustainable implementations affected farm workers, and listed this research opportunity with the UCT Knowledge Co-Op. I chose the topic, and Jan Coetzee from BBBB has kindly supported me throughout the process.

Physically, this story takes place on a sheep and grain farm called *Hoëberg*[5] located on the Cape Town side of Caledon in the Western Cape. It is approximately 2200ha of arable land that is divided 50/50 into sheep and grain. Barley and wheat percentage of production varies from year to year, but this year about 700ha of land was dedicated to growing barley. Besides wheat and barley, canola, lucerne, and oats are also grown to feed some 5500 Dohne Merino sheep on the farm. The farmer, Lukas[6], his wife, Tannie[5], and their three daughters live in the main homestead. Lukas owns approximately 1650ha of the land he farms, and rents the rest. Two foremen, Coenie and Oom Jordaan, manage the two different parts of the farm: Coenie the sheep and Oom Jordaan the grain. Four farm workers and their families stay on the farm, one farm worker stays by himself on the farm, and one farm worker has a house in Bot Rivier but stays on the farm during the week. Other farm workers either live in Bot Rivier or Caledon, and travel in daily. In total, my named informants come to 35 people, ranging in age from two years of age to 74. In this thesis I draw from the experiences of Coenie, Bolta, a senior worker, his wife Koekie, Pietie who has worked on the farm for five years, and his 13 year old son, Marshall.

The cup of tea I would like to start this story with is the accompaniment to a conversation started in May 2015. A year and a half later, this conversation is still continuing with many different people, and many different cups of tea. This document is, in many ways, a collection of those conversations, with the intention of looking towards the future, arming ourselves sufficiently in the hopes of improving the lives of those around us.

Structure and Organisation of Thesis

This thesis argues that The Farm as a neoliberal, agricultural system regulates workers through time, discipline and money. Workers are able to resist and subvert this system through the creation of relationships with one another, and therefore although the system might not recognise the humanity of labour, workers are able to recreate their humanity through community.

The chapter that follows outlines the methodology of my fieldwork, and the ethical considerations taken including an outline of an "ethics of care" as advocated for by Andrew Spiegel. I then conduct a thorough literature review in Chapter Three with works covering

[5] Literally translated from Afrikaans as *High Mountain*. The name of the farm has been changed in order to preserve anonymity.
[6] Name changed

agriculture in South Africa, sustainability, lack of emphasis on social sustainability, capital, labour, and the Human Economy as outlined by Keith Hart. Chapters Four and Five outline the regulation and discipline within the neoliberal farm structure through both time and money, and Chapter Six explains how farm workers are able to resist this discipline through interdependency and the collective. I conclude in Chapter Seven with a summary of my argument, practical suggestions for Better Barley to consider in the improvement of their sustainability program, and possibilities for future research on the subject.

Chapter 2: Methodology, Ethics & Reflexivity

Abstract

In this chapter I outline my physical field, the stakeholders I had access to, and the various types of qualitative research undertaken. I conducted research on a farm outside of Caledon in the Western Cape over June and July 2016, and had access to nearly all stakeholders. Research mainly took the form of participant observation, with informal interviews and a social mapping exercise with the children. I also discuss the ethics of my research, and what lengths I had to go to protect my informants. Reflexivity is also an important part of anthropological research and I outline my own idiosyncrasies in the field and how my viewpoint influences my research.

Introduction

Martin Hammersley states that: "research design should be a reflexive process which operates throughout every stage of a project" (1995:24). It is in this light that I shall outline the methodology of my research. Even while in the field my design and methodology was constantly evaluated, and if deemed ill-fitting it was adapted to suit the context I found myself in. Much of the work conducted I had only planned a few days before, as I tried to fit in with the schedule as much as possible, and other times investigations were only able to be taken so far and no further. Some methodologies, while not referred to directly in the rest of my work, have influenced my thought processes in the field and therefore they are included for a holistic viewpoint of how I went about my fieldwork.

Methodology

Having outlined my areas of interest through extensive reading, I then had to formulate a methodology that would allow me to gather data insightful to labour, sustainability and human relationships. Participant observation, the backbone of any ethnographic research, allowed me to experience mostly labour and human relationships. Dewalt et al point out that although participant observation is accepted "almost universally as the central and defining method of research in cultural anthropology", authors do not often agree on the definition of what constitutes actual participant observation (1998:259). For them however, participant observation is a method within fieldwork which includes "the explicit use in behavioural analysis and recording of the information gained from participating and observing" (ibid.).

Thus in participating in labour and family life as well as observing these activities, I was able to document various aspects of labour and human relationships. Sustainability is more difficult to document physically: while you can see some of the effects of the guidelines take place, it was more insightful to conduct interviews with various people on and off the farm in order to ascertain what sustainability meant in this local context.

I conducted fieldwork from the 13th June 2016 until the 15th, going home for the long weekend and then immersing myself in the field proper from the 24th of June until the 6th of July. During this time I went home to visit my family for one weekend. I found that the first two days gave me an introduction to farm life without being completely overwhelmed immediately: the ability to process the place and people a little before starting fieldwork proper the week after, although not necessarily 'orthodox', allowed me to know who I was going to talk to and what the location was like. As this was my first "proper" fieldwork it helped my confidence. I think this was also appropriate as not all of my participants had been informed of my research prior to my arrival. The farmer's wife (Tannie) and I had had lengthy correspondence, meeting once before as well, and although my reason for being on the farm was explained to the workers briefly and a group meeting with the women of the farm was held with Tannie and me, I found it far more useful to explain in my own terms, and introduce myself to the households individually without the farmer or farmer's wife present. On the afternoon of June 13th, I drove over the road from the farmer's house to the farm workers' houses, and randomly approached houses that looked lived in, standing outside and explaining in broken Afrikaans that I was going to be here for the next month looking at how things worked on the farm, and everyone was to understand that there was no obligation to take part, and if they didn't want to they should say as such at any time. This was a rude awakening to the realities of fieldwork: awkwardly asking people to allow me into their lives, while nearly being bitten by a guard dog. I hoped though that these various introductions meant that my participants all had time to 'digest' my research and consider whether they wanted to be a part of it before it started. I stayed in a guesthouse two kilometres from Hoëberg. Although multiple sites were first considered, in the end I remained on Hoëberg for the entirety of my fieldwork.

I had access to nearly all stakeholders of the farm: the farmer and their family, farm workers and their families as well as any other people who were involved in the day-to-day running of the farm, including two foremen, and various outsourced actors who had particular roles. The only group of people that I did not have direct access to were the seasonal day-to-day

workers. As stated before, four of the farm workers live with their families on the farm, while two others stay alone. Five other farm workers live off of the property and travel in to work each day. One foreman also lives with his family on the farm, and the other lives in Caledon. In total, my named informants come to 35 people, ranging in age from two years to 74.

Due to the large size of the field of study, sampling within the research field had to occur. Hammersley notes that there are "three major dimensions along which sampling within cases occurs: time, people and context" (1995:46). The time of research definitely has to be noted: due to the specific time of year that had been allocated to field research, I was not able to conduct research during all the stages of barley farming. This is problematic as there are different levels of labour required at different stages of the year, and I did not have access to seasonal workers who are contracted in for the harvest period in November and December. Unfortunately the scope of the study does not allow for a year's worth of field research, and therefore this will just have to be noted as a limitation of the study which provides room for future improvement. People will also be 'sampled' in this ethnography through the relevance of their stories to my argument. Although I spent time with all of my informants, I will not be able to include all of their experiences here. Again, this allows for more work to be produced in the future. Context was also taken into account: a farmer or worker may behave very differently in their own home with their family than the way that they behave while at work. These differences of behaviour were noted and accounted for.

During my stay, as I have stated above, I employed three main methods of data collection: participant observation, informal interviews, and with the children I conducted a social mapping exercise. David Jacobson, in his book *Reading Ethnography* (1991), writes that there are "modes of thought" and "modes of action" when analysing phenomena or conceptualising reality. Through participant observation I hoped to record "modes of action" – what the various actors in the field do in their daily lives – and then provide an explanation and analysis as to how informants act and interact with each other and the environment around them. *Participant* observation is important, as I not only recorded others' actions but took part in what they were doing, thus being able to experience for myself the various activities on the farm.

Social mapping is an interesting method of research as it is able to straddle both "modes of action" and "modes of thought"; originally intended to 'map out' various actors of the community and their relations to each other, (Chambers, 1997) I combined this with physical

map-making, allowing the children to draw the farm as they saw it including people in this physical space. This allowed me to observe their actions (how they drew the people and surroundings), as well as consider what they thought about the geographical space that they lived in. The limits of this methodology were not anticipated: for the most part the children dictated what they were going to participate in, and so although they were easily engrossed in drawing their own families and houses, I was unable to coax them to draw anyone else. This will be expanded upon in the final chapter entitled 'Everyday Resistance through Community, Interdependency and Conviviality'.

"Modes of thought" were captured through interviews, both semi-structured and informal. Semi-structured interviews were unable to occur in the field as it would have been too disruptive to everyone's work, but I was able to interview the representative of Better Barley, Better Beer after my fieldwork was completed. Informal interviews were conducted ad-hoc during the process of participant observation with people I happened to interact with, and I captured these exchanges either in note form or fieldnotes as immediately after the exchange as possible.

I expected participant observation itself to take a gendered viewpoint, as labour on the farm is often considered "men's work", and therefore I didn't know whether I would be allowed to participate in the jobs that workers perform on a day-to-day basis. I was lucky in that I was able to accompany workers every day, splitting my time between workers and families. I also participated in one day's full work to experience the physical demand that was required over the period of the day. The only thing that I was unable to do was load feed, as the bags were 50kg each and I was unable to pick them up. Everything else I participated in: I fed sheep, caught sick ewes for treatment, picked up dead lambs from the fields, cleaned out troughs and water pumps, loaded hay bales, dosed flocks of sheep, dug up compressed manure, swept out stores, and sprayed weeds. I accompanied every farm worker on his daily duties except for the seasonal workers, who broke down stones and this was also too physical for me to participate in. I also spent time with the families on the farm, bringing colouring in for the children, playing games with them, helping out in household chores such as collecting firewood and sweeping, and preparing food. I would also regularly speak with the farmer's wife, and accompanied the farmer on his inspection rounds.

Ethics & Reflexivity

Every effort has been made to consider ethics at every stage of my research: throughout research design, implementation, fieldwork and analysis and write-up afterwards, extending into the afterlife of my work and implications of it being available online for the general public to read. According to the University of Cape Town's Faculty of Humanities *Guide to Research Ethics*, the characteristics of my research encourage continuous deliberation over ethical challenges, as the research may evolve and move in 'unexpected directions' (2013:6). Efforts have been made to comply with the departmental and faculty requirements for ethics clearance, as well as the Anthropology Southern Africa ethical guidelines, some of which will be discussed below.

The primary responsibility of an anthropological researcher is to their research participants or informants. "Do No Harm" should be the mantra within the field, and the researcher should be able to protect and anticipate harm, although this is not always possible.

Informed consent has been asked of all participants, in either a verbal or written form – whatever was deemed most appropriate in the moment. Consent needs to be constantly negotiated with all participants throughout the time of study and even after the fieldwork has ended. Participants have been informed as to the nature and purpose of the study, and their own concerns need to be accommodated as far as possible within the research method and products. All participants have had the freedom to stop participating at any time during the project with no questions asked, and also have had the option of being anonymised through pseudonyms. However, most participants wanted to be named and therefore where appropriate I will be referring to them by their first names. Where it is possible that they could be discriminated against, I will anonymise them.

Farm workers are generally a marginalised and exploited part of society (Marcus, 1989); (Jeeves & Crush, 1997); (Atkinson, 2007); (du Toit, 2004); (Levine, 2015). I therefore have a responsibility to ensure that my informants are not rendered more vulnerable through my research, and ideally I would have liked to empower my informants by providing them with a direct input into the kind and focus of research I conducted. Research results will also be disseminated to participants in a way that they can understand, and feedback will ideally be generated so that I am moderated in some way by my informants as well as an internal and external examiner. Participants have been remunerated for their work in whichever way I felt

was most appropriate: thank you gifts were given to all participants[7], and I also spent time a large amount of time helping in the households by collecting firewood, entertaining children, and participating in general chores including hanging out washing and sweeping rooms. I participated in work wherever I could while observing the farm workers, thus hopefully making the load lighter and not getting in the way.

I aimed to practice an "ethic of care", as advocated by Andrew Spiegel (2005). This means that the ethics I practice was

> "flexible and responsive to immediate demands, rather than [being] a mechanically operationalisable (liberal) ethics of universal justice and rights... that takes its direction from political concerns with issues only of public power and individual rights" (2005:134).

According to Spiegel, care comprises of "four interconnected but sequential stages" (2005:137). These are:

1. Caring about – attentiveness
2. Taking care of – responsibility
3. Care giving – competence
4. Care receiving – responsiveness

Trust links all these phases of care, and therefore the relationship between research and informant lies at the heart of this form of ethics (2005:138). I endeavoured to create trusting, caring relationships within the field that were "situationally and contextually guided by the particularities of contemporary circumstances" (ibid.).

In order to create these trusting relationships in the field I had to guarantee certain things to all parties, so that they don't feel that I could bring harm or backlash of any kind. I have already guaranteed that I will not write any 'exposé' articles to BBBB, but at the same time I could not remain quiet if I did find that exploitation was taking place. If this was indeed the case then I would have had to report it to BBBB, and if they had not had a clear idea of what to do with the information then I would have also consulted my supervisor before going further. Although my report critiques sustainability in general, Better Barley Better Beer is a project

[7] These gifts were sensitive to the situation of the participant, so that the farmer was given a bottle of wine, but because of the issues of alcohol amongst farm workers the families were given an alternative gift but with the same monetary value: a tin of instant coffee and a bag of sugar. All workers included in this study were given a slab of chocolate, and the children were given a small bag of chocolates and sweets, each child receiving the same gift to avoid favouritism.

that aims to help farmers improve their farms economically, environmentally and socially, and therefore if I find that certain parts are substandard then they have the responsibility to help the farmer. This relationship ensures that a farmer will not be 'kicked' from the project, and rather they will be helped in order to better the circumstances they find themselves in.

The farmer is therefore guaranteed that I will not publically embarrass or shame them, and I have chosen to anonymise the farm and farmer, even though this was not explicitly asked for. This is the same kind of guarantee that was given to the farm workers as well as their families: everything we discuss will not be relayed back to the farmer as long as it does not harm anyone, although I chose to name the workers where appropriate to acknowledge their personhood. I therefore tried to approach every situation with sensitivity and an aim to keep such matters as private as possible, while still making sure that nobody was being harmed.

An important and necessary part of any anthropological undertaking is reflexivity: that is, reflecting on myself as an author and attending to the ways that I interact with and influence my field. While I hope to situate myself within the entirety of the thesis, not just this paragraph, it is important to directly confront who I am in relation to who I am writing about, and what 'baggage' I bring with me into this dissertation. Firstly, I am a white South African female of direct European descent. This has large significance because of the history of colonialism and racial discrimination in South Africa in general, as well as the particular agricultural context that I am studying. I need to be aware of this prejudice throughout the thesis, as although I am able to experience the physical labour that farm workers do every day, I will never know what it is truly like to be a Person of Colour in a system that is violent towards them in ways I cannot always anticipate. Secondly I also have to acknowledge that I have personal ties to a farm, and therefore possibly a conflict of interest: at the beginning of this research I had a serious conversation with Susan, my supervisor at the time, who thought it might be best that I do not conduct research so "close to home". I transcribe a section of my email response here:

> "If I or my family in some way inherit the legacy of agriculture in South Africa, I would rather acknowledge this part of my existence with eyes open than to pretend it never happened." (Personal correspondence, March 2016)

It is in this spirit that I engage with my legacy as a white South African.

I also need to engage with my own idiosyncratic views of the field that might not be as obvious to outsiders: how do my personal tinted lenses affect the way that I interact with the field? My preference for straight-forward talking meant that I found it very difficult to integrate myself into the households on the farm: the women were far more difficult to approach and interact with, and I loathed arriving without any particular motive other than to "hang out". On the other hand I was able to build up camaraderie with the workers relatively quickly, especially when they realised that I wanted to participate in everything, and not just watch. The routine of the farm day also relaxed me because there was always something to do even if a conversation wasn't going well, and the fact that I was relaxed meant that awkward conversations were few and far between. Having danced in a coloured community all the way through my high school years, I was also far more in tune to the particular nuances of Kaapse Afrikaans, and did not feel unfamiliar with the people or the way they did things.

Conclusion

While my methodology has been fairly fluid, I incorporated participant observation, informal interviews and a form of social mapping within my qualitative research. These allowed me to consider both the "modes of thought" and "modes of action" outlined by Jacobson (1991). In being reflexive, I used Spiegel's "ethics of care" model in order to protect my participants from harm. I also have complied with the University of Cape Town's Faculty of Humanities *Guide to Research Ethics* and Anthropology Southern Africa's ethical guidelines. My work continues to 'live' even after it is finished, and therefore I need to account for future implications as well, thus producing an ethically responsible work that puts the participants' safety and dignity first above all else. I also need to be aware of my own positionality within the field both as a white South African who has benefitted from the discrimination of others in the past and who continues to live with white privilege in the present, and my own person with my own approaches to data collection. In the next chapter I discuss the history of agriculture in South Africa, sustainable agriculture and what it is meant to mean as well as how it is put into practice at present, and capital, labour and the Human Economy. Through this literature review I hope to provide a thorough background for the presentation and analysis of my data.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Abstract

This literature review is divided into three sections. First I give an outline of the history of agriculture in South Africa and important works on farm labour. While a fair amount of literature exists on farm labour, most of this work has been done by sociologists, economists, historians and political scientists. Andries du Toit and Susan Levine are the leading anthropological experts in this field at the moment, with du Toit focussing on the poverty and marginalisation of wine and fruit farm workers in the Western Cape (1993); (2004); (Du Toit & Ally, 2004); (2005); (Ewert & du Toit, 2005), and Levine focussing on child labour in an agricultural context, particularly on Western Cape wine and grape farms (1996); (1999); (2000); (Streak, et al., 2008); (2011); (2015). This is followed by a discussion of sustainable agriculture. From what I have been able to find, no anthropological work exists on sustainable grain farming or sustainable farm labour in a South African context, so while this is a gap that I aim to fill with this research, it means that this will be a conversation between works that are not necessarily anthropological in nature, or work that was conducted elsewhere in the world. *Social* sustainability is further lacking from sustainable agriculture literature, which is a further gap I aim to fill.

The third section, *Capital, Labour and the Human Economy*, discusses the economic framework that I will be using to frame sustainability and labour on grain farms. 'The Human Economy' is a concept that is explained and advocated for by Keith Hart as a way to counter the increasingly alienating market economy the West finds itself in today (2010). I will also be looking at structures of power, how money fits into the human economy and outlining James Scott's argument for everyday forms of resistance (1985). These concepts will support the argument I make in chapter four, five and six.

Agriculture and Farm Labourers in South Africa

It is a common understanding that the marginalised and super-exploitable work force of black and coloured farm labourers was a methodical and deliberate creation instrumented by Southern African colonial powers beginning in the nineteenth century Jeeves & Crush, 1997:1); (Marcus, 1989:2); (Atkinson, 2007:8); (Levine, 1996:43). Alan Jeeves and Jonathan Crush give a historical account of the commercialisation and industrialisation of South

African farms in between the period of 1910 – 1950 in their book *White Farms, Black Labour* (1997). They argue that agriculture in South Africa was slower to industrialise than other countries because of its large mining industry: without heavy state subsidy and policy bias towards commercial, white farmers, they argue that agriculture would not have necessarily seen the successes that it had in the 1930's to 50's. These political forces reduced competition from black farmers and created a labour force that otherwise would not have existed (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:2). Jeeves and Crush refer to this transformation of South African agriculture as a "revolution"[8] (1997:1), which saw radical changes to forms of labour on white farms.

Before this transformation semi-feudal labour tenancy, letting to 'squatters', and sharecropping were common labour systems amongst farms (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:20). African 'squatters' on white farmland paid in cash or kind in order to farm their own crops and livestock, but the Natives Land Act of 1913 prohibited Africans from living on non-reserve land for any other payment other than labour, and so labour tenancy grew hugely (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:21). Migratory wage labour became more and more dominant as a system of employment as the transformation of the agricultural sector took place, and by the mid 1930's it had become the central labour institution of the South African economy (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:3). Migrant workers viewed farm labour as a secondary option to more prosperous opportunities in the mining and industrial sectors of the economy, and farmers pressured government for even more draconian controls, which Tessa Marcus refers to as the attempt to "immobilise black workers in commercial agriculture" (1989:2).

This contestation of labour between the different sectors of the South African economy is largely what drove the "agricultural revolution" of the first half of the twentieth century, with farmers relying heavily on state regulation of production which included subsidising of production and transportation costs, keeping local markets at inflated prices and introducing policies that heavily favoured white farm production and tried to protect farms' accessibility to a large work-force (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:15-16). This was only partially successful, and therefore farms became more and more reliant on migrant, vulnerable populations that had to be heavily disciplined and placed under intense surveillance in order to maintain their production levels. Under these practices, workers were subjected to extremely poor working conditions (Jeeves & Crush, 1997:26).

[8]Tessa Marcus argues against the use of the term "revolution" as exploitation of workers continues throughout the process bearing no real change (1989:1), and therefore I shall not refer to the restructuring as such.

Tessa Marcus prefers to refer to the agricultural revolution as "the restructuring process" of agriculture because of this super-exploitation, and divides the process into two phases: the first extending from the 1930's to the 1960's, and the second from the mid 60's to the late 70's and beyond (1989:1). The first phase was characterised by growing capitalisation and expansion of production as outlined by Jeeves and Crush above, which lead to a huge demand for labour. The second phase shows a shift in production in commercial agriculture from being labour- to capital-intensive, which results in a decline in farm worker populations as well as a shift in social composition with growth of migrant, female, child and prison labour numbers (1989:2).

Marcus outlines a disparity in the literature between focussing on the modernisation, mechanisation and technological innovation of this second phase and the "continued intense oppression and exploitation of black farm workers" (1989:2). She proposes that these two different viewpoints are in fact the opposite sides of the same relation, and that cheap labour is the central, material force in the process of reorganising production relations on South Africa's white-owned farms (ibid.).

Contemporary debates around South African agriculture and farm labour stem from this complex history, although other forces become apparent in continued labour market restructuring. Andries du Toit[9] is concerned with rural reform (specifically the way it influences farms' management structures) and poverty both on and off farms. He discusses paternalist practices on farms (a direct legacy of the patriarchal, racialised and hierarchical structures of slavery and colonialism (2004:993); (1993:315); (Du Toit & Ally, 2004:4)) and the way that they have not disappeared, but rather just "mutated and adapted" in response to growing international market pressures and policy restructuring on a national level (2004:994). This uneven process of labour market restructuring, including the *de*regulation of agricultural producer markets (Du Toit & Ally, 2004:5); (Du Toit, 2004:994), has meant that temporary and seasonal work has quickly become the majority mode of employment for farm labourers[10], with more than half of the farmers du Toit interviewed using third party labour

[9] A social scientist with experience in both political science and anthropology who directs the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) in the Western Cape.

[10] Du Toit specifically studies deciduous fruit and wine farms in the Western Cape which are high intensity forms of agriculture. Further investigations need to be done to see whether this is a country-wide phenomenon also experienced on low-intensity cereal farms such as barley, but my experience on Hoëberg points towards labour as a popular form throughout South Africa as all farmers are experiencing the same market and policy pressures. Doreen Atkinson substantiates this argument in her work, *Going for Broke* (2007). I was unable to expand on her ideas here, but should this work be expanded upon her research into policies in South Africa would be beneficial.

contractors, and many abandoning their role in supplying housing to workers (2004:994), thus moving from land tenancy to more fluid, migration forms of employment.

Du Toit also argues that these outside influences need to be taken into consideration when looking at chronic poverty in areas such as Ceres. "Social exclusion", a concept developed by policy debates in the EU, does not translate to chronic poverty in South Africa, du Toit argues (2004); (2005). Instead, the multi-dimensional nature of poverty is better described through "adverse incorporation", an analysis of "power relationships and processes that perpetuate and create... marginality" (2005:47). Ultimately livelihoods on wine farms in the Western Cape have been shaped by what du Toit terms a 'triple transition', involving local industry deregulation, international agro-food integration and the politics of democratisation and legal reform (Ewert & du Toit, 2005:315).

As introduced in chapter 1, Susan Levine wrote her Ph.D. in anthropology on child labour occurring on wine farms in the Western Cape in 1996. Levine conducted a restudy of her original 1996 field site from 2004 to 2008, as 'protective' legislation had been implemented by government that did not originally stand in her initial research, including the new child labour act, the minimum wage act and the abolition of the 'dop'[11] system. What she found was that contrary to the hopes of protection that these acts would bring, children were much hungrier than ten years ago due to not being able to contribute to family income and parents spending their wages on alcohol (2011:10). Policy that was designed for the betterment of children had failed them, just as the policies that du Toit described had failed farm workers in general. In her 2007 book *Going for broke: the fate of farm workers in arid South Africa*, Doreen Atkinson specifically studies past policy failures and future policy options, indicating that there is still much work to be done in the South African agricultural sector.

Sustainable Agriculture in South Africa

In his Masters of Philosophy thesis, Damian Weldon outlines sustainable agriculture, and examines "to what extent environmental and agricultural legislation currently in effect in South Africa supports the adoption of the sustainable agriculture concept" (2013:9).

[11] The 'dop' system is a method of payment previously used by farmers that supplied farm workers with alcohol instead of cash. This existed in various forms, from giving workers tins of strong wine throughout the working day to taking home bottles in the evening, but whatever the form this introduced rampant alcoholism, the affects of which is still seen today in farm labouring communities (Levine, 1999:42); (Wilson, et al., 1977:10-11).

Weldon outlines a clear distinction between "sustainable agriculture" and "agroecology". "Sustainable agriculture" aims to promote agri-technologies and practices that minimise harmful effects of the environment, create an agricultural sector which is accessible to and effective for farmers, and increase food productivity (2013:11). Agroecology is a method "in which the aims and goals of sustainable agriculture can be achieved" (2013:16), which focuses on energy and material flows or driving forces of economic systems, environmental effects and *social impacts* (2013:18, my emphasis). Interestingly, there is an ethical difference between sustainable agriculture and agroecology: while agroecology rejects all forms of bioengineering, sustainable agriculture permits its use as long as it is a sustainable practice in itself (Weldon, 2013:18). BBBB falls into the latter group, in that they promote sustainable agriculture without commenting on the politics of bioengineering.

'Sustainable agriculture' as a term does not exist in any legislation currently in effect in South Africa (Weldon, 2013:11). While sustainable development is absent from legislature dealing with agriculture directly, the Constitution's Bill of Rights does include the right to a clean environment, which helps South Africa lean towards sustainable practices (Weldon, 2013:46;70).

A large issue however is that "sustainable practices", according to Weldon, are largely environmental in nature, and there is almost no mention of social equality in his thesis apart from explaining that agroecology encompasses ecological, economic and social dimensions (2013:14), essentially paying lip-service to the supposed "triple" bottom line. Elsewhere authors concur that within the general definition of 'sustainability' the social element is often overlooked, neglected or ignored. In part, this is due to varying definitions of the concept, and definitions are still being reviewed, reworked and adapted for local contexts. Stephen McKenzie explains that this neglect stems from the difficulty in quantifying social sustainability, evidenced by the wealth of literature geared towards attempts in measuring impact (McKenzie, 2004). He continues:

> "Further, all-purpose indicators of social sustainability are too general to be useful, and specific indicators need to be developed for particular companies, meaning that their usefulness to academic discourse in particular contexts of social sustainability is questionable." (McKenzie, 2004:7).

McKenzie argues that within the sustainability movement there is never true interdisciplinary practices, and instead within the environmental movement, the social and economic aspects

"will commonly be treated as tools to further that agenda" (McKenzie, 2004:6). The same occurs within the triple bottom line, a framework of sustainability that baselines the economic aspect as baseline which is supported and aided by environmental and social practices. Within agriculture, it is clear that environmental and economic baselines are prioritised as Weldon's thesis focuses on *environmental and agricultural* (economic) *legislation*, not social policy. Thembela Kepe and Ben Cousins, in their 2002 policy brief, extend this ironic marginalisation of social equity to a global level (p. 1). They argue that poverty and inequality is particularly stark in rural areas of South Africa, and without radical policy implementations of land reform through "redistributing productive agricultural land and securing rights to land and other resources" (ibid.), there will never be any real improvement of livelihoods.

When researching sustainable farming in general, a lot of literature is dedicated to small-scale, small-holding farming – a phenomenon that was initially puzzling to me, as South Africa does not use small-scale farming in any large sense. 85% of the country is farm land, but only 14% of those farms are small-holdings (Weldon, 2013:20). Andy Wales wrote a report from an initiative by SABMiller India, in which they helped 6000 local, small-scale farmers in Rajasthan implement malting barley farming in a sustainable manner that reduced carbon footprints, increased their income and reduced water wastage (Wales 2014:317-318).

In *Land, Labour and Livelihoods in Rural South Africa*, the editors argue that evidence points towards smaller farms having higher labour use as well as a higher output and slightly higher overall productivity per hectare of land (of similar quality) than larger farms (Lipton, et al., 1996:viii). This therefore explains the concentration of literature on sustainable small farms as they are more beneficial for the economy both in terms of employment and production levels, but South Africa does not have these small farms purely because of the historical bias towards white, commercial farmers as outlined by Jeeves and Crush above (1997) (Lipton, et al., 1996:vii-viii)[12]. Kepe and Cousins are therefore supported in arguing that the only way South Africa is going to fix the problem of poverty and inequality (and be truly sustainable in all three senses of the word) is through radical land reform.

[12] This does not seem to be abating, and in reality the opposite is happening. When interviewing a Better Barley, Better Beer representative they predicted that in 50 years there will only be 100 grain farmers in the entire country, having vast tracts of land under the control of one person.

Capital, Labour and the Human Economy

Karl Polanyi is an important 'founding member' of economic anthropology who wrote in the first half of the 20th century, arguing that the rapid industrialisation that had taken place had left no room for the 'social' in understandings of the market economy. His larger aim was to 'lay the groundwork for a general theory of comparative economics that would accommodate all economies, past and present' (Isaac, 2012:13). In his article, *Our Obsolete Market Mentality*, Polanyi demonstrates the divide between formal and substantive economics (Polanyi, 1947) and argues that contrary to general understandings of hunger and gain being the only incentives to drive human economic production, many other social incentives are also present in the functioning of the economy.

Industrialisation, he argues, has separated the market economy from the human, where labour is commoditised and the economy has the ability to regulate itself without human input. Marx is another important theorist when talking about separating the human from the economy: he argues in *Wage Labour and Capital* that human labour is commoditised, meaning that the human element in production is rendered invisible. (1921).

Keith Hart explores a different model of the economy that allows for the complexities of being human, aptly naming this 'the human economy'. Hart outlines this new epistemology as being flexible and able to adapt to local contexts, thus allowing for practical application to any situation, with the object being 'the reproduction of human beings and of whatever sustains life in general' (Hart, 2010:5). It needs to serve the needs of *whole* persons and communities, not just a narrow individualism shown in the market economy today, and is global in its ability to address the building of a world-wide human economy (ibid.).

Subconsciously labourers recognise this divide and not being acknowledged as human actors. James Scott outlines the concept of everyday resistance in his ethnography *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance*. He argues that protest and other forms of overt resistance are only resorted to once there is no other choice. A far more attractive form of disproval is covert, everyday resistance that allows actors to not put themselves in danger of losing their income, and remain anonymous. Different forms of this exist from 'slow-downs' to pilfering the authority's assets, and in this thesis I will be arguing that a more positive form of resistance occurs on Hoëberg through inter-subjectivity.

The ‘authority’ that is resisted against is also important to consider, as it has various means of control and regulation. On the farm labourers are at the bottom of this ‘power pyramid’:

The industrialisation of the agricultural sector in South Africa as discussed above has resulted in the exact split between formal and substantive economies that Polanyi warns against. I will be using these theories in order to argue that if a truly sustainable model of agriculture is to be achieved, the reconnection of these two sides of the same coin needs to occur. Of all actors in the system, they have the most regulation placed upon them and least amount of power. Karl Marx’s *Wage Labour and Capital* illustrates how the labourer is at a disadvantage when selling his labour, because although the employer multiplies his labour when commoditising both his efforts and the product of his efforts, the labourer is unable to multiply his productivity, instead only sustaining his life for a relatively short period of time (1921).

Foucault is another important theorist when considering power and the regulations it places on actors. Throughout his work he considers power in various different situations, objectification of subjects in sciences, separation of the subject from other parts of society, and personal objectification (Foucault, 1982). His famous theory on the ‘Panopticon’ is especially relevant when considering the regulation of labour even when workers are not directly observed by their supervisor, and so power can be applied on the farm both directly as regulation from above and indirectly through self-regulation.

Conclusion

The agriculture industry in South Africa, while important, has had to be sustained by the government and as a result exploitation of labour in apartheid was necessary in order to maintain production levels. Industrialisation meant that farming transitioned from labour-intensive to capital-intensive production, creating the neoliberal market as outlined by Polanyi that does not recognise the human. Sustainable agriculture, while a concept that has been in consideration for some time, has yet to be formally introduced to South African governmental policy and this results in various different definitions and implementations of sustainability currently. Most definitely there is only ‘lip-service’ to the triple bottom line, with most initiatives focussing almost solely on the economic and environmental sectors of the ‘triple bottom line’, neglecting the social. This social is unable to be acknowledged because of the divide between the formal and substantive economies today, and Keith Hart proposes a different episteme called the ‘Human Economy’ to address this divide. He argues that in order to reverse the effects of a disembodied market one needs to acknowledge the

human so that economies can be more locally relevant, and globally connected. Marx and Foucault are important in understanding the regulation that takes place on farms, both directly through authority and indirectly through self-regulation. In the next chapter I present the first two of these regulatory forms: time and discipline.

Chapter 4: Time, Discipline and Regulation

Abstract

In this chapter I first define 'time' as a concept outlined through the work of Johannes Fabian, and then apply what he terms as the 'denial of coevalness' to the neoliberal system itself, uncovering the same kind of dichotomy that Fabian accuses anthropologists of perpetuating. I then discuss the power dynamics on Hoëberg in general, using the theoretical framework of the formal economy by Karl Polanyi and the panopticon by Michel Foucault to explain discipline and power as a controlling structure. Finally I analyse the manual produced by Better Barley, Better Beer to gain a better understanding of the power structures put in place by concepts of sustainability.

Introduction

The neoliberal, commercial farm in South Africa requires a very specific actor in order to maximise production, and power and regulation exists on the farm in order to enforce the actions of actors to make sure that they comply. This chapter focuses on regulation through time and discipline, and I argue that the farm is a business first and foremost that expects certain behaviour and certain hours from all actors. It does not take into consideration the human element of the economy, and as a result social relations are not deemed important. Although sustainability itself is supposed to regulate production through sustainable practices, thus externally regulating the farm, in reality this does not happen. Instead these regulations form part of the neoliberal system itself, demanding certain behaviour from all actors regardless of their circumstances. In order for the regulations set out by Better Barley, Better Beer to be truly sustainable, they need to circumnavigate the commercial farm and insist on behaviour that counteracts the neglect of the human.

Time

"Jissis, daai bladdie alarms het gisteraand sommer elf uur, twaalf uur en twee in die oggend afgegaan."[13] Coenie runs a rough hand over his stubble. We're driving out to *withekke,* fields over the road from the main farmstead high on the hill. It's eight in the morning, and the sun is just beginning to cast a golden glow over everything as the day starts proper. The beauty of the scene captivates me, but it's obvious that the fatigue and looming long day ahead makes

[13]"Yissis, those bloody alarms went off last night at eleven, twelve, and two o'clock this morning"

Coenie slightly less easy to impress. The alarms being cursed are attached to the collar of a sheep, and if they move too quickly the alarm sends an SMS to Coenie's personal cell phone, alerting him that the flock is on the move when it shouldn't be. Coenie is the foreman of the sheep side of *Hoëberg*. He lives in a house on the farm with his wife and two young children, and is responsible for approximately 5500 Dohne Merino sheep that are bred, reared, shorn and sent off for slaughter. He joked to me saying that by the time that he's worked for twenty years he'll be a sheep too, not being able to say anything but "baa". There's not much that Coenie can do about the alarms if they are in fact stealing sheep: thieves often come armed with knives and guns, and if he were to drive out to the field in the dead of night, his lights would show him coming from miles away. He shows me a scar on his chin, where he was stabbed while checking on sheep once. "Wie gaan vir my familie kyk as ek doodgaan?": "Who's going to look after my family if I die?" He shakes his head. The alarm wakes up the entire household, and he says he had no choice in the matter of it being put on his cell phone in the first place. "They do what they want to" was his reply.

We find the offending young *hammeltjie*[14] amongst all the ewes, and after cursing it colourfully and checking the fences, which were intact, we started the rounds of feeding the many different flocks on the farm.

Coenie has been on the farm since January this year, replacing another foreman who moved jobs up the road for a better pay, according to the other farm workers. The farmer, Lukas, considers Coenie to be still wet behind the years, despite his previous experience in other parts of the province, and he still needs to learn how things are done "op *hierdie* plaas"[15]. Lukas is the fourth generation farming on the same plot of land, where he grew up. His father and he farmed together, but sadly his father suddenly passed away from a heart attack in 2005, and he has taken over the reins since then. The workers sense the tension between Coenie and Lukas: there is a huge expectation to be on-call 24/7, and because Coenie has a young family he doesn't want to be as available as Lukas would like him to be.

Time on the farm is strictly regimented in all respects: the day has a specific schedule, as does the year. At half past seven every morning all permanent workers are expected to have assembled in the shed and by eight every morning workers are busy starting the day's labour. At one o'clock in the afternoon is the lunch break for an hour until two, and then work carries

[14] A castrated young ram.
[15] "On *this* farm."

on until six o'clock in the evening, sometimes later. Each worker clocks in with a tag of their own that hangs on a hook next to the device in the shed that monitors the hours that they work. Lukas is keen to stick to these hours, as he pays them overtime from five thirty in the evening, but in reality if there is work left to finish, it must be done. "Maak klaar" ("finish", literally "make done") is one of Lukas' well-worn sayings, as is "alles moet netjies wees" (everything must be neat). The year also has a schedule to follow: sheep have a medication schedule, and they are also shorn every eight months. Lambing occurs twice a year, and the lambs must be weaned, docked, castrated and sorted at specific ages. Grain needs to be sown at a specific time of year, which ends in May. Weeds are sprayed while the grain grows, and harvesting starts in November, ending early December. During harvest and planting time Lukas and the workers will go home for dinner but return to work until midnight, getting up again early the next day in order to carry on with the work. Whatever the farm needs, it has to be done, and therefore workers are also required to work some weekends to feed and monitor the 5000 sheep, taking it in shifts, with Coenie overseeing them. Natural shifts in time like the weather and seasons affect the production of the farm as planting, lambing and harvesting needs to happen in certain seasons and the weather can affect the outcome of production, but in other ways the farm is oblivious to the elements: sheep need to be fed whatever the weather, and as a result I spent some days on the back of a bakkie being pelted with rain, barely being able to feel my hands while mixing food.

Time as a concept is well known to anthropologists, as the history of anthropology attests. Johannes Fabian in one of his most important works *Time and the Other* argues that there is a disparity between how anthropologists experience time in the field, and how they write theory with temporal consequences (1983). This has to do with "othering" of the subject, and the power relations between the anthropologist and their informants[16]. Fabian describes the anthropologist and their 'subjects' to be *coeval* in the field, which means on equal footing temporally. They both have the same understanding of time, and are experiencing the same temporality. When writing however, anthropologists use time to distinguish between themselves, the elite academic, and the 'savage' through evolutionism. He describes this as the 'denial of coevalness'. Achille Mbembe writes similarly about research on Africa in his work *On the Postcolony*. He argues that projecting the West's own ideas of time on Africa has lead to a complete breakdown in interpretation, resulting in the West defining the 'Other'

[16] This is especially true for anthropological studies in the first half of the 20th century, as Fabian writes from the early 80's.

as not *different*, but *nothing at all* (Mbembe, 2001:4). He argues that the West views time in Africa as stationary, and where change results only in chaos and confusion. Instead he aims to document a continent where time is not stationary nor linear: instead he argues that time exists as an entanglement between past, present and future with multiple experiences of reality occurring at the same time (Mbembe, 2001:16). Differently experiences of time then, described in turn by Fabian and Mbembe, are able to exist independently but at the same time, and the West often denies this by projecting a specific interpretation and meaning of time onto every experience. This critique can be carried across to the commercial South African grain farm. The neoliberal system is an outside projection of time onto expectations of what the farm needs to do when, and both the day and year are structured in such a way that productivity is central. This might, but not necessarily does intersect with the experience of a day or year of the individual. While in the everyday practices of the farm the farmer and labourer have a similar understanding of work and time (for example, the farmer works just as long as the worker during harvest time) this is not translated across structurally, as there is still an unrealistic expectation of the worker being available at all times, should the farm need them. There is therefore a denial of coevalness by the market economy, and a projection of time in a way that is not always applicable to the specific reality of Hoëberg.

Time, if projected from an external source, disciplines the body in a specific and regimented way: certain actions need to be carried out at specific times, and the body is subjected to certain realities because of an applied schedule. Time is therefore used as a tool of discipline, which is what I will examine next.

Discipline

People who visit Hoëberg describe it as "a well-oiled machine"[17], and this perpetuates the understanding of the farm in a formal economic sense. The farm produces a certain amount of grain and sheep, and as long as the conditions are right and everything is completed timeously, the yield should reflect maximum production. Lukas the farmer also embodies this perspective in the way that he runs the farm. Described as "a perfectionist" by others, he tells me that farming is all about the detail, and as long as everything is seen to and nothing goes unnoticed, the production will go smoothly and your yields will be high. He points to a neighbouring barley field belonging to another farm: "There was something wrong with the

[17] A journalist who visited the farm in October 2016 described it as such and I also described it as such in my fieldnotes.

machine that planted his seeds. See how it skips out every fifth line?" I squint at the field and realise that indeed, every fifth furrow is bare of little shoots. "That's very bad," Lukas says, repeating again, "very bad". Emphasis is also placed on the need to do everything as fastidiously and as quickly as possible: time here is used as a form of discipline, as well as the direct regulation of bodies. At the morning meetings everyone knows to remove their headwear when listening to the Bible reading of the day. Unfortunately however one morning after the prayer Richard put his hands in his pockets nonchalantly – this was immediately pointed out by Lukas and he warned Richard that decent workers did not stand around with their hands in their pockets, as it did not represent willingness or attention in the workplace.

A lot of what Lukas does is overseeing work, so that he very rarely (if ever) physically labours like the others. Even Oom Jordaan, a 74 year old foreman who deals with the grain side of the farm, walks through the fields spraying, fixing fences, and a lot of the time I struggled to keep up with his spindly, long legs striding forth up steep hills. Instead Lukas oversees the financial side of the business, making sure that they have enough of everything, coordinating with the fertilising company, making trips into town to service vehicles and buy supplies, keeping track of the markets online, and doing rounds of the farm where he drives in his bakkie, radioing various people about anything that he sees is incorrect or faulty. It was not uncommon to have Lukas radio us about something that needed doing or to tell us what we were doing wrong. Sometimes we were unable to see his bakkie in the nearby fields, but he was still able to see that we had not being putting the mielies on the contours of the sheep pens, which is what he wanted us to do. This very much reinforced the idea of being watched the entire time, even when there was nobody there.

I was fortunate enough to be on the farm when Lukas and his family went away for a week to visit family. The following morning it was immediately obvious that 'the surveyor' was gone: two people arrived extremely late for the morning meeting, which would have been disastrous for them had Lukas still been there. Later that week I was assigned to two workers who were varnishing a fence which was placed quite near to the N2 highway. Instead of painting, we chatted for nearly three hours, talking about cars (there was a constant commentary on the types of cars that were driving to and fro), alcohol, and being smart with money. I was slightly worried because I didn't want to be accused of shirking work, but at the same time enjoyed sitting on the unvarnished fence listening to two men talking about their interests. At the end of the day Coenie teased us, saying that we talked too much but in a very

light-hearted way, and I felt that this would definitely not have been the case had Lukas been around.

Foucault is the leading authority on discipline as theory, and his work spans different institutions of regulation including prisons, psychiatric institutions, and schools. In his seminal piece on the topic, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, Foucault outlines the "docile body", and how regulation and power becomes manifested on a micro-scale within the behaviour and appearance of an individual, producing a subjected and practiced body (Foucault, 1975:138). This new form of control and manipulation is a conglomeration of many different actions over time and space, and it has spread through institutional life in the hopes of regulating education, the military, healthcare (both psychiatric and physical), penitentiary systems, and the industrialisation of production. He argues that disciplinary power has three elements, namely hierarchical observation, normalising judgement, and examination. Hoëberg is a textbook example of the discipline that Foucault describes. Lukas embodies the perfect surveyor of activity on the farm: he enforces particular kinds of behaviour on bodies (like Richard found out when he put his hands in his pockets), and facilitates observation through judgement and normalising his gaze that makes it possible for him to classify, correct, and punish if need be. Foucault's description of the Panopticon is also perfectly descriptive of the industrial farm: although we could not always see Lukas his judgement and control was felt: when his physical presence left the farm the behaviour of the workers changed to reflect that they were no longer self-disciplining to such a strict level as when the farmer was on the property.

Self-regulation however always occurs at some level: none of the workers drank alcohol while working even when Lukas was away, and they still fulfilled their roles to a certain degree. Fiona Ross engages with this in her book *Raw Life, New Hope* (2010) where she explores the concept of 'ordentlikheid', directly translated as decency[18]. Residents in an informal settlement regulated themselves through expecting certain behaviours of each other and themselves, and on the farm this is no different: decency can also be seen as a form of discipline and self-regulation.

[18] The Afrikaans is far more nuanced however, and can also indicate 'properness' and 'respectability'.

Internal and External Regulation

Time as used in discipline, discipline and self-discipline are all forms of regulation. Regulation is dealt with in abundance through the Better Barley, Better Beer manual, but in a very different way that regulation and discipline is played out on the actual farm. According to South African law, businesses and operations have to implement and make sure they take note of many different environmental, financial and employment regulations: these are put in place to limit the amount of exploitation and abuse that can happen in many different forms. In the manual these are expressed in external ways, by which I mean that the government externally has placed these regulations on the farm, and the farm must ensure that it complies.

While on the farm I did not experience any external regulation, or the knowledge of protecting regulation against any harm that might befall me or the people I was working with. Regulation throughout my fieldwork was internal: expectations were placed on us *by the farm*, not the government or any other legal or sustainability outlines. The only instance that I could possibly think was external regulation was the thorough recording of hours worked, and the way that employees were paid. The farm pays an external company to audit and manage all of their contracts and payslips, so that they make sure they comply with all current legislation in South Africa. Otherwise all regulation was through Lukas or protocols that Lukas had put in place. This is why it is difficult to untangle the farmer in the system rather than the farmer being the system: this all depends on what is their own initiative, and what they are required to do by law. Internal motivations are hard to decipher, and the formal economy does not allow for this. If a sustainability model like Better Barley, Better Beer is implemented through a capitalist model of farming, it is not going to achieve a lot of change. Instead it will continue to neglect the human through the formal economy. The only way to prevent this is to step outside of the framework of neoliberalism, opting for different practices that prioritise the person instead of production.

Conclusion

Through defining time, discipline and regulation on the farm, it becomes apparent that the system does not prioritise the human, but instead expects unrealistic input from actors because of the end goal of maximum production. There is a break between the concept of time in reality versus the concept of time that the structure requires, and through this dichotomy the human is forgotten. Discipline and regulation are achieved through various different exercises of power, both direct through the gaze of the farmer and indirect through

the self-regulation of workers in a panopticon effect. While time and discipline are two ways of regulating the worker, this does not take into account the formal economy's emphasis on finance and cost. Money or capital is a very important part in the regulation of the farm as a commercial structure, and so the next chapter is devoted to this subject.

Chapter 5: Money, Regulation and Social Relations

Abstract

This chapter adds another example of tools of regulation to the discussion: money. I first introduce Bolta as a farm worker who has stayed on the farm for the past sixteen years. He discusses with me the positives and negatives on the farm, and does not understand why he is paid so little as there are large transactions of money going on all the time. I contrast this with Lukas' framework of money where large expenses costing millions of rands, in his eyes, have to be paid. I argue that The Farm attempts to falsely divide money into a dichotomy of "public and private", which counters the everyday experience of money on the farm. I argue with Keith Hart that money is a bridge between the public and private, and thus is crucial in humanising the labourer.

Introduction

The backbone of any modern business is finance: "money makes the world go round" is a popular saying for a reason. Hand in hand with a formal understanding of the capitalist economy is a very specific understanding of money, which fails to notice the "many sides of the coin", as Bill Maurer terms it (2006:16). I will be arguing in this chapter that just like time and discipline, money is also used as a means to regulate the farm; and just like time, money is forced into a dichotomy that does not necessarily stand in real life. While the farm rationalises money into an equation (income – expenses = net profit) money is very much social to all actors, including the farmer. This duality between the formal and substantive will be dissected using Keith Hart's understanding of 'institutional dualism' (Hart, 2005). Another way of portraying this dualism is Maurer's 'dichotomy between the real and imagined'. The farm is regulated through the belief that money is abstracted from the real, which in fact is a skewing from reality. I will be illustrating these two sides of the same banknote through ethnographic descriptions of all actors, showing how they hold the idea of personal and impersonal money at the same time. Just like a watermark has the ability to shine through both sides of the paper, public and private cannot be kept separate, even at the best efforts of the neoliberal, commercial business. Hart argues that money is the bridge between public and

private and therefore is central to humanising society: I argue that money on the farm is central to humanising farm workers.

Working on the farm, paying on the farm

Bolta is a senior worker on Hoëberg, and has been working there for the past 16 years, which means he worked for five years under Luka's father as well before he passed away in 2005. On first meeting Bolta, he appears to be a quiet, serious man who keeps himself neat and gets on with the job. He is able to drive heavy machinery, and does a lot of the basic engineering and welding on the farm. His wife, Koekie, works a few days every week in the farmer's house cleaning and cooking, and his only child, Jaden, is seven years old and attends the local primary school. Their house is small but neat and more furnished than the other workers' houses – they have a set of black faux leather couches that were bought from a furniture store in Caledon, and a large wall unit that houses their TV and various pictures of the family and awards that Bolta has achieved. Koekie sells packets of chips and individual sweets to all the children on the farm. For R1 you are able to buy a packet of chips, or alternatively three sweets. She buys her stock in Caledon whenever the family goes to town for groceries, and I do not think she earns much profit from this, rather just providing a tuck shop for the children of the farm. Amongst friends Bolta is friendly and earnest – he always has a story about a personal experience that relates to the topic of conversation, and I listened in awe as he told the workers around him during lunch about how he was picked up drunk by the police one weekend years ago, and shifted gears for them in the middle of the front seat as they drove back to the police station. This caused much laughter, but he finished the story with a serious warning about the dangers of drink. He is now a fervent teetotaller and has been dry for four years, preferring to go on scenic drives with his family around the Hermanus coastline in his BMW, which is proudly displayed under a protective canopy next to his home.

Bolta never attempted to make small-talk with me, which I appreciated. This respected distance however was also difficult to bridge, and he would rather ask his wife to ask me to help him varnish a fence than to ask me directly. I'm not sure if this was because of my age and marital status, or whether he felt awkward talking to me, but once I arrived and set about painting wooden posts with engine oil, he was happy to answer my questions. He spoke earnestly about Hoëberg and how he liked it there, but felt that he was being paid too little and was unable to move elsewhere because accommodation for both him and his family was difficult to find on other farms. Although entitled to stay in his house even if he did not work

on the farm, he did not want to make this choice, and preferred to remain. The lack of money, he said, was strange as after Lukas' father died the farmer told the workers that money was never a problem on this farm, and if they had any troubles they must go and speak to him. Bolta related this to another worker one afternoon while I was helping them, and how in applying for a loan from Lukas, Bolta was able to remain debt free to the furniture store, instead paying off his couches in instalments deducted from his salary. Bolta claims that he could earn R3000 more on another farm in the same area, a substantial amount, but Koekie, his wife, says that they will be staying on the farm because workers are enticed away with seemingly good salaries but in reality the contracts are worse.

Lukas and Tannie have a more clinical approach to the workers' salaries, even if they do agree to finance furniture. Sitting down with Tannie one afternoon to look over all the salaries, I was interested to see the hierarchy according to monthly earnings. Bolta is one of the farm's longest standing workers, and because he has more responsibilities and extra licences for driving heavy vehicles, he earns double what the entry-level permanent workers earn. This however is still far below any of the senior employees (the foremen, or Tannie as a bookkeeper and secretary) and it is through virtue of the sheer volume of overtime worked that Bolta or any of the other workers manage to support themselves and their families. Entry-level employees, Tannie explains, earn just above the minimum wage as they have very little responsibility and only do what you tell them to do. She laughed at the thought of them doing anything of their own volition – I couldn't help but feel that this made the workers sound like robots devoid of feeling or their own thinking skills.

While I was having this conversation Lukas walked into the office, and pointed to scribbled figures on the desk in front of me. The price of a brand-new sprayer, the machine that sprays pest- and herbicides on the grain, is over six million rand. The demo-model is 4.8 million, which is less, but Lukas would still have to pay a deposit of 2.2 million rand should he want to buy it. These machines have a working lifespan of about ten years, after which you have to replace them should you not want the quality of spraying to deteriorate. "It's madness," Tannie comments. Lukas is fastidious about this though: machinery cannot be left past its expiry date, and money needs to be spent in order to ensure a quality product. Each nozzle on the sprayer retails for around fifty rand, but Lukas buys the two hundred rand ones: "They are higher quality, so they spray directly downwards and the poison doesn't travel as far" he explains. "This way when you're spraying grass growing in the canola, the poison won't drift onto nearby fields of wheat which are part of the grass family." John Deere, the manufacturer

of agricultural machinery that costs millions of rands, knows exactly how to promote their products. Instructing for the driving of complex vehicles comes "free" with the purchase, and they organise all maintenance checks and fixes. It is not uncommon to see farmers wearing John Deere branded clothing or hats, and in Lukas' office a John Deere lunchbox and miniature tractor sit on his shelf.

The Market and Money

Money in the world has a long history – over 5000 years of history, covered extensively by David Graeber in his book *Debt: the First 5000 Years* (2011). Money was created as a means of impersonal credit: whoever it was given to or exchanged between did not limit its value in its own right, being able to be spent by anyone. This understanding has continued into the classical economic theoretical understandings of money today: in the economics textbook *Everyone's Guide to the South African Economy*, money is narrowly explained as something that "acts as an accepted means of payment or exchange; it stores value; and it allows us to determine the prices and value of goods" (Roux, 2011:87). Roux spends the rest of the chapter explaining what stands as money, and how money is created. What he does not focus on is *why* money is created, or what inherent value is – thus, effectively taking the human out of the economic equation.

Keith Hart has argued that the expansion of the market depended on this impersonality and separation from the individual, and the duality between public and private is the moral and practical foundation on capitalist society (2005, as cited in 2007:13). Karl Polanyi introduced to anthropology the concept of the embedded economy, and thus, by default, the *dis*embedded economy, also described as impersonal by Hart. This disembedded, impersonal economy is what capitalism has been founded on, and is still supported by: the idea that an economy can function without human input maintains the split between the human and the economy. This however takes a large amount of cultural work and ultimately is impossible to sustain, and as a result in reality money does not divide the individual and society but rather creates a means of relating between the two.

Graeber explores different epistemologies of credit and debt throughout the history of modern man, and critiques heavily the rational economy as put forward by economists. He argues that when one considers the market economy, a lot of humanity disappears, including most women and children, leaving only men behind exchanging means of living. This is a "sanitised" view of the economy, as

> "The tidy world of shops and malls is the quintessential middle-class environment, but at either the top or the bottom of the system, the world of financiers or of gangsters, deals are often made in ways not so completely different from ways that the Gunwinggu or Nambikwara make them - at least in that sex, drugs, music, extravagant displays of food, and the potential for violence do often play parts." (Graeber, 2011:127)

Hart argues instead to create a space for a *human* economy, as it includes both the interests of the individual and the intricacies of a multitude of social relations that make everyday life messy, and yet real. He proposes that this view should include practicality, the propensity to address people's lives on the ground, be based on holistic views and not one gendered viewpoint, and be usable by the whole of humanity (2010:11). Money, he argues, has the ability to make the human economy a reality due to its special properties of bridging the public and private economies that the neoliberal west expects individuals to keep separate. Money has the ability to sustain local meaning and universal connection at the same time.

Money on The Farm, Money on the farm

Money therefore on Hoëberg is forced into a dichotomy through 'The Farm' as a business and 'the farm' as a site of society and community-making. Money is strictly regimented and controlled through the business where expenses need to be less than sales, while money in workers' houses is used to feed children, pay for petrol and amenities needed. Money is funnelled through the business as wages to this more personal role, and therefore acts as a bridge between the two, even if its meaning is changed in the process. While one rand technically holds the same value to both the business and the worker, one rand on its own is useless to the farm as a business but is valuable to workers and their families in the way that it can be exchanged for chips or sweets. Lukas attempted to cross this divide when he told the workers after his father's passing that "money was not a problem" and if they had any issues they should come to him, but as soon as he changes his priority to that of farmer, the workers are forgotten as people and wages become yet another expense.

Money is used to regulate bodies as the workers rely on money in order to support themselves and their families. The business formally recognises this in the way that bodies are remunerated for their labour in cash, but this is where the social understanding of money for the business ends. Instead it is understood as a way to hold workers accountable to the

business through their own needs, and the business tries to ride the line between keeping its expenses as low as possible, and paying the workers enough so that they don't seek work elsewhere.

Conclusion

Just like time, money is used as a way to regulate bodies in order to maximise production. Bolta is regulated by money through the amount that he earns each month, and the awkward relationship that he has with Lukas trying to differentiate between personal money (like money used to buy furniture) and impersonal money (his wages). Lukas also tries to keep this divide between the two, even though he is able to traverse between personal and impersonal in a much more fluid manner. This is only looking at money through a "black and white" lens, which denies the fact that money is special in that it can bridge the gap between the business and the human, which should ultimately be the goal of any social sustainability program. Understanding the personal financial needs of workers and the ways that this influences and is influenced by their income should be a far more predominant concern for the business. Though regulation on the farm occurs, workers are able to regain their humanity through resisting the neoliberal economic system in various ways. In the next chapter I outline how workers are able to claim back their ability to humanise themselves and others through community, interdependency and conviviality.

Chapter 6: Everyday Resistance through Community, Interdependency and Conviviality

Abstract

Through the discussion of the two previous chapters, I have outlined that the farm is a regulated, capitalist system that expects a very specific type of person in order to reach maximum productivity and efficiency. This theory leaves very little space for the human: no flexibility, no variance in personality, no other desires besides fulfilling hunger and gain. In this third and penultimate chapter I will be showing how the actors on the farm subvert this structure, bringing into their livelihoods a sense of identity, purpose and community. Although individual acts of "resistance" take different forms, resistance as a concept can only hold true for those who have no structural power on the farm. Therefore Lukas and his family, although able to participate in activities outside the bounds of capitalism, are unable to resist the system because they have the power to change it. First I will illustrate forms of resistance on the farm that are not recognised by the neoliberal business, and will then theorise them according James Scott's *Weapons of the Weak,* putting the 'human' back in the 'human economy'. Even though these are acts of subversion that are covert by nature, this resistance also illustrates that the human is always present, whether the system formally allows and recognises it or not.

Community & Interdependency on the farm

Four families live on the farm: Pietie's family, Bolta's family, Piet's family and Peter's family. Collectively there are ten children from the age of two months to eighteen years who go to the same school and keep each other company during the afternoons and holidays. While they don't spend every day together, it is not uncommon to see children playing, and as I was a main attraction throughout my time on the farm all the children gathered wherever I had arranged to be for the morning or afternoon. Mothers would keep an eye on each other's children, and the baby Cherylynn was especially passed around as Sara, Cherylynn's mother, cleaned her house. She was still breast-fed though and would be ferried back to her mother by one of her siblings as soon as she started grizzling.

Koekie, Bolta's wife, was the one who organised anything that needed organising, partially because she was the longest-standing wife on the farm, and also because she worked at the main farmhouse as a char. When the men were cutting down trees across the road, Koekie would be the one to gather everyone for a walk down the road, and was the spokesperson for the party, the other women remaining silent. The afternoon we went to go fetch wood I was invited along, and we must have looked quite the party trooping down the road: three coloured women, me the white woman next to them, and seven children among us, one pushing the baby in a pram. The three seven year old boys were screamed at every time they got too close to the road, and when we were collecting wood they were strictly instructed to remain on the inside of the fence. It is definitely not strange or rude for one mother to "skell" (scold) other families' children, and when they are under her watch they must do as she says, even if their mother would say something different. Dewalt, one of the workers, was messaged by Koekie to bring the tractor and trailer, and we loaded quite a few sapling branches onto the tractor to be taken home later while the children stayed close by. We also collected armfuls of sticks, and walked back down the road triumphant in our mission to collect firewood.

The branches too big to carry were delivered later that day, and they were piled up outside Koekie's house. The following morning when I offered to do Koekie's washing up, her mother in law and the mother in law's friend were sitting eating breakfast in the lounge, watching a soapie on TV. They were at least 60 years old, and visiting from a farm outside Greyton. I greeted them in Afrikaans and after briefly quizzing me on how my stay on the farm was going, they went outside. After I had finished being taught how to wash up dishes with a bar of soap, to my surprise I found the two old ladies outside sawing wood, holding the one blade between them. Later Marshall, Pietie's 13 year old son, and I were asked to pile up the small logs that had been produced from the efforts of the grandmothers, and for our efforts were each given a banana. I am embarrassed to say that I began eating my banana on the way back to Pietie's house – I treated it like a mid-morning snack, and it did not hold much value to me at all besides the goodwill gesture that Koekie had given it to us. Marshall on the other hand carried his banana all the way to his father's house, where he showed it to his mother before dividing it equally between himself, his mother and his two year old sister. I was harshly woken up to how selfish I was, and gave the last piece to Nathan, one of the seven year olds.

Sharing food was an important part of family life, and I learnt after that to accept willingly as well as remember others with food. I would often bring small packets of biscuits for the children while we had our colouring in sessions, and if I was offered something I would take it with gratitude: not doing so would have been an insult. I was given tastes of goose biltong as well as 'vetkoek', a deep fried bread spread with peanut butter, and Marshall being a generous person was always trying to give me sweets he had bought from Koekie's tuck shop. A rainy and cold Friday morning was spent guessing animals that others had thought of, passing around a single phone that had one game on it, and in an enlightened moment Marshall gave us all a spelling test, using the words he had been given from school. Even the two year olds took part at the table, and we dutifully wrote down the words we were told to write. Pietro, the eighteen year old girl also took a round and then we waited for lunch to be made: deep fried garlic polony[19] on slices of white bread spread with margarine. Pietie had taken the week off work, and he stood in the kitchen as well, humming along to the music on the radio. Sue-Ellen and Nieke, the two two-year-olds played with teddy bears, an old handbag and a doll's pram, and four of the older ones and I passed around the phone, each trying to get the highest score while Pietro fried the slices of polony. Even though three of the six children were not Pietie's, they all were offered and accepted lunch, and I accepted a slice of bread with hot polony on it as well. I then fetched a bag of naartjies from my car, and we peeled them for dessert, the juices running down the toddlers' faces. While the rain poured outside and the smoke from the wood stove clouded the top half of the room, I felt part of an extended family, sharing the little that we had with each other to warm up a cold Friday.

What Pietie did that Friday was not expected of him: it is commonly accepted in a western, capitalist society that households care for themselves and there is no obligation to care for children who are not yours, even if you work with their parents. He was on leave that week and could have easily said that he wanted some peace and quiet in his own home, but instead he put on music and chatted to the children, telling me about the farm. Koekie is in no way responsible for the other households she neighbours with, and could have collected wood for herself only. Mothers looking after each other's children is not a formal arrangement or done for any profit, there is just an agreement that if I am able to watch your child I will, and if you are able to you will watch mine. Even though there are undercurrents of politics and occasional disproval, the women are still there for each other to fill in where necessary, and even though the men are detached from this while they work, it is an accepted part of family

[19] A cheap, processed meat shaped into a sausage that is usually made from the offcuts of various animals.

life on the farm and does not have to change when the men come home. 'Resistance', then, is a form of pushing against the capitalist system that expects certain behaviours that have maximum gain in mind. It would not make sense for Pietie to share his polony with all the children: he would be able to get another meal out of the leftovers to feed his family again tomorrow, but instead he shares the polony with the understanding that other families would do the same for his children. Koekie does not have to go out of her way to look after other households when she has her own, but instead she makes sure that Sara has firewood even though she might not be the best mother towards her children. Sharing what you gain with others is a way to subvert the farming system that does not want to share anything with anyone. The sense of community goes against the neoliberal approach to production, and interdependency, while viewed as weak through a capitalist perspective, is what keeps the community on the farm strong.

Supplemented to this view of community is the result of the "social mapping" exercise I conducted with the children one morning. The thirteen year old drew a vague outline of "the farm" as I had asked, but I did not specify how much of the farm there would be. All the different siblings drew their own houses and families; Jaden being an only child was able to draw his house by himself. I call this exercise "social mapping" gingerly, as although a physical resemblance of the workers' houses was reproduced, the children did not engage in their surroundings. It seemed that the farm was an incidental background on which their lives happened to take place, and it was not worth drawing a single sheep or grain of barley as this had seemingly no impact on their lives at all. I tried to encourage the drawing of the other buildings in close proximity to them, but even those remained empty squares in stark contrast to their colourful houses and families. I concluded from this that the farm is indeed not important in their lives, even though their fathers' income is derived from its existence, and instead most important to them are the people they interact with on a daily basis.

Everyday Resistance

James Scott spent two years conducting ethnographic research in a Malaysian village from 1978 – 1980, attempting to understand the everyday struggle and resilience of peasants who farmed rice. *Weapons of the Weak* is the ethnography produced from this experience, in which he not only accounts for the ideologies underpinning the resistance by 'peasants', but the resistance itself as well. Popular accounts of revolt by "the masses" did not account for the reasons of their protest, instead ignoring reason altogether. Scott argues that missing from

the picture of "periodic explosions is the underlying vision of justice that informs them and their specific goals and targets, which are often quite rational indeed" (1985, p. 37). These outbursts are often only a last resort however, and before such drastic actions should be taken there exists a resistance that is covert, allowing the powerless to express their dissatisfaction with the regime or system they find themselves under without bringing to attention their own existence, remaining anonymous. Scott emphasises that these actions are supported by a background of meaning, symbols, norms, and ideological forms, which means that those resisting have a specific set of intentions, values and purposefulness that "condition their acts" (Scott, 1985:38).

The actions carried out by the farm workers and their families are also guided by a set of 'norms' or 'ideological forms' with specific intentions. Safety and well-being is a big concern for the families who live on the farm, and not only safety of themselves or their own children but the others in their immediate vicinity as well. Looking after another person's child or gathering wood together ensures that children do not go missing, and everyone has cooking material and fuel to keep warm for the next while. There is a common understanding that looking after others benefits you eventually as those around you will do the same for you.

Even though 'open peasant revolts' are few and far between, Scott emphasises that this does not mean that things are fine in between these displays of unhappiness and frustration. This is the same on the farm: even though 'open revolt' in the form of striking open disapproval has never occurred, this does not mean that workers are satisfied with their working conditions. Instead, everyday resistance allows workers to express their disapproval of the system without exposing themselves to backlash directly, remaining anonymous and protecting their income and family. Resistance occurs when those who do not have the ability to change the system for themselves are able to act in a way that subverts the system's expectations. Talking about cars for an hour instead of varnishing a fence does not lead to the outcome that the system expects of its actors, and therefore this is active resistance as the consequences could be potentially harmful for the workers involved. Pilfering a few sacks of rice from the silos, Scott explains, is not outright bedlam but at the same time, should the perpetrators be caught they risk imprisonment or worse.

Scott places the actions of the peasants in Malaysia on a spectrum between compliance and resistance, of which there are many forms. Although resistance sometimes can lead to harm, there are other instances where resistance is the creation of identities in addition and surplus

to the system, but still interacts with the system in that it subverts expectations and helps workers comply. The community built up on Hoëberg farm, while neither harming the system's productivity nor being an expectation of the system, actually helps in creating productive workers as they rely on the support of each other, and find enjoyment and benefit from the community. Conviviality through joking while working is not a requirement of the system, and does not necessarily increase production, but neither does it hinder production, and in the end creates happier workers who are more willing to come to work tomorrow, even though they are regulated through long hours and little pay. Essentially workers create coping mechanisms and support systems that allow them to be strictly regulated by the farm without having to openly resist or fight to be recognised as human.

Conclusion

While the neoliberal business of sheep and grain farming attempts to regulate employees in strict ways, workers are able to resist this system by forming a community with each other that supports each other in ways that the system does not expect. Caring for other people's children, collecting firewood together and the sharing of food are a few examples of the way a community has been built up on Hoëberg. The mapping exercise with the children illustrates this clearly in the way that they only focussed on their immediate surroundings, not being willing to draw empty buildings around them or the main farm house across the road. Open resistance is not always possible because of the risk that it places on workers' livelihoods, but covert, everyday resistance is still possible through sharing resources, jokes and food. Farm workers and their families are able to regain their sense of humanity even though the system does not formally recognise the humane, and it is through this subversion that workers are able to endure the long work hours, little remuneration, and lack of recognition for their essential contribution. In the next and final chapter I will be reflecting on this gap in sustainability that workers have filled themselves, through providing a summary of all the chapters so far, looking back on what I have learnt through this research, providing practical examples for the betterment of the BBBB program, and suggesting areas that can be expanded upon for future research.

Chapter 7: Growing a Sustainable, Human Future

Throughout this thesis I have argued that the human is ignored on The Farm as a neoliberal, capitalist business and although sustainable protocols have been implemented social sustainability is not recognised in any real way. Hoëberg expects a particular type of worker in order for maximum production to be reached, which includes a particular type of farmer as well as labourer.

In chapter one I introduced my topic through the medium of tea: tea is much more than a beverage, and can include the meaning of community and sharing in a ritual. I introduced the general history of farm workers in the Western Cape, and explained how the inheritance of apartheid has shaped the agricultural sector in South Africa today.

Chapter two followed with my methodology, ethical considerations and reflexivity – where do I fit into this study? My methodology was a multifaceted qualitative approach which included participant observation, informal interviews and a social mapping exercise. I followed an ethics of care as advocated for by Andrew Spiegel, and I placed myself in the social map of South Africa today by stressing both my gender (female) and race (caucasian) which meant that I will never truly experience what it is like to be a farm worker, although I can get close. The length of my study means that the methodology can be sparse at times, and I would have liked to stay longer for more data collection. This can be taken further if I have the opportunity to expand the study.

My literature review followed in chapter three, where I outlined agriculture in South Africa, sustainable agriculture with a special focus on social sustainability, and ideas around capitalism, labour and the human economy. Agriculture in South Africa is a direct result of apartheid's restructuring of land ownership and the support of white farmers, which feeds into the ideology around modern-day neoliberal farming as well. Sustainability, while considered in both its economic and environmental senses a lot, does not extend to the social sphere nearly as much as it should, and the literature consulted does not address social sustainability in South African agriculture.

Chapter four looked at time and discipline as a method of regulation on The Farm. I first recounted ethnographic data around time and discipline, and then theorised time and regulation through Fabian and Mbembe's concepts of time as a construct that is used by anthropologists to either alienate or unite them with their participants. I argued that the

capitalist Farm uses time in a way that is not recognised by the workers, and so the understanding of time is dichotomised, forgetting the human in the break of understanding. Discipline likewise is something that is used to regulate workers' bodies, through external expectations as well as self-regulation through Foucault's "panopticon effect".

Chapter five discussed money as another tool used to regulate workers, and referring to Bill Maurer and Keith Hart's work I showed that just like time, money is divided falsely into two spheres: private and public, or personal and impersonal money. This construct requires a lot of work to keep the two spheres separate, with The Farm not recognising the private or personal meanings of money resulting in a loss of the human yet again. Even though this separation is harmful, in reality money can have the opposite effect of bridging the gap between the individual and business, through recognising that employees use their salaries for personal means and domestic lives.

Although workers on Hoëberg are regulated in a number of ways as expounded upon in the previous chapters, they also are able to express their humanity through "everyday resistance", which was the last chapter's argument. Through James Scott's description of Malaysian peasant workers and their ability to express their own desires covertly, I was able to show how farm workers are still able to recognise each other's humanity through a sense of community, interdependency and conviviality. This was my shortest chapter and deserves an entire dissertation on its own: it has the potential to be expanded upon much further, including why community and interdependency are such strong markers of humanity.

Better Barley Better Beer would like some pointers as to how they could better their project, and I think it would be best improved if it re-centred the human as the primary concern of sustainability. In essence, sustainability is currently defined as making sure that things are able to be extended into the future, without the real need of making things *better* if they are able to be carried on for an indefinite period of time. Environmental and economic sustainability, while important, ultimately affect the human as we are trying to sustain ourselves for the future, through managing resources and money responsibly. This human focus must not only focus on the consumers and producers, but all people who are involved in the barley production process, including those who are often neglected. Hoëberg as a farm won a highly prestigious prize in the 2016 year, and although newspaper articles covered this, they did not name one single worker on the farm, instead choosing to name the family dog. This lack of recognition denies those workers their pride in work they perform to the best of

their ability, but even more so it also denies them their humanity: the ability to be recognised as a human being who has needs, desires and dreams the same way that CEOs and farmers do.

The Farm as a system therefore grows people just as it grows grain or raises sheep, expecting certain outcomes from calculated investments. Because of this, any sustainability program that wants to be truly sustainable in all senses of the word needs to address this cultivation and make sure that it is not to the detriment of the employees. Sustainability needs to cultivate human relationships, as it is only through recognising the worker as human that sustainable agriculture can move forward.

As an exercise in learning how to conduct anthropological research, I have learnt more than could be put into words. I had expected to complete this project much sooner than reality, which has taught me about time management and realistic expectations of what I am capable of. It has taught me discipline in writing field notes, how not everything goes according to plan and therefore flexibility is always necessary, and the need to be open minded to avenues that are not anticipated before they are presented. I have learnt my limits as one researcher in the field, and also how big and small the impact of research is, sometimes concurrently. I have learnt how to ask for help, how to push for things that I think are important, and most importantly how to "hang out" like any anthropologist needs to do. I have grown in ways that are not always measurable, and just like any other researcher who has been in the field would say, I have fundamentally changed as a human who relates to others, and I have my participants to thank. I hope to carry my lessons into future endeavours, and to never stop learning.

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