

Social Responsibility and Power I: J.T. van der Kemp's Interventions For and on Behalf of the Khoikhoi on the Eastern Cape Frontier (1801 – 1806)

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Abstract

In a previous article, I have traced Van der Kemp's link to the British anti-slavery network, argued that his position on the exploitation of the Khoi paralleled his views on slavery, and that his civil rights activism for and on behalf of the Khoi mirrored his anti-slavery advocacy (cf. Smit 2016b). In this article, I continue my analysis of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century archive which Van der Kemp formed part of, and here focus on Van der Kemp's interventions for and on behalf of the Khoi (1801 – 1806) and power. My hypothesis is that starting with Van der Kemp, the interventions of Christian missions vis-à-vis the governments and the frontier settler farmers, and later beyond the frontier, on behalf of indigenous people, were the manifestations of late eighteenth and nineteenth century 'social responsibility'. As indicated in my topic, such taking up of 'social responsibility' includes the 'power' or more particularly, in Foucault's terminology, the colonising 'power effects' of the missions on indigenous people. In this article I consecutively provide some background related to twentieth century, as well as late eighteenth and nineteenth century notions of 'social responsibility', Van der Kemp's change of plans to not continue with mission work among the Xhosa but to switch to the Khoi, and his and his fellow missionary James Read's interventions for and on behalf of the Khoi asserting their 'freedom' and their 'civilisation'. For these focuses, I mainly draw on Van der Kemp's correspondence from his extant South African texts. For 'power' or 'power

relations' and 'power effects' in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, I draw on the theoretical and discursive historical studies by Michel Foucault¹.

Keywords: J.T. van der Kemp, Khoi (or Khoikhoi/ Khoisan), social responsibility, power or power effects, Foucault

1 Introduction

In a previous article, I have traced J.T. van der Kemp's link to the British anti-slavery network, argued that his position on the exploitation of the Khoi paralleled his views on slavery, and that his civil rights activism for and on behalf of the Khoi mirrored his anti-slavery advocacy (cf. Smit 2016b; as well as Ross 1986:77-115). In this article, I continue my analysis of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century archive which Van der Kemp formed part of, and here focus on Van der Kemp's interventions for and on behalf of the Khoi (1801 – 1806) and power². My hypothesis is that starting with Van der Kemp, the interventions of Christian missions vis-à-vis the governments and the frontier settler farmers, and later beyond the frontier, on behalf of indigenous people, were the manifestations of late eighteenth and nineteenth century 'social responsibility'. As indicated in my topic, such taking up of 'social responsibility' includes, in the terminology of Foucault, the 'power' or more particularly the 'power effects' of the missions on indigenous people. For these focuses, I mainly draw on Van der Kemp's correspondence from his extant South African texts – mainly his diary and letters published by the former non-conformist and ecumenical colonial British mission agency, the London Missionary Society (LMS) in its *Transactions* (1804; 1806; and 1812), and some letters published in Saxe Bannister's *Humane Policy* (1830). For

¹ The same topic will be further explored in a follow-up article.

² In brief, I take the notion of the 'archive', to comprise of all those statements, in Foucault's sense, or views, and thoughts or ideas, expressed, written down and published, or communicated and reported on or sometimes just alluded to, as part of the Knowledge, or more closely, the European and colonising Knowledge-Power complex that was in the process of formation, both in Europe and the colonies. In scholarship on Van der Kemp, and the archive his thought and practices formed part of, there is a pre-Kantian limit, that has to be acknowledged (cf. Krom 1800,II:lxxf).

‘power’ or ‘power effects’ in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, I draw on the theoretical and discursive historical studies by Michel Foucault (cf. also Carey & Festa 2009; and Koopman 2013).

In this article I then focus on a sample of Van der Kemp’s own views of, and social responsibility interventions for and on behalf of the Khoi. For the latter, I shall also draw on a few perspectives of Foucault with regard to the significance of related governmental, civil and religious interventions on behalf of the general populace in late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century Britain and France, which were interventions that are symptomatically mirrored in the missionary discourses in Europe’s colonies, contesting colonisation in its actual cruelty and de-humanising effects. These anticolonial Christian missionary movements in the colonies, mirror the anti-hegemonic power systems of seventeenth and eighteenth century Christian movements in Europe, and later America. This will provide some indication as to the even broader *episteme*³, in which we must position Van der Kemp’s own judgements, ideas and initiatives on the Eastern Cape frontier of the time, but

³ In my perception, Foucault’s notion of *episteme*, can usefully be understood as what we may call, an epochal historical, and historicisable, knowledge-power construct. While inherently quite diverse and pluriform, as well as developmental, in its internal Knowledge (or epistemological) and related institutional constitutional articulations, there are certain problematizing and conceptual features that allow different forms of knowledge to be grouped together. In this regard, there is some affinity with Thomas Kuhn’s diachronic notion of ‘paradigm’ in his *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962] 1970), as well as the latter’s understanding of the ‘incommensurability’ of historically consecutive, but also parallel paradigms, synchronically understood. In this regard, Foucault’s diachronically understood *episteme*, could also be usefully employed for the study of mutually-exclusionary knowledge-power constructs, especially during times where certain regions of the world, or maybe even the world of discursive formations, in some combined fashion, undergo some form of epochal transformation. The so-called ‘linguistic turn’ – where Saussurian linguistics impacted the cultural and social sciences – and the ‘cultural turn’ and the ‘social turn’ dating from the 1980s and 1990s respectively, are examples. With the rise of Information Technology and social media, and the increasing ‘globalising’ of the world, we are currently living through such an era, because there is socio-cultural data about our world that is being produced

also his own missionising power effects on the Khoi, even though he intervened with the government (and the frontier settler farmers, cf. Smit 2016a) on their behalf.

2 Background

2.1 *The Twentieth Century and ‘Social Responsibility’*

Since the 1950’s the notion and related practices of ‘social responsibility’ have been developed as part of ‘corporate social responsibility’ (cf. Carrol 1999), ‘corporate social responsibility and ethics’ (cf. Friedman 1970) or more broadly speaking, social responsibility focused on ‘profits, political performance, social demands and ethical values’ (Garriga & Melé 2004)⁴. Since the 1970s, this notion, and the various forms in which it was included in and practiced as part of capitalist formation strategies in civil life, have been severely criticised⁵.

In the Christian context, for this article, I want to make three points in this, its first section. *Firstly*, the notion of the ‘social responsibility of the Church’ was first definitively broached by Richard Niebuhr in 1946 in his Chapter Five, ‘The Church’s Responsibility for Society’ of the, *The Gospel, The World and the Church*⁶. Echoing the critiques of Nazism by the German Confessing Church (the ‘*Kirchenkampf*’), Dietrich Bonhoeffer (cf. Smit 2015a: 262-263) and especially world-famous theologian, Karl Barth amongst others, Niebuhr says:

In our time, with its *dramatic revelations of evils of nationalism, of*

in society, that previous problematizations and objectifications and conceptualizations – or paradigms/ epistemes – cannot deal with analytically and interpretively.

⁴ Cf. also Carroll (1999); Lydenburg (2005); and Lee (2008).

⁵ Cf. Jacoby (1971:3-19); Garriga and Melé (2004); May, Cheney and Roper (2007); and Banerjee (2012) amongst others. But see Dierendonck and Patterson (2010), on the notion of ‘servant leadership’ within corporate context.

⁶ Niebuhr was a postliberal engaged theologian, Sterling Professor of Christian Ethics at Yale University Divinity School, and part of the so-called ‘Yale School’ of thought. He also definitively impacted later world-renowned ethicists such as James Gustafson and Stanley Hauerwas.

racialism, and economic imperialism it is the evident responsibility of the Church to repudiate these attitudes within itself and to act as pioneer of society in doing so (e.a.). The apostolic proclamation of good and bad news to the colored races without a pioneering repudiation of racial discrimination in the Church contains a note of insincerity and unbelief. The prophetic denunciation of nationalism without a resolute rejection of nationalism in the Church is mostly rhetorical. As the representative and pioneer of mankind (sic.) the Church meets its *social responsibility* when in its own thinking, organization and action it functions as a world society, undivided by race, class and national interests (e.a.).

This seems to be *the highest form of social responsibility in the Church* (e.a.). It is the direct demonstration of love of God and neighbour rather than repetition of the commandment to self and others. It is the radical demonstration of faith. Where this responsibility is being exercised there is no longer any question about the reality of the Church. **In pioneering and representative action of response to God in Christ the invisible Church becomes visible and the deed of Christ is reduplicated** (bold e.i.o.).

These views would make a world-wide impact, also impacting Martin Luther King Jr. and the American Civil Rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

Secondly, the so-called twentieth century ‘neo-evangelicalism’ came into being in the 1930’s⁷ and was critical of the Christian fundamentalist critique of the ‘social Gospel’⁸. While remaining ‘fundamentalist’ in its theology (both Protestant and Catholic), it also propagated the church’s engagement with ‘the social’, especially social ills such as ‘racial hatred, a

⁷ So labelled since 1947, or also labelled ‘neo-fundamentalism’ by ‘liberal theology’.

⁸ I.e. the ‘Social Gospel’ as it developed during the late eighteenth century, the span of the nineteenth century, and the first three decades of the twentieth century. The social gospel dealt with Christian social justice matters such as: inequality, poverty, inadequate schools, child labour, crime, racial oppression, slums, environmental pollution, misuse of alcohol, dysfunctional labour unions, and the atrocity of war. Numerous sources list these issues, amongst others, as part of the agenda of Social Gospel practitioners.

spiraling crime rate, the liquor and drug traffic, slums and violence’⁹.

Significant leaders in neo-evangelicalism were Edward John Carnell, Bernard Ramm, Harold Ockenga¹⁰, Carl F.H. Henry and Billy Graham – who also invited Martin Luther-King Jnr. to his rallies. Collectively, they (amongst others) are credited with the ‘reformation’ of conservative and non-socially engaged fundamentalist American evangelicalism. This ‘reformation’ basically meant the centrally positioned and inclusion of ‘the social’ into the broadly established Christian Biblical and theological fundamentalist tradition (cf. Marsden 1987 amongst others). Twentieth-first century developments, as we have in the conservative Australian ‘Uniting Congregations’ (2007) amongst others, would continue this tradition, in their four-pronged programme of ‘social responsibility of the Church’ as encompassing) a person’s ‘relationship with God in Jesus Christ’; 2) ‘works of mercy, which include caring for the bodily needs of people (cf. Mt. 25:31-45; Ac. 6:1-7; Js. 2:15); 3) to constructively engage ‘social, structural causes’ of specific events in which people are made to suffer, for the purposes of promoting ‘justice in social, political, and economic areas’ (cf. Phil. 2: 5-11); and 4) to ‘examine the ideological underpinnings which produce a society’s structures, actions and attitudes’ (cf. Cl 2:6 – 23). This latter point includes the church’s ‘self-examination’ because it forms part of society and ‘should not be lead astray’¹¹.

Thirdly, in Africa, the ‘social responsibility of the Church’ was initially mainly propagated by Catholicism, and dates back to the late eighteenth century (if not earlier) but especially the late nineteenth century (cf. Ziegler 10 April 2013). In twentieth century Catholicism, there is a significant history of this notion, focusing on the ‘dignity of the human

⁹ Cf. Benware (1971) for an overview, including scriptural arguments – that obviously count as major source for numerous evangelically-conscious, but also sometimes very un-prophetic positionings.

¹⁰ He was co-founder of the world-famous Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

¹¹ There is a wide array of scholarship of and about the ‘social gospel’ movement which is not addressed here, but centrally important for this topic for obvious reasons. For a ‘liberal’ interpretation covering the twentieth century, cf. Dawley (1991); for a comparison of the church’s social responsibility vis-a-vis the ‘corporation’, cf. Sethi (1972.)

person/ one's neighbour', 'the human community' and the 'essential equality of all: social justice', 'women and justice', the 'denouncing of injustice', delivery from 'oppression and slavery', the setting free of the 'needy and oppressed' (Lk 6:21-23)', the furtherance of 'justice and peace' and 'development and justice', the work for the 'common good', 'solidarity' with the 'poor and oppressed' (which includes 'the spiritual', and non-Christian religions), the working class as well as with the labour unions that struggle for equity, and social justice in the areas of 'economics and ecology' impacting people materially, socially, culturally, and spiritually. In summary, it means that,

[a]t the heart of social justice, then, is the firm intention of individuals, employers, rulers, and nations to pursue the common good. According to Catholic teaching, it is an intention made manifest in respect for human dignity and human rights, in the paying of a just wage, and in consideration for poorer nations in trade relations (cf. Ziegler 14 May 2013; for both Protestant and Catholic views, cf. Hauerwas 1995).

For the current 'evangelical' situation, the 'integral' gospel that includes both 'evangelisation' and intervention and caring for the poor dates from the evangelical revivals and British anti-slavery movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including the 'social action' of John Wesley and the eighteenth century emerging Methodist Church. For current practice – especially in the Global South, Rey's view is indicative. He says:

It is now normal to find next to a church, regardless of its size, a health center, a school, a soup kitchen, etc. The majority of the churches have understood that they have an integral mission and that evangelization goes hand in hand with social responsibility (cited in Penyak & Petry eds. 2006:360).

In his exposition of 'social responsibility in Africa, George Ehusani (1999) draws on pronouncements from the Second Vatican Council's '*Gaudium et Spes*' 1-3 (1962-1965) (Joy and Hope), the 1971 statement, 'Justice in the World by the World Synod of Catholic Bishops', and more specifically focused on Africa, on Pope John Paul II's post-synodal document titled 'Ecclesia in Africa' of 1995. The latter focuses mostly on the Church's

contribution to ‘justice and social peace’, ‘justice, liberation, development and peace’, ‘becoming the voice of the voiceless’, the church’s ‘prophetic role’, ‘the condemnation of injustices’ and ‘the injustices and violations of human rights’, and the promotion of ‘greater social justice and good government’. In his exposition, Ehusani focuses on a sample of all the social ills that face African people, spanning the African continent from Christians conforming to the dictates of corrupt despots and governments, and apathy, to government corruption and the exploitation of citizens. (Cf. also Kodia 2005.)

Focusing on the beginning of the nineteenth century, this article does not follow any of these trajectories. These mainly developed in the twentieth century, with some socio-ethical genealogical scholarly ancestry, dating to the germination of critique of mechanisation and the beginnings of industrialisation, slavery, and capital accumulation or mercantilism. These forms of critique also obviously had their own excesses. These are not dealt with in this article. The main hypothesis rather, is that it was the various Christian missionary movements and their networks, which as an even though divergently networked social formation, took up the challenges of both an often precarious and paradoxical colonial critique and what we call social responsibility today. This was the case, both at home in the metropole, and on and beyond the colonial frontiers in the colonies. Granted that the main objective of the Christian missions was to Christianize (or bring to ‘salvation’) indigenous populations, by founding their mission stations, they also played a critical role to protect indigenous populations against the continuous encroaching colonising practices (mostly by violence) of settler colonialism and colonising governments, by intervening on behalf of indigenous populations. Critical of the deterritorializing of indigenous inhabitants by force (through forced settlements, the barrel of a gun, murder, rape, enslavement and forced labour) these missionary formations and their establishments intervened on behalf of indigenous populations vis-à-vis the colonising governments, leveraged some spaces for indigenous resistance and critique, as well as succeeded in grooming an indigenous intellectual elite equally critical of colonisation, oppression and (labour) exploitation. It is this variegated formation that laid the foundations for the wide variety of liberation movements in the colonies during the twentieth century, and the successful wresting of independence from the forces of colonisation. But let us start at one of the beginning points of this history.

2.2 The Beginning of Christian Missions at the End of the Eighteenth and Beginning of the Nineteenth Centuries in South Africa

Given the varied practices and rationales for taking social responsibility and intervening on behalf of indigenous people, J.T. van der Kemp was the founder of missions in South Africa¹². The argument is that when Van der Kemp saw the destitute conditions of the Khoi at Graaff Reinet in 1801, it was his sense of social responsibility that moved him to engage in a process, the outcome of which was the establishment of the world famous mission station, Bethelsdorp. This article traces this process¹³. It also contextualises the study in terms of the theorising of the notion of ‘power’ or power effects at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries as developed by especially Michel Foucault.

Central to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Enlightenment was the removal of ‘monarchical sovereignty’ founded in ‘divine right’ and the establishing of some forms of democratic systems in some states in Western Europe. The monarchical systems were starting to lose their grip. In Britain it meant that its monarchy was pushed to only govern in consultation with and consent of parliament (since 1688)¹⁴. As such, it started to follow Hobbes’s (1651) and Locke’s (in his *Second Treatise*, 1689) Philosophy concerning the co-existence of the monarchy and ‘civil society’ (but Hobbes and Locke did differ in the detail on this point). The French Revolution in France (1789) in the eighteenth century resulted in a different system, in that it did away with the monarchy in line with the theory of ‘civil society’ deriving from the state of nature as developed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his chapter on ‘Civil Society’ in the ‘Social Contract’ (Rousseau ([1762] 1882)). Accompanying these developments was the explosion of scholarship in Philosophy and the sciences, as well as a focus on ordinary citizens and the organisation of ‘civil

¹² For the purposes of this argument, we are not taking into account the the work of the Moravian mission station at Baviaanskloof/ Genadendal since 1792, and its earlier attempt dating to George Schmidt’s establishment of 1737 – cf. Viljoen (1995).

¹³ This is in addition to arguments and evidence put forward in Smit (2016a; and Smit (2016b).

¹⁴ England also passed its Bill of Rights in 1688.

society', esp. for the improvement of the economic conditions of citizens (cf. Foucault [1983] 1994:372) – to draw them into the armies and barracks for training, to build schools for the education of children, to found orphanages for orphans, prisons for criminals, hospitals for the sick and infirm, and psychiatric asylums for people with psychological problems or the 'mad'. These forms of institution building in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also formed part of the rising tide of industrialisation and urbanisation, but also management of previously rurally-based people. This was a widespread phenomenon in Western Europe. Foucault is famous for researching and analysing these developments, as these relate to the production of knowledge(s), and their power (or power effects), related to 'madness', asylums, the 'clinic', the 'sciences of man', and prisons¹⁵. Growing from his initial studies in the early 1960s, he gradually shifted his focus to not only analyse the knowledge produced, but also the power that accompanied such knowledge as well as the related institutions that were developed in line with the knowledge produced, in the 1970's. How Foucault's development of his notion of power, power relations, and power effects, especially in the last four to five years before his death in 1984, have significance in and for humanities discourses he analysed in the 1960s and early 1970s, still need to be thought through and written up. During the last few years of his life, he often refers to this fact – that in his study and analyses of the knowledge formations of the eighteenth century, he was in fact actually talking about power. Yet, how this is the case, is not evident, and, to my knowledge, no scholar has taken up this challenge that he posed, and which he constantly referred to in his last few years. But be that as it may.

To complement Foucault's research we need to also assert that the general advances in the establishing of parliamentary democracies, and institution building in Europe, also impacted Christian organisations, for many Christian denominations and charities of the time participated in these developments. Similarly, they founded institutions such as schools, orphanages, hospitals, asylums, and old age homes (cf. Foucault [1973] 1994: 60). This would also impact on the missions that critically accompanied colonisation which started in the 1890s. The missions – as well as the British anti-slavery movement – must also be seen in the context of the rising importance

¹⁵ Cf. Foucault ([1961] 1982a); ([1963] 1973); ([1970] 1982b); ([1975] 1979).

of the notion of civil society as an independent social formation space, towards the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century (cf. Smit 2016b). This philosophers' notion opened up the social or civil space for an increasing social leverage for the wide variety of Christian organisations which came into existence during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mostly critical of colonisation (cf. Smit 2016a), the missions in South Africa and the West Indies – with their slavery and plantation slavery systems – would serve the indigenous populations during the nineteenth century, with mission stations, mission schools, hospitals, asylums, orphanages and havens for run-away and later destitute freed slaves. As such, they constituted institutions that took social responsibility for indigenous populations in the face of the direct and cruel colonising powers' theorising and their practices. Due to Van der Kemp's submissions on settler farmer 'cruelty and injustice' (LMS II AR 1804:241) towards the Khoi (cf. Smit 2016a:23,36,42-47) – he also calls them 'cruel murderers' (LMS I TVDK 1800:424) – the colonial government conceded that there was indeed 'cruel treatment experienced by the Khoi' at the hands of the settler farmers (cf. H. Ross's letter to Van der Kemp on behalf of Governor Dundas in Bannister 1830:clxii), and conceded to many of his interventions for and on behalf of the Khoi.

This is the context in which we must understand Van der Kemp. Given that he was not only an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland but also a noted philosopher, philologist, and qualified medical doctor, he would, amongst others impact on the Khoi population through his mission work, his medical assistance as well as through education¹⁶. But, as with Foucault's studies, we cannot only look at his interventions for and on behalf of the Khoi in the face of the cruelties of colonisation. We must also reckon in the notion of 'power' as was the case in the founding of the other Western European Institutions that Foucault studied. As such, this article looks at the 'facts of this power', quoting from Van der Kemp's reports and letters to the London Missionary Society (LMS). Even though critical of colonisation, his practices included power effects in the colony, such as his critique of both the settler farmers and the colonial government (cf. Smit 2016a), but also his impact for and on behalf of the Khoi community. As such, his eventual founding of Bethelsdorp as place for the deterritorialised and landless Khoi,

¹⁶ He was known for teaching 'reading and writing' to the illiterate in Europe as well as to the Xhosa and Khoi.

and his notions of the introduction of ‘civilisation’ and ‘discipline’ practices in the Khoi community are not only similar to what was happening in Europe, but also symptomatic of his own power effects in the community. So, it is reasonable to say that his intervention and the ‘social responsibility’ Van der Kemp took for the Khoi, was not without its own power effects.

3 From a Mission for the Xhosa to One for the Khoi

From missionary to the Xhosa, with practices akin to non-professional-intellectual travellers and early anthropologists of the time¹⁷, Van der Kemp decided to switch his intended establishment of a mission amongst the Xhosa, to a mission for the Khoi. There are a few references in the *Transactions* to Van der Kemp’s decision to make this switch. The first reference appears in the journal entry for July 29 1801.

Whilst we are in suspence as to our future station, the Lord has evidently shewn us, that he has conducted us to Graaff Reinet, for the sake of a number of [Khoi] and Heathen of other nations, whom we found collected at and near this place, and it has pleased him to raise a Mission among this people, contrary to our intentions; and as he has raised it he has also blessed it The number of Heathen under instruction is about two hundred, of these, however, only thirty-two have yet given in their names as Catechumens, or persons who have declared themselves desirous, after being instructed in the way of salvation, to walk in that way, and to submit to our discipline (LMS I TVDK 1801:486; e.a.).

Compared to the one convert Van der Kemp made during his fifteen months stay amongst the Xhosa, it appears that the success of his endeavours amongst the Khoi during a mere two and a half months prompted him to switch his mission to the Khoi. Even though he still contemplated the possibility of starting a mission among the Xhosa at his meeting with Ngqika (August 19 1801), the decision that a mission was to be established for the Khoi had already been taken when he returned to Graaff Reinet from his short excursion back into Xhosaland (August 12 – August 27 1801). For September 7 1801, he writes:

¹⁷ Cf. his text on Xhosa culture and government in LMS I 1804.

The number of children at present in our school is sixty-two. *We have resolved to fix a small Missionary settlement at Graaff Reinet, under the care of one Missionary, consisting of a hall for keeping meetings and a school, and a house for the Missionary; the Commissioner Maynier gave us for this purpose a piece of ground on the banks of the Sunday's river, about two thousand six hundred and sixty feet long, and five hundred and thirty-seven feet broad; this we accepted in the name of the Missionary Society (LMS I TVDK 1801:490f; e.a.).*

The 'free conversation' he had with local Graaff Reinet Commissioner and Landrost Honoratus, Christiaan David Maynier on October 29 1801 (cf. below) - just after the disagreements with the Colonists were settled - and Governor Francis Dundas' letter of October 30, paved the way for the establishment of the mission for the Khoi¹⁸. Van der Kemp then thanked Dundas in his letter of November 11 1801 as follows:

After I had been informed that it has pleased your excellency to offer me a piece of ground in any part of the Colony which I might judge best calculated for the erection of a Missionary settlement, for the instruction of the [Khoi] nation in the doctrine of Christ, the resident Commissioner Maynier communicated to me a period of your Excellency's letter, dated October the 30th, in which your Excellency expresses a desire to have my ideas respecting such an institution laid before you (LMS I TVDK 1801:495; e.a.).

Even so, it was not only Van der Kemp's success among the Khoi, but also the 'state' or 'condition' in which this 'nation' found themselves, which saw him deciding to take social responsibility on their behalf, and prompted him to change his missionary objective from the Xhosa to the Khoi. This is clear from his letter to Dundas where, after describing the Khoi's conditions, he says:

¹⁸ Maynier became Landrost in 1793 and resident-Commissioner on 25 December 1799. He garnered more accusations from the settlers, was called back to Cape Town, and was found not guilty of the accusations in 1802, and absolved. Dundas was British Governor at the Cape of Good Hope twice, viz. 1798 – 1799 (acting); and 1801 – 1803.

These reflections have induced us *to suspend for a while our Missionary attempts among the [Xhosa] and [Khoisan], and to devote ourselves to the instruction of the [Khoi] in this village*, that we might be instrumental to afford them spiritual blessings, till it should please the Lord, by sending us a sufficient number of Missionary brethren for help, to enable us *to re-establish the [Xhosa] Mission, and for an establishment near the Great River for the use of the [Khoisan]*. And, though it were not in our power to sublevate the temporal calamities of the [Khoi], we hoped and trusted that the Lord would in his time open a way to answer also in this respect our ardent wishes (LMS I TVDK 1801:496; e.a.).

To this letter, Governor Dundas replied in his undated letter as follows.

I have only time, by the present opportunity, to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter, dated November 11, containing some heads of a plan for a [Khoi] establishment, which I am desirous to encourage, seeing the necessity of endeavouring to ameliorate the spiritual and temporal condition of those *unhappy people, whom, upon every principle of humanity and justice, Government is bound to protect*.

The Secretary of the Colony has this day received my directions to acquaint the Landdrosst with my wishes upon this subject, being extremely anxious that this plan should be carried into effect as soon as possible, and the [Khoi] moved towards their proposed establishment without delay, where every reasonable assistance at the outset, *to enable them hereafter to provide themselves with provision and other necessaries, it is my intention to afford them at the expence of the Colony* (LMS I TVDK 1801:499; e.a.).

Apart from the significance of this letter within the context of the colonial government's approval of the mission and assistance in the expenses the Khoi would incur, and that it had been accepted at this level that the mission among the Khoi could now proceed, its discursive significance lies in the concepts Dundas used to capture Van der Kemp's description of the 'condition' of the Khoi in his letter - 'those *unhappy people, whom, upon every principle of humanity and justice, Government is bound to protect*'. Within the eighteenth-century archive, these concepts had particular significance, as did those with

which Van der Kemp used to describe the conditions of the Khoi. It is to an analysis of these conditions that I now turn.

4 Freedom

Six days after the hostilities of the Boor rebels (cf. Smit 2016a; Van der Kemp's denotation/ spelling) against Commissioner Maynier and the missionaries ceased – the June, July and October uprising against the government by the settler farmers in 1801 – Van der Kemp reports for October 29 1801 on a 'free conversation' he had with the Commissioner. He says:

I had a free conversation with the Commissioner on *the state of the [Khoi] nation, and the present calamities*, and gave as my opinion that *the [Khoi] should be perfectly free, upon an equal footing in every respect with the Colonists, and by no sort of compulsion brought under a necessity to enter their service, but have a piece of ground given to them by Government as their own* (LMS I TVDK 1801:494; e.a.).

The significance of this journal entry is four-fold. *Firstly*, the 'state of the [Khoi] nation' is articulated with regard to '*the present calamities*'. The latter refers to the Boor uprising. Through some mechanisms, Maynier and Van der Kemp met their complaints (cf. below) except one - that the Khoi were 'put upon an equal footing with the Christians'. This complaint was in this 'free conversation' countered by Van der Kemp's assertion that the Khoi should be 'perfectly free, upon an equal footing in every respect [!] with the Colonists'. This assertion of 'freedom' meant that they were to be treated as subjects with the same privileges but also duties as the farmers, i.e. under the then British colonial government. As I have argued, the Khoi were in fact treated similar to slaves by the frontier settler farmers though (cf. Smit 2016b). In this regard it is significant that Foucault ([1982a] 1994: 342) points out that institutionalisation and education in the eighteenth century could only proceed if people were 'free' (Cf. also Foucault [1984a] 1994: 292). He argues that slaves were not free, and could therefore not be made subject to disciplinary power and knowledge. In the Khoi's situation, however, part and parcel of Van der Kemp's argument for 'freedom' was not only for the benefit of the Khoi, but also that of the missionary exercise of 'power' vis-à-vis that of the exercise of power impacting the Khoi by the then British colonial government and the frontier settler farmers. If they were institutionalised at the mission, it would

mean that they would switch from these two institutions of power to that of the power of the mission – including in their labour (cf. Van der Kemp and James Read’s ‘Annual Report’ below – (LMS II AR 1803:165; e.a.).

Secondly, on what Van der Kemp understood under the ‘*state of the Khoi*’ is evident from his description of the ‘conditions’ in which he found the Khoi at Graaff Reinet and with which he introduced the ‘ideas’ that he sent through to Governor Dundas thirteen days later on November 11 1801. Here he said:

It was God, Sir! who brought me by a chain of unexpected events out of [Xhosaland] to Graaff Reinet, where I met with my associates in the [Xhosa] Mission, Read and Van der Lingen. We were witnesses of the *deplorable and wretched conditions into which the [Khoi] nation is sunk for want of food, destruction, liberty, useful employments and spot*, which they under the *superintendance* of Government might in some measure call their own home (LMS TVDK 1801:496; e.a.).

That he depicted their ‘conditions’ as ‘deplorable and wretched’ indicates - by the use of this word ‘wretch’ - that he saw the Khoi as similar to the ‘wretches’ in Europe: those who are not ‘useful’ to society - peasants, the unemployed, the vagabonds and criminals (cf. Foucault 1979:88). This understanding is also evident from his description of them as having ‘sunk’ into such conditions - meaning that they have had much better living conditions before colonisation, and had ‘degenerated’ to this level. It appears as if Van der Kemp developed a similar view of the illiterate frontier settler farmers (cf. LMS II AR 1804:241).

Moreover, what makes these conditions ‘deplorable and wretched’ in themselves but which was also the cause of them, was that the Khoi had ‘sunk’ to this level due to ‘want of food, destruction, liberty, useful employments and spot’. In other words, as causes,

- 1) ‘want of food’ the Khoi were no more in a position to produce food for themselves¹⁹;

¹⁹ Because they have lost their land to the continuous intrusion on their lands by the encroaching settler farmers – which caused the colonial border to be shifted inland sporadically.

- 2) ‘destruction’, that, if the Colonists and the Xhosa had governments, customs, history and systems of ‘crimes and punishments’²⁰, the Khoi had lost theirs, and that this in part caused their wretchedness;
- 3) want of ‘liberty’, that they could not exercise their freedom in the same way they did before, nor could they, now that they are in effect citizens under the colonial regime, use and practice their liberty as behaved free citizens;
- 4) the want of ‘useful employments’ – the term for accommodating the previously excluded peoples into the modernisation or civilisation processes of national and colonial regimes; and
- 5) that they did not have a ‘spot’ – that they have lost their land due to the encroaching deterritorialising settler farmers, and that they did not have any land which they could cultivate for their own agricultural use.

Significantly, Van der Kemp summarised this description by qualifying the ‘spot’ they needed - and by implication also the other elements of wretchedness he pointed to - as a place which they, ‘under the *superintendance* of Government might *in some measure* call their *own home*’. From Bannister (1830: cxxxviii; and cxli) it is further clear that government would provide ‘ground’ to the Khoi as part of its own ‘humane intentions’ toward them. Even so, government would then require – as part of its own ‘power’ in the colony – that the Khoi should ‘submit to regulations established by government’²¹. It is then clear that these were very important statements at the time and indicative of Van der Kemp’s social responsibility and intervention for and on behalf of the Khoi with government.

A general sense of homelessness, impacted the living conditions of the Khoi, and it was - in Van der Kemp’s understanding - only by having a ‘spot’ and a ‘home’ that their conditions could be changed for the better. This, then, does not only qualify Van der Kemp’s understanding of the ‘state’ of the Khoi in general, but also the *fourth* suggestion he made to Maynier - that the Khoi should have ‘*a piece of ground given to them by Government as their own*’. If

²⁰ Cf. Van der Kemp’s text on Xhosa culture and government in LMS I (1804).

²¹ H. Ross in a letter to Van der Kemp on behalf of Dundas – cf. Bannister (1830: cxlii).

they could have land and cultivate it for their own benefit, then they could also function as citizens of the colony and potentially make a contribution to the production of food (and goods) in the colony.

Further, even though they could get a place which they could call 'home', Van der Kemp's reference to the 'superintendence' of government is not without its archival significance. As in Europe, the assumption is that the 'cultivation' of the 'wretch' does not come by itself. It needs to be 'superintended', and that by government. This direct link to government is a further reference to the fact that the underlying assumption was to make the Khoi into useful citizens under government supervision and at government's instigation.

Thirdly, however, Van der Kemp asserted in his 'free discussion' with Commissioner Maynier that the Khoi should '*by no sort of compulsion [be] brought under a necessity to enter their [the frontier farmers'] service*'. This was one of the missionaries' prime areas of contestation with the farmers and would in time contribute towards the Black Circuit Court of 1812 after Van der Kemp's death in Cape Town in 1811 (cf. Smit 2016a).

5 Civilisation

If these were elements of Van der Kemp's assessment of the 'state' or 'conditions' of the Khoi at this point, then these are expounded upon even further in the 'ideas' he sent through to Governor Dundas thirteen days later. Significantly, he states here that the Khoi at the time 'repair' to Graaff Reinet 'as to an asylum' or that they 'shelter themselves' from the 'barbarities of the Colonists' by living among the Xhosa.

I am speaking of their condition at Graaff Reinet, the very place in which numbers of them by the present circumstances are compelled to repair as to an asylum, where they may be nourished at the expense of Government, while still a greater number prefers to shelter themselves among the [Xhosa] on the side of the Great Fish River against the Barbarities of the Colonists (LMS TVDK 1801:496; e.a.).

Significant for our argument is that Van der Kemp here compares the colonial 'frontier town' Graaff Reinet, to an 'asylum' in Europe. Here, and contrary to earlier asylums for the 'mad' and 'insane' where mental patients would be treated inhumanely and often put in chains (cf. Foucault 1982a), the late eighteenth century saw a change both in Britain and in France where,

Quaker reformers such as William Tuke also began to advocate for humane treatment [of the mad] with the creation of the York Retreat in 1796, which treated clients by removing their chains and substituting occupational tasks, good food, and pleasant surroundings for the chains and disorderly environment of many existing facilities (cf. *The History of the Asylum* 2010).

Since Van der Kemp equated the subjection to and power of the settler farmers over the Khoi to that of slavery conditions (cf. Smit 2016b), one can understand his comparison of them fleeing the inhumane conditions of the farms, and aggregating at Graaf Reinet, with the changes taking place in Europe with regard to people being treated differently in its asylums – read, colonial frontier town providing food to the deterritorialized and destitute Khoi. Significantly, and not only metaphorically, for Van der Kemp, his understanding of this town, but also his mission station, would also mean that ‘chains’ would be removed.

So, as for the current situation in which Van der Kemp positioned the mission, it was to be an intervention. The letter continues:

Among this number are found the hordes of Klaas Stuurman and Ourson, who repeatedly requested me to come to them to *instruct* them, but constantly refused to settle themselves at or in the proximity of Graaff Reinet. The *consequences of such a condition* can be no others than *idleness, poverty, or enormous expenses to entertain them, an aversion and actual separation from civilized society, vices of every kind, which may end in plundering, murders and irregularities of a different nature, but all tending to reverse the happiness and usefulness of that nation and the safety of the Colony* (LMS TVDK 1801:496; e.a.).

The instruction which the missionaries would bring to the Khoi meant that ‘idleness’ and ‘poverty’, would be remedied, by introducing ‘useful occupational tasks’ in then emergent asylum discourse, but also that government expenses would be curbed. It would also change or ‘reverse’ the Khoi ‘aversion and actual separation from civilized society’ and their ‘vices of every kind, which may end in plundering, murders and irregularities of a different nature’ to that of ‘happiness’ and ‘usefulness’, and so contribute to the ‘safety of the Colony’. Similar to church interventions in Europe, such an intervention for the Khoi

through ‘instruction’ at a mission, would transform the Khoi from slaves to citizens and curb their own struggles for survival through ‘plundering’, even ‘murder’ and other ‘irregularities’, in the wake of their loss of land. If the missionaries would be allowed to instruct the Khoi – and even colonial fugitives like the famous Stuurman and Ourson and their followers beyond the colonial frontier (who often raided colonists’ cattle which they have ‘plundered’ from them in the first place) – then the safety of the colony would be increased. Moreover, such instruction would add to Khoi ‘happiness and usefulness’.

The notion of ‘happiness’ in political philosophy, dates from the time of Socrates (in Plato’s *Republic* 352a on how we ought to live our lives – cf. Zefnik 2014:i) and came in vogue in seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe as part of the social and economic objectives of living as citizens and their *experience* (!) of ‘happiness’. In Christian context, ‘happiness’ was a common seventeenth and eighteenth century code for both ‘salvation’ and the happiness of people in actual ‘experience’ and ‘existence’ – or the ‘good feeling on earth in connection with the affirmation of everyday life’²². Zefnik (2014:x) comments, that the Christian context included the notion of ‘happiness’ as that of ‘the ideal of human existence’ and that it ‘not only became possible already in this world, but also that it became perceived as entirely achievable with human efforts’. ‘Salvation’ also included material ‘happiness’ in this world (Zefnik 2014:96-102) and without ‘salvation’, ‘happiness’ had a similar meaning in a ‘secular’ context (Zefnik 2014:102ff)²³.

‘Usefulness’ similarly referred to the rising tide of urbanisation and the urbanised engaging in work as citizens, and so to contribute to the outputs and productions of a country in Europe. As such, they would not remain illiterate or at worst ‘wretches’ and ‘vagabonds’ (and rural) and eke out a living, but would be able to engage education, and care for themselves and their offspring. It would also mean that they would not depend on governments

²² Cf. Zefnik’s 2014:ix; as well as his Chapters 4 – 6, in his study of Foucault’s oeuvre focused on the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

²³ In the twentieth (and twenty-first century), ‘(the birth of) happiness is presented as essential to our understanding of a broader context in which important aspects of individual and social life – such as consumer culture, the modern state, economic system, science and technology, idea of progress, etc. – have emerged in the West’ (Zefnik 2014:x); but also internationally.

for their well-being and wellness²⁴.

Of all the concepts Van der Kemp employs to depict the kind of intervention the mission would have in the then current ‘state’ but also criminal activities – not only of the farmers but especially the Khoi – ‘civilization’ seems to have had profound significance. That this was the case, is also evident from the last report of the Directors of the LMS for 1803 as well as the ‘Annual Report’ by van der Kemp and his fellow missionary who assisted him with the Khoi, James Read, of 1803.

The Directors’ report mentions ‘civilization’ in two contexts. In the first, they say:

... Excellency General Dundas ... prompted by the humanity of his disposition, and the just sentiments he entertained of the influence of Missionary exertions in *civilizing the natives*, and promoting the peace and prosperity of the colony, requested [Dr. Van der Kemp] to furnish him with a plan for the formation of a [*Khoi*]-village, *with a view to their civilization* (LMS II DR 1803:54:e.a.).

In their understanding, ‘civilizing’ meant the same as in Europe – that it would intervene in the ‘criminal’ activities of illiterate and uneducated people that found themselves still outside ‘civilized (modern) life, and those who were not usefully employed. The converting, educational and institutionalisation of indigenous people through the intervention of the missionaries would bring about ‘peace and prosperity’. As such, it would intervene in the state of war between the colonists and the Khoi (also theorised by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau). Significantly (as in Europe) the establishing of a Khoi ‘village’ with all the demands of (peaceful) village life, as well as the overseeing functions by the missionaries and government, and their governmental ‘power’, would bring about ‘civilization’. Centrally, this would mean the introduction of Khoi life into the emerging mode of urbanisation and village labour in the colony²⁵.

²⁴ John Philip (1828) represents a similar understanding. This is echoed by Comaroff and Comaroff (1997:408f), who summarise, saying that ‘civility’ meant, ‘possessive individualism, commercial production, wage work, contractual relations, ethnicized identity’.

²⁵ The nineteenth century missions in Africa would continue along this track.

In their second reference, they did so by comparing the conditions under which the missionaries went out to work, with those of ‘civilized society’ in Europe. They say:

Actuated, we trust, by the noblest motives by which the human mind can be swayed; [the Missionaries] *have relinquished the enjoyments of civilized society*, for the disgusting intercourse of the rude and uninstructed heathen; some of them have suffered the want of all things; have been, like the apostle, in deaths oft, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of the heathen, in perils of the wilderness, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness (LMS II DR 1803:56; e.a.).

In this reference, we find the whole gamut of emerging modern, upwardly mobile democratic European life as the standard against which missionary life in the colony is measured.

In their list, quoting from the Apostle Paul, the directors actually compare their existence with his reported sufferings, and also as such, make their efforts on taking social responsibility for the Khoi – existentially identifying with the plight of the Khoi – praiseworthy.

On ‘civilisation’, another indication comes from a letter James Read wrote to the LMS in London. He says that, even though he and Van der Kemp have not had a place allocated for their mission, they ‘continue civilizing and instructing the [*Khoi*], at or near Graaff Reinet’ (LMS I EL1 1802:503). Even though it is not clear what he means by ‘civilizing’, his mention of ‘instruction’ is seminal to the spread of education amongst those outside bourgeois life and culture, both in Europe, and in the colonies.

A closer specification of ‘civilization’ however, becomes clearer in Van der Kemp and Read’s ‘Annual Report’ of 1803. They say:

... but the state of poverty in which most of them are, obliges many to go to the Boors to work; others go from their own free choice, as these have no care upon them to provide for themselves, which is one of the characteristics of a [*Khoi*]. Others choose to lie in the bushes, and live upon the roots of the field, rather than *be subject to the discipline of a civilized life*. Laziness is the most prevalent evil among our people, which exposes them to the greatest distresses. Some, however, are

willing to work, if we could employ them; this we cannot do, not having been able for more than a year to get any money from the Cape, so that we cannot pay them for their labour, which circumstances subjects both them and us to many inconveniences (LMS II AR 1803:165; e.a.).

To this we may add Van der Kemp's report on Governor Jan Willem Janssens' unwillingness to allow the missionaries teach reading and writing - especially the latter²⁶. Whereas Janssens' rationale for his rule that '[n]o instruction in writing' was to be given the Khoi was that it 'is not absolutely necessary in the commencement of cultivation', Van der Kemp's interpretation of this 'prejudice' was that he [Janssens] considered them [the Khoi] 'not to be sufficiently *civilized* to make proper use of it' (cf. LMS II P 1805:236; LMS AR 1803:162; e.a.)²⁷.

Archivally speaking, the most general conceptual formulation - but also the most telling - can then be said to have been that of instructing the Khoi to become 'subject to the discipline of a civilized life'. If they would live such a life, they would not remain in 'poverty', or go and work on settler farmers and be subjected to the latter's cruelty, or 'live upon the roots of the field' but work and produce for themselves and their own well-being. Significantly – and this notion must have been written down by Van der Kemp due to his philosophy background dealing with Classical Greek Philosophy as used in his Interpretation and then new translation of the Letter to the Romans²⁸. He says that the Khoi go and work for the frontier settler farmers – where they are also subjected to the latter's 'cruelty' (cf. Smit 2016a: 42-47), sometimes out of their own free choice', since they 'have no care upon them to provide for themselves'. Here, we find echoes of the classical Greek notion of 'care of the self' so famously analysed by Foucault. He did this under the rubric of

²⁶ Janssens was appointed Batavian Governor of the Cape in 1802, and served until it was taken back by the British in 1806. To some degree, he was popular with the frontier settler farmers, and hostile, to Van der Kemp and Read.

²⁷ The development of dictionaries, grammars and the teaching of reading and writing by the missions would in time lead to the developing of literatures in the indigenous African languages as well as the 'Africanisation' of Christianity; cf. Pawliková-Vilhanová (2007); and Smit (forthcomingb).

²⁸ Cf. Van der Kemp (1799, 1800, 1802).

Ethics²⁹³⁰. What is significant in this case, is that where people do not take care of themselves, there is need for intervention, as was the case in the dialogue between Socrates and Alcibiades (ascribed to Plato) that Foucault (1988:23-30) analysed. (Cf. also the many references to the *Alcibiades* in Foucault [1981 - 1982] 2004.) In the case of the destitute Khoi – and to use a twentieth century notion coined by Sampie Terreblanche (1977), their ‘chronic societal poverty’ due to colonialism, deterritorialisation (their loss of their ancestral lands), disenfranchisement and oppression and exploitation – the missionaries’ interventions on their behalf stand out as luminary examples of the taking up of social responsibility and to intervene on the behalf, of the poor and destitute – both with government and with the frontier settler farmers.

Furthermore, if this objective is offset against the repeated statement on the ‘idleness’ and ‘laziness’ of the Khoi, then, according to the eighteenth-century archive of power, the Khoi were here seen on a same footing as the peasants, the ‘lazy’, the ‘vagabonds and the criminals’ of Europe - that class of people, of which Le Trosne even said: ‘A reward of ten pounds is given for anyone who kills a wolf. A vagabond is infinitely more dangerous for society’ (cf. Foucault 1979:88)³¹. They, therefore, had to be rounded up in the countryside and from the forests, be imprisoned or at least institutionalised for their own ‘cultivation’ and ‘instruction’. This class of people - perceived as criminal and ‘useless’ in principle in the modernising Europe, had to receive such an education in the prisons, schools, orphanages, and military academies of Europe. Slaves to the state, they were to become ‘useful’ for its general prosperity. In Europe - and as it appears to have been also in the understanding of Van der Kemp for the missionary movement - this was to be achieved through institutionalisation. Even more telling of the ‘power effects’ this would bring about is that the missionaries assume that the Khoi should work for the mission and that the mission should pay them for such work. Even so, the ‘civilization’ of the Khoi would also mean that they be made subjected to a

²⁹ Foucault ([1986] 1988: 16 – 49); ([1982b] 1994: 242 – 249); and ([1984b] 1994: 284 - 288).

³⁰ Cf. Smit (forthcominga). This planned article is a follow-up on Smit (2015b).

³¹ This kind of rhetoric is pathologically part and parcel of colonising discourse, because it simultaneously legitimates the superiority of the coloniser, as well as the excesses of colonising practices (cf. Smit 2017a).

‘useful’ and an ‘analytic pedagogy’, and to ‘institutionalisation’, that they be ‘governed’ and that they as a result, be ‘pacified’. (Cf. the follow-up article³².)

6 Conclusion

I have endeavoured to provide an argument for the social responsibility and power of Van der Kemp, joined by Read in 1801. Their social responsibility manifested in their interventions for and on behalf of the Khoi on the Eastern Cape Frontier (1801 – 1806). Central to the argument is that we should not understand ‘social responsibility’ in the colonies in terms of twentieth century notions of ‘corporate social responsibility’, as set out by the various documents released by the Catholic Church during this century, that also deals with ‘social responsibility’, and as in late twentieth century understandings of the social responsibility of African Christianity for African citizens. Rather, the late eighteenth century missionary interventions on behalf of indigenous people in the southern African colony (as well as more broadly in Africa and the West-Indies for example), must be understood in terms of how they mirrored the governmental and civil society interventions (esp. those by the various ecclesiastical denominations) on behalf of a mostly illiterate and uneducated populace in Europe. More specifically, these interventions were asserted on behalf of indigenous people as they were viciously being deterritorialized and culturally colonised by both colonial governments and frontier settler farmers. These two realities were the background to Van der Kemp and Read’s interventions and would continue throughout the nineteenth century in the southern African colony as well as further afield in other African colonies.

³² I have stayed close to the actual in-context use of the notion of ‘civilization’ here, and have not articulated it in terms of the broader scholarly considerations of the time, related to ‘Mahometanism’, and Chinese Confucianism, as debated by deists (cf. Harrison 1990). A former staunch deist, Van der Kemp’s usage of ‘civilization’ should be understood within this broader ambit of the discursive formation at the time. And, contrary to Benjamin’s ([1955] 2001) messianic ‘[t]here is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism’, and Freud’s diagnosis of ‘civilisations and its discontents’ (cf. Smit 1998), Van der Kemp’s denoted a complex of both anti-colonial civil rights intervention, resistance, and push-back activism, as well as a calculated and guarded support of Empire, in so far as it abolished the slave trade.

For this first part of the research, I have indicated that Van der Kemp initially came to South Africa to start a mission among the Xhosa beyond the frontier, but was disappointed because he was not successful. The reason was that they preferred their own cultural systems (which Van der Kemp described, including rules for click sounds and a Vocabulary of isiXhosa – cf. *LMS Transactions I*) and refused the foreign system, even though they were open to being ‘instructed’, or educated (cf. *Social Responsibility & Power II*). On his return to the colony, Van der Kemp noticed the destitute conditions of the Khoi, due to their progressive loss of land and because of the encroaching settler colonialism, and the fact that they could not provide for themselves anymore. This made him to petition the British colonial government for land for the Khoi on which he could start a mission station, and for financial support by government for Khoi living conditions and food. Once the mission station had been founded, he would continue to petition government – including the Batavian government (1803 - 1806) for such support.

In this first part of the research I have dealt with the topics of ‘freedom’ and ‘civilisation’. When the Khoi, due to their destitute conditions, were coerced to work for both government and frontier settler farmers under atrocious conditions, Van der Kemp resisted this. He asserted that the Khoi were ‘*perfectly free*’, and that they should therefore be treated ‘*upon an equal footing in every respect with the Colonists*’. This is very significant because the frontier farmers looked down on the Khoi and treated them ‘cruelly’, and ‘murdered’ those who would plunder them due to their destitute condition. As such, the merciless and brutal physical power relations between Khoi and settler farmers constituted a complex in which Van der Kemp sought to intervene on behalf of the Khoi. This he did, and he also succeeded to some degree in this regard. With regard to the colonial government, it used some Khoi as troops, but also to work for the colonial government in what could broadly be characterised as ‘public works’ like clearing vegetation for ox-wagon roads. They were paid a pittance – about which the missionaries continuously complained to government. Even so, the missionaries succeeded to found Bethelsdorp within the colony’s borders close to the colonial frontier. This would give many Khoi a ‘spot’ or ‘home’ as the missionaries argued for many years to come.

Given these realities, part of Van der Kemp and Read’s arguments for a piece of land for the Khoi was that they said that this would also be a place for their ‘civilization’. Similar to how institutionalisation in Europe was meant

to improve the quality of life for mostly illiterate and uneducated people, the missionaries argued that the same should happen on behalf of the Khoi. At the mission, the missionaries would strive for their ‘conversion’ and ‘salvation’, but also subject them to education. Because the Khoi lost their lands due to colonisation and were increasingly de-culturalized by being displaced from their ancestral lands, the missionaries sought to give them a Western Education. As education was part and parcel of both West European and missionary practices in the colonies, it impacted the Khoi.

Even so, the missionaries did not strive to rebuild the Khoi culturally in terms of their own cultural heritage. Rather, they were subjected to the power of a foreign religion as well as educated culture. Moreover, we see in one of Read’s letters to the LMS directors in London, that he argued that rather than working for the settler farmers, the Khoi should work for the mission station. In brief, they should switch their subjection to power from the colonial government and frontier settler farmers on the one hand to the mission station on the other. This was part of the beginning of missions and would continue into the nineteenth century. We may reason – as Van der Kemp intimated – that the mission station would assist the Khoi to ‘take care of themselves’. The historical truth however, is that this challenge had to be taken up while they were being subjected to missionary ‘useful education’, ‘institutionalisation’ and ‘surveillance’, and ‘pacification’. This argument will be developed further in my ‘Social Responsibility and Power II’.

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Johannes A. Smit

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