

Capital, Market, and Labour in the Western Cape Winelands c.1900: Agricultural Capitalism?*

LARS OLSSON

*Professor Emeritus of History at Linnaeus University and Visiting
Professor at Malmö University, Sweden*

E-mail: Lars.Olsson@lnu.se

ABSTRACT: This article is a case study of the political economy of the Western Cape Winelands c.1900. The analysis covers three intertwined processes that were crucial for the advance of a capitalist mode of production: the making of capital, the making of a commodity market, and the making of a labouring class. The making of capital was achieved after the mid-1800s. However, even at the end of the century, the market for Cape wines and the making of a labouring class remained obstacles to the advance of capitalism. Some wealthy farm owners, though, were about to overcome these obstacles. A small group of them were of old Afrikaner origin, while others, mostly investor capitalists of British origin, were quite successful in establishing a capitalist mode of production on their wine farms. In particular, drawing on a vast array of primary sources, we discuss the many labour recruitment programmes that were organized as private and state initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

The Western Cape of South Africa is one of the best-known regions in the world for wine farming. The cultivation and production of wine was initiated soon after the Dutch East India Company gained a foothold in the Cape peninsula in the mid-1600s and Europeans first settled there. Wine was produced both for the crews of the ships en route to India, Batavia, and China and back to Europe, and for consumption in the expanding colony. For many years, wine farming developed very slowly, but it expanded significantly after the British occupation in the early 1800s owing to wine now being exported to England on favourable conditions.¹ Cape wine was

* The research for this article has been funded by the Swedish Research Council's division for Development Research. I would like to thank Fredrik Lilja, Ulla Rosén, Jonas Sjölander, two anonymous reviewers, and the IRSH editors Angelie Sens and Aad Blok for their most valuable comments on the text. Ulla Rosén made me aware of the existence of the article by Eric Hobsbawm that inspired this study. The staff at the JS Gericke Library in Stellenbosch and the National Library in Cape Town were most helpful.

1. Mary Isabel Rayner, "Wine and Slaves: The Failure of an Export Economy and the Ending of Slavery in the Cape Colony, South Africa, 1806–1834" (Ph.D., Duke University, 1986), ch. 2 [JS Gericke Biblioteek: Africana. Stellenbosch University].

needed for the crews following the establishment of “a strong military and naval force at the Cape” in 1813, and the British government introduced “preferential tariffs on Cape wines” in Britain after the Napoleonic wars.²

However, the “sweet times” for wine farmers lasted only a decade and, according to Pamela Scully, they rapidly showed “the potential for turning sour”. In Britain, a reduction of duties on European wines and an oversupply of, often, bad-quality Cape wines resulted in falling demand and lower prices on the British market. In addition, slavery, which was the labour base for wine production in the Western Cape, was abolished in 1834³ and farmers had to find “free” labourers to work for them instead. In 1861, the British government’s abolition of the “preferential duties” on colonial wine brought about the collapse of the British market for the Western Cape wine farmers.⁴ Nevertheless, wine farming expanded: the number of wine farmers increased from 688 in 1875 to 1,599 in 1904; the number of vines increased from 69,910,215 in 1875 to no less than 134,354,621 in 1904; and, despite the disastrous phylloxera epidemic in the late 1880s,⁵ the volume of wine produced increased from 4,485,665 gallons in 1875 to 5,686,671 gallons in 1904. Although the districts of Paarl and Stellenbosch remained the centre of wine farming, the Winelands also expanded beyond, into Malmesbury, Robertson, and Worcester. Additionally, as all but six wine farmers in 1875 and all but ten in 1904 were registered as “European or White”,⁶ wine farming was controlled by Whites.

It is remarkable that so little research has been done on the expansion of wine farming in the Western Cape at the end of the nineteenth century. Hermann Giliomee and Scully seem to be the only scholars who have focused on that transformative period, but neither of them says very much about the mode of production that was practised. Giliomee notes that, despite the collapse of the British market, wine making was “the largest provider of work in the Western Cape” by 1880. But “the whole agricultural industry” was “languishing in consequence of the bad supply of labour” due to the low

2. D.J. van Zyl, *Vineyards and Wine and History* (Stellenbosch, 1987).

3. The Slavery Abolition Act ended slavery in the Cape officially in 1834, but, though officially freed, the slaves were still bonded to their old masters for four years under a system of “apprenticeship”.

4. Pamela Scully, *The Bouquet of Freedom: Social and Economic Relations in the Stellenbosch District, South Africa, c.1870–1900* (Cape Town, 1990), pp. 3–4.

5. Van Zyl, *Vineyards and Wine and History*, p. 39.

6. *Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1875* (Cape Town, 1877), Part IX – Occupations of the People, p. 185, Table IV; *ibid.*, Part IX – Land, Crops, Livestock, Pastoral Products, Agricultural Machines, and Industries Connected with Agriculture, Table III, Land under Cultivation, p. iv; *Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1904* (Cape Town, 1905), Part VII – Occupations of the People, pp. 342–345, Table IX, Occupations of the People in Detail: General Summary; *Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1904* (Cape Town, 1906), Part X – Livestock and Agriculture, pp. 508–509, Table XI, Extent of Land Cultivated: Workers on Farms: Census Districts.

wages and the “ill-treatment of farm workers” by farmers. Only some of “the wealthiest wine and wheat farmers” were successful by exploiting “a system of tied rent to secure a stable labour force”. Farmers had to “compete in the wider and diversified economy created by the expanding capitalist sector”, but according to Giliomee wine farming was not part of the capitalist economy.⁷

Scully, instead, claims that wine farmers developed and gradually involved Western Cape wine farming in “the spread and intensification of capitalist relations” at the end of the century. She is, however, somewhat ambiguous in defining capitalism. On the one hand, she agrees with Robert Ross, Mary I. Rayner, and Nigel Worden when she concludes that there was “a capitalising elite within the dominant class in the Western Cape” during slavery and that “farmers in the South Western Cape became part of an increasingly hegemonic capitalist economy” as early as the late eighteenth century.⁸ She adds that wine farmers were seriously concerned about “access to markets, to labour and to the source of capital”.⁹ However, she does not explore these concerns.

On the other hand, Scully hints that Ross, who does not say much about wine farming after the abolition of slavery in 1834, “exaggerate[s] the extent to which capitalist relations had penetrated the South African countryside prior to the mineral discoveries”. While Ross argues that agriculture in the colony was “unmistakeably capitalist in character” in the Western Cape during slavery and long before the start of the mining industry,¹⁰ Scully claims that “[t]he data for Stellenbosch supports” the conclusion that “even in the 1920s only a minority of South African farmers could be described as capitalist”. Most farmers did not keep record books, nor did they “invest in machinery or in intensified use of their land”, she maintains.¹¹ Certainly, that might be an indication that, around 1900, most wine farmers were not capitalists, and they obviously did not concern themselves with the accumulation of capital. Scully does not, however, clarify in what sense Western Cape wine farming on large farms was or was not capitalist in nature.

7. Hermann Giliomee, “Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1870–1915”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14:1 (1987), pp. 38–63, 39f, and 47.

8. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, pp. v and 17; Robert Ross, “The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture in the Cape Colony: A Survey”, in William Beinart, Peter Delius, and Stanley Trapido (eds), *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa 1850–1930* (Braamfontein, 1986), pp. 56–100; Rayner, “Wine and Slaves”; Nigel Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* (Cambridge, 1985). For a discussion of agricultural capitalism in Eastern Cape, see for instance Timothy Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order* (Charlottesville, VA, 1996); Fredrik Lilja, *The Golden Fleece of the Cape: Capitalist Expansion and Labour Relations in the Periphery of Transnational Wool Production c.1860–1950* (Uppsala, 2013), ch. 7.

9. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, pp. v–vi and 8.

10. Ross, “Origins”, p. 61.

11. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, pp. v–vi and 8.

In this article, I hope to contribute to our understanding of agricultural capitalism in Western Cape wine farming by analysing a few of its basic components at the end of the nineteenth century. I understand agricultural capitalism to refer to a mode of production based on private ownership of capital (land, tools, machinery), which is used to produce a commodity that is sold on a market to yield a profit for the owner of the capital and to contribute to the accumulation of capital. Most of the work is performed by “free” labourers, who are exploited by the capitalist and paid for their work in cash and/or in kind. Their daily work in the fields and/or barns is often managed by a hired supervisor or a foreman.

For my analysis, I was inspired by Eric Hobsbawm’s little-known analysis of Scottish reformers of the eighteenth century, where he tries “to clarify the nature of capitalist agriculture”.¹² In particular, the reformers highlighted a number of political, social, and economic obstacles in pre-capitalist societies that had to be overcome in order to create a capitalist mode of production in Scotland.¹³ Hobsbawm identifies the most crucial of these as being: unclear property rights, a pre-capitalist moral economy, inefficient organization of work, and a poor infrastructure. Those obstacles, I argue, can and should be analysed for other peripheral parts of the British Empire and for other periods of time, and as a way to understand the geographical expansion of capitalism as a mode of production.¹⁴ I will do so by studying the making of capital in the Cape Colony after the British occupation of the colony. However, I will also discuss obstacles to the development of capitalism that the Scottish reformers and Hobsbawm were not very concerned with: the making of a market for wine and the making of a class of agricultural labourers. By combining these three processes, I will develop a “history-of-society” analysis of Western wine farming and the development of agricultural capitalism in the late nineteenth century, which Hobsbawm convincingly argued for in other contexts.¹⁵

I base my analysis of the making of capital on existing literature. Due to the very limited literature, my analysis of the commodity market and the making of a class of agricultural labourers are instead based on six extensive primary sources. In analysing the making of a market for wine, I have drawn on the *Report of the Liquor Laws Commission*

12. Eric J. Hobsbawm, “Scottish Reformers of the Eighteenth Century and Capitalist Agriculture”, in *idem* (ed.), *Peasants in History: Essays in Honour of Daniel Thorner* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 3–29.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

14. The geographical expansion of capitalism has been highlighted by David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (London, 2006). See also Lilja, *Golden Fleece*.

15. Eric J. Hobsbawm, “From Social History to the History of Society”, *Daedalus*, 100:1 (1971), pp. 20–45; *idem*, *The Age of Revolution* (London, 1962), ch. 8; *idem*, *The Age of Capital* (London, 1975), ch. 10.

of 1889–1890¹⁶ and the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Wine and Brandy Industry of the Western Province* of 1905.¹⁷ In analysing the making of a class of labourers, I used the *Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on the Labour Question* of 1890,¹⁸ the *Minutes of Evidence and Minutes of Proceedings of the Labour Commission*, February – April 1893, the *Report of the Labour Commission* of 1893–1894,¹⁹ and the *Report of the Select Committee on Farm Labour Supply* of 1907.²⁰

THE MAKING OF CAPITAL: THE LEGAL SYSTEM, ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS, AND THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CAPE COLONY

After the British occupation, the Cape Colony became part of an expanding capitalism. Timothy Keegan highlights how, in the 1820s, the British authorities “began the liberal reform of the colonial economy and society at the Cape, seeking to remove obstacles to free enterprise and free trade, and to dismantle archaic legal and economic structures based on monopoly and patronage”.²¹ Martin Legassick and Robert Ross add that the political economy of the colony also was “Anglicized”. In 1827, “English became the colony’s only official language”.²² In this section, I will deepen their analysis by focusing on reforms to property rights, the free trade of money, efficiency of production, and infrastructure to explore how these reforms encouraged agricultural capitalism in the Western Cape.

Property rights

The first obstacle to the development of agricultural capitalism was the existing view of land, especially “the field of property rights”, which prevented “adequate bourgeois property or lease-rights”, due to “peasant custom” and/or “feudal rights and practices.” The Scottish reformers

16. *Report of the Liquor Laws Commission, 1889–1890*. Cape of Good Hope. G. 1 – 1890 (Cape Town, 1890).

17. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Wine and Brandy Industry of the Western Province*. Papers printed by the Legislative Council and the Government 1905, vol. 5, G. 30 (Cape Town, 1905).

18. *Report of the Select Committee on the Labour Question*. Papers printed by the Legislative Council and Government. Cape of Good Hope. A 12 – 1890 (Cape Town, 1890).

19. *The Labour Commission*. Papers printed by the Legislative Council and Government. Cape of Good Hope. G. 39 – 1893 (Cape Town, 1893) and G. 3 – 1894, vol. III (Cape Town, 1894).

20. *Report of the Select Committee on Farm Labour Supply*, CCP, C.2 – 1907. Cape of Good Hope (Cape Town, 1907).

21. Keegan, *Colonial South Africa*, p. 281.

22. Martin Legassick and Robert Ross, “From Slave Economy to Settler Capitalism: The Cape Colony and Its Extensions, 1800–1854”, in C. Hamilton, B. Mbenga, and R. Ross (eds), *The Cambridge History of South Africa*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 253–318, 272.

argued for land to be transformed into a “commodity”, implying partly “the freedom to sell or mortgage land without restraint”, and partly the transformation of land “into property units suitable for bourgeois enterprise”. The diffuse conception of ownership had to be specified so that an owner could sell land without interference on an open market. Land-ownership had to change from being a family matter, based on the principle of hereditariness and kinship, into a commercial commodity; moreover, landowners needed to abandon old traditions and customs and instead look at land as a means of production that would yield them a profit.²³

In the Western Cape, wide areas of common land were taken from the indigenous Khoi and San people and privatized by the Dutch East India Company, which gave or sold it to European settlers. However, ownership was traditionally diffuse, and land was normally transferred among the Boers, from one generation to another, within kinship relations. Scully underlines the continuity in landholding within certain families in the Western Cape before the British occupation, and Keegan highlights the concentration of property in wine farming – vines and slaves – in the hands of the “gentry of the Cape” in the 1820s.²⁴ Moreover, rich farmers bought additional farms for those of their sons who did not inherit the main family farm, and farms were also transferred via daughters who married within the kinship.²⁵

Wayne Dooling explains how land was transferred by reference to the existence of a pre-capitalist “moral community”, where women, especially widows, “played a crucial role in ensuring that land and wealth circulated within narrowly constructed familial boundaries”.²⁶ The ownership of the Vrede en Lust farm by the De Villiers family (1728–1846) exemplifies how the estate was kept in one family by “intermarriage between cousins”.²⁷ So, although there was a considerable accumulation of capital in some families in the early nineteenth-century Western Cape, the accumulation of capital does not by itself constitute a capitalist mode of production. Rather, the prevailing view of landownership within the Afrikaner moral community was an obstacle to the development of agricultural capitalism.

Land surveying was one basic way to identify and secure the landowner’s property rights in a more distinct way than before. The first Land Board in the Cape Colony was established in 1828 in order to identify the boundaries of single properties and to keep official records on landownership, and it employed “qualified land surveyors” to regulate the owning of private

23. Hobsbawm, “Scottish Reformers”, pp. 10–11.

24. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, pp. 17–18; Keegan, *Colonial South Africa*, p. 51.

25. See for instance Phillida Brooke Simons, *Meerlust: 300 Years of Hospitality* (Cape Town, 2003), pp. 72 and 97.

26. Wayne Dooling, *Slavery, Emancipation and Colonial Rule in South Africa* (Scottsville, KT, 2007), p. 37; Ross, “Origins”, p. 67.

27. Romi Boom, *Vrede en Lust since 1688* (Groot Drakenstein, 2003), pp. 31, 34, 38, and 41.

property.²⁸ From that same year, all deeds of transfer of “immovable property” and property mortgages had to be registered in *The Deeds Registry*. In 1846, it became compulsory to register all mortgages in a government *Debt Register*, since “the increasing embarrassments of such debtors” made it important to “secure a preference over other creditors who may have dealt with such debtors in total ignorance that any such mortgages or hypothecations were in existence”.²⁹ The moral community was about to be dissolved and economic relations formalized in written contracts registered with the colonial administration.³⁰ By the 1830s, a legal system that granted full and legalized ownership of land in the Cape Colony was about to be established, and thereafter the property owners could sell their land to anyone on a market beyond the kinship and the new owners had legal documentation relating to the property that they had bought.

Free trade of money

Availability of capital was crucial for the development of capitalism because “agricultural improvement [...] necessitated investment”.³¹ Consequently, a second condition for agricultural capitalism was the abolition of traditional economic relations based on family and kinship. It was argued that economic relations between agents should be guided by “a *free trade in money*”. Until the 1830s, Cape farmers had supported each other economically within kinship relations, based on trust and a moral community, where “individuals had to conform to certain acceptable standards of behaviour” and where reputation and shame mattered. Some of the traditional Boer colonial families, though, approached the new British rulers and “hastened to acquire competence in English, intermarried with members of the English ruling class and took them on as business partners”. Although old and new kin networks were of importance also during capitalism, and prosperous Boer farmers could keep and even expand their wine farming as part of the gentry, this was the beginning of the making of a White, racialized, and anglicized gentry in the Western Cape after 1815.³²

Certainly, there was outspoken opposition among the remaining Boer farmers to the new bourgeoisie and the new political order. In the 1830s, several Boer farmers sold their farms in the Western Cape and left the colony during the Great Trek in order to settle north of the Orange River.³³

28. Keegan, *Colonial South Africa*, p. 101.

29. *Official Year Book of the Union*, 2 (1918), pp. 400–401.

30. Dooling, *Slavery*, p. 188.

31. Hobsbawm, “Scottish Reformers”, p. 17.

32. Dooling, *Slavery*, pp. 46 and 74–75.

33. Ross, “Origins”, p. 66.

Others stayed, and in the 1870s the opposition was organized into an anti-British and anti-capitalist movement by “patriotic Afrikaners”, after so many traditional wine farmers had gone bankrupt with the loss of the British market for Cape wines. However, the leadership of the Afrikaner Bond argued that British capital was of vital importance for commercial Western Cape wine farmers, and the Bond became a movement for wealthy, White, racialized farmers.³⁴

In the moral community, individual farmers were bound “to an intricate web of obligations and expectations, of which the lending of money was perhaps the most public manifestation”; it included restrictions on rates of interest. There was a kinship solidarity, based on class and race, but it “came under immense strain” during times of crisis. The emancipation of slaves, i.e. the dissolution of the economic base of the Afrikaner moral community, was one of the most severe crises of all. It was, according to Dooling, “at precisely this time that the slaveholders’ value came under determined ideological attack”, especially from colonial merchants, who “stood at the forefront of this assault” and penetrated the Western Cape countryside “under the banner of ‘free trade’”, including market-based interest on monetary loans. These merchants “attempted to free colonial agriculture from the hold of the moral economy of the former slaveholders”. One Afrikaner wine farmer even complained that “free trade in money was introduced with no other object than to blow out and destroy the so hated Dutch class, in order to make room for strangers”.³⁵

Since several farmers had mortgage debts equalling the total value of their farms, investors could buy farms pretty cheaply when farmers were under strain. Wine farmers notably “lived with the perils of incestuous money-lending”, which opened up the possibilities for outsiders to buy farms.³⁶ Characteristically, in 1854, the Vrede en Lust farm was bought by an Irish immigrant, who married an Afrikaner woman and served as a land surveyor in Stellenbosch. These arrangements made the seventy-four-year-old Irishman “a gentleman with his own estate”.³⁷ He was a capitalist, who hired a manager to run the farm for him. So, too, was Jannie Marais, from an old Boer family, “who made a fortune on the Kimberley mines” and returned to Stellenbosch in 1891, where he bought the Coetzenburg farm.³⁸

Even exploiters and leading politicians of British origin – such as Cecil Rhodes, James Sivewright, and John X. Merriman – invested in Western Cape wine farming at the end of the nineteenth century. In company with “a handful of ‘indigenous’ progressive farmers”, these merchant capitalists

34. Dooling, *Slavery*, pp. 213–214.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11 and 199–200.

36. Dooling, *Slavery*, pp. 193 and 196.

37. Boom, *Vrede en Lust*, p. 41.

38. Giliomee, “Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism”, p. 60.

constituted “part of the minority of progressive capitalist farmers in South Africa”, Scully maintains.³⁹ However, Rhodes, Sivewright, and Merriman were not capitalist farmers, but capitalists who invested in large-scale farming. They did not manage the farms by themselves, as the capitalist farmers did. However, as there does not seem to be any systematic study of landowning and the transfer of farms in the Cape Colony in general, we have to rely on certain fragmentary evidence.

Merriman, a Member of the Legislative Association since 1869, Treasurer of the Cape Colony, and Commissioner of Lands, Mines, and Agriculture,⁴⁰ bought the Stellenbosch farm Schoongezicht in 1892. The farm had been hit by phylloxera, so Merriman acquired the property “on easy terms”. His manager, a wine-farming expert, experimented with fruit growing and wine making.⁴¹ “Merriman found a new interest in life in ceasing to survey the land of others and becoming a landowner himself”, his biographer concludes, while his brother-in-law exploited his kin network and bought the adjacent farm of Rustenberg. Another neighbouring farm was purchased by Sir Thomas Smartt.⁴² Merriman paid visits to wine farms in France and Spain to learn more about advanced wine making,⁴³ and his slogan was said to be: “Never let the wagon go to the station without something for the market.” He even succeeded in selling the Schoongezicht wines on the London market.⁴⁴

Sivewright was a Member of the Legislative Assembly, an Anglo member of the Afrikaner Bond, and Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works, who invested in railways, telegraphs, waterworks, gas, and farming. He owned the Lourensford wine farm at Somerset West, and in 1898 he bought neighbouring wine farms, including the famous Vergelegen farm.⁴⁵

Rhodes invested in both wine and fruit farming in order to accumulate capital also within agriculture. He bought the well-known Boschendal estate and several other “handpicked” farms, altogether more than 5,800 hectares – thereby controlling “a large part of the farmland” in the Dwars River Valley. By the mid-1890s, he had also bought several farms close to the Pniël Mission station, north-east of Stellenbosch, and he expanded his wine farming significantly when his managers had another 685,000 vines

39. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, p. 27. In 1890–1892, Rhodes, Sivewright, and Afrikaner Bond leader Jan Hofmeyer comprised the “Trinity” that ruled South Africa. See James T. Molteno, *The Dominion of Afrikanerdom: Recollections Pleasant and Otherwise* (London, 1923), p. 28.

40. *The South African Who's Who 1908* (Durban, 1908).

41. P. Laurence, *The Life of John Xavier Merriman* (London, 1930), p. 134; Dictionary of South African Biography, vol. II (Cape Town, 1972), p. 464.

42. Laurence, *Life of John Xavier Merriman*, pp. 134–135.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 136 and 342.

45. Exhibition information at the Vergelegen Estate Museum, March 2015; Kenneth Wilburn, *The Life of Statesman and Industrialist Sir James Sivewright of South Africa, 1848–1916* (New York, 2010), chs 5 and 6.

planted.⁴⁶ As an absent owner, Rhodes did not know exactly how much land he owned, since he claimed that he owned “some twenty or thirty farms in the Paarl and Stellenbosch district”. Certainly, there was an animosity among the Afrikaner farmers in the valley, when they learned that Rhodes had bought farms there. He was officially accused of “sinister designs on the Dutch”, and “great secrecy had to be maintained at first about the sales”,⁴⁷ especially as he was accused of buying farms cheaply from desperate Afrikaner farmers affected by the phylloxera catastrophe.⁴⁸ Whether or not this animosity was based on ethnicity – all the foremen in the region were pioneer Englishmen – or on a clash between two modes of production cannot be settled here. Probably, it was a combination of the two. Undoubtedly, though, several farmers saw Rhodes as a representative of British imperialism.

One way of loosening the pre-capitalist bonds of an economy based on kinship was the establishment of a commercial bank system, which certainly facilitated the selling and buying of land on the open market. Like elsewhere, commercial banks were started in the Cape Colony by “a new layer of the colonial bourgeoisie” in Cape Town in the late 1830s and the 1840s, primarily to absorb the slave compensation money that the British government paid to slaveholders for their freed slaves.⁴⁹ The Cape of Good Hope Bank was established in 1836 by three “honourable” men and six esquires.⁵⁰ Between 1836 and 1862, no less than twenty-nine local banks were established in the Cape Colony. Through these banks, the moral economy was gradually replaced by a free trade of money,⁵¹ and they paved the way to an open land market and agricultural capitalism after the abolition of slavery. In fact, the main purpose of these banks was to ensure compensation money was made available for investment in agriculture in order to secure the quality of the two main export commodities – wine and wool – and to create an infrastructure for trade with Europe.⁵² These local banks – based mostly in Afrikaner communities and managed by Dutch-speaking “prominent farmers”⁵³ – encouraged agricultural capitalism in the Cape Colony by the late 1830s and onwards.

46. Kees (C.S.) van der Waal (ed.), *Winelands, Wealth and Work: Transformations in the Dwars River Valley, Stellenbosch* (Scottsville, KT, 2014), pp. 8 and 10; Basil Williams, *Cecil Rhodes* (London, 1921), pp. 301–302; Chris Aucamp, “Rhodes Fruit Farms: A Small Beginning in the Paarl Valley 1897–1910”, *Contree*, 31 (1992), pp. 11–18; Boom, *Vrede en Lust*, p. 49.

47. Williams, *Cecil Rhodes*, p. 301.

48. Aucamp, “Rhodes Fruit Farms”, p. 14.

49. Keegan, *Colonial South Africa*, pp. 163–164.

50. *Deed of Settlement of the Cape of Good Hope Bank*, dated 4 August 1836 (Cape Town, 1837).

51. Dooling, *Slavery*, pp. 200 and 188.

52. E. Hengherr, “Emancipation – and After: A Study of Cape Slavery and the Issues Arising From It, 1830–1843” (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 1954), p. 68.

53. Giliomee, “Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism”, p. 58.

Several of these local banks “went to the wall”, however, and by 1882 there were only eight local banks still operating.⁵⁴ Moreover, the surviving ones and new local banks such as the Stellenbosch District Bank were challenged by the imperial Standard Bank, which started to do business in the Western Cape in 1875. With its “British connection” and “largely English-speaking staff”, it started up in Stellenbosch in 1880 and in Paarl in 1881. This British bank did not have any local shareholders, and it approached only “the affluent farmers who produced quality wines”. It was attacked by Afrikaner communities as a “giant devil fish” that aimed to destroy the Afrikaner communities in the wine districts by supporting outsiders who wanted to invest in wine farming. Most Afrikaner farmers stayed with those of their local banks that survived the “imperial” competition, and they became clients with newly opened trust companies.⁵⁵ But there were banks in the Winelands for both those wine farmers who stayed within the Afrikaner community and for those who acted beyond it, especially non-Afrikaner investors.

Efficiency of production

A third condition for the development of agricultural capitalism was the transformation of farmland into “*property units* suitable for bourgeois enterprise”.⁵⁶ A system of split units of production had never existed in the Western Cape, though, since coherent units of production were established when the White settlers gradually dispossessed native peasants from their collectively owned land. Instead, farmers expanded the area for wine farming by bringing new land under cultivation. In the 1890s, the Cape Flats, close to Cape Town, in particular, were under cultivation, and the wine-farming area at Constantia had doubled over the previous decade.⁵⁷ In the last decade of the nineteenth century, agricultural capitalism was geographically extended by the cultivation of more land.

Gradually, the original mixed farming of cattle, wheat, and wine gave way to specialization. At Meerlust, one of the largest wine estates of the Western Cape, Johannes Myburg had already changed from mixed farming to wine farming around 1800, and the quantities of wine and brandy increased substantially.⁵⁸ Wine farming was not very sophisticated however. Scully claims that the Census of 1875 “illustrates the lack of mechanisation and the lack of capital investment in agriculture in Stellenbosch district during the late nineteenth century [...] and manual labour [...] the rule and the use of

54. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 48–49, 51–52, and 58.

56. Hobsbawm, “Scottish Reformers”, p. 10.

57. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 2820.

58. Simons, *Meerlust*, pp. 78–81.

machinery the exception".⁵⁹ She might be correct, and pure manual labour was a fourth obstacle to overcome in order to ensure a transition to a capitalist mode of production.

Nonetheless, wine farming was partly being mechanized in the late nineteenth century. In 1893, the Labour Commission learned that many farmers "since lately" used "labour-saving machinery". The consequences of the demand for labour were significant. "Where formerly six or eight men were required to work a vineyard, a couple now suffice to tend the machines", Haumann, a wine farmer in Franschoek, claimed. He could not see how wine farmers could survive without these machines.⁶⁰ Cloete, a wine farmer at Wynberg, was mechanizing work on his farm by introducing grubbers, furrow drilling, trenches for manure, and ploughs to cover the manure. He had a machine for ridging up the ground in the middle between the rows of vines, so that only six inches of land out of four feet had to be worked by men with spades and grubbers "instead of having a gang of men at work and the ground is kept very clean".⁶¹

In 1875, farmers in Stellenbosch and Paarl used 1,301 ploughs and 546 harrows, and in 1904 the numbers were 2,031 ploughs and 895 harrows.⁶² However, most ploughs in these districts had just one furrow, most likely because there was not much space between the rows of vines. So, mechanization was favouring capitalist wine farming by the end of the nineteenth century.

Despite some progress being made, the wine industry was in a poor state until the 1880s, when the Colonial Office bought the large wine farm Groot Constantia and recruited the leading Austrian viticultural expert Carl von Babo to develop the industry. By hiring von Babo, the Colonial Office intended to transform wine farming and wine making into a profitable enterprise.⁶³

After arriving at the Cape Colony in the mid-1880s, von Babo did not mince his words when describing what he saw on the farms. Not only did farmers mix different kinds of grapes in wine making, they also, he noticed, did the following:

The cutting of the grapes, the separating of the ripe from the unripe grapes, the collection of the grapes before pressing, is all done, with a few exceptions, in a careless manner. But the climax of the untidy proceedings is reached in the

59. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, pp. 21–24; Dooling, *Slavery*, p. 176.

60. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 4892.

61. *Ibid.*, Evidence 2822.

62. *Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope*, 1875, Part IX – Land, Crops, Livestock, Pastoral Products, Agricultural Machines, and Industries Connected with Agriculture, p. xxi, Table X, Agricultural Instruments; *Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope*, 1904, Part X – Livestock and Agriculture, pp. 516–517, Table XI, Extent of Land Cultivated: Workers on Farms: Census Districts.

63. P.D. Hahn, "Viticulture of the Colony", in *Cape of Good Hope: Official Handbook*, Governmental Publications (Cape Town, 1886), pp. 263–278, 275; *Official Year Book of the Union*, 2 (1918) (Pretoria, 1919), p. 438.

tramping of the grapes. During this operation the germs of the acetous fermentation are carried on the feet from the floor into the fermenting liquid. There is in almost all cellars wine spilt on the floor, in which the acetous germs develop and exist; they fill the air of the stores and get also in this way into the wine.⁶⁴

However, von Babo reported that there were wine presses not only at Groot Constantia, but also at another dozen farms. In 1904, there were 1,086 wine presses and 837 wine pumps used in the colony,⁶⁵ so some mechanization was taking place in the wine-making process as well, and science was introduced to better the quality of the wine.

Moreover, the new methods of making wine were cleaner, the farmer got more juice out of the grapes, and he or his managers could use all the juice for making wine of quality for the market.⁶⁶ This testifies to another aspect of the production of commodities for market sale that is crucial in an analysis of industrial capitalism but very seldom, if ever, discussed in the context of agricultural capitalism – a uniform quality of product. As late as 1905, a government committee reported that wine farmers were “inefficiently equipped” to produce wine and brandy “of a uniform quality” because of “ignorance of approved modern methods of manufacture”.⁶⁷ The committee recommended that young wine farmers go to Europe – as Merriman did – to learn “efficient” wine making and that wine farmers form a common wine cellar for making wine.⁶⁸

An efficient infrastructure

A fifth condition for a capitalist breakthrough was the development of an infrastructure that allowed agricultural capitalists and capitalist farmers to transport seasonal labourers to farms and products to market.⁶⁹ As late as the 1830s, wine was transported by ox-wagons from Drakenstein to Cape Town on the “sandy, heavy-going road across the Cape Flats”. For “years to come” that road was “terrible”. The amount of wine that could be transported was limited to two leaguers at a time,⁷⁰ and “a single trip over

64. Hahn, “Viticulture of the Colony”, p. 277.

65. *Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1904*, Part X – Livestock and Agriculture, pp. 516–517, Table XI, Extent of Land Cultivated: Workers on Farms: Census Districts.

66. Carl von Babo, *Report on the Viticulture of the Colony: Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Excellency the Commander*, Papers printed by the Legislative Council and Government, vol. II, G. 49 (Cape Town, 1887), pp. 7–8.

67. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Wine and Brandy Industry, passim* and, for instance, pp. 7 and 93–96.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

69. Hobsbawm, “Scottish Reformers”, p. 9.

70. According to Diko van Zyl, during British rule one leaguer equalled 127 imperial gallons or 578 litres. Personal communication to author from Wessel Visser of Stellenbosch University, 8 August 2017.

bad roads [could] take four days".⁷¹ Indeed, there was no easy way to the market for the Cape wine farmers. In 1845, though, a new road was constructed from Cape Town to Klapmuts, "cutting the Drakenstein farmers' transport costs by half".⁷² A large project using convicted labourers to build main roads, mountain passes, and bridges was started in the 1840s, and the first company to build a railway – from Cape Town to Swellendam – was set up in 1845.⁷³ The way to the market was being opened, but the process was slow. Around 1890, there was, though, a railway from Cape Town to Malmesbury;⁷⁴ and the Cape–Orange Free State railway line reached the expanding market in Johannesburg by 1892.⁷⁵ At the same time, several men at the Genadendal Mission Station were engaged in work "along the line up to Worcester or Beaufort and on the new line to Robertson".⁷⁶ So, the building of an infrastructure for the transport of wine to market and migrant labourers to farms was being intensified in the Western Cape at the end of the nineteenth century.

THE MAKING OF A MARKET FOR CAPE WINES

As markets also existed in feudal societies, producing agricultural goods for a market certainly did not in itself mean capitalism. This, according to Hobsbawm, was so self-evident to Scottish reformers that they "took it for granted" without discussion.⁷⁷ Being connected to a market and being connected to capitalism in England did not make agriculture in Scotland capitalist in nature. Likewise, the agriculture in the Western Cape – wine farming – was not in itself capitalist by nature, simply because wine was sold on a market. The market was a necessary, but not a sufficient, precondition for the development of agricultural capitalism.

As already noted, the British market became a problem for Western Cape wine farmers in the 1860s; and the failing market, in fact, reimposed one of the basic obstacles to the development of agricultural capitalism. Certainly, farmers asked the British government to reduce the import tax on Cape wines, and they asked for "a better marketing system for wine and brandy".⁷⁸ However, this was all in vain. Not even Cecil Rhodes could re-establish the British market for Cape wines in the early 1890s.⁷⁹ In 1905, the spokesman for the wine merchants

71. Boom, *Vrede en Lust*, pp. 38 and 40.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

73. Keegan, *Colonial South Africa*, pp. 211 and 169.

74. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 4617.

75. N.G. Garson, "Cecil John Rhodes", in *Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. III (Cape Town, 1977), pp. 704–715, 710–711.

76. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes of Evidence, Evidence 6501.

77. Hobsbawm, "Scottish Reformers", p. 9.

78. Boom, *Vrede en Lust*, pp. 42–45.

79. Robert Rotberg, *The Founder: Cecil Rhodes and the Pursuit of Power* (New York, 1988), pp. 355–356 and 483.

in the Western Cape, Charles Sedgwick, concluded from his own experience that it was impossible for outsiders to break the wine ring of London.⁸⁰

Scully notes that the “main market for Cape wine” was instead to be found in “the local sale of dop wine” to cattle, corn, and wheat farmers, who also used dop wine to secure labourers. This was a “wine of poor quality” that also was sold to roadside canteens, where labourers consumed it.⁸¹ Wine farmers could also sell liquor from their own farms, but only “in quantities of no less than seven gallons at one time” to prevent misuse by individual consumers.⁸² Although several witnesses testified to the commissions in the 1890s and early 1900s that coloured farm labourers clubbed together for a half-aum of poor wine to drink on weekends,⁸³ this was not a market for the expanding commercial and profitable wine-farming industry that Rhodes and his fellows tried to establish.

The regional market was also limited by the legal prohibition to “sell, supply, or give” any form of “intoxicating liquors” to inhabitants in any “native location” in the colony as defined by the “Native Locations Act” of 1876.⁸⁴ Native locations on private property were defined as follows: “any number of huts, or dwellings, on any one farm occupied by three or more male adults, being Kaffirs, Fingoes, Basutos, Hottentots, Bushmen, and the like such occupants”, who were not in “the *bona fide* and continuous employment of the owner of such land” as a domestic servant or “in or about the farming operations, or any trade business, or handicraft by him carried upon such land”.⁸⁵ Moreover, according to Gavin Williams, the temperance associations intensified their work and spoke to both the labour and the liquor committees in the 1890s.⁸⁶ The temperance movement was backed by an international network, several organizations, and many thousands of members in the Cape, and relations between the movement and wine farmers were “highly fractious”.⁸⁷ In particular, they argued

80. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Wine and Brandy Industry*, p. 85.

81. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, p. 46.

82. “The Liquor Licensing Law”, Act No. 28 – 1883. §II. *Statutes of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1895*, vol. II. 1880–1893 (Cape Town, 1906), p. 2118.

83. A half-aum equalled ninety-six bottles or sixteen gallons. *Select Committee on the Labour Question*, 1890, p. 6.

84. “The Liquor Licensing Law”, pp. 2118–2142. See also *Report of the Liquor Laws Commission, 1889–1890*, G. 1 – 1890 (Cape Town, 1890), p. 25.

85. “Native Locations Act” or “Act to provide for the better and more effectual supervision and management of Native Locations, and for the more easy collection of Hut-tax”, Act No. 37 – 1884. *Statutes of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1895*, vol. II. 1880–1893 (Cape Town, 1906), pp. 2096–2102. Quotation, p. 2096.

86. Gavin Williams, “Slaves, Workers, and Wine: The ‘Dop System’ in the History of the Cape Wine Industry, 1658–1894”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 42:5 (2016), pp. 893–909, 906–907.

87. Paul Nugent, “The Temperance Movement and Wine Farmers at the Cape: Collective Action, Racial Discourse, and Legislative Reform, c.1890–1965”, *Journal of African History*, 52:3 (2011), pp. 341–363, 344–346.

against the roadside canteens. In 1893, the advocate James Molteno, who had also been a Member of the Legislative Assembly since 1890 and a member of the Labour Commission of 1893/1894,⁸⁸ gave an address to the Church Temperance Society in Cape Town, where he advocated “the suppression of all country roadside canteens”. The society’s council sent Molteno’s address to all members of parliament, to relevant magistrates, ministers of religion, and editors of newspapers asking for comments. The council published the address, some of the comments, and a summary.⁸⁹ No legislative measure was taken, though, perhaps because farmers and merchants constituted a vast majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly. In the early 1890s, there were forty-six farmers, twenty-six merchants, and four advocates in the Legislative Assembly.⁹⁰ Nugent assumes that “their parliamentary representation would be expected to give them influence”.⁹¹

Indeed, canteens became an important part of the market for Cape wine. In 1882, “the canteen wine made up more than three-quarters of the Cape wine market”.⁹² Louw, a wine farmer, argued that canteens were “a good thing” for the farmers because “the natives spend their money there, and when they have no money, they are forced to work”.⁹³ Some farmers were even in favour not only of the canteens, but also of heavy drinking by the labourers. Human, also a wine farmer, explained the connection between the wine market and the labour market: “I regard it as a good thing if they drink a lot, for they spend their money and have to work again.”⁹⁴ Reverend Kunick of the Mamre Mission Station at Malmesbury added that it had “even happened that the farmer has had his men paid at the canteen”.⁹⁵ Obviously, the canteens were an important link in the circulation of capital, and they helped wine farmers to accumulate capital that could then be invested in more vines and wine farming.

Other witnesses complained about restrictions on selling liquor to Coloureds and Blacks in the Eastern Cape Colony and over the duties on Cape wine and brandy exported to the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. The Labour Commission agreed, and it concluded in 1894 that legislation prohibiting Coloureds and Blacks from drinking liquor should not be enforced, although several witnesses argued in favour of enforcement, because “such legislation would tend to injure the industry of the west on

88. *The South African Who's Who* (Cape Town, 1908), p. 277.

89. *Public Opinion on Liquor Problems and Legislation* (Cape Town, 1894), pp. 1–13, 6.

90. Molteno, *Dominion of Afrikanerdom*, pp. 19f and 29.

91. Nugent, “The Temperance Movement and Wine Farmers at the Cape”, p. 342.

92. Giliomee, “Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism”, p. 51.

93. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 5095.

94. *Ibid.*, Evidence 5681.

95. *Ibid.*, Evidence 4039.

which a great portion of the population depends".⁹⁶ In 1905, the Liquor Committee added that "a modification of the restrictions applied to the natives in regard to the sale of liquor" was "extremely desirable not only in the interests of the natives themselves but also in the wine industry". Coloureds and Blacks, though, should be allowed to consume Cape wine only "of a limited standard of strength [...], provided that such wine shall be served by the glass and consumed on the licensed premises only, and shall not be carried away in bottles or otherwise in bulk".⁹⁷

Charles Sedgwick, spokesman for the wine merchants, argued strongly that "those Natives and other coloured persons who flocked to all centres of trade and industry to work for Europeans" should not "be prevented from having their glass of wine or beer". The restrictions for inhabitants in the Transkeian Territories could certainly "be continued with respect to brandy", but "these people" should not be denied "wine of limited strength"; after all, he was a wine dealer. Instead, he expected them "in time" to prefer wine to "stronger drink", and that drunkenness and "other forms of crime" would thereby decrease significantly.⁹⁸

Another argument against the prohibition on Coloureds and Blacks drinking wine was that, according to distiller Gideon Krige in Stellenbosch, Europeans in the colony could not consume all the wine that might be produced. The distiller calculated that another 60,000 leaguers of wine could be consumed annually in the colony if one fifth of its 1.5 million "Natives" were permitted to drink the Cape light wines "at a rate of half-a-bottle per diem". Instead of trying to compete on the European market, he argued, the government "should make use of the product of this country" by expanding the market to all people in the colony.⁹⁹ Making wine "a legalised marketable commodity among these people" would, in fact, the commissioners concluded, give a substantial stimulus to "a staple industry which at present receives too little legislative protection". By permitting Coloureds and Blacks in the Cape Colony to drink Cape wine, the colonial administration could encourage the expansion of wine farming. Wine farmers and wine merchants pointed out that they just wanted "protection". They asked for "an open market" in southern Africa as it "used to be" before the Second Boer War, when the Kruger regime allowed "Kaffirs in the late Republic [...] to drink wine, and thousands upon thousands of gallons were imported from this Colony, but directly prohibition was enforced[,] the market declined and the price dropped". The Liquor Committee agreed and concluded that it would be "most disastrous to

96. *Report of the Labour Commission, 1893–1894*, vol. III, p. xiv.

97. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Wine and Brandy Industry*, p. 4.

98. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

many wine farmers” if no relief was granted immediately.¹⁰⁰ Obviously, a failing wine market in southern Africa was still a substantial obstacle for an expanding agricultural capitalism in the Cape Winelands around 1900. Wine farmers and merchants, though, tried to create a new market in the Cape Colony by having Coloureds and Blacks drink more wine and thereby overcome one obstacle to the development of agricultural capitalism.

THE MAKING OF AN AGRICULTURAL LABOURING CLASS

According to Hobsbawm, the transformation of land into property units suitable for capitalist business implied that capitalist farmers and farming capitalists took measures “to clear a large part of the peasantry from the land”. Capitalism required “the abolition of peasantry” and the elimination of “subsistence plots” of land.¹⁰¹ For their own living and that of their families, labourers were required to be mobile and to offer their labour on the market wherever (agricultural) capitalists demanded it. The existence of subsistence peasants was an obstacle to be overcome in order to establish a class of landless agricultural labourers as part of agricultural capitalism. As the US historian Ira Katznelson underlines, “Capitalism is unthinkable without proletarianization”.¹⁰²

I agree with Marcel van der Linden, though, that we have to go beyond “the normal employment relationships” to get a full understanding of capitalism and to include forms of income that supplemented earned wages, such as subsistence labour, small-scale production, and the sale of goods.¹⁰³ However, we should also see earned wages among peasants (tenant labourers) as supplementing their subsistence economy in order to retain their status as subsistence peasants and resist full proletarianization. I argue that, in agricultural capitalism, both commercial farmers and peasants or tenant labourers were in favour of seasonal labour in addition to permanent labourers.

Traditionally, wine making in the Western Cape was based on slavery. Slaves were brought to the colony from India, Batavia, and from elsewhere in southern Africa, since the VOC “prohibited the enslavement of the indigenous ‘free’ Khoi”, with whom the company wanted to trade cattle.

100. *Ibid.*, pp. 4 and 86. On alcohol consumption among mine workers in Transvaal, see Charles van Onselen, “Randlords and Rotgut 1886–1903: An Essay on the Role of Alcohol in the Development of European Imperialism and Southern African Capitalism, with Special Reference to Black Mineworkers in the Transvaal Republic”, *History Workshop*, 2:1 (1976), pp. 33–89.

101. Hobsbawm, “Scottish Reformers”, pp. 19–20.

102. Ira Katznelson, “Working Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons”, in *idem* and Aristide Zolberg (eds), *Working-Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States* (Princeton, NJ, 1986), pp. 3–41, 14.

103. Marcel van der Linden, *Transnational Labour History: Explorations* (Aldershot, 2003), ch. 12, especially p. 201.

The British government, though, prohibited the slave trade in 1808 and abolished slavery throughout the British Empire in 1833; this was made effective in the Western Cape by 1 December 1834.¹⁰⁴

Scully reports the “shortage” of agricultural labour in the Western Cape in the late 1800s and identifies three different strategies among wine farmers to recruit labourers. Under the tied-rent system, “a farmer offered a laborer a house on the farm or in a nearby village at a nominal rent” and used his labour when he required it. A second strategy was the advance system, when a farmer paid a labourer in advance to secure his labour at the picking and pressing seasons. The most spectacular of these strategies, however, was the dop system. “Two bottles of rough doctored dop wine every day of the year from the age of about 12 to the day of death, did much to aid farmers in their quest for a compliant proletariat”, Scully claims. Farmers gave dops of wine both with meals and between them, so “the very rhythms of daily life facilitated and affirmed the farmers’ control” of the labourers.¹⁰⁵ Scully does not, however, clarify how these labour strategies constituted parts of a capitalist mode of production. Nor does she point out that those measures were far from enough to secure labour. Getting labourers was still an obstacle in Western Cape wine farming at the end of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the dop system, in particular, resulted in very poor quality labourers, as it caused alcohol addiction among them. Nonetheless, many farmers had to offer the dops to get any kind of labourer, even “the scum”, as a few farmers called the labourers that were available to them.¹⁰⁶ The labour commissions of 1890 and 1893–1894 testified that many farmers had to do so, but several witnesses gave evidence of other measures that were practised or discussed to increase the number of “good” labourers available to work in wine farming.

The best way to get “good” labourers was to offer them a house and a small plot of land that the women and children could cultivate, while the men worked for the farmer.¹⁰⁷ Several large and established wine farmers gave evidence to the labour commissions of their method of arranging this labour tenancy. Hendryk P. Beyers called this kind of labourer “small tenants”, but maybe tenant labourers would be more correct. Either way, he testified, “I have a lot of labourers on my farm [and] I give them a patch of garden ground, a house to live in, cattle, and poultry, and if they work with me I supply [the men] with food.” When they worked for Beyers, they received one shilling a day – one shilling and six pence for sowing, reaping, and pressing seasons – and a bottle of wine a day.¹⁰⁸ Johannes P. Eksteen

104. Williams, “Slaves, Workers, and Wine”, pp. 895, 899, 902.

105. Scully, *Bouquet of Freedom*, pp. 54–55 and 58–59.

106. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidences 5103 and 5277.

107. Williams, “Slaves, Workers, and Wine”, p. 906.

108. *Select Committee on the Labour Question*, 1890, Minutes of Evidence, Evidences 37–46.



Figure 1. Postcard showing the gathering of grapes near Capetown, 1920s.
National Library of South Africa. Used by permission.

gave similar evidence, although he had “tenants” both on his “large farm” and on his property in the “village”. When the farmer required them, the village labourers worked on the farm on weekdays as day labourers and returned to their families at the end of the week. He admitted that he could get “cheaper labour” than the average (wine) farmers because of the “advantages” that he could provide his labourers. Women and children were also called in for work when extra labour was needed at harvest times, and they were paid extra.¹⁰⁹

Cecil Rhodes’s managers also secured labour in the 1890s by housing labourers and their families comparatively well and by developing more systematically and more extensively the labour policy that farmers such as Beyers and Eksteen practised. His managers initiated the construction of “140 cottages [...] of a model style for the time” in a couple of villages close to his farms. His managers created both a school and a church, and they imported both a teacher and a minister in the new village of Languedoc.¹¹⁰ In fact, the managers established a traditional paternalistic society that aimed to affiliate the labourers with the employer, as paternal industrial capitalists did. The labour contracts were based on the male breadwinner concept, but women and children were called in when extra labour was

109. *Ibid.*, Evidences 74–76, 119, 135.

110. Rotberg, *Founder*, p. 640.

required in the picking and pressing season. Most farmers, though, had to get labourers through other means.

The main source for external labourers was the mission stations. These were introduced in the Western Cape around 1800 not only to convert the Khoisan and slaves to Christianity, “but also to adherence to the colonial order and to what was held to be civilized behaviour”. They expanded in the colony especially after the end of slavery, when about 6,000 out of the 25,000 freed slaves, in addition to the Khoisan, settled there.¹¹¹ Families were allotted a cottage and some land, and they often had some sheep and pigs.¹¹² In a way, the inhabitants of the mission stations were also a kind of tenant labourer, even if the land and the houses they had access to did not belong to a farmer or a capitalist like Rhodes but to the mission station.

All men at the mission station were their own masters and, consequently, not subject to the Masters and Servants Act of 1856 and its amendments. As a result, they could not be forced to work for a (White) master.¹¹³ However, they “were generally unable to escape the requirements of waged labour”, so they normally had to work for farmers to add waged earnings to their subsistence economy at the mission stations.¹¹⁴ “Everyone [at Mamre] who hears of a master wanting labour, goes thither”, the Coloured churchwarden Johannes April, born on the station in 1844, testified in 1893.¹¹⁵ Reverend Kunick, who was in charge of Mamre, concluded that the mission station was “a sort of labour depot, from which [farmers] could draw supplies when required”. The reverend declared that “all the surrounding farmers” approached the station to get labour, and these labourers were “permanently employed by farmers near the station” and visited their families at their homes “only on Saturday nights”.¹¹⁶

Nonetheless, there were periods when the labourers did not work for farmers but prioritized their own plots of land. According to J.S. van Reenen, a farmer, they had good reason to doing so, especially when “their mealies, figs, pears, and other fruits and vegetables get ripe and as long as they can get anything to live on free”.¹¹⁷ On the other hand, women and children worked for farmers in harvest seasons. These families were not fully proletarianized, and they sold their labour to an employer only when

111. Dooling, *Slavery*, p. 117; Legassick and Ross, “From Slave Economy to Settler Capitalism”, pp. 264 and 269.

112. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidences 5060–5061.

113. R.L. Watson, *Slave Emancipation and Racial Attitudes in Nineteenth-Century South Africa* (Cambridge, 2012), ch. 12.

114. Ross, “Origins”, p. 85.

115. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidences 4055–4060.

116. *Ibid.*, Evidences 4030–4032 and 4049.

117. *Ibid.*, Evidence 3523.

they wanted or had to earn additional earnings without risking their own harvests and subsistence economy. Several farmers, though, were not satisfied with the freedom of the mission tenants.

Child labour

As in most other socioeconomic contexts worldwide, Western Cape wine farming, too, saw increased exploitation of child labour as a substantial feature of technologically primitive capitalism. As there were a few complaints to the labour commissions that the wives and children of tenant labourers who lived on the farms did not work for the farmers, we can presume they did, especially in harvest seasons. However, there were quite a few farmers who argued that children of the mission stations should offer their labour to them more than they did. The Select Committee on the Labour Question therefore recommended that the government “enter into correspondence with [...] the authorities of such mission schools, in order to arrive at a system of school vacations, which would correspond with the seasons when that kind of labour is most urgently required”.¹¹⁸ The Chairman of the Labour Commission, Jan Cambier Faure, concluded that there was a “general complaint among the farmers that the coloured children [were] being kept in the mission schools too long”. Some farmers even testified that “their own boys and girls [had] to lead the plough, while older coloured children of perhaps fourteen or fifteen years of age, [were] sitting in school”.¹¹⁹

Several witnesses claimed that the main reason why Coloured tenant labourers at the mission stations did not send their children to work for farmers was their standard of living. Van der Walt, a commissioner, and Loubser, a farmer, declared that the labourers were so independent that it was “unnecessary for them to take their children out of school”. In addition to the income from their gardens, the men at the missionaries made such “a good living” by working for farmers that their children could stay at school too long instead of working for farmers.¹²⁰ This statement, though, is hard to believe, and, in fact, most children at mission schools did work for farmers at harvest times. Van Reenen, a wine farmer, testified that the schools were closed during the reaping season so that “every child who could go helped the farmer to pick grapes”. Moreover, Van Reenen noted that, on some occasions, even the schoolmaster went picking grapes, a fact Reverend Kunick confirmed.¹²¹ So, managers of the mission schools encouraged children to work for farmers at harvest times.

118. *Select Committee on the Labour Question*, 1890, p. iv.

119. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 6250.

120. *Ibid.*, Evidence 3789.

121. *Ibid.*, Evidences 3494–3497 and 4049.



Figure 2. Harvesting grapes was very labour intensive, manual work. The Constantia farm in 1929. *National Library of South Africa. Used by permission.*

Basically, there was a class dimension concerning the education of the Coloured children at the mission schools, who were not to learn more than necessary to be labourers. Daniel Zeeman, a teacher at Mamre, gave an assurance that their pupils would turn out to be “good labourers” when they left school at the age of thirteen.¹²² Reverend Hettasch at Genadendal noted, “We always keep it before us that the children belong to the labouring class.”¹²³ Reverend Neethling claimed that a Christian education at the mission stations made better labourers, since the children became “strong and honest” and caused “less trouble” for the farmers. In fact, a “Christian life” would be “the solution to the labour question”, the reverend argued.¹²⁴ Thus, one of the main tasks for mission stations was to prepare Coloured boys and girls for a conscientious working-class life in the rural and urban Western Cape.

Import of labourers from Europe

Some witnesses proposed to the Labour Commission in 1893 that the colonial administration should help farmers to import labourers from Europe. Merriman, for instance, supported the import of “the cheapest white labour which could be obtained”. Since Europeans took farm work in Argentina, he saw no reason why they should not be willing to work on farms in the Western Cape.¹²⁵ Moreover, Europeans would be “bound to work” for an employer because they “cannot get away” from the colony by returning to Europe, he trustfully argued.¹²⁶ In particular, Merriman recommended labourers from northern Italy and Germany because they had experience of wine making. He added that a German, though, was “not so first class” as a servant because he was “not the sort of man to remain working for a master at three shillings a day”. Instead, he advocated importing Norwegians and Swedes as they “would be a godsend to the country”.¹²⁷ Obviously, he thought Scandinavians would be willing to stay with the farmers as hardworking and undemanding labourers.

Others, like Van Reenen, were also hesitant about Germans because they were “very smart” and would not stay as farm labourers, but advance to farmers quite soon after their arrival in the Western Cape.¹²⁸ Van Aarde, a farmer, added that the German immigrant first “works under me and then he wants me to work for him”. Germans would take over both the farms

122. *Ibid.*, Evidence 3809.

123. *Ibid.*, Evidence 6599.

124. *Ibid.*, Evidence 5311.

125. *Ibid.*, Evidence 2357.

126. *Ibid.*, Evidence 2362.

127. *Ibid.*, Evidences 2410–2412 and 2416.

128. *Ibid.*, Evidence 3575.

and the country, and “instead of Afrikanderland this would soon become Germanland”, he feared.¹²⁹ Seemingly, the import of Germans would not contribute very much to the making of a labouring class in the Western Cape.

Some witnesses argued against other Europeans as well, but for quite different reasons. For instance, Cloete, a wine farmer, advised the commissioners against Italians, whom he considered to be “dirty” and to be “filthy a lot”.¹³⁰ Merriman did not want Polish Jews, although he could not see any way “to prevent them”.¹³¹ He did not elaborate on his reasons, but it would not be too hazardous to suggest anti-Semitism. Others argued in favour of a new transport of English orphans, like those who had been transported to the colony after the abolition of slavery in the late 1830s.¹³² Not much, though, came of the ideas to import European labourers. Nor was the ongoing proletarianization of poor White peasants (bywoners) and farmers enough to provide wine farmers with labour,¹³³ especially not during the harvest and ploughing seasons. As a result, White farmers still had to rely on Coloured and Black labourers, and several farmers and politicians in the Western Cape looked for labourers in other parts of southern Africa.

Import of labourers from southern Africa

The Select Committee on Labour of 1890 was strongly in favour of importing labourers from Damaraland, Delagoa Bay, and Mozambique.¹³⁴ The “Report on Native Immigration to the Colony from Extra-Colonial Territories” made it clear as early as 1879 that “natives from Damaraland” would help “to supply the great and increasing demand of the agricultural and general labour market” in the Western Cape. Several employers made cash deposits with the government, and in the 1880s Damaras were recruited as part of a government labour recruitment programme. This programme was based on the oppression of the Damaras by the Hereros, who dispossessed the Damaras of their stock and land, impoverished them, and made many of the males into proletarian herders, herding sheep that belonged to the Hereros. Some of the Damaras regarded being migrant labourers in the Western Cape as a way of escaping Herero economic and political oppression. The programme was successful for the Western Cape

129. *Ibid.*, Evidences 3713–3716.

130. *Ibid.*, Evidence 2813.

131. *Ibid.*, Evidences 2363 and 2365.

132. Hengher, “Emancipation – and After”, pp. 100–103.

133. Colin Bundy, “Vagabond Hollanders and Runaway Englishmen”, in Beinart *et al.*, *Putting a Plough to the Ground*, pp. 101–128.

134. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Wine and Brandy Industry*, p. iv.

farmers, and it was “tied up with the history of south western Africa’s increasing integration into the expanding capitalist economy of the Cape Colony during the 19th century”.¹³⁵

The labourers were transported to Cape Town by ship, and the transports were organized by the merchant Anders Ohlsson and his trading partner Axel Eriksson, both of whom were Swedish immigrants to the Cape Colony. The labourers were then offered to employers in the Western Cape. This labour migration included men, women, and children, who were contracted as indentured labourers for two or three years, with accommodation and food, with cash wages not being paid until the end of the contracted period.¹³⁶ Cloete, a wine farmer, preferred Damaras to “Cape boys”, because they were “very willing” to learn the trade and because they could be trained as skilled labourers within a year.¹³⁷ Johannes Visser was initially also very positive about them, but then he became more concerned:

[...] while they cannot understand the language they are all right, but as soon as they do, they ask the other men what they are getting. Hearing that these get £1 while they have fifteen shillings, they become dissatisfied. This dissatisfaction is heightening in harvest time when the Hottentot boys receive their 3s. or 2s. 6d. per day.¹³⁸

Obviously, farmers exploited the ethnic split between indigenous labourers, while Damaras exploited their increasing knowledge of labour relations in the Western Cape to promote their class interests as labourers by learning from the local labourers and by forming a class of labourers with them.

The Cape Government Damara programme was stopped in 1882, although many individuals continued to go for work in the Western Cape for several years afterwards. In opposition to British interests, by the mid-1880s German imperialists had taken control of “Hereroland”, and gradually the German settlers and authorities had the Damaras work for them instead of going to the Western Cape. In 1891, the German authorities prohibited the recruitment and export of Damaras from “German South West Africa”.¹³⁹ Two years later, the “native labour contractor” George Henry Stevens in Cape Town claimed that the German authorities would “not allow an agent” from the Cape to recruit labourers for the colony any more.¹⁴⁰ Instead, German employers in German

135. Dag Henrichsen, “Damara’ Labour Recruitment to the Cape Colony and Marginalisation and Hegemony in Late 19th-Century Central Namibia”, *Journal of Namibian Studies*, 3 (2008), pp. 63–82, 73, 75–77 and 63.

136. *Ibid.*, pp. 67–69.

137. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 2731, and *Select Committee on the Labour Question*, 1890, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 229–230.

138. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 886.

139. Henrichsen, “Damara’ Labour Recruitment”, pp. 67 and 79.

140. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidences 1100–1101. See also Evidence 2438. In 1890, Stevens was “in the service of the South African Chartered Company” and had for some months been with Lobengula as representative of the Matabeleland Commissioner.

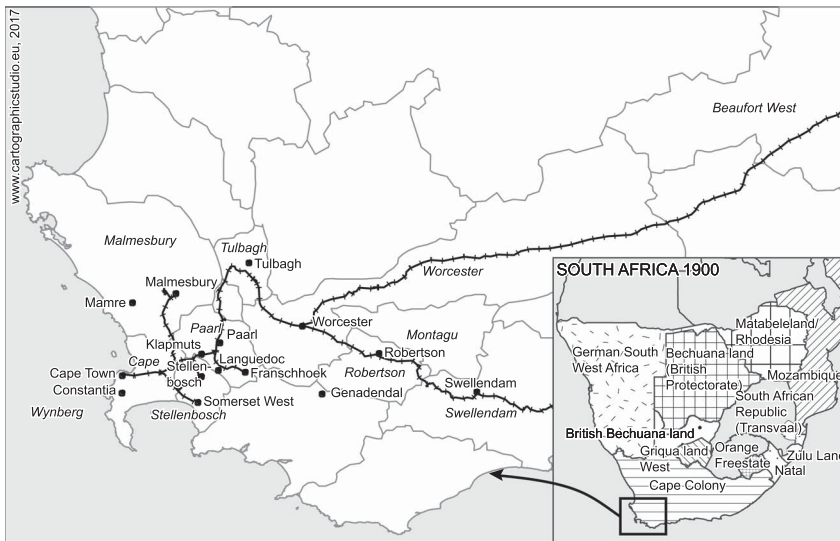


Figure 3. Wine growing areas in the Western Cape, with on the insert map the areas from which migrant labour originated.

South West Africa sought to recruit labour in the British Cape Colony. In 1907, “the German Agent” was still recruiting labourers in “considerable numbers” in the Glen Grey Area in the Eastern Cape, which housed between 50,000 and 60,000 “natives”.¹⁴¹ The imperialist scramble for Africa at the end of the nineteenth century was not only about controlling land, but also about controlling indigenous labour.

Instead of trying to attract Damaras, Western Cape farmers sought to recruit labour in the Delagoa Bay area.¹⁴² By 1883, migrant labourers from the gold mines brought to the Delagoa Bay area twice as much money as local farmers and hunters exported from the area.¹⁴³ Subsequently, migration to the Western Cape too increased. In 1892, labour contractor Stevens recruited about 3,000 labour migrants through his local agents in

See *Select Committee on the Labour Question*. He had served as a labour contractor since at least the early 1870s and had been superintendent of convicts. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Evidences 353 and 359–361.

141. *Report of the Select Committee on Farm Labour Supply*, Evidences 108, 10, and 34.

142. In the early 1890s, Rhodes and Sivewright tried to purchase, or at least lease, the Lourenço Marques province (the Delagoa Bay area), from the Portuguese government, but unsuccessfully. Sivewright and others established the Delagoa Bay Land Company in 1894. Wilburn, *Life of Statesman and Industrialist Sir James Sivewright*, pp. 236 and 299–302.

143. Patrick Harries, *Work, Culture, and Identity: Migrant Laborers in Mozambique and South Africa, c.1860–1910* (Johannesburg, 1994), pp. 101–102.

Inhambane, which was formerly “a notorious centre for the export of slaves” and still a trading centre.¹⁴⁴ Stevens characterized these agents in Inhambane as “the real merchants”, who sent “runners” out to recruit labourers. Certainly, these local agents had to “pay a certain rate of tax” to the Portuguese authorities. Then, the contractor brought them by boat to Cape Town, where he distributed them to farmers asking for extra labourers. Most of these labourers, however, preferred to work at the docks, so the wine farmers got little out of them; but by bringing these labourers down to the docks, the contractor could “liberate” a lot of local dock labourers – “Cape boys” – who could return to the farmers.¹⁴⁵

In the 1890s, several farmers complained that migrant labourers too often left their service when they had earned enough for their purpose, or for other reasons. Stevens agreed that the colonial government should appoint “agents with the natives” as “a safeguard to the farmer”, so that “a letter or a telegram may be despatched to have him brought back” if the labourer deserted his contracted employ. He added that the Portuguese authorities in Mozambique already kept a register of labour migrants for poll tax purposes.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, the Portuguese imperial administration did not mind Mozambicans moving to the Western Cape for seasonal labour, but they benefitted financially from the capital accumulated as a result of the work performed by labour migrants from Mozambique for wine farmers in the Western Cape.

Labourers for the wine farmers were also recruited from the Eastern Cape. Several “frontier Kaffirs” had been sent to the Western Cape as forced labour after the last “Kaffir rebellion”, i.e. the Gcaleka War that was crushed by Anglo-Cape troops in 1879.¹⁴⁷ These captives had to work for White employers in the colony for six months without any wage at all; they were subsequently paid for the next three years, a period considered to correspond to the normal contract period.¹⁴⁸

Besides obtaining forced labour, the contractor Stevens had been “securing labour” from the Eastern Cape for farmers in the Western Cape since the late 1870s. By 1893, he was bringing down 8,000 to 10,000 seasonal farm labourers annually, especially to the Stellenbosch, Paarl, Malmesbury, and Tulbagh districts. They were hired as contracted labourers and transported from their homes by railway and back again after their contracts had expired, partly at the expense of the farmers.¹⁴⁹ In sum, the improved infrastructure promoted the mobilization of seasonal migrant labourers,

144. *Ibid.*, pp. 1 and 15.

145. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidences 967, 971, 975–976, 979, 993, and 1019.

146. *Ibid.*, Evidence 1044.

147. Henrichsen, “‘Damara’ Labour Recruitment”, p. 73.

148. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 1041.

149. *Ibid.*, Evidences 932–960.

who most certainly were required for the expansion of agricultural capitalism in Western Cape wine farming. It also made labour migration easier. However, since most of the labour migrants returned home when they had earned enough money for their needs, “[t]he method of managing them to come down and stay, or to come down and go, has yet to be discovered”, the labour commissioners concluded.¹⁵⁰

In 1894, the labour commissioners admitted that several men in “the Native Territories” had migrated in order to work for farmers in the Western Cape, but the commissioners did not regard them as contributing with their labour “as much as it would be well for them and the Colony”. Their “desire to work for wages requires to be gradually developed”, the commissioners concluded.¹⁵¹ This idea was turned into a political issue, and the Glen Grey Act of 1894 – “frequently associated” with the Labour Commission of 1893–1894 – was a landmark in Cape labour policy.¹⁵² It was instigated by the Rhodes government in 1894 and implied, among other things, that common-land tenure in the Eastern Cape be replaced by individual tenures and that a labour tax on Xhosa men be imposed. The individual plots of land were limited to five morgen (ten acres) in order not to fully provide for one family, and the land was to be devolved by primogeniture, i.e. only the eldest son could inherit the land, thereby forcing the others to earn their living by working for an employer. Moreover, “an aborted attempt” was made “to impose a labour tax of all Black men who had *not* spent some time each year in White employment [my italics]”.¹⁵³ The tax was ten shillings on every young man who did not go out to work for an employer outside the Glen Grey area.¹⁵⁴ According to Thompson and Nicolls, the act was “intended to serve the labour needs of the farming interest of the Cape Colony [...], especially the farmers of the western (sic!) Cape”.¹⁵⁵ Bundy describes it as “the great contribution by Cecil Rhodes to the employers’ efforts”.¹⁵⁶ In Rhodes’s own words, it would act as a “gentle stimulant” to natives to work and to “remove them from the life of sloth and laziness [...] and make them give some return for our wise and good government”.¹⁵⁷ It should also make them “recognize the dignity of labour”. Certainly, “labour” did not mean that Coloured and Black peasants should only cultivate their own land, but that they should earn their living by also working for White employers

150. *Report of the Labour Commission, 1893–1894*, vol. III, p. ix.

151. *Ibid.*, p. viii.

152. R.J. Thompson and B.M. Nicolls, “The Glen Grey Act: Forgotten Dimensions in an Old Theme”, *South African Journal of Economic History*, 8:2 (1993), pp. 58–70, 62.

153. *Ibid.*, “Glen Grey Act”, pp. 58–59; Bundy, “Vagabond Hollanders”, p. 135.

154. *Report of the Select Committee on Farm Labour Supply*, Evidence 487.

155. Thompson and Nicolls, “Glen Grey Act”, p. 59.

156. Bundy, “Vagabond Hollanders”, p. 135.

157. Merle Lipton, *Capitalism and Apartheid: South Africa, 1910–1986* (Aldershot, 1986), p. 119.

beyond the Glen Grey district and thereby contribute to capital accumulation among commercial farmers.

Certainly, Afrikaner farmers wanted to “break up all ‘locations’ and to ensure a supply of cheap labour to the farms”.¹⁵⁸ In fact, the Glen Grey Act was intended “to force Africans through taxation to exchange traditional life for one that bound them to the colonial, capitalist state”.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, the act aimed at dispossessing the indigenous people of Eastern Cape of “their traditional way of life by forcing them more fully into the capitalist structure of the colonial state”.¹⁶⁰ Rhodes attempted “to bring Africans into his vision of British imperialism”, where they were to “provide the basis for the Cape’s capitalist labor force”.¹⁶¹ The main aim of the Glen Grey Act was to enforce the making of a class of indigenous labourers in the Eastern Cape; they were intended for work not primarily for the mines but for farmers in both the Eastern and Western Cape.¹⁶²

Other efforts on the part of the colonial government, beyond the Glen Grey Act, to force young men in “the native territories” to offer their labour to Western Cape farmers should also be considered. Labour contractor Stevens emphasized to the Labour Commission the importance of a “central native labour office” in the colony to supply farmers with “Native” labourers. He even proposed the creation of “an intelligently conducted labour department”, which would be “of very great assistance both to the large contractors and the Government, and by releasing the agricultural labourers, also the farmers”.¹⁶³ The proposal was accepted, and the Rhodes ministry established a Labour Department in 1895. White rulers, commercial farmers, and capitalists were about to develop both economic and political measures to overcome the most pressing obstacle to the development of a capitalist mode of production in Western Cape wine farming – the making of a class of Coloured and Black farm labourers. This process was a basic part of the racialized and class-based political economy that aimed to encourage agricultural capitalism in the Cape Colony around 1900.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this article has been to discuss some of the obstacles to the promotion of capitalism within wine farming in the Western Cape at the end of the nineteenth century. Inspired by Hobsbawm, I identify three sets of obstacles that

158. Giliomee, “Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism”, p. 58.

159. Wilburn, *Life of Statesman and Industrialist Sir James Sivewright*, p. 320.

160. *Ibid.*, p. 324.

161. Thompson and Nicolls, “Glen Grey Act”, p. 60; Wilburn, *Life of Statesman and Industrialist Sir James Sivewright*, p. 328.

162. Molteno, *Dominion of Afrikanerdom*, p. 47. See also Thompson and Nicolls, “Glen Grey Act”, pp. 59–62 and 65.

163. *Labour Commission*, 1893, Minutes and Evidences, Evidence 1060.

had to be overcome for the advancement of capitalism: the making of capital, the making of a commodity market, and the making of a class of labourers.

After the British occupation, the new rulers of the Cape Colony encouraged agricultural capitalism through political, economic, and social reforms in the late 1820s, the 1830s, and the 1840s. Property rights were secured, ensuring a full and legal system for land ownership that made it possible to transfer land on a land market also to potential non-kin purchasers. The traditional Boer moral community was gradually replaced by legal contracts and the free trade of money through the establishment of several banks, including the British Standard Bank. Later on, British settlers too invested in wine farming. By the end of the century, the colonial administration had improved and expanded the colony's infrastructure, farmers and investors had enhanced efficiency at work through mechanization, and skilled wine makers were making sophisticated wine in their cellars. The making of capital was not far off.

With Britain occupying the colony, Cape wines were favoured on the British market. Forty years later, though, the London market for Cape wine collapsed and a failing market was re-established as an obstacle to the development of capitalism in Cape wine farming. Consequently, progressive farmers and wine merchants tried to open up a new wine market among Coloureds and Blacks all over the colony. In particular, they campaigned for the abolition of the law that made it illegal to provide any form of intoxicating liquor to Blacks in any "native location". Since many Whites did not want Coloureds and Blacks to be drunk and "troublesome", the fight for a wider wine market was still going on at the turn of the century. However, the limited number of prosperous wine farmers or farm owners who made the best wines – especially rational investors – found a slowly expanding market among the growing White, urban bourgeoisie. The others had to rely on an increasing consumption of poor wine at road canteens, city bars, and on more or less illegal sales of wine to Coloureds and Blacks. On several farms, the limited and restricted market was still an obstacle to the promotion of capitalism.

The availability of labour was another precondition for the promotion of capitalism. After the abolition of slavery in the Cape Colony by 1 December 1834, farmers worried about securing sufficient cheap labour, and the labour issue re-emerged as an obstacle to the promotion of capitalism in wine farming. Certainly, the farmers' power over Coloured labourers was strengthened by the Masters and Servants Ordinance of 1841 and the Masters and Servants Act of 1856 (and its amendments), which also prevented farmers from competing with each other for labour.¹⁶⁴ However, farmers could not force free men and women to work for them, especially when those free men and women could earn more being employed in public

164. Williams, "Slaves, Workers, and Wine", p. 908.

works on roads and railways and in harbours. Also, employers operating in the construction industry in Cape Town and other cities paid better than farmers. Wine farmers had to compete for labour with those employers.

Some wealthy wine farmers and capitalist investors in wine farming encountered no problems in getting the labour they needed though. They and/or their managers developed a kind of paternalism on or around their farms by providing their labourers with a house and a plot of land. While the men worked on the farm, their wives and children worked the plot, and they were called in when extra labour was needed to harvest the grapes.

Several, mostly poor farmers were unable to develop any kind of paternalism on their farms. They were dependent on the traditional *dop* system, and gave permanent as well as seasonal labourers one or two bottles of poor wine every working day. Others tried to obtain child labour from the mission stations and to import labourers from Europe, which was less successful, or from neighbouring southern Africa, which was more successful. At first, Damaras were recruited, but German imperialists put an end to that. The scramble for Africa in the late nineteenth century was not only about controlling land, but also about controlling indigenous labour. The Portuguese authorities, on the other hand, were more willing to let labour agents from Cape Town recruit young men from the Delagoa Bay area and Mozambique to work for the wine farmers in the Western Cape, especially since they benefited financially from the capital accumulated by the labour migrants. Eventually, the Rhodes government forced young Black men from the Eastern Cape to sell their labour to wine farmers in the Western Cape and it established a Labour Department to promote labour migration. By 1900, the Cape Colony was seeing a gradual transition to a class of agricultural labours.

TRANSLATED ABSTRACTS FRENCH – GERMAN – SPANISH

Lars Olsson. *Capital, marché et main d'œuvre dans les vignes de Western Cape vers 1900: un capitalisme agricole?*

Cet article est une étude de cas sur l'économie politique pratiquée dans les exploitations viticoles de Western Cape vers 1900. L'analyse couvre trois processus entremêlés qui furent essentiels pour l'avancement d'un mode de production capitaliste: la création de capitaux, la création d'un marché de produits de base et la création d'une classe ouvrière. La création de capitaux fut achevée après la seconde moitié des années 1800, mais le marché des vins du Cap et la naissance d'une classe ouvrière continuèrent de faire obstacle à l'avancement du capitalisme à la fin du siècle. Cependant, certains propriétaires agricoles fortunés parvinrent presque à surmonter ces obstacles. Un petit groupe d'entre eux était des Afrikaners de vieille souche, d'autres, pour la plupart des capitalistes investisseurs, réussirent très bien à établir un mode de production capitaliste sur leurs nouvelles exploitations viticoles.

En particulier, les nombreux programmes de recrutement de main-d'œuvre qui furent organisés sur des initiatives privées et étatiques sont examinés, en se fondant en grande majorité sur des sources principales.

Traduction: *Christine Plard*

Lars Olsson. *Kapital, Markt und Arbeitskraft in den Weinanbaugebieten der Westkap-Provinz um 1900: landwirtschaftlicher Kapitalismus?*

Bei diesem Beitrag handelt es sich um eine Fallstudie zur politischen Ökonomie der Weinanbaugebiete der südafrikanischen Westkap-Provinz um 1900. Die Analyse behandelt drei miteinander zusammenhängende Prozesse, die ausschlaggebend für den Fortschritt der kapitalistischen Produktionsweise waren: die Schaffung von Kapital, die Schaffung eines Warenmarktes und die Schaffung einer Klasse von Arbeitern. Die Schaffung von Kapital war ab Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts geleistet, wohingegen der Markt für Kapweine und die Schaffung einer Klasse von Arbeitern für die weitere Entwicklung des Kapitalismus auch Ende des Jahrhunderts noch Herausforderungen darstellten. Einige wohlhabende Gutsbesitzer waren jedoch in der Lage, auch diese Herausforderungen zu meistern. Eine kleiner Teil von ihnen war burischen Hintergrunds. Es waren jedoch überwiegend investitionssuchende Kapitalisten britischen Hintergrunds, denen es gelang, auf ihren Weingütern eine kapitalistische Produktionsweise durchzusetzen. Auf Grundlage einer Vielzahl von Primärquellen erörtert werden in diesem Zusammenhang insbesondere auch die zahlreichen Programme zur Rekrutierung von Arbeitskräften, die teils auf private, teils auf staatliche Initiativen zurückgingen.

Übersetzung: *Max Henninger*

Lars Olsson. *Capital, Mercado y trabajo en los viñedos de Ciudad del Cabo alrededor de 1900: ¿un capitalism agrario?*

Este texto es un estudio de caso de la política económica en los viñedos de Ciudad del Cabo alrededor de 1900. El análisis se centra en tres procesos interconectados que resultaron cruciales para el avance de un modo de producción capitalista: la formación de capital, la formación de un mercado de consumo de estos bienes y la formación de una clase trabajadora. La formación de capital se completó poco después de mediado el Ochocientos, al tiempo que el mercado para los vinos de Ciudad del Cabo y la formación de una clase de trabajadores todavía se encontraban con obstáculos en el proceso de configuración del capitalismo al final de ese mismo siglo. Algunos de los principales propietarios de tierras trataron de superar esos obstáculos. Un pequeño grupo configurado por propietarios de origen afrikáner, y otros, principalmente inversores capitalistas de origen británico, tuvieron cierto éxito en la instauración de un modo capitalista de producción en la explotación de sus viñedos. Especialmente en lo que se refiere a los programas de contratación de mano de obra que se organizaron tanto de forma privada como los promovidos por el Estado son objeto de análisis sobre la base de un espectro amplio de fuentes primarias.

Traducción: *Vicent Sanz Rozalén*