VOLUME 104 PART 6 DECEMBER 1994 ISSN 0303–2515

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ANNALS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUM

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(continued inside back cover)

ANNALS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUM
ANNALE VAN DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE MUSEUM

Volume **104** Band
December **1994** Desember
Part **6** Deel

DEATH IN PELLA: MORTUARY RITUALS IN A NAMAQUALAND RESERVE, 1978–1989

By

G. P. KLINGHARDT

Cape Town Kaapstad

The ANNALS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUM

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Die ANNALE VAN DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE MUSEUM

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Verkrygbaar van die Suid-Afrikaanse Museum, Posbus 61, Kaapstad 8000

OUT OF PRINT/UIT DRUK

1, 2(1–3, 5–8), 3(1–2, 4–5, 8, t.-p.i.), 4(1), 5(1–3, 5, 7–9),
6(1, 2, t.-p.i.), 7(1–4), 8, 9(1–2, 7), 10(1–3), 11(1–2, 5, 7, t.-p.i.),
14(1–3), 15(4–5), 24(2, 5), 27, 31(1–3), 32(5), 33,
36(2), 43(1), 45(1), 49(1), 67(5, 11), 84(2)

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Kopieregnavrae aan die Suid-Afrikaanse Museum

ISBN 0 86813 159 8

Printed in South Africa by
The Rustica Press (Pty) Ltd,
Old Mill Road, Ndabeni, Cape

In Suid-Afrika gedruk deur
Die Rustica-pers (Edms) Bpk,
Old Mill-weg, Ndabeni, Kaap

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[*MS accepted 3 October 1994*]

ABSTRACT

An ethnographic account of mortuary rituals in Pella, a Namaqualand Reserve community, has been used to demonstrate that the systematic investigation of ritual, accepted as essential to reconstructive studies of 'traditional' African societies and groups, is of equal value in the study of contemporary complex societies in southern Africa. The analysis has followed Van Gennep's tripartite structure in treating mortuary rituals as communal rites of passage and has enabled the major features of the social organization of Pella, the different types of solidarity to be found there, and the main foci of differentiation such as kinship, age and sex, and religious and ethnic affiliations to be set out. However, it has given no indications regarding other aspects, such as political affiliations, nor are the structures of clique alliances and of informal associations represented in symbolic form. The examination of cultural patterns has shown the essentially European origin of most of the cultural traits and forms observed in connection with formal religion and mortuary rites and the extremely small number of remaining traits of indigenous Nama provenance. This indicates, in regard to the cultural formation of the Pella community, that processes of acculturation and assimilation have proceeded so far that in cultural terms the community at Pella, in common with those formed by Reserve-dwellers elsewhere in Namaqualand, can be regarded as part of a wider synthetic cultural system brought into being by the historical processes that have given form to the current shape of South African society.

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INTRODUCTION

Although there are many descriptions and analyses of communal ritual in ethnographic reconstructions of 'traditional' southern African societies, there has rarely been a systematic treatment of this topic in the anthropological literature on complex colonial and post-colonial societies in the subcontinent. The aim of this paper is to examine patterns in the ritual content of the events

Ann. S. Afr. Mus. **104** (6), 1994: 115–157.

and activities that are associated with the death of a community member in the Pella Reserve, Namaqualand, in order to show the ways in which these rites symbolically express and reinforce social relations and values through time by drawing people together for re-enactments of mutual sentiments about one another and about their view of life and death.

The experience of death is common to all people, but individuals and groups differ widely both in their practical treatment of it and in their understanding of what it means (Matousek 1990). Some might see death as complete annihilation, whereas others would regard it as merely one stage in a continuing cycle of existence. Beliefs about the dead are generally a mixture of conceptual oppositions to and projections of the living. On the one hand, the dead may be set apart by certain characteristics that oppose them to the living, whereas on the other they may also share or reflect certain features of the social and cultural organization of the living. The analysis of beliefs and conceptual schemata about death and the dead may therefore reveal features of the socio-cultural system both directly, as a projection of the world of the living, and by opposition or indirectly, as a transformation of the world of the living.

Culturally, the significance accorded death influences the attitudes and rituals that surround the burial of the dead. As Huntington & Metcalf (1979: 2) have pointed out, '[in] all societies . . . the issue of death throws into relief the most important cultural values by which people live their lives and evaluate their experiences'. Human groups possess a social organization of the experience of death, both as a personal and family crisis and as a crisis of social structure and role replacement. While in an ultimate sense every person dies alone, in most societies around the world death is also a social occasion, a time when family and neighbourhood obligations are taken very seriously. The immediate crisis is met by the mortuary rites and practices of society, whereas the long-term problem of transmission of property and position is met by the rules of inheritance and succession. Though some mortuary rites may themselves be occasions for disposing of the possessions of the deceased, the significant property involved is transmitted later through equally complex rituals.

The study of mortuary rites has always been of great importance in anthropology, and the effects of death in socio-cultural terms and its ritual management in 'traditional' societies have long been of interest to anthropologists. Ritual connected with death takes a wide variety of forms, but it may be seen as providing the structure for the reaffirmation of social values and ties and for the transition of the deceased person from one social order to another. Rites and practices relating to death in general should be seen as a rational response to the threat of death, for in ending life and resisting all forms of control, death represents the greatest possible menace to both the individual and society. In the process of transition, funerary ritual brings to the fore symbols of reintegration and continuity, serving as a reaffirmation of life in the face of all-negating death.

Contemporary analyses of mortuary ritual have been strongly influenced by the work of Hertz, Van Gennep and Turner. In his attempts to relate the type of rites to the type of social organization, Hertz (1909) drew attention to a theme later stressed by such other writers as Van Gennep (1909) and Radcliffe-Brown (1952): how society coped with the disruption caused by the disorganizing effect

of the death of one of its members. Structure-functionalists such as Malinowski (1922: 490) asserted that 'death . . . causes a great and permanent disturbance in the equilibrium of tribal life', whereas Radcliffe-Brown (1948: 285) observed that 'death constitutes a partial destruction of the social cohesion, the normal social life is disorganized, the social equilibrium is disturbed. After the death, the society has to organize itself anew and reach a new condition of equilibrium'. Hertz (1909: 76) showed how the division of the funeral obsequies into parts enabled people to mourn the disruption of society, but later to re-establish its order, and he also pointed out that differentials in the forms of rituals varied according to the status of the deceased. In this way, he was able to draw attention to the striking similarities between mortuary and initiation rites, a theme that has been echoed ever since in both the theoretical and the ethnographic literature on many areas of the world.

The functionalist approach to the study of mortuary rituals has been heavily criticized as being incapable of dealing with the dysfunctional components of religious behaviour and their contribution to the transformation of cultural systems. Geertz (1973) has argued that a semiotic conception of culture as patterns or systems of meaning would make it possible to obtain a fuller appreciation of the significance of death-related activities in the creation and communication of symbols of meaning through time. The reality of everyday life is constructed and maintained through a dialectical process in which the individual projects and objectifies his own meanings into the world around him, with this apparent reality then being reappropriated and transformed from 'structures of the objective world into structures of the subjective consciousness' (Berger 1969: 4). Death, which emphasizes the precarious and unstable nature of people's lives, constitutes a crisis that could destroy the socially constructed world of an individual. However, death rituals as symbolic systems provide procedures for the maintenance of reality in the face of death by telling those involved in them that there is some aspect of the individual that transcends death and through its immortality allows the process of social construction and transformation to be continued.

Death rituals may be considered as rites of passage and their structure examined to understand the way in which they bring about a transition from life to death and in so doing construct a new reality for the bereaved. In his outline of rites of passage, Van Gennep (1909) divided the ritual process into three stages: separation from one state or status, a transitional or liminal period, and reincorporation into a new state or status. According to Turner (1984: 22), the liminal phase is the critical stage in the process, and is often associated with special behaviour, symbols and objects: 'Liminality itself is a complex phase or condition, it is often the scene and time for the emergence of a society's deepest values in the form of sacred dramas and objects . . . .' In some societies, death itself may also be regarded as a rite of passage in which the experience of death is wrested from chaos and the dying person is initiated into a cosmos of sacred meaning (Goa 1986) through the process of becoming an ancestor who will continue to have a social personality. In other societies, the dead are completely removed from the sphere of social life among the living, though the recently dead may often be seen as continuing to influence or manifest themselves in the world of the living, as there may be a period of transition in which they are not

fully separated from it. Components of the mortuary rites and their associated activities may be directed towards attempts to influence or control the powers of the dead during this period in order to protect the living.

Social ceremonies consist of complex structures with communicative functions (Hoppál 1983). Funerals, like weddings and similar social occasions, are among the most routinized acts of microcommunication and represent nonverbal forms of social behaviour developed and passed down through the generations in a given community (Szecskö 1971), offering some of the most profound insights into the social and psychological structure of cultural groups, past and present. At the same time, they provide opportunities for the expression of individual meanings in gestures and acts, or the lack of them, through the transformation of a person into a discursive object. This has implications for the theoretical determination of historical and contemporary forms of cultural identity at both the local level and in a wider context.

After a brief summary of the main features of the community setting, the principal activities connected with death in Pella are presented along the lines given above, and an interpretation is offered in the discussion that follows. A fairly detailed account of the objects and usages associated with death is given with a few observations on the wider historical and contemporary distribution of burial and mourning practices in Namaqualand.

The published anthropological material concerning usages associated with death in this region consists mainly of information relating to graves (e.g. Biden & Kling 1912; Laidler 1929) and little detailed analysis of the social significance of the accompanying social practices has been attempted. A. W. Hoernlé, the first anthropologist to work in Namaqualand (Carstens *et al.* 1987), was seeking to reconstruct the precolonial 'traditions' of the Nama and presented her field observations accordingly, although admitting that even at the time of her fieldwork, 'the series of rites connected with death have perhaps undergone more disintegration than any of the others described. They have been telescoped, as it were, into one another, so that often enough as many of them as remain are all carried out on the same day, after the burial is over' (Hoernlé 1918: 79). Carstens (1961, 1966) addressed issues relating to death in the Steinkopf Reserve as part of his studies of the Namaqualand Reserves in the 1950s, but his account reflects the beliefs and practices of the Protestant majority and not those of the Catholic minority in the Reserve.

This paper is based on analyses of twelve Catholic funerals that were observed during periods of fieldwork in Pella between 1978 and 1989, though particular reference is made to a sample of seven funerals and their accompanying activities studied in 1978 and 1979. Lengthy residence in Pella in the course of an extensive community study made it possible for the researcher to make observations of all the various aspects of the death rituals as they were carried out and to conduct detailed interviews with informants (including the local Catholic missionaries) on beliefs and practices associated with death. A number of the researcher's older informants died during this decade of research and additional information was obtained from discussions of their funerals and the related activities with members of their families. Of the twelve funerals observed, nine were of men and three of women. Five of the deceased were aged between 25 and 43, and seven were aged between 61 and 86. In terms of

ethnic affiliation, it was possible to study several individual cases of the funeral practices for members of all but one of the major groupings in Pella; five of the funerals were of Basters, four of Damaras and two of Namas, but there was only one of an elderly European man. There was little obvious variation in the way in which these funerals and their related activities were enacted, despite the elapse of 10 years between the first and the last ones observed. It has thus been possible to make some broad generalizations about the ritual patterns followed and their significance for the local community, without limiting the scope of the paper by focusing on any particular funeral as a case study.

Despite the long history of missionary endeavour at Pella, dating back to 1812, there is surprisingly little information on folk beliefs and practices connected with death to be found in the extensive documentation preserved in the local mission archives, and the material available also relates mostly to places of burial and grave forms. In the absence of material that could give a substantial time depth to the study, and with no anthropological work having been carried out in Pella prior to that of the present researcher, this paper has therefore been written in the form of an ethnographic account of a past present (the period of fieldwork) that is situated within the wider context of ongoing socio-historical processes (Sanjek 1991), in order to provide a baseline for future comparative studies in Pella and in other Reserve communities in Namaqualand.

PELLA

Pella Reserve is situated about 30 kilometres north-west of the town of Pofadder and is some 48 000 ha in extent, two-thirds of which comprise semi-desert plains to the south and the rest mountainlands above the valley of the Orange River in the north. In 1985, the population was some 2 000 (comprising 455 households, all Afrikaans-speaking), with about 1 700 people living in the village of Pella, the ecological centre of dominance in the Reserve, and some 300 in hamlets and farmsteads elsewhere in the Reserve. Though there is a large core of permanent residents, the overall population has tended to increase and decrease in size in response to environmental factors (which have influenced the viability of stock-holdings) and economic considerations (notably fluctuations in employment opportunities in nearby mining operations). Pella village contains the Reserve's main service institutions—the local government office, postal agency, school, clinic, shops and recreational facilities. The focus of the village is the Roman Catholic mission and its fine cathedral, which is the seat of the Bishop of the Diocese of Keimoes-Upington. The mission grounds are some 20 ha in extent, comprising land in the centre of the village and a small irrigation farm on the south bank of the Orange River; a substantial proportion of the income of the mission is derived from the cultivation of dates on its property in the village and from the hiring out of the farm.

At the time of fieldwork, only a small proportion (12%) of the population was engaged in full-time stock-farming in the Reserve, though many households kept a small number of goats or sheep on the commonage for domestic purposes. The cultivation of grains, vegetables and fruit, a significant economic activity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had almost ceased at the time of fieldwork, and in only a few households did farming activities provide

more than a subsistence living. For a livelihood, the great majority of households were dependent on income from non-farming activities and sources both inside and outside the Reserve: from employment for wages from commuter labour to a sillimanite quarry that opened in the Reserve in 1952; from migrant labour to the copper, lead, zinc and diamond mines elsewhere in Namaqualand (especially the Black Mountain Mine at Aggeneys, which is close enough for weekly commuting); and from government funds in the form of wages, salaries and pensions. Thus the economy of Pella cannot be regarded as peasant in character, for through involvement in employment outside of the Reserve and oscillation between the Reserve and regional urban areas, the inhabitants form part of the wider class structure of Namaqualand (Sharp 1980). Only those people dependent on farming for an income, based for the most part on the production of karakul pelts and low-grade wool, could properly be called peasants. Living in rural surroundings and following codes of behaviour usually associated with the peasant farm-family ethos, the inhabitants of Pella are nevertheless part of an industrial economy whose cultural forms and social differentiation they have to be familiar with and have to accept in order to gain a livelihood.

As a territorial unit, Pella is the smallest (8% of both land area and population) of the seven 'Rural Coloured Areas', or Reserves, in Namaqualand that were set apart for communal occupation by people classified as 'Coloured' under the now-defunct Population Registration Act. These Reserves originated as mission stations on Crown Land in the nineteenth century (Sharp 1980: 10) when Protestant missionaries (from the London Missionary Society, Rhenish Mission Society and the Wesleyan Church) created more or less autonomous peasant communities by settling nomadic and semi-nomadic Baster and European stock-farmers and the remnants of the aboriginal Nama pastoralists of Namaqualand on defined territories granted by the Cape Government. The communities were able to survive into the twentieth century for several reasons, the most important of which included support from the missionaries for their territorial integrity, and their perceived value as labour pools for the mining industry in the region. The development of distinctive forms of local identity, arising from the need to regulate the distribution of internal rights to land for subsistence farming activities, also contributed significantly to the continued existence of the communities by preventing the inhabitants from identifying with the situation of the working class in the mining towns and on farms elsewhere in Namaqualand (Sharp 1977, 1980; Klinghardt 1979). The future of the Reserves as communal territories in the post-apartheid period was still uncertain at the time of writing.

Historically, Pella differs from the other Reserves in Namaqualand in that the Rhenish Mission Society, having failed to obtain a recognized grant of land for its converts from the Cape Government, abandoned its mission work there at the time of the first Koranna War in 1868, and the mission station was taken over by the Roman Catholic Church in 1874 (Klinghardt 1982). The Catholic Church succeeded in securing an exclusive title to the land for itself and established a Mission Farm with recognized boundaries. This enabled missionaries of the Order of St Francis de Sales, a French missionary order based at Troyes (with German, Austrian, Italian, Dutch and American provinces that provide

additional personnel) to control the development of the community in ways best suited to the extension of the Faith, rather than merely grafting themselves on to an established community as happened when the Church later began expanding its activities in Namaqualand (Simon 1959). Through its missionaries (priests and other religious) and by encouraging European settlement at Pella, the Church both introduced an established religion and consolidated the general forms of western European culture among the inhabitants of the area, and it has been the arbiter in nearly everything—from education and morals to dress and social affairs—during the past century. Owing to such factors as the secular authority of the Church, the office of confession and control of education, the local priests wielded great influence in the local community over this period, and have continued to do so even after the loss of their secular power in 1974.

The Pella Reserve has been administered by a secular local authority since 1974, when the Mission Farm was transferred to the Administration of Coloured Affairs. After 1948, the Nationalist government sought to convert the Mission Farm into a 'Coloured' Reserve as part of its policy of rooting out all forms of multiracial and nonracial communities in South Africa. The aims of the central government enjoyed the support of many of the local people as these coincided with their own utopian ideas of a future free of 'White' control (Klinghardt 1982). Despite a long period of resistance by the Church to the imposition of the apartheid policy on Pella, most of those inhabitants classified as 'White' were compelled eventually to leave in 1973 and Pella became a 'Rural Coloured Area' in 1974. The Catholic Church was recognized as the established church in the Reserve, however, and it retained ownership of the Mission grounds and a small farm at the Orange River. The form of local government was initially an Advisory Board drawn from among the politically active inhabitants to assist the Reserve Superintendent, an appointed government official who was an outsider. The limited powers of this body were a cause of considerable dissatisfaction in the community, and in 1987 it was upgraded to a Management Board, consisting of a committee elected by the registered occupiers and headed by a local chairman.

Membership of a spatially isolated administrative unit such as this—first in the form of a Mission Farm and then of a Reserve—with precise spatial boundaries within which all residents have clearly defined rights and duties, privileges and obligations, has engendered strong in-group sentiments and a sense of community based on common citizenship in so far as dealings with outside authorities have been at issue. As in the other Namaqualand Reserves (cf. Sharp 1977 for an analysis of similar processes in Komaggas and Concordia), this has resulted in the development of an over-arching sense of local identity ('Pella-naarskap'), which includes ways of admitting newcomers ('inkommers') to the community, though the emphasis on locally based identity has varied through time according to changes in the socially dominant groups in the community. Within the Reserve, however, the community has, since its beginnings in the nineteenth century, been divided by networks of neighbourhood, class and ethnic relations that created internal boundaries in multiple dimensions (Klinghardt 1982, 1987).

Research in contemporary Pella showed that these internal boundaries were a manifestation of complex processes of differentiation that had their roots in the

diverse origins and character of the population. Pella has been inhabited in various proportions through time by the aboriginal Khoisan, comprising hunter-gatherers ('Bushmen', said by informants to have called themselves 'Tahama-nannin') and Nama herders (/Hobesen), immigrant Baster and European stock-keepers, and Damaras (a heterogeneous grouping of people of Herero and Dama descent) (Klinghardt 1978, 1982). Historical records show that, by the mid-nineteenth century, Baster settlers had replaced the aboriginal hunter-gatherers and pastoralists in the area. The hunter-gatherers were for the most part destroyed in small-scale conflicts, whereas the pastoralists were forced to withdraw to the north across the Orange River after the Basters had taken possession of their pasture lands and water supplies by drawing on the support of missionaries and the colonial government (Marais 1939; Carstens 1966; Sharp 1977; Klinghardt 1982). These early Baster colonists, however, were scattered during the first Koranna War of 1868 (some going to Concordia and others to Mier and Rehoboth, where their descendants still live) and were replaced in turn by European settlers and other Basters from eastern Bushman-land in the 1870s and 1880s. The Europeans were numerically dominant in Pella, constituting some 70 per cent of the population until the end of the South African War in 1902, after which they were increasingly overshadowed by the rapid growth of the other groups resident there; they nevertheless maintained their politically and socially dominant position in the community until 1973. Herero and Dama refugees from wars in Great Namaqualand and Damaraland began entering northern Bushmanland in the 1860s, some to seek work at the copper mines, others to establish themselves in the Orange River basin with their livestock, and further waves followed after the collapse of indigenous resistance to German rule in 1906. Though the leading Damara families in contemporary Pella are of Herero origin, the long association with Nama people north and south of the Orange River has led to the incorporation of many Nama cultural traits in the pattern of identity of this group of people in the community. Whereas members of various Nama groups have lived at Pella in varying numbers during its history, the few people of Nama origin still there are the descendants of Bondelswarts refugees who entered the area after the German-Nama war in German South West Africa in 1906. This summary hardly does justice to the complex centripetal and centrifugal socio-political forces that have been at work in shaping the present community but, owing to both historical and present links, the groupings of people formed by the descendants of these immigrants may be considered as forming a continuum in the local population, though in local eyes the groupings have tended to be regarded as mutually exclusive, partly owing to perceived differences in racial, cultural and linguistic origins and partly due to an emphasis on kinship as a determinant of membership (Klinghardt 1982, 1987).

At the time of fieldwork, the Basters comprised about 60 per cent of the population, the Damaras 25 per cent, Nama 14.7 per cent and Europeans about 0.3 per cent. The first three groups were officially classified as 'Coloured' and the Europeans as 'Whites', but few informants accorded legitimacy to the official racial classification system. Each of these groups included people whose forebears had come from a range of racial and cultural backgrounds but, in their contemporary definitions, informants regarded these groups as being based on a

notion of common origins that ignored the heterogeneity of their origins and treated kinship and family history as the deciding factors in determining membership of these groups. The absence of any emphasis on primordial bonds of attachment in this form of ethnicity at Pella can be ascribed to the fact that, as shown in genealogies and local parish records, no families could trace their ancestry to the original inhabitants of Pella in the early nineteenth century, and few had a continuity of more than four generations in the area. Although a high rate of marriage between the many offspring of the families within the boundaries of the various groups has produced a profusion of kinship bonds among the population, informal and formal restrictions on marriages among members of different groups have nevertheless produced patterns of marriage that have tended to reinforce the existing ethnic and social boundaries in the community as apparently immutable in the eyes of the members of all these groups.

Strong sentiments of belonging together were also shown in relation to two types of informal territorial grouping: the small neighbourhood in the village, a social grouping based on shared residence in a 'natural' area; and the larger districts, or wards, of the Reserve, which are distinguished by the inhabitants. A natural area was recognized as being based on a distinctive geographical feature such as a ridge, vegetation or watersource; on a distinctive material feature, such as a style of architecture; or on a distinctive socio-cultural feature, such as class or ethnic homogeneity. The principal criteria were homogeneity within the area and distinctiveness from its surroundings. In Pella village there were five principal natural areas, divided into 17 neighbourhood areas. The inhabitants of the oldest areas tended to be homogeneous in terms of ethnic origin and cultural expression—Basters being resident in two areas and Damaras in one—whereas those resident in areas that developed after 1952 were more heterogeneous, with neighbourhoods reflecting class differences based on wealth and occupation, rather than kin and regional origin, as in the former. In the Reserve, in addition to the central village, there were five informally defined wards, of which the three on the plains were dominated by Baster farmers and the two that included the mountainlands and the Orange River valley by Damara and Nama stock-keepers.

Perceptions of differences among the residents have played a major role in generating the internal political process in Pella over the past century, though their significance has varied according to the issues at stake. After 1974, for example, their importance declined concomitantly with the growth of shared community resistance to attempts by the central government to change the system of communal land tenure in the Reserve through the subdivision of the land into economically viable farms, which would have been granted only to those bona fide farmers recognized by officialdom (Klinghardt 1982). Owing to a combination of local resistance and changes in government policy, this scheme was subsequently abandoned in favour of one in which stock-owners would rotate their stock among five camps, of which one would be closed each year to allow the recovery of the pasturage. After this success and with the approaching end of the apartheid era, however, the community had to face the growing spread of populist ideologies in the wider society that stressed interests and identities beyond those of the local community. The initial response of the inhabitants was to re-emphasize the internal boundaries of ethnic groupings

within the community as a way of protecting themselves against hegemonic forces that were perceived to be a threat to community control of the land in the Reserve.

Religion in Pella revolved around the Roman Catholic Church and the formalized practices and beliefs associated with it. About 95 per cent of the population was Catholic, a most distinctive feature that has set Pella apart from the other Namaqualand Reserves, in which the populations have always been Protestant. Information gathered during surveys, interviews with informants and studies of social networks indicated that the majority of the inhabitants could be considered good Catholics, whose theology and religious practice could be best represented as devotion to the crucified Christ and the Virgin Mary in various guises. The degree of devoutness varied greatly, however, with men being rather less concerned with religious matters than women, and it was observed that many people retained a range of folk beliefs and practices, including a lively belief in sorcery, that were derived from a variety of sources and that occasionally emerged in the circumstances of everyday life. The Catholics formed a single congregation in the Reserve, but the resident priest also served a satellite congregation, composed mainly of people from Pella, in the mining town at Aggeneys, and regularly visited small settlements elsewhere in northern Bushmanland that formed part of the parish of Pella. Of the 150 or so Protestant residents, most were descendants of relatively recent newcomers to the Reserve and were mainly Damaras, though there were also a few Basters who had resisted conversion but had been tolerated by the former mission authorities on account of their close kinship links with converts. The Protestants were nearly all members of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and were considered part of the Pofadder congregation. Some attended Catholic religious services, though the minister visited Pella regularly to conduct services. For the majority of inhabitants, however, residence in Pella implied membership of the Roman Catholic Church (the established church) and attendance—in common with members of the wider community—at religious services and at recreational events in the village hall. Central to the organized ceremonials of the community were church rituals and ceremonies, including the Mass, confession, baptism, confirmation and marriage, which followed the conventional Catholic lines and were wholly under the direction of the ordinary church organization headed by the priest. Other group or community events were organized by lay societies associated with the Church, such as the Legion of Mary, the Society of St Vincent de Paul, and youth groups. Only sports clubs and political groupings were quite independent of the Church.

The outstanding feature of the history of Pella has been its steady absorption into the economic, politico-legal and social structure of Namaqualand within the agrarian-industrial complex of South Africa. In the sphere of cultural expression, there has been a massive assimilation of the aboriginal population into colonial society. Indigenous cultural traits (primarily those of Nama and Damara herders) were submerged in those of European and Baster colonists in the course of the processes that have produced the present cultural pattern of Pella. Many traditional cultural practices, extant until little more than a generation ago and associated with nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralism (which in the case of Baster people were already a synthetic combination of Nama and

European traits, and in that of Damara people between Herero and Nama traits), have since disappeared or were only rarely observed during the period of fieldwork. Although the origins of many traits in the cultural inventory of the inhabitants of Pella can be readily identified (Klinghardt 1990)—particularly in cases of items of material culture such as dwellings, clothing, utensils and farming equipment—it was often difficult or impossible to determine with certainty the origins of other components, such as elements of folklore and magical beliefs, in which a complex combination of European and Nama elements had produced an entirely new synthetic form. It is only in the persistence of certain ritual observances that connections could be found between the present and past inhabitants—and that only in the context of the wider population of Namaqualand—though the resemblances may seem superficial when set against the essential Europeanization of the entire population that had occurred under the influence of missions, government, traders, farmers and military in the nineteenth century. Of the rituals connected with the life cycle, none contains more deeply rooted 'traditional' elements than those practices associated with death, burial and mourning.

With this brief sketch of the salient features of the Pella community, the practices relating to death and mourning can now be examined. The activities and ceremonies surrounding a death may be divided into several phases, each of which was clearly recognized by informants, and this has provided the framework for the account that follows. This account is restricted to those usages that existed among the Catholic element of the population. Though information was collected on Protestant usages, this account would have to be drawn out to an inordinate length to deal adequately with the differences between these and Catholic usages and to spell out the sociological and cultural significance of such differences. These will have to be explored in a future publication.

PREPARATION FOR DEATH

In social terms, it was difficult to determine the beginning of the phase of dying. As individuals aged, falling prey to illness and debilitation, and withdrew increasingly from work and active participation in community life, so they moved closer to the sacred sphere. Their time was increasingly taken up by attending religious services and solitary prayer and meditation. People discussed quite openly with relatives and friends the possibilities of living beyond significant points in time, such as the beginning of summer (when the first rains fall), religious festivals such as Easter and Christmas, or even lambing time. Aged persons endured their fate with resignation and would even console distressed visitors, reminding them that everyone has to die, or that they had lived long and well and were now tired. It was considered normal for people to die with their families, relatives and neighbours around them; many elderly informants spoke of their fear of dying in a hospital or an old-age home, far removed from the familiar surroundings of their homes in Pella. As will be shown below, it was considered vitally important that certain expiatory rituals, which were seen as forming part of the process of dying, had to be carried out to prevent undue distress to both the living and the deceased.

Ideas about death and the after-life were essentially Catholic in form and content, and bore testimony to the effectiveness of missionary endeavour at Pella since 1874. Indeed, as early as 1932, Bishop J. M. Simon was able to review this work with some satisfaction, commenting on '. . . the thousands [of] souls we have gained to the true Faith of Christ, who show in their struggle with the world and especially when they have to meet Death, how deep the Religion has penetrated in their hearts . . .' (Roman Catholic Mission Pella 1932). Death was believed to have entered the world through sin, and bodily death, from which people would have been immune had it not been for the commission of the original sin as shown in the biblical Creation and Fall, would be overcome only when the wholeness lost through the fault of humanity is restored by Christ. The common assumption, in accordance with Catholic doctrine, was that at death, in order to make satisfaction even for sins that had been forgiven, the soul of the departed entered the state of Purgatory where a period of expiation, which could not be measured in earthly time, would have to be undergone before it could pass on to Heaven. As all on earth were considered to commit venial and daily sins, all would need the mercy of God to free them from sin and its consequences, which could only be achieved through the sorrows and trials of life on earth or in the next life by purifying fire and torments, and make them fit for eternal life. Small children who died, however, were believed to go directly to Heaven. It was not believed that a soul went directly to Hell, no matter how wicked a life an individual may have led on earth according to community morality.

From an early age, Catholics at Pella learned to include pleas for a good dying ('goeie sterwe') in their prayers. A good dying meant that the soul became an ordinary spirit ('gewone gees'), able to enter the sacred sphere. The most important criterion of a good dying was the presence of the priest to administer the sacrament of extreme unction (more properly called 'Anointing of the Sick') in the course of terminal illness and the last rites during the final moments. The absence of pain and the presence of loved ones at the bedside were also important, but it was said that these were of little consequence compared with the last rites, because it was individual confession and absolution given by the priest that constituted the sole ordinary means by which a member of the faithful who was conscious of grave sin could be reconciled with God and the Church (Catholic Church 1983: 174) and might thus prevent the departing soul from eventually descending into Hell. Other important rituals in the process of taking leave of the world ('afskeid van die lewe neem') included making peace with enemies and asking forgiveness for wrongs done to friends and relatives.

In general, the dead were not particularly feared, nor was it believed that they would return under ordinary circumstances. The nature of a person's death could, however, under certain conditions cause his soul to return to disturb the living even after the burial of his earthly remains. If a person died without receiving the last rites or had failed to carry out the other expiatory procedures to release interpersonal tensions, had died suddenly as a result of an accident or had been murdered, or had committed suicide, he was considered to have made a bad end and his soul was believed to become a 'swart gees' (black or evil spirit, or lost soul), which would appear to the living as a ghost ('spook') intent

on frightening or harming them. A person could also become a 'swart gees' if he was not given a proper funeral and burial, for this neglect caused the soul to be angry with his relatives and because of this malice could not proceed further into the sacred sphere. In such cases, close kin would offer prayers for forgiveness of the soul and, in certain circumstances, would seek the help of the priest in alleviating the effects of the ghost, or even have recourse to a sorcerer or herbalist depending on the severity of the case. However, if a person dreamed frequently of a dead relative, it was believed that the deceased individual had returned for a member of his family and that one of the household would certainly die. There was no remedy possible for such a situation.

Although souls were supposed to go directly to Purgatory after death, some people nevertheless entertained a belief in the persistence of the soul in the neighbourhood of its home and family until after the funeral. When dogs barked inexplicably in the night after a death, this was taken as a sign that the soul had returned to its former habitation. Preventive measures against possible harm included the constant provision of light in the death house and, among Damara and Nama people, the sprinkling of cold water on relatives and visitors and the mounting of white flags around the dwelling (see p. 131).

At the critical stage, when it was clear that death might occur at any time, the immediate family in the household acted by notifying the priest and summoning close relatives. It was then the norm that members of the family—parents, grandparents, children, brothers and sisters, grandchildren and first cousins—would come to take farewell of the person on his deathbed, and would visit at least twice a day, remaining for up to an hour at a time, until the death. Special friends among the neighbours would also look in several times daily and help the household. Second cousins and more distant relations would not visit as frequently, perhaps once every two or three days, whereas remote relatives of the third, fourth and fifth degrees would pay only one call, at which they said their final farewell. Those who honoured him, a group that would have included old comrades, fellow-workers and people of standing in the village, would also pay a final visit. Owing to the belief in the need for a proper leave-taking to ensure that the soul would depart from the world in peace, a failure to visit the dying was regarded as a serious social and moral lapse that could have serious consequences for both the living and the dead. If a religious service took place while it was known that a member of the community was dying, the priest asked his congregation to offer prayers for an easier passage into the next world for that person. Nuns frequently visited the household to assist the family and offer spiritual comfort to all concerned. There were always one or two people present to assist the dying person. No desire of the dying person could be refused, and people went to great lengths and expense to obtain some favoured food or drink that might have been requested.

When death was near, the priest was summoned and attended at the bedside to receive confession and give absolution. The priest was obliged to ensure that the faithful close to death made their confession and received Holy Communion while they were still in possession of their faculties. Communion given in this way as Viaticum was a special sign of participation in the mystery celebrated in the Mass, the mystery of Jesus and his passage to Heaven and, strengthened by it, the dying person was endowed with the pledge of resurrection in his passing

from this life (Flannery 1975: 124). The closest relatives of the dying person were also present if possible—spouse, children, siblings or parents—as well as friends. Other relatives or friends might call in regularly for information, or send a child. Consequently, immediately after a death had occurred, there was already a nucleus of relatives and friends ready to deal with the crisis. A constant vigil was kept, during which prayers were said outside the hearing of the dying person, prayers that asked for the spiritual calm of the dying person and for God to be a merciful judge of him. However, excessive weeping and other expressions of grief had to be avoided until after the death had actually occurred, as it was believed that premature mourning would hinder the passage of the soul to the hereafter.

BETWEEN DEATH AND THE WAKE

When a person had died, there were a number of things that had to be done immediately and the relatives of the deceased would gather at the house to assist the immediate family in the various funeral tasks. News of a death in the community spread rapidly, carried by relatives and neighbours of the deceased to other relatives and friends in the village and Reserve. In the past, the death of a member of the community was announced by the tolling of the cathedral bell for about an hour but, at the time of fieldwork, this was done only for people who had been prominent in community life through their involvement in political and social affairs. Close relatives outside the Reserve were notified and informed of the date of the funeral by telephone, telegram or letter, or through mobile members of the community, including lorry- and taxi-drivers, commuter workers, traders and farmers visiting the village. News of the demise of a prominent member of the community was extremely rapid in reaching every household in the community, since in such an event special efforts were made to spread the report.

The Afrikaans phrase 'bo die grond' ('above the ground') denoted the period from the moment of death to the time of burial. During this time, only members of the household and immediate family were expected to observe any prohibitions, such as abstaining from work and not attending dances, film shows or parties, but these were not rigid requirements. In households actively engaged in farming operations, certain routine tasks had to be carried out for the well-being of livestock. There was no general abstinence expected from people in the neighbourhood, though parents kept their children from playing near the house of mourning and social functions planned nearby in the area might be postponed. Formerly, when the village was small and under the direct control of the missionaries, a general abstinence from non-economic activities was required on the death of a prominent member of the community. Although the entire community would have been affected in some way by a death, except perhaps in the case of a young child, not all sections and categories of the population were affected in the same way, and certain forms of behaviour were expected only of close relatives and those people living in the vicinity of the house of death.

The major share of responsibility for dealing with the crisis of death almost always lay with the closest adult male relative of the deceased, who could be referred to as the chief mourner. In the last two decades, this role has been

filled increasingly by the principal survivor, mostly the widow or widower, for the spouse was considered to be closer to the deceased than the latter's parents, siblings or children. The reason for this change can probably be found in the increasing emphasis on the nuclear family as the basis for legal and social relations, particularly in regard to inheritance and the transfer of occupation rights in the Reserve. It was the duty of the chief mourner to see that the relevant authorities were informed of the death and to obtain a burial certificate, and to notify the deceased's burial society or obtain the services of an undertaker or otherwise ensure that a coffin was obtained. This person, usually in conjunction with other relatives, also had to ensure that supplies of food, beverages and liquor were purchased or procured for the initial tide of visitors and for the wake. Liquor was purchased on a general shopping trip to Pofadder or Aggeneys, or from illegal local sources. It was also the responsibility of the chief mourner to arrange for the preparation of the grave. The chief mourner inspected the site in the cemetery and requested three or four male relatives to come and dig the grave.

The costs involved in the arrangements for the wake and the funeral were considerable. A coffin had to be bought, vehicles hired, and the transport costs of relatives met. To cover these costs, there were three possible avenues. Though a few people (mainly teachers) would have made provision for funeral costs in their life insurance, most would have taken out a policy with one of the burial societies (usually referred to colloquially as the 'doodsvennootskap', the 'doodsklub' or 'society') represented in Pella. A person made a regular contribution to a communal fund and, when a death occurred, the association met the costs involved or at least that of the coffin. A third possibility was through a collection taken up by the chief mourner among the people of the neighbourhood or area, which might be enough to cover costs.

Unlike in Steinkopf, where the burial societies were local organizations associated with the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (Carstens 1966), the two burial societies at Pella came from outside the Reserve and operated independently of the Roman Catholic Church. One worked through a local agent (a relative of a prominent Baster member of the local authority in the Reserve), whereas the other sent an agent based at Pofadder to collect the monthly payments. Both societies co-operated in using a small building (owned by the locally resident agent of one of them) in the village to store coffins until they were required. Membership (one member per family, usually the breadwinner) entitled everyone in the family to a full burial. The types of subscriptions available varied; policies could be taken out to cover all the arrangements for the funeral or for only the supply of a coffin (which differed in the quality of the wood and fittings according to the amount paid by the member). Although some might prefer an elaborate funeral and more expensive coffin and were prepared to pay the extra costs, others were content with just the supply of the coffin. Expenses for the wake were not covered by these policies.

Before the introduction of these societies, close relatives of the deceased often had to collect money from other relatives and friends so that the costs could be met. As in Europe, the burial societies active in Namaqualand had their origins among the poorer classes in the mining towns, who attached great importance to having a 'decent burial'—a pauper's grave was the final

humiliation of poverty. The locally based societies in the urban areas and the Reserves appear to have started out as savings co-operatives specifically aimed at providing their members with funds for this purpose. It was said that in Pella until the mid-1960s, only European families had belonged to such societies and that few other people had made use of them, allegedly because they did not understand how they worked or what was entailed in taking out a policy, but mostly because they were unable to afford the membership fees. Only one of the societies was willing to assist non-members with making funeral arrangements. In one case where the deceased person was not a member of a burial society, his personal savings were sufficient to cover the costs of his funeral—most of which involved the purchase of a coffin, goats for slaughter and liquor for the wake—and his family did not have to ask for assistance from others or a burial society.

In the village as well as in the hamlets in the Reserve, there were elderly women who regularly undertook to lay out the bodies of those who died in their neighbourhoods. After death, the female relatives present closed the eyes and mouth and, after a suitable interval (but while the body was still warm), male relatives carried the body into a back room of the house and laid it on a wooden table on its back, either dressed or wrapped in a blanket, with its feet together and the arms crossed over the chest. It was then washed with water and soap and dressed by these women after the men had left the room. There was no special term for these women, and their role in death was not connected with any other specialist roles they might have had in the community. As many as three or four might carry out the washing and dressing in a single case. They were given food and refreshments at the house of the death, but they ate separately from the rest of the household.

The remains were usually dressed in the deceased's best clothes ('kispak'), in nightclothes, or wound in a sheet. Informants stated that it was taken for granted that a corpse should be clothed, and that to bury a person uncovered was never done as this would be considered scandalous. The garments were prepared by the nearest relatives, and could be either purchased or locally made items. Older people from conservative Baster and European families have been known to insist that they be buried in locally made clothes. This was explained as being a way of maintaining, even after death, a symbolic continuity with the values cherished by their pioneer or 'trekboer' forebears, whose way of life (in which they might themselves have grown up) was characterized by a strong sense of individual identity and values of self-sufficiency and independence. One elderly informant recalled that his grandmother had been placed in her coffin fully dressed with bonnet and white stockings and with two pennies on her eyes so that the lids would not open (cf. Botha 1925). The latter practice does not seem to have been widespread, though not uncommon in Namaqualand, and is no longer done. Though grave goods are not part of a Christian burial, some small item of jewellery might sometimes be left on the corpse, especially in the case of women, and pins used in the deceased's clothing or shrouding were also left in the coffin to avoid bad luck. Once dressed, the remains were covered with a white shroud ('doodsmus') supplied by the deceased's family and then placed reverently in the coffin to the accompaniment of prayers led by the chief mourner. According to Christian custom, the deceased was laid on his back

and, in most cases, with the arms stretched along the sides or sometimes slightly bent at the elbows so that the hands rested on the thighs. The coffin was then moved into either the front room of the house or the bedroom, and placed in the centre of the room on a stand composed of chairs. If the coffin was not yet available, the body was placed on a similarly positioned bed, called the 'cold bed' ('koue bed'), until the coffin arrived.

At the time of fieldwork, the coffin ('kis' or 'doodskis') was usually supplied by the burial society. Formerly, a coffin was either purchased beforehand and stored ready in the house, or it was constructed by a local carpenter when required. When on trek with their livestock in Bushmanland, stock-farmers usually had some wooden boards slung underneath the wagon for a coffin and, if a death occurred, the person was buried in the veld. Informants stated that, during the nineteenth century, few of the dead among the poorer people away from the Mission were laid in coffins, and that most were dressed in shrouding garments and buried in a side-chamber grave ('grondkis'). This type of grave, consisting of a circular or rectangular shaft with a niche cut into the wall at the base, into which the corpse was placed, was extensively used by the Khoikhoi (Inskeep 1986: 224). Examples of side-chamber graves excavated at Henkries near the Orange River (Drury, n.d.) and at Vredendal (Wilson pers. comm.) suggest that they were employed mainly for adult burials. Their continued use by nineteenth-century Christian converts can be seen as both a means of meeting a practical need and reflecting the notion, still current, that a coffin was desirable but not compulsory.

The body was seldom kept in the house for more than two days. Normally, after a day and a night and the day and night of the wake, it was removed to the cathedral where it remained unattended until the funeral service. In cases where the obsequies had to be delayed, the body was removed to the mortuary facilities in Pofadder. In the past, preserving the body until the time of the funeral often constituted a serious problem, especially in the great heat of summer, and to overcome this wet cloths were placed over and around the body and kept moist so that the corpse was cooled by the evaporation.

The house of death itself was made ready for the major social occasion that followed a death by means of symbolic rearrangements of its furnishings and ornaments. The curtains might be drawn on either all the windows or, more commonly, only on those of the death room. In some houses all the pictures, except religious ones, in the death room were either removed or turned to the walls, and mirrors covered or removed. It was said that the latter practices had been introduced by an Irish family that settled at Pella in the late nineteenth century. A bowl of holy water was placed beside the coffin; Catholic mourners dipped the fingers of the right hand in this and made the sign of the cross before kneeling to pray. A set of Rosary beads might be placed on the chest of the corpse or entwined in the hands. A candle or lamp was placed beside the coffin, usually on a chair or small table on the northern or left-hand side, and was kept alight while the body was in the house. Among Damaras, on the morning after a death, white flags were hung on the house and in a rough circle on bushes around it as sign of mourning. This created a spatial zone of exclusion around the outer perimeter of the death house, and it was noted that people who came to visit and to participate in the wake generally remained inside the circle of

flags. All these arrangements served to situate the remains of the deceased as the focal point of the mourning process, which would reach its climax in the wake held on the eve of the funeral and burial.

While the body was in the house of death, a permanent vigil was kept. Most daytime visitors were women and children; for practical reasons men usually came in the evenings and night-time. Group prayers were said at intervals, closing with the request that God assure 'the repose of this soul and the souls of all the faithful departed', whom the deceased was presumed to have joined. Relatives up to the third degree of consanguinity and affines of the deceased were expected to make special efforts to pay their respects before the wake, as were all close friends of the deceased, neighbours and the deceased's elementary family. The degrees of relationship cited here were determined by the number of generations separating given individuals in the same line of descent or separating them from a common ancestor. Parents and children were related in the first degree, as were siblings; grandparents and grandchildren were in the second degree, along with first cousins; individuals sharing a common great-grandparent (second cousins) were in the third degree, and so on.

Invitations to visit were not issued (cf. Botha 1925), but it was also expected that visitors would bring food and refreshment to supplement the household stocks. Among Damaras, people entering the house of death, or approaching where the body was lying, were purified by being sprinkled with water. Close relatives arriving from outside the Reserve were purified in the same way when they reached the outer perimeter of the dwelling, the gate or the line of stones surrounding the swept area around the building or hut. This was done in a serious fashion to 'cool' them and was accompanied by a prayer for protection from evil, a practice that can be traced back to Nama origins (Hoernlé 1918, 1923). Other relatives and visitors were sprinkled informally when they arrived, but this was done casually and often jokingly. During the day, prayers and the Rosary were said, but there was no singing. For the refreshment of the many visitors, each family (people mostly came in family groups) brought something with them: a goat, flour or bread, coffee, tea or sugar, but this was not a strict duty. In one case, a bereaved Damara family put out a tin for donations to cover the costs of providing refreshments.

THE WAKE

The wake ('lykwaak') was generally held on a Friday night and the funeral proper followed on the Saturday afternoon. This timing at a weekend was important as it enabled migrant members of the community to attend the funeral and its associated activities (and then to go to confession) without interfering with the solemnity of Sunday observances. Wakes were usually held in the house of the deceased person but, in the past, if a person died in a hamlet in the Reserve, the corpse was brought into the village and the wake was held at a relative's house if the burial was not to take place at the hamlet.

As part of the rite of transition bridging life and death, the wake had two purposes. It was regarded as an obligation on the part of the surviving relatives to pay public homage to the deceased in order to appease his spirit so that it would become an ordinary spirit ('gewone gees') that would not return to

disturb the living. Secondly, it served as an institutionalized gathering where the bereaved could publicly express their feelings of loss, be comforted by their relatives and friends, and so overcome their grief. Informants stated that, as a mourning practice, the wake was considered more important for the living than for the dead, and that it would be held whether the body and coffin were present or not—it had to be seen to be done. In the case of a prominent person, a vigil would be held for several consecutive nights, even without the presence of the body.

Wakes began at sunset on the evening before the funeral and continued through the night until dawn. Though the wakes observed all conformed to a general pattern, certain significant differences between those of Basters and Damaras were noted. A European wake could not be observed, as in the one European funeral studied, the death occurred in Cape Town and no wake was held; there was only a formal tea after the funeral in Pella. Contrary to popular opinions expressed by urban-dwellers in Namaqualand, wakes took place in an orderly fashion and, though frequently animated, did not degenerate into drinking parties even with the occasional presence of intoxicated individuals.

In wakes held by Basters, the body was 'watched' by male relatives and friends and the closest adult female relatives throughout the night. Anyone could attend a wake, but generally only relatives and close friends would be present throughout the night. At least one of these people, almost always male, but not necessarily the chief mourner, maintained a vigil by the side of the coffin, while the others sat in the living room or the cooking shelter. Visitors came and went at various times during the course of the evening, and it was not unusual for them to arrive carrying bottles of wine or beer to supplement the supply of liquor already procured by the chief mourner. Some less pious visitors would also bring strong drink with them, which they consumed in secret, going away from the firelight into the darkness to have a swig ('dop') from time to time. Other refreshments included tea, meat, bread and cakes. The men sat at the fires discussing male topics—work, farming (goats and sheep), local affairs—and cracking jokes, taking turns in sitting beside the remains for spells of about a quarter of an hour. The women were usually busy preparing food and beverages, serving the men and cleaning up in and around the cooking shelter and fires, but they too conversed on a wide range of topics. On several occasions during the night, all moved to the death room for prayers, Rosary recitations and hymns. The Catholics knelt and prayed aloud, but on such occasions Protestants stood silently, with bowed heads, behind the kneeling group. No particular person was responsible for deciding when these periods of prayer should take place, but it was always a close relative of the deceased, usually the chief mourner, who led the praying, except on the rare occasions when the priest happened to be present.

Damara and Nama wakes followed a similar pattern, but tended to be more formal with a greater emphasis on religious activities. At the beginning of the wake, the coffin was taken out of the death house and placed outside on a stand composed of chairs, with a lamp standing on a chair on the northern side at the head. The coffin was orientated with its head in the west in order to face towards the sunrise and in the conceptual direction of Jerusalem. Thus positioned, the deceased became a focal point within the circle of light cast by

the cooking-fires lit around the death house inside the ring of flags and was accorded an integral place in the communal gathering of family and friends. The chief mourner spent most of the wake seated on a chair by the southern side of the coffin, speaking with and being consoled by relatives and friends. Close relatives and friends were informally grouped by families, and sat in small groups around fires outside the house for much of the time. Outside of this clustering were several informal groups of less closely related old and young people gathered around the outermost fires which were being used to cook meat and boil water. Relatively few people were present when the wake started at sunset, but the numbers increased as the evening wore on and towards midnight many people would arrive after the end of evening entertainments in the village hall, some of them drunk. Throughout the night, under the direction of one or more of the Damara leaders or prominent members of local lay organizations, prayers were said and hymns read at intervals. All knelt during prayers and when the Rosary was recited. From time to time, all gathered around the coffin to pray, the immediate family taking the lead and forming a circle, while the rest gathered around them. The coffin was opened (the lid would not be fastened until the coffin was made ready to be transferred to the cathedral the next morning) and the lamp on the chair next to the coffin was raised and held to the face. After the prayers had been said, each family member in turn placed a hand on the forehead of the deceased, manifestations of grief being strongly marked at this point. In contrast to Baster wakes, where food and drinks were freely available throughout the night, refreshments were served by the women at particular intervals between the religious activities; coffee and bread were served at about nine o'clock and three o'clock, meat and tea or coffee at midnight and again at about four o'clock in the morning.

The most significant feature that distinguished Damara from Baster wakes was the performance of protective rites of purification using blood from the goats slaughtered to provide food to mark those attending the wake. The meal at the wake was no ordinary meal, and it was believed that under certain circumstances it could be dangerous to the participants. These rites of protection can be traced to Nama funerary practices (Hoernlé 1918: 80), but no informants knew the origins of these rites, claiming that they were old Damara usages. When the goats were slaughtered, the blood was collected and soot scraped from a cooking pot mixed with it. Those attending the wake were marked on their arrival with this blood by an elderly female member of the deceased's immediate family. This was known colloquially as 'streep' or 'streeptrek' ('striping') or, in Nama, *mâi-!nab* or *mâi-//ôab* (*mâi* refers to putting right; *!nab* to the stomach; *//ôab* to the arm) (Rust 1969: 262, 278, 321). On women and girls, a cross ('bloedkruis') was drawn with the right forefinger on the stomach, a vertical line from above to below the navel and a horizontal line above the navel, with the words, ''n Goeie maag!' ('A good belly!'). In the case of men and boys, the cross was drawn on the inner side of the right forearm, with the words ''n Goeie arm!' ('A good arm!'), though at one wake there was a variation in that boys received only a line ('bloedlyn') drawn down the inside of the right forearm on the grounds that they were not yet mature. With this one had nothing to fear from the meal, but nobody (including the researcher) was allowed to eat or drink before having been marked in this way. The words were

the same in form for both males and females, but it was clear from informants' statements on the meaning of this practice that an absence of protection would have had different effects on men and women. In the case of women, the effects were directly physical, for without the blood cross a woman would experience extreme hunger during the wake and afterwards suffer stomach pains and diarrhoea. In the case of men, however, the effects would have had to do with his livelihood and thus the well-being of his family or household dependent on him. For a man, eating without having been striped would have resulted in misfortune in his work; he might lose his job, or it might become increasingly difficult to obtain money in whatever way. The striping of men was often accompanied by joking references to the generosity or otherwise of the guest's contribution to the refreshments, and even in the case of boys, who would not have brought anything, the elderly woman advised them not be stingy when they were grown up and had become rich. The striping of children was said to prevent sickness resulting from being in proximity to death.

BETWEEN THE WAKE AND THE FUNERAL

The wake ended at dawn, either with the appearance of the morning star or at sunrise, and the participants dispersed to their homes to prepare for the funeral in the afternoon. In the course of the morning, a number of close relatives and friends gathered at the house to assist in the transfer of the coffin to the cathedral. This was spoken of as the 'raising' ('opligting') of the coffin.

When the time came to prepare to move the coffin, the lid was opened and those present filed around it, each in turn touching the face or hands of the deceased as a farewell. The priest, or the chief mourner in his absence, led the group in prayer as the coffin lid was closed over the body, placing particular emphasis on the imminent departure of the deceased from the house. At this point, manifestations of grief, especially among the women, reached a height only to be exceeded at the burial.

After the lid had been screwed down, the coffin was lifted by six men and carried out to a light truck or van in which it was to be conveyed to the cathedral. Until the 1950s, a wagon drawn by horses which, in contrast to donkeys or oxen, were regarded as prestige animals and thus served to honour the dead, was used for this purpose; it was said that only in the early days, when there were few people at Pella and all lived close to the mission station, did bearers carry the coffin to the cathedral on foot in a silent procession. The chief mourner, the bearers and a varying number of others then proceeded to the cathedral, the truck leading and the others following in cars or light trucks. The procession took a roundabout route to the cathedral, even when the distance was very short, and avoided passing in sight of the cemetery; this was, as it were, the offering of a final view of scenes familiar in the deceased person's life. Non-participant bystanders were expected to stop and bow their heads as the cortège went by, to 'honour' ('eer') the procession. It was noted that old women and children turned their backs to the passing coffin and crossed themselves, but informants could offer no explanation as to why this was done.

On arrival at the cathedral, the procession was met by the priest, or nuns in the absence of the priest. The men removed their hats as the coffin was blessed

at the door. Then all entered the cathedral led by the chief mourner behind the coffin, which was placed on a stand in front of the high altar. After the coffin had been given benediction, the mourners departed, leaving it alone in the empty cathedral until the funeral service in the afternoon. The coffin was placed directly in the grave only when death had been due to disease or if the corpse had reached an advanced stage of decomposition. In such a case, the coffin received benediction at the door of the cathedral and the procession then proceeded to the cemetery. For the purposes of the funeral service, an imitation coffin, made of wood and painted black with a white cross on the lid, was put in front of the high altar.

FUNERAL AND BURIAL

The funeral proper ('begrafnis') began with a service in the cathedral. When the priest was not available for the funeral, he appointed someone to conduct it in his place, usually a member of the Parish Council who was also the leader of a church-based community organization. In the past, when a priest could not be present at some remote hamlet or other place in the Reserve, a locally respected person filled this role. In the nineteenth century, Catholic people were frequently buried in unconsecrated ground, on the land where they had lived or wherever they might have died, with a stone at the head and foot of the grave. When in due course a priest came that way, the stones were pulled up, holy water was poured down the holes left by the stones and sprinkled over the mound, and a service was read over the grave. As it was not considered good Christian usage to lay people down in unconsecrated ground with only a brief service of committal said over them, the Catholic missionaries insisted that their parishioners should bring their dead, even over long distances, to be buried in the only Christian burial place in the region, and thus be laid to rest in consecrated ground in accordance with Canon Law No. 1180 (Catholic Church 1983: 208), and by the mid-twentieth century this had become general practice.

In the funerals observed, the process of taking leave of the community took place in the cathedral, and the ideal was that all Christ's faithful who had died should be given a Church funeral. At the time of fieldwork, the Funeral Mass was conducted as a matter of course, though in the past, in cases of people dying in areas remote from Pella, it had been done only when it had been expressly desired. It was considered important that, even if the coffin had already been placed in the grave, prayers for the dead should be said in the cathedral as a communal farewell before the actual committal. For a proper burial the deceased had to be borne to the cathedral, be present during the service and then be buried with the appropriate prayers read or sung over them by the priest. Church funerals were conducted according to the ordinary norms of the Roman Catholic liturgy. In these funeral rites, through the union of all with each other in Christ, the Church prays for the spiritual support of the dead, it honours their bodies, and at the same time it brings to the living the comfort of hope (Catholic Church 1983: 207). In the funerals observed, the Funeral Mass was performed on the day of burial, and normally included a short homily designed by the priest to reach those who did not often come to Mass but might attend funerals. The emphasis in these homilies on the consolation of the living

with hope in the face of death was symbolized in the vestments of the priest. The colour of the chasuble and other vestments follows long-standing customs of expressing in a material way some aspect of the particular mystery of faith being celebrated in a Mass. Thus the use of black vestments for funeral services is indicative of sadness and mourning. The priest at Pella, however, making use of the greater freedom of interpretation granted clerics after the wide-ranging reforms in the Church initiated by the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s (Flannery 1975: 198), sometimes wore vestments of white, which is the sum of all colours, to signify the themes of joy, purity of soul and hope, in his homilies at funerals. He was, in effect, urging a transcendent view of death as the gateway to eternal life, in contrast with the torments of Purgatory emphasized by earlier missionaries at Pella.

A person who died on a Wednesday or Thursday was considered fortunate, for there was then not a long interval before the burial. Most funerals took place on a Saturday and not on a Sunday, as it was considered unseemly to have the wake with its attendant activities immediately before the first of the Sunday Masses. An informant stated that when two deaths had occurred in a short period of time, the occasion arose that two funerals were planned for the same day. In this event, each party concerned strove to go first. The traditional belief was that the soul of the most recently buried person had to guard the cemetery and had no repose until the arrival of the next. This was said to be a very old Dutch or French belief.

Anyone was welcome to attend funerals, and people went without formal invitation. The funeral proper always attracted a large gathering and large numbers of mourners might be present at the funeral of even the most undistinguished person, for it was understood that everyone acquainted with the deceased should participate unless there was good reason to be absent. At the funeral of a prominent person, there might be more than 400 or 500 people present, for on such an occasion the ideal was for every household in the Reserve to be represented by at least one member. In 1978, over 600 people, of all classes and ethnic affiliations, attended the funeral of the last European mayor of Pella. For persons of less consequence, perhaps 100 to 200 people would be present. The funeral proper might thus be regarded as more of a total community event than any of the preceding stages in the process of disposal, which are mainly local and kinship activities. This was clearly evidenced in the general use of black clothing by mourners attending a funeral. Just as the burial clothing of the deceased expressed values of identity and incorporation, so too did that of participants in his funeral. The dress worn by people to the funeral was special to the occasion, not only as a mark of respect to the dead, but also symbolic in expressing solidarity in the face of disruption. People attending funerals in Pella were expected to be respectably dressed, if not wholly in black (which was desirable) then wearing at least one black item, and even the poorest people came dressed in their best dark-coloured clothes.

At the end of the Funeral Mass or prayer service, the coffin was borne out of the cathedral and placed in a hearse or on a light truck, while the mourners assembled outside, men and women in more or less discrete groups, conversing and exchanging greetings in subdued tones. The funeral procession ('lykstoet') then formed up and set out for the cemetery. The cathedral bell was tolled at

funerals only when this had been requested (in the past the ringing of the bell was supposed to drive away the dead person's ghost and evil spirits).

The cemetery was less than 200 metres north-west of the cathedral. Until about two decades ago, it was customary for the procession to walk the entire distance from the cathedral to the graveyard, and the coffin was carried by bearers. By the time of fieldwork, however, the coffin was conveyed in a hearse or on the back of a light truck. Sometimes better-off mourners travelled to the cemetery by car or light truck, occasionally as part of the procession with the rest following on foot or apart from the procession itself. In one case, a poor chief mourner, knowing that some of the mourners at his father's funeral would go to the cemetery by car, hired a car beforehand from a local 'taxi-driver' to convey himself and his immediate family, in order not to lose face. In nearly all the funerals observed, however, the coffin was transported on a vehicle while the mourners covered the way on foot.

A definite pattern could be discerned in the processions observed. Immediately following the coffin, walked (or drove) the chief mourner, the closest female relative, and sometimes an official of the burial society to which the deceased had belonged. It was not unusual for two males to walk together, for example, two brothers behind a parent's coffin; or a father and son might walk behind the latter's dead brother. That a female could accompany or even be the chief mourner was said to have been a development of the last 10 years, for in the past the closest female relative had always walked behind the chief mourner, except in the case of parents following the coffin of their child. Behind the principal grouping of mourners, the rest walked three or four deep in informal ordering.

Apart from the precedence accorded to the chief mourner, no other differentiation was made among males in the procession. It was not considered remarkable, for example, that the school principal or a high-ranking teacher, or a government official, or a high-status Protestant newcomer ('inkommer') to the Reserve, or even an outsider, should have walked behind or at the side of an unemployed labourer, a cousin of the deceased and a Catholic. Nor did it draw comment if a Baster and Damara walked together. Eyebrows would have been raised, however, if they had stood together at the graveside, as this would have involved abandoning the tendency towards family clustering in this part of the funeral (see below). On the other hand, females tended to group themselves spontaneously according to nearness of kinship with the deceased, those who were most closely related walking nearest the coffin. In this way, women were grouped in elementary family units, for example, mother walking with daughter, or sister with sister.

In the procession, severe solemnity was observed only in the immediate vicinity of the coffin, among the chief mourner, bearers, close relatives, and the first rows of women, who might pray and sing. Beyond this area, people chatted quietly about current events, the Funeral Mass, or the weather as they walked along. Non-participant bystanders were expected to 'eer' ('honour') the procession by standing still and bowing their heads as it passed. Here, again, old women and children were seen to turn their backs and cross themselves, just as those observing the transfer of the coffin to the cathedral had done.

When the procession arrived at the entrance to the cemetery, it broke up in an orderly fashion. Cars and light trucks were parked at the gate and from there the entire procession resumed on foot. At the entrance to the burial ground, the men at the head of the procession halted, faced inward towards one another and removed their hats. The coffin was lifted off the truck or hearse by the bearers and the cortège then passed between the lines of men into the cemetery. The coffin was brought to the eastern edge of the grave, around which the closest relatives and the priest with his assistant took up positions, the former usually at the western end. Around this group, relatives and friends tended to cluster by families and degree of acquaintanceship. In this way, Basters and Damaras came naturally to stand separately without any deliberate attempts to form groups consciously apart from one another, and this also produced a tendency to separate men from women as in the funeral procession.

The most extreme case of differentiation among mourners at the graveside seen by the researcher occurred at the funeral of the last European mayor of Pella in 1978. Those who attended included his relatives both from Pella and further afield, the Bishop of Keimoes, clerics and religious from the diocese, dignitaries from Pofadder and farmers from various parts of Bushmanland, as well as about 600 local inhabitants. The burial was at the family plot in an area of the cemetery that had been fenced and set aside for the exclusive use of Europeans in 1962 (see p. 145) and, with the exception of the cathedral choir and old family servants, only people recognized as 'White' entered the fenced area; the rest lined the fence to observe the proceedings, a position that emphasized the distinction that had come into being between the 'White' and 'Coloured' inhabitants of Pella as a result of government policy.

After the priest had read the prayers for the dead and sprinkled holy water on the coffin, other speakers might say a few fitting words emphasizing the need for all to prepare for death, or indeed launch into lengthy eulogies, punctuated at intervals by the singing of hymns by the mourners or a choir. Eulogies and obituaries comprised brief life histories and accounts of how the person had died, including how he had prepared for death, details of illnesses suffered (if any), prayers offered and intercessions requested, how he had made peace with his relatives and friends, how he had made his final confession, and an uplifting peroration on his last words.

When the time for actual committal came, two male bearers descended into the grave to receive the coffin as the other bearers lowered it into the grave with its head to the west. After crossing themselves, they guided the coffin down until it reached the floor of the grave and then so positioned it that it rested equidistant on all sides from the walls. The bearers standing above gave directions in this regard to those in the grave. The bearers were then helped out with a hand offered from someone along the margin of the grave so as to avoid stepping on the coffin. Only at the funeral of the European mayor, for which the arrangements had been made by a professional undertaker, was a mechanical lift used for the committal. At this point, after a final sprinkling of holy water and the completion of the absolution prayers, it was usual for the priest and his assistant to depart precipitately, leaving the people to complete the burial.

After further eulogies and farewells, male and female relatives within the first and second degrees of kinship started filling in the grave by throwing either

handfuls or spadefuls of earth into the grave as a mark of respect for the deceased (cf. Hoernlé 1923: 517; Botha 1925: 549), after which the bearers and male relatives shovelled in the remainder of the earth. At two of the funerals observed, hymns were sung while the grave was being filled. It was at this point that expressions of grief, equal to or surpassing those shown at the closing of the coffin, were always forthcoming. It was expected that female relatives should weep, but males should not. In instances noted where male relatives were unable to control their emotions, they were assisted away from the grave to the fringes of the group.

When the grave had been filled in, a mound was built over it with the surplus ground and the wreaths and other items were placed on it. Before each wreath was placed on the grave, the accompanying tribute was read, an often time-consuming activity when lengthy biblical citations had to be quoted in full. The time taken up by the actual burial could be considerable, varying from one to three hours or even longer in the case of a prominent person, mainly owing to the drawn-out process of eulogizing and reading of tributes.

When the last wreath or tribute had been put in place, the grave was considered closed. A temporary marker, in the form of a wooden cross, was placed on the grave only at the end of the period of full mourning, after which it remained until the permanent tombstone or cross could be mounted and consecrated later. Before leaving the graveside, it was usual for each person to pass by and throw one or three handfuls of ground or a few pebbles on the grave with the words 'Rus in vrede' (Rest in peace) as a final farewell. With Damara and Nama people, this 'grondgooi' (casting of earth) was regarded as a special custom, but many Basters were for the most part content to say a final silent prayer or a *requiem aeternam* on leaving the grave and did it only if attending the burial of a Damara or Nama person. When the burial was completed, the mourners dispersed quietly but, before leaving the cemetery, most people walked about viewing the graves of members of their families, sometimes kneeling in prayer before a fresh grave but more frequently sprinkling a handful of earth in greeting.

After visiting their relatives' graves, the mourners returned, either walking or by vehicle, to their homes. The immediate family and closest relatives of the deceased were joined at home by more distant relatives and perhaps some close friends. Those who had dug the grave were also included in this visit. It was usual for all kin up to the third degree to pay this short 'comfort' visit ('troosbesoek') after the funeral proper. The visitors were given refreshments, tea and liquor with biscuits and perhaps bread or cakes supplied by the immediate family (cf. Botha 1925: 549) but, before partaking, everybody first washed their hands 'to get the dust off', using basins of water and towels placed ready for this purpose. This occasion formally ended the funeral proceedings, and thereafter all dispersed to their normal occupations. Afterwards, when all the relatives had gone home, the members of the immediate family began to discuss the division of inheritance that would take place after the legal formalities had been concluded, unless previous arrangements had been made.

During this visit, mementoes of the deceased were usually distributed among the relatives present. Some of these items had considerable material value, e.g. watches, jewellery and tools. Their passage generally followed the same lines as

would be followed in the inheritance of livestock, house and household goods, that is, they were kept within the family of procreation of the deceased. Articles such as photographs, sacred medals, prayer books, etc., were distributed more widely, however, to relatives outside the elementary family, such as cousins, nephews and nieces. In some of the European families, a few articles of the dead person's clothing were washed and stored in a drawer or chest kept in the front room. These garments would never be worn again but were put away, along with other souvenirs, and would be brought out only on rare occasions to be shown to those who had been close to the deceased or to his descendants.

AFTER THE FUNERAL

Ritual actions to commemorate the dead in the period after the funeral varied considerably, both in intensity and duration. Mourning, in the more prolonged sense, serves to stress the relationship between the living and the dead, but it also marks a transitional period during which the mourners are partially separated from society. As already noted, death was regarded as a normal event and mourning was mostly restrained. Considerable grief was shown when the deceased had been a vigorous person or an older child who had not yet fulfilled his potential, whereas less was shown for an old person who, having begun to lose his vigour, was often spoken of as 'half-dood' ('half dead'), or for infants and young children who, owing to their age, were regarded as not yet fully alive in the sense of having reason and a conscious awareness of themselves as social beings in the world. For persons not regarded as fully part of the community of the living, no great emotional response to their deaths could be expected, and the mourning observances differed accordingly.

This can be seen most directly expressed in the differences in the funeral practices for children and adults. In the case of a deceased child, the godparents provided the burial clothing and it was usual for them to assist the mother's sisters in laying out the body. The godparents took no part in the funeral arrangements of a person over about 14 years of age. There was no formal wake, except in the case of youngsters past the age of puberty, but parents, relatives and godparents kept vigil by the body on the eve of the funeral. In some cases, the parents bore all the costs of the funeral, in others they were assisted by relatives or drew on their policy with a burial society. There was no service in the cathedral for children. The coffin was raised in the usual way and taken to the graveyard on the afternoon of the burial. Three or four male relatives prepared the grave, and there were often only close relatives present for the interment which was, however, conducted by the priest. The relatives filled the grave with earth. Sometimes some of the women sprinkled a handful of earth on the coffin in the form of a cross. There were no prayers or other ceremonies and the burial party left immediately after the grave had been filled. The simplicity of these rituals can be ascribed to the different beliefs regarding the afterlife of the two age groups referred to above in our consideration of the period of preparation for death.

The period of full mourning in the immediate family varied from seven to nine days, though in the case of a spouse, it could last several months, in the course of which both widows and widowers were expected to retreat from social

intercourse. During this time, members of the family of the deceased would commonly visit the cathedral from time to time to pray for the dead, but the practice of burning a candle at the same time had fallen away at the time of fieldwork. Purificatory rites were slight and appeared to be restricted to the dwelling. Some informants said that in times past, certain rites were performed among Damara and Nama people, but no specific particulars of these could be obtained. On the morning after the funeral, there was a general cleaning of the house and its surroundings ('uitskudding en skoonmaak van die werf'). Furnishings, mats, clothing and all household goods, including pictures and ornaments, were taken out and the floors thoroughly swept, especially in the corners, and the walls and ceilings (if any) dusted off. All items touched and used by the deceased were thoroughly cleaned. Afterwards all the rubbish on the 'werf' (yard) was taken away and dumped on the ash heap or buried and the ground carefully swept, particularly where the furnishings from the house had been piled, and lastly the surrounding border of fencing or stones was repaired. According to informants, this was done so that all might see that outwardly life had begun to return to normal.

On the final day of mourning, the immediate family usually offered a Mass in the cathedral, and those families who could afford it invited relatives and friends to a farewell meal for the soul of the dead, so that it would not bring illnesses or bad dreams to those still living. The timing of this meal to coincide with the service was not a strict requirement, but it was considered necessary to have it within a few months of the funeral. For Baster informants, this occasion would appear to have lost its significance in recent years and among many was no longer considered a requirement for a proper conclusion to the mourning period. Among Damara and Nama people, however, failure to hold the meal was believed likely to bring misfortune—livestock might be lost or cultivated lands might dry out. At this time, too, a simple unpainted wooden cross was placed on the grave, though with little ceremony. In instances where, after the mourning period, the closest survivors—the parents or the surviving spouse—might remain unusually depressed, relatives would visit them frequently and speak of things that they thought might give consolation. If this did not improve their condition, the priest or nuns would be approached for counselling, or a herbalist ('bossiedokter') who was known to have suitable medicines against prolonged depression would be consulted.

Among Damara and Nama people, there was usually a minor occasion a few weeks after the funeral, when the skins of the livestock slaughtered for the wake were sold. Relatives and neighbours who had attended the funeral were invited to 'drink out' ('uitdrink') the proceeds of the sale and any money left after the funeral expenses had been met. This took the form of a simple meal consisting of tinned food and bread with tea or coffee, but no liquor. The intention was that there should be no gain to the family from the communal activity of the funeral.

'Roudiens' (mourning service, a term that should not be confused with the similar colloquial term for a Mass for the Dead) was performed by those relatives and friends who for some reason or another could not attend the funeral and who might come to Pella only some months afterwards. The bereaved family slaughtered a goat for a meal, to which neighbours and relatives in the Reserve were invited. Before the meal, the visitors were taken by the chief

mourner to the grave, so that they could greet the deceased. This was done by casting a handful of ground on the grave, accompanied by a verbal greeting and a *requiem aeternam*. Among Damara and Nama families, on returning to the house, the visitor had to stop at the edge of the 'werf' and be sprinkled with water to 'cool' him before he could enter the precinct of the dwelling, and he had to wash his hands before eating.

At the time of fieldwork, there were few long-term mourning customs. There was no avoidance of the dead person's name, but whenever it was mentioned, it was almost always qualified by 'oorlede' (late, e.g. late Piet Visagie, or my late mother). There were no rules on the use of mourning symbols, a custom that has practically disappeared, and the length of mourning periods. Among the former European inhabitants of Pella, grown offspring of the deceased are said not to have attended dances and other public entertainment for some months to a year after the death. Upon the death of a close relative, the whole household wore black clothes as a sign of full mourning. For a few weeks after the funeral, first-degree male adult relatives usually wore a black tie, and some continued to wear the black tie or a black band on the jacket-sleeve for up to a year of half-mourning after the death. Some widows wore black or dark garments for the rest of their lives ('like Queen Victoria', according to one informant), but most laid aside mourning clothes a few months after their spouse's death. These customs no longer applied among the inhabitants of Pella at the time of fieldwork, though some widows deliberately avoided wearing brightly coloured headwear.

The slightness of long-term mourning customs does not imply that the dead were quickly forgotten or that they no longer occupied a ritual status in the structure of the community. Apart from the annual general commemoration on All Souls' Day, first-degree relatives of a dead person usually offered a Mass on his behalf on the anniversaries of his death. Each Sunday, the priest announced the names of deceased members of the community on whose behalf Masses were to be offered during the coming week, or gave the names of the families who had offered the Masses. Even if not mentioned by name, a dead person was included in the general category of 'the faithful departed' for whom prayers were said at every service. In these prayers, God was asked to have mercy on those souls still in Purgatory and to raise them into Heaven. In private prayers, the deceased might be asked to intercede on behalf of the living. Although it was considered that the souls of some people were condemned to Hell and would thus be unable to make an intercession, the soul of a particular person was not automatically assumed to be in Hell, regardless of the conditions under which the individual lived and died. It was believed that any given individual would eventually be received into the highest of the sacred spheres, the most remote from earth, at which point the cycle that began with birth would be completed.

COMMEMORATION OF THE DEAD

Long-term commemoration of the dead was focused on the cemetery. As a detailed examination of the form of the cemetery, types of graves and grave markers has been reserved for a future publication, only those features essential for this account will be given here.

The cemetery is situated to the north of the mission and is surrounded by a low concrete wall supporting a wire fence, through which access is obtained by a single gateway ornamented with an arch topped by a cross and bearing the inscription 'Rus in Vrede' (Rest in Peace). As with any form of territory, the cemetery has borders, an entrance, paths and markers, including a large communal cross flanked by trees (a combination of the symbols of the Christian cross standing on Calvary, the midpoint of the earth that is also believed to have been occupied by the fatal tree of Eden, and the pagan European image of the tree at the centre of the world) that establish significant angles and middle-points similar to those found in houses and yards and in the broader pattern of settlement in the village and Reserve. There are relatively few identifiable old graves in the cemetery, the oldest dated 1876 being that of a pioneer European colonist, though the form of a number of unmarked graves indicates that they date back to the period of effective Rhenish mission work at Pella (1840–1868). An examination of the death registers kept by the Catholic missionaries has also indicated that not all burials took place there for, as noted elsewhere above, only in the twentieth century were the dead brought over long distances to be buried in the only Christian burial place in the area and thus laid to rest in consecrated ground.

As a feature of the cultural landscape, the cemetery is itself a type of landscape that can be examined for its utilitarian, religious and aesthetic qualities (Tuan 1979: 94). It is essentially an assemblage of personal memorials that through time takes on a particular historical effect, evoked by the form and ornamentation of the graves and the nature of the grave markers (Lowenthal 1979: 123). The forms of graves in the cemetery range from those that are little more than an unmarked mound of earth, sometimes covered with limestone pebbles, to those that are carefully constructed masonry tombs. Grave markers range from a variety of forms of crosses, posts, foot-posts and tablets to tombstones in contemporary urban styles, along with a wide range of supplementary signs and decorations in the form of artificial flower tributes, ornaments and everyday items familiar to the deceased. Many graves are ornamented with religious objects such as old crucifixes and Rosary beads, or with other objects that were used by the person while still alive, including crockery and, on the graves of infants, babies' bottles. Nama and Damara people sometimes decorated the graves of their dead with *Patella* shells; the reason for this was unknown, but one informant suggested that the shells symbolically held people down—from the grip of the limpet on the rock (cf. Carstens 1966: 178). Although not intended either by those who designed the cemetery or those who buried their dead there, through the combination of all these features, the cemetery has ultimately become both a relic and a landscape of the past and in this way adds to a general awareness of the past among the living.

This process can be perceived most clearly in the spatial layout of the cemetery created by the distribution of the graves which, despite changes through time, has been primarily shaped according to given patterns of social differentiation in Pella. The graves of former missionaries occupy a dominant position in the centre of the cemetery, constructed according to a uniform style and orientated along the line of the cathedral in relation to the protective crosses on the surrounding mountains, and are thus surrounded by the graves of their

converts and parishioners. Among the latter, however, death has never been seen as the great leveller. Originally the faithful departed were buried in chronological order within defined areas in the cemetery and, although this ordering has been distorted subsequently by the filling in of spaces among the earlier graves, two significant separations remain visible. The first is that the graves of European colonists were always kept separate from those of other local people in the cemetery, even in the nineteenth century, and the second, less obvious to a casual observer, is that whereas Protestants have always been buried beside Catholics as good Christians, the nineteenth-century graves of people called 'Bushmen', who were said by informants to have been regarded as irredeemable heathens and vermin by the other inhabitants of Pella, were sited outside the boundaries of the cemetery.

Most of the European graves were clustered on the eastern side of the cemetery, the side that is conceptually closest to the Holy Land, whereas the common people lay in the west with the graves of missionaries between the two groups. This clustering occurred owing to the fact that it was considered that each conjugal or elementary European family should have its own plot and be situated near other kin, and friends, if possible. Ideally, parents and unmarried offspring were buried together, but each one's grave would have its own head-stone or cross, however modest. A husband and wife should be laid to rest side by side. Their married sons should be buried in their own plots; their married daughters in the plots of their husbands. This arrangement has not always been realized in practice. There was a tendency among some families, said by informants to have been a survival from what were called the 'patriarchal' days, to gather deceased relatives into a patrilineal plot. At the time of fieldwork, however, allowing for a few exceptions of this nature, it was still the ideal that the elementary or conjugal family of parents and unmarried offspring should share a group of graves segregated from other elementary families, just as it is the ideal today among the living for household membership to be based on elementary family relationships.

A formal division of the cemetery into 'White' and 'Coloured' areas through the erection of walls and fences took place during renovations in 1962, largely on the initiative of the European residents who themselves bore the costs and did much of the work. The irony of this acceptance of an officially imposed racial classification with all its implications of residential separation is that, according to a member of one of the European families who had been living in Pella at that time, it was carried out with the aim of winning the sympathy of the central government for the claims of the European inhabitants to the right to live in Pella, whereas, as already noted above, it was the European inhabitants themselves who were eventually to suffer the most under the application of the 'apartheid' policy to Pella in 1974. By 1989, the division had been abandoned and recent burials of local people have been steadily using up the available space in the 'White' area since that time, for although the area of the cemetery was doubled in size in 1988, the local authority has decreed that all the existing spaces have to be filled before the new section can be taken into use. The fences that divided the cemetery have not been removed, however, and thus, long after the departure of the last European residents, the visible separation between the graves of those classified 'White' and those classified 'Coloured' remains as a

reminder to the present inhabitants of the historical basis of their currently uncontested occupation of the Reserve.

Owing to a widespread belief in ghosts, most people were reluctant to visit the cemetery, especially after dark, and they seldom visited graves once they had been constructed. Some aspects of beliefs about the dead have already been mentioned. The souls of the dead were believed to be dwelling, roaming, or wandering in and around the cemetery, where people walking alone at night might see them, though occasionally ghosts could be seen even in daylight. The appearance and actions of a ghost might terrify passersby and domestic animals, but sometimes it was not identified as an apparition as such until later (especially in the case of children before they had spoken to adults about what they had seen). Only over a period of several days before All Saints' and All Souls' days, would volunteers from among the church cleaners and school children clear away weeds and windborne litter from the entire graveyard, and then some people would tidy the graves they were planning to visit during the ceremony marking All Souls' Day.

The major annual communal mourning ceremony was on All Souls' Day, the 2nd of November, following the festival of All Saints' Day on the 1st of November. The marking of All Souls' Day is based on the doctrine that souls, which at death are not sufficiently purified to be fit for the Beatific Vision, may be helped by the prayers of the faithful here on earth. Though known colloquially as 'Voorvadersdag' ('Forefathers' Day') and regarded as a day for the commemoration of all deceased, in reality the faithful departed, whom the living named in their prayers on this day in the cathedral and in the cemetery, were limited to dead relatives within the second and third ascending generations. It was considered a sacred time, when the living claimed to feel the presence of the deceased, though this was not expressed through material offerings or propitiations to the dead either in the cathedral or in the cemetery, practices which among Europeans embody beliefs of pagan origin that are of great antiquity (Matousek 1990). In the period of the novena carried out by the religious before All Saints' Day, people might go to the cathedral to pray for the dead and to say the Rosary. According to Catholic doctrine, devout recitation of the Rosary could obtain a remission, in whole or in part, of the temporal punishment due to sin. Such an indulgence, plenary or partial, was a means of lessening the satisfaction that must be made for sins, even after they have been forgiven, in the state of Purgatory. At this time in the liturgical calendar in particular, some of the indulgences gained in this way could be offered up for the souls in Purgatory, asking God to relieve their sufferings.

On All Souls' Eve (1 November), a Mass for the Dead was celebrated in the cathedral, and another Mass was held in the morning of the 2nd, after which, at about 11 a.m., the priest, attended by assistants bearing a crucifix and holy water, led an organized procession to the graveyard. If this was a weekday, only women, pensioners and children attended. After leading all in prayers and five decades of the Rosary dedicated to the dead at the large communal cross ('doodskruis') in the cemetery, the priest proceeded around the graveyard and, with one assistant, sprinkled graves at random with holy water, while the people remained grouped at the cross. After completing his circuit he left and the people moved apart to visit the graves of their dead. In most cases the graves

were greeted with the casting of earth and a *requiem aeternam*. After this the family might sit or stand around and chat, with little evidence of sorrow, though the day was said to be 'sad'. After perhaps an hour of visiting the various graves of family and friends, the people left informally; it was considered that with the Mass and this ceremony, they had completed their annual obligation to the deceased.

This annual visit to the cemetery can also, however, be seen to be important in reinforcing a sense of continuity among the living. For them, the inscriptions on the tombstones evoked a meaningful chronology, for many of the things that had happened during the years, marked on the gravestones and representing lifetimes, would be known to the viewers who might have heard others talk of them or have experienced some of them themselves. Similar feelings were aroused even among those whose relatives lay in unmarked graves, for knowledge of the identities of those buried without inscribed grave markers was passed on through the generations. Although graves, especially those of parents, might awake in the viewers an awareness of being alone, they were also strongly reminded there that, surrounded by the hills of home, they were both victors and victims of the past in the graves around them.

DISCUSSION

In analysing funerals and mourning practices, two important aspects of the relation between ritual and social organization have always been emphasized by anthropologists: the contribution of ritual activities to the maintenance of social relations; and the expression and regeneration of social relations and values in symbolic form. Both of these aspects will be treated here, and some attention will also be given to the part played by beliefs and practices associated with death in facilitating personal adjustment to the crisis of death, though the intention here is to pursue the cultural significance, rather than the purely psychological implications, of beliefs and practices associated with death for people living at Pella.

In discussions with informants, it was clear that they did not regard death as simply a sudden, seemingly arbitrary banishment into a void, but rather as a major turning-point in the human cycle. This view of death was also implied in the ways in which the series of activities associated with a death were both enacted and phased. As already noted, the passage of a person from this world into the next began even before death itself happened. Except in cases where death was sudden and unexpected, an individual would have anticipated and prepared for his departure, drawing on the support of the priest, other religious, relatives, neighbours, and fellow-members of the congregation. The moment of death itself was not considered to indicate the complete separation of the deceased person from his earthly milieu, for other well-defined stages had to be passed through before there was a final and complete fusion with the other world. In this aspect, mourning ritual at Pella can be seen to conform to the ideal type of *rites de passage* as formulated by Van Gennep (1909).

Three separate ritual stages can be distinguished. Firstly, there was the period of separation, between the time of death and the end of the wake while the body was at home and on display; then followed the period of liminality or

transition, initiated by the closing of the coffin, during which the body lay unattended in the cathedral; and this was followed by the phase of reincorporation, after the funeral proper, during which the recently deceased person, now below the ground, was commemorated, principally through being mentioned in Masses. At the completion of each stage, the dead person was removed a further step from this world, though a tenuous connection with the living was maintained, perhaps for generations, through prayer, the keeping of mementoes, and visits by descendants to graves. Furthermore, in the course of the rites of transition, the dead person was transformed from an 'actor' into an 'object'—the soul, symbolized in material terms by the grave mound—that enabled him to continue to occupy a ritual status in the social system of Pella. Thus, in contemplating his own demise, a person was assured of ritual support both in preparation for death and in his passage from Purgatory into Heaven, and he was furthermore assured of an indefinite extension of his social identity on earth.

The stage of closing and raising the coffin, and then placing it as a kind of 'lesser altar' in front of the high altar in the cathedral, may be seen as a critical point in the liminal transformation of a deceased individual into a ritual object. Not only was the individual person lost to sight for ever on the closing of the coffin, but it was at this point that the coffin became the focal point of formal religious rituals performed on a series of profoundly significant spatial localities, first in the home, then inside the cathedral, and lastly in the cemetery. The ritual process of completing the removal of the individual from the profane to the sacred sphere was structured by the Ordinary of the Funeral Mass, of which the central feature was the contrasting of the immortality of God with the mortality that lay before the high altar. This containment of the temporal and worldly within the eternal was symbolized by the temporary placing of the coffin on the sacred axis of the cathedral at the sanctuary steps.

This axial point is the centre of the cruciform plan of the cathedral: a line runs from north to south from the high altar down the line of the nave to the door, whereas another runs from east to west between the altars in the two side chapels, dedicated respectively to the Blessed Virgin and St Joseph. Dictated by the positions of the high altar and the minor altars and marked at their extremities by stars of red and white stained glass set in round windows, these lines intersect on a spot directly in front of the sanctuary steps where the priest comes to recite prayers or to read the Gospels; this is also where the living receive communion, where the bride and bridegroom stand during the marriage ceremony, where children are confirmed, and where the banners of church-related lay groups are blessed. In the days when the Church controlled the secular administration of Pella, this was where the Bishop or the priest stood to make announcements about the affairs of the Mission Farm and the village. In the past, before the installation of fluorescent lights on the walls, the importance of this point was emphasized by a lamp that hung suspended from the ceiling above it. This point is, furthermore, flanked by tombs. Three prelates and a priest are buried in the side chapels: the graves of the first, third and fourth bishops lie orientated from west to east on the right of the high altar in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, whereas the grave of the founding priest who built the cathedral is on the left of the high altar, and orientated from east to west in

the chapel of St Joseph. Thus buried in a holy place, they can participate in all the services celebrated in the cathedral.

The axis of the cathedral is in turn the axial point for a series of crosses, clearly recognized and articulated by the missionaries and their parishioners, that guard the integrity of the mission, the cemetery, the village and the Reserve against evil deriving from the Devil and sorcery. Constituted a sacred place in terms of Canon Law (Catholic Church 1983: 213), the cathedral is a central place within the pattern of settlement in the village, itself practically in the centre of the Reserve territory, whereas the village and the Reserve are components of a wider landscape infused with symbolic significances represented on the ground by both visible and invisible boundaries that shape social relations. Boundaries are central to this idea of spatial integrity. The concept of territory involved here includes several elements: the village (a group of people who consider themselves related, established in a single living situation, and making use of a communal territory, i.e. the Reserve), the household (which includes the same elements) and the Reserve itself. The material expression of the spiritual unit formed by each is symbolized by the Cross. In the home, this is represented by the crucifix, which is present in all Catholic homes to defend the domestic group, its livestock and property. For the village, it is the position of the cathedral, edified and consecrated on a chosen site, which is at the centre of a conceptual cross, formed by three iron and wood crosses (symbolizing the crosses of Jesus and the two thieves) mounted on the summits of the surrounding mountains, and rooted in the Annakop hill 15 kilometres to the south of the mission. The cemetery shares this centrality with the cathedral in the broad figure of the cross in the landscape. These crosses installed on the mountaintops protect the integrity of the territory, just as beacons raised on high points mark out the physical boundaries, and guard the various sources of water, especially the springs of running water, from ill-disposed spirits so that the living can obtain water. Another similar cross, also rooted at Annakop and centred on the cathedral, reaches north through the mission to the now-abandoned Pella-Orange Chapel at Rooipad (the irrigation farm belonging to the mission situated on the south bank of the Orange River), and its east–west axis links the T'Kouroes and Brakkie hamlets with the T'Nougab and Eenriet/Lelikpad complex of hamlets, all places in the Reserve that had formerly had substantial populations and at which the missionaries had regularly celebrated Masses.

Pella itself is also conceived to be at the centre of an integral part of greater crosses outside the Reserve territory. Pella is seen as the middle point of a cross rooted in St Mary's Cathedral in Cape Town (from where the Namaqualand mission originated), with the south–north axis running from Cape Town to Heirachabis (the first Roman Catholic mission in Great Namaqualand) and west-east from Matjieskloof (the first site of Catholic missionary activity in Namaqualand) to Keimoes (the residence of the Bishop of the Diocese of Keimoes-Upington, formerly the Orange River), in this way linking clusterings of settlements significant in the history of Pella. The Cape is also seen as the root of a greater cross that runs through Rome to Aachen in Germany (marking the association with the Holy Roman Empire) and east–west from Troyes (the headquarters of the Oblates of St Francis de Sales) in France to Jerusalem (the Holy City).

Lastly, this is part of a global cross which links the four great continents, Africa and Europe, the Americas and Asia, and which is centred on Jerusalem.

Thus, by being placed on the axis of the cathedral, the coffin of the deceased was for a time at the centre of the symbolic universe of Pella and, on being buried in the cemetery at the end of the liminal stage, could be assured of protection until the Day of Judgement.

For the bereaved relatives, the process of mourning constituted a ritual that served to channel the emotions of all concerned into a pattern that enabled them to come to terms with the fact of death by passing through a clearly defined series of public and semi-public rites that provided socially accepted ways of adjusting to a difficult situation. Writing in the fifth century AD, St Augustine (1984: 21) reminded his readers that '. . . such things as a decent funeral and a proper burial, with its procession of mourners, are a consolation to the living rather than a help to the departed'. As Firth (1951: 63) expressed it, '. . . the funeral ritual gives a social backing to their [i.e. the relatives'] attempts at adjustment, provides them with a cathartic mechanism for a public display of grief, and sets a period to their mourning. In essence, the community says to the relatives: ". . . Wail for him in one final outburst, before us all. We expect it of you, and we demand it of you. Then tomorrow you will return to a normal social existence"'. This was expressed most clearly in the material and ritual support of a wide range of community members at the crucial time between the death and the funeral, and was symbolized most obviously in the wearing of black or dark clothing by all the mourners at the funeral service itself, even though not all people in the community suffered the same degree of grief. There was no suggestion of hypocrisy in this display, for by wearing black they were emphasizing their respect for the dead and showing their sympathy with the sufferings of the bereaved and their desire to share in their sorrow as fellow community members.

Mourning and burial rituals were among the most frequent occasions when members of the community were drawn together in a common forum where expression could be given to their sense of unity and a re-affirmation of the values upon which that unity is based could be made publicly. An adult resident of Pella might participate in 10 to 15 or more wakes and funerals in a year, and this undoubtedly contributed greatly to the attitude towards death as a familiar and inherent part of the whole round of life in Pella. This view of death as a 'normal' event is evident in the way sacred and secular elements were merged in the series of rituals. Mourning and burial comprised a sequence of 'religious' events: the priest was present and performed specific tasks during the dying moments; he might be present at the closing of the coffin; he received the body at the door of the cathedral, officiated at the Funeral Mass and at the burial itself; the arrangements of the room where the body lay in the house of death were rich in religious connotations, and the mourners present spontaneously offered prayers and made other religious gestures. Amid these forms and acts of sanctity, however, the mourners spoke freely about everyday topics such as mining and sheep, gossiped and took care to ensure that there was an adequate supply of liquor and food. The incongruity of this is only superficial, for the rites that accompany a death are not intended simply to mirror inward emotions; they exist to express proper attitudes and to conduct the bereaved through a

difficult time. Frequent attendance at these rites not only created a familiarity with death, but also strengthened an individual awareness of being part of the community through the medium of a shared emotional experience of a communal ritual and thus reinforced feelings of group loyalty. The fact that people were willing to contribute and participate uninvited (no invitations were expected or sent out to visit the bereaved, or to attend wakes or funerals) in mourning activities, that relatives, neighbours and fellow-residents in the Reserve were prepared to give of their time and material goods and to abandon certain forms of work and play when one of their number died, takes for granted the existence of strong sentiments of unity and solidarity. Most significantly, however, as shown above, this participation transcended factional divisions and friction in the community to produce a cultural unity despite the perceived persistence of seemingly unchanging ethnic and class differences.

There is further evidence of communal solidarity in the smooth running and spontaneity with which the series of ritual and practical activities were executed, some of which involved at times several hundred people and needed a degree of co-ordination that could only be achieved through an ongoing consensus and shared understanding. Apart from the need for drawing on the financial support available from burial societies, there was no great dependence on a formal organization of individuals 'acting in office' to deal with death as there is in most of urban society in South Africa; only in the case of the funeral of the last European mayor (whose remains had had to be brought to Pella after his death in 1979 in an urban area near Cape Town to which he had moved five years previously) was a professional undertaker hired to make the various arrangements and supply a high-quality coffin, a fashionable hearse and other equipment unavailable locally. With the exception of the priest, who acted in a formal sacred office, the process in the majority of cases was handled by individuals performing roles in the informal system of kinship and community relations.

While the contribution of mourning practices to the unity of the community is readily discernible, the ways in which the series of events connected with death described above reveal the basic alignments and patterns of differentiation within the community are less obvious. As already shown, not all members of the community were involved to the same extent in the activities associated with any given death. The 'specialized' roles performed by individuals—such as the priest and his assistant, those who laid out bodies, grave-diggers, etc.—will not be considered here, but only the observances expected of different groupings in the community.

The most intense involvement was expected of the members of those elementary families most closely related to the deceased: spouse, children and their families; parents, own siblings, grandparents, parents' siblings and their families; spouse's parents and siblings and the families of the latter. These relatives were always the first to be notified of a death and the first to offer aid and be in constant attendance. Relatives descended from the siblings of grandparents and close friends of the deceased were also committed to more than just visiting the deceased and the bereaved family, and adult males from these categories were expected to take an active part in the wake. More remote relatives were regarded as more or less equivalent to neighbours: it was considered appropriate for them to visit during the 'bo-grond' period between the death and the

funeral proper, and to take part in the closing of the coffin and perhaps also the transfer of the body to the cathedral. Finally, all adults who were not indisposed and who were in the village at the time were considered to be under a social obligation to take part in the funeral, even though they might have had no special links with the deceased. It was this expectation, in which religious ties and macro-community obligations overrode factionalism, that made it possible for Basters and Damaras to attend one another's funerals, though they infrequently attended one another's wakes as this would have reflected a degree of familiarity not achieved, or desired, in everyday life.

These varying degrees of commitment to render support and to active participation in the process of coping with a death, taking in all from the closest relatives to other Reserve-dwellers, were similar to the priority of commitment to mutual aid and sociability in other spheres of Reserve and village life. Care of the old and infirm, for example, rested first upon the family of procreation (offspring) and then upon that of orientation (siblings), but if an arrangement involving these was impossible, third-degree relatives were expected to take on this responsibility. If an old person lived alone without kin of these degrees, it was expected that neighbours and relatives even more remote than those mentioned should give assistance. It was only when none of these arrangements worked satisfactorily, that the 'community', represented by the priest, a local government officer, members of the local authority, or the district surgeon, would take steps to arrange for the old person to receive the required care, if necessary through removal to an old-age home. Similar patterns of commitment to mutual aid and sociability were also observed in farmwork, in attending and contributing to weddings, and in exchanges of visits at the New Year or Easter.

A further important aspect of Reserve society revealed in the mourning ritual is a clear differentiation according to sex, such as in the performance of tasks, the positions taken up by participants in the funeral procession and at the graveside, and so on. Of these, the aspect with the most far-reaching implications is the apparently random distribution of men in the funeral procession compared with the distribution of women, which tended to follow kinship alignments. This indicates that men had a wider range of interaction than women, and that the sexes orientated themselves differently towards patterns of kinship. This is confirmed by examinations of other areas of interaction. In the case of women, it was noted that their daily interaction was limited to their kinsfolk and immediate neighbours to a greater extent than among men. Informal visiting exchanges tended to occur most frequently between adult sisters, owing to proximities in residence created by selective marriage patterns among the relatively few large families of similar class and cultural backgrounds located in particular neighbourhoods in the village. Visiting among men, on the other hand, was undertaken on a broader scale and included both kinsfolk and those with whom they worked, though interaction with the latter was more strongly marked among those involved in the mines than among farmers. It was noted that women tended to have a narrower circle of acquaintances than men, who had grown up together in neighbourhood gangs, whereas girls would have remained around the home under the control of their parents. Evidence from studies (pers. obs.) of domestic disputes and patterns of sociability in selected families also indicated that solidarity among sisters was stronger than among

brothers. On the other hand, male solidarity in the community as a whole was stronger than female solidarity, as shown in the fact that it was not uncommon for men to associate with the husbands and brothers of women whom their own wives and sisters deliberately avoided.

Among other forms of differentiation expressed in mourning procedures is that based on religious affiliation. Catholics and Protestants paid respect to one another's dead by visiting and attending wakes and funerals, thus confirming the friendly nature of relations between the two groups but there was some evidence of a social barrier between them; this was to be found in the mutual avoidance of attending one another's religious services and in differing patterns of behaviour when praying in common at wakes and funerals. This barrier was not transferred into everyday life except in regard to marriage, where it was expected either that one or other of the partners would join the faith of the spouse or that their children would be brought up in the faith selected by agreement between their parents until they were of an age to decide on their religious affiliation for themselves.

Social status, as a principle ordering social relations in the community, played a comparatively minor part in the patterns of behaviour observed at funerals in Pella. There were distinctions in the community according to which social rank and standards were evaluated, such as those of teachers and well-off stock-farmers, and these can be regarded as signs of an internal positioning of all in the community within the structure of broader classes in relation to the population of Namaqualand, but there was no distinct structure of social status groups. For this reason, social status was unimportant in determining positioning in events and in the allocation of roles for the various ritual activities, though at funerals the type and cost of the coffin and its fittings, the supply of food and drink, the use of cars, etc., and afterwards the type of grave markers, would be remarked on as being 'typical' of this or that class of person. Most Pella men espoused egalitarian attitudes towards community relations, though among women this was less often the case owing to the differences in upbringing and interaction in everyday life; the fact that a teacher or official of the highest rank could be placed together with a labourer in bearing or following a coffin was often cited to support their view that their community was 'democratic', or was so as long as the accepted rules of exclusion of people defined as outsiders were followed, socially in the case of those living in the Reserve, and legally in the case of strangers from outside the Reserve.

Where these rules of exclusion could be seen in operation was in relations between members of the various ethnic groupings in Pella. The differentiation between Basters and Damaras on the grounds of origin and race (Klinghardt 1978, 1982) was particularly manifested in the formation of separate groups when they attended one another's funerals and came to stand around the grave. As noted above (see p. 123), this came about in that the barrier between members of the different groups in the social structure of the Reserve has been maintained through the discouragement of intermarriage, thus preventing the potential development of kinship bonds between them, and this was reflected unconsciously when the participants grouped themselves by families. The most striking example of ethnic exclusivity, however, was that afforded by the pattern of differentiation that occurred at the funeral of the last European mayor of

Pella. A multiplicity of historical factors (alluded to in various places above) was at work in shaping the way the people responded to the tension created by the funeral of this 'White', high-status, former resident of Pella (whose power in the community had been based on both his official role—outranked only by the Bishop and resident priests—and his position as a merchant able to control the lives of his clients in the Reserve through credit facilities). These responses were channelled, however, according to mutually accepted rules of separation, rules through which all, directly and indirectly, were forced to give legitimacy to the official status and racial structure of South African society, which had been intensified and legally sanctioned after 1948.

Although the analysis of mortuary rituals practised in the community of Pella has provided enough material to enable the setting out of the major characteristics of social structure and organization in Pella, the different types of solidarity to be found there, and the main foci of differentiation such as kinship, age and sex, religious and ethnic affiliations, it has given no indications as to political affiliations in the community, nor has it been possible to spell out in symbolic form the structures of clique alliances and of informal associations. Although it may be argued in theoretical terms that any series of rituals will provide an outside observer with insight into the sentiments and social organization of the group performing them through time, this study has shown that not all facets of social organization will necessarily be symbolically represented in any given ritual. This implies that Carstens' theory of 'information through symbolism' may provide only partial insights into the codes of culture and behaviour through time as well as at a particular period of time (1975: 93).

This study has further revealed some points of considerable interest in the cultural formation of the community at Pella, on the basis of which Barnard's suggestion that the religious beliefs of 'Cape Coloured' people in Namaqualand reflect the culture of their 'Khoekhoe' forebears (Barnard 1992: 198) can be tested. Perhaps the most striking of these is the essentially European origin of most of the cultural traits and forms observed in connection with formal religion and mortuary rites, and the extremely small number of traits of indigenous Nama provenance, the expression of the latter taking the form merely of details within a larger framework, as can be seen for example in the 'striping' of the participants in Damara wakes. A parallel situation exists regarding the material expression of culture (Klinghardt 1990); clothing, tools, most forms of dwellings, political and ceremonial organization all reflect European patterns, and this is also true of farming techniques, some of which may be based on indigenous patterns but which are known to have been formalized by Baster and European farmers who were reliant on the skills of Nama shepherds. Despite the European origins of these cultural elements, the cultural pattern is obviously different if compared with the contemporary European-orientated cultural patterns that predominate among the majority of people in South Africa who were formerly classified as 'Coloured', but it should not be taken to represent a 'survival' of nineteenth-century conditions and practices in Namaqualand any more than Pella should be regarded as representative of similarly sized village communities in the region. The uniqueness of the cultural pattern lies in the reworking of its European ideas and materials together with those of indigenous origin. Despite the obvious influence of missionaries and European colonists,

this reworking may be due as much to the patterning influence of indigenous ideas as a spontaneous evolution in the partial isolation of the late nineteenth century, but this is a matter for further investigation. A comparison of the cultural patterns of Pella with those of Steinkopf, even allowing for the considerable elapse of time separating the two sets of ethnographic data, would show that the two communities share some common customs and rites, particularly in respect of the process of preparation for death and of practices connected with wakes and relating to graves (cf. Carstens 1966), but there are also many differences, including the greater formality and apparent uniformity in beliefs and practices connected with death and the performance of funerary rites in Pella as opposed to Steinkopf. This aspect, which probably reflects differences between Catholic and Protestant beliefs and structures of church government, requires further comparative research in Steinkopf, however, and will be treated in a future publication on forms of cemeteries in Namaqualand. The examination of cultural patterns has shown, however, that hegemonic processes of acculturation and assimilation through internalization of the values and practices of the dominant social ideology have proceeded so far that in cultural terms the community, in common with those formed by Reserve-dwellers elsewhere in Namaqualand, can be recognized as being part of a wider synthetic cultural system brought into being by the historical processes that have given form to the current shape of South African society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The financial assistance of the Institute for Research Development of the Human Sciences Research Council and of the South African Museum towards this research is gratefully acknowledged. Opinions expressed or conclusions reached are those of the author and should not be regarded as representative of those of the Institute for Research Development, the Human Sciences Research Council, or the Council of the South African Museum.

The author is indebted to the inhabitants of Pella for their co-operation and hospitality during his numerous visits to their community, but it is impossible to single out individual informants in the interests of their anonymity.

The generous hospitality and assistance of the personnel of the Roman Catholic Mission at Pella are gratefully acknowledged. Special thanks are due to Fr. M. Malery, Sr. Léonie de Gonzaque and the late Sr. Theresé-Bernard Thünemann.

Numerous people outside the Pella Reserve also contributed to this research, but particular thanks are due to the Bishop of Keimoes-Upington, the Right Revd J. Minder, Dr O. van Schalkwyk, Dr P. Davison, Ms L. Hooper and Mr J. Herridge.

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Names of new taxa, combinations, synonyms, etc., when used for the first time, must be followed by the appropriate Latin (not English) abbreviation, e.g. gen. nov., sp. nov., comb. nov., syn. nov., etc.

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Synonymy arrangement should be according to chronology of names, i.e. all published scientific names by which the species previously has been designated are listed in chronological order, with all references to that name following in chronological order, e.g.:

Family **Nuculanidae**

Nuculana (Lembulus) bicuspidata (Gould, 1845)

Figs 14–15A

Nucula (Leda) bicuspidata Gould, 1845: 37.
Leda plicifera A. Adams, 1856: 50.
Laeda bicuspidata Hanley, 1859: 118, pl. 228 (fig. 73). Sowerby, 1871: pl. 2 (fig. 8a–b).
Nucula largillierti Philippi, 1861: 87.
Leda bicuspidata: Nicklès, 1950: 163, fig. 301; 1955: 110. Barnard, 1964: 234, figs 8–9.

Note punctuation in the above example:
comma separates author's name and year
semicolon separates more than one reference by the same author
full stop separates references by different authors
figures of plates are enclosed in parentheses to distinguish them from text-figures
dash, not comma, separates consecutive numbers.

Synonymy arrangement according to chronology of bibliographic references, whereby the year is placed in front of each entry, and the synonym repeated in full for each entry, is not acceptable.

In describing new species, one specimen must be designated as the holotype; other specimens mentioned in the original description are to be designated paratypes; additional material not regarded as paratypes should be listed separately. The complete data (registration number, depository, description of specimen, locality, collector, date) of the holotype and paratypes must be recorded, e.g.:

Holotype

SAM–A13535 in the South African Museum, Cape Town. Adult female from mid-tide region, King's Beach, Port Elizabeth (33°51′S 25°39′E), collected by A. Smith, 15 January 1973.

Note standard form of writing South African Museum registration numbers and date.

7. SPECIAL HOUSE RULES

Capital initial letters

(a) The Figures, Maps and Tables of the paper when referred to in the text
e.g. '. . . the Figure depicting *C. namacolus* . . .': '. . . in *C. namacolus* (Fig. 10) . . .'
(b) The prefixes of prefixed surnames in all languages, when used in the text, if not preceded by initials or full names
e.g. Du Toit but A. L. du Toit; Von Huene but F. von Huene
(c) Scientific names, but not their vernacular derivatives
e.g. Therocephalia, but therocephalian

Punctuation should be loose, omitting all not strictly necessary

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Specific name must not stand alone, but be preceded by the generic name or its abbreviation to initial capital letter, provided the same generic name is used consecutively. The generic name should not be abbreviated at the beginning of a sentence or paragraph.

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