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978-0-521-12124-8 - Masters and Servants on the Cape Eastern Frontier 1760-1803

Susan Newton-King

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Masters and Servants on the Cape Eastern Frontier 1760–1803

This important study sheds light on the history of the South African interior during the eighteenth century, virtually a lost century in South African historiography, and yet one in which South Africa's specific variant of social discrimination first evolved. Susan Newton-King describes the tense and volatile relationship between European settlers and the indigenous Khoisan peoples. She probes beneath the surface to examine the underlying causes of the pervasive violence that marked relations between masters and servants in the eastern Cape. Focusing on the fate of the many women and children captured by Boer commandos, she shows why they were assimilated to the condition of captive labour. She also provides the first detailed account of the 'Bushman War' on the north-east frontier. Her analysis links the frontier economy and the markets and merchants of Cape Town, and indicates the overriding importance of the commercial policies of the Dutch East India Company.

SUSAN NEWTON-KING is senior lecturer in history at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. She has published a number of articles dealing with frontier history in South Africa, and is co-author, with V. C. Malherbe, of *The Khoikhoi rebellion in the eastern Cape, 1799–1803* (1981).

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Acknowledgments

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Glossary of Dutch terms used in the text

<i>bijwoner/bijwoonder</i>	tenant farmer
<i>buitenpost</i>	outpost; outstation
<i>d'oude</i>	the elder
<i>De Kaap</i>	Cape Town
<i>dominee</i>	minister; clergyman
<i>droster</i>	deserter; runaway
<i>erfportie</i>	share of inheritance
<i>in maatschappij</i>	in partnership
<i>kleinbaas</i>	young master
<i>knecht</i>	servant; contracted wage labourer (usually white)
<i>krijgsgevangenen</i>	prisoners of war
<i>krijgsraad</i>	council of war
<i>ledikant</i>	four-poster bed; curtained bedstead
<i>op de helft van aanteel</i>	[farming] on the half; in return for half the increase
<i>opgaaf</i>	enumeration for the purposes of taxation
<i>opstal</i>	farm buildings
<i>schuldboek</i>	debt-book; debt register
<i>sjambok</i>	whip made of animal hide
<i>smous</i>	itinerant trader; pedlar
<i>strooijshuis</i>	mat house, probably circular
<i>trekos</i>	draught ox
<i>veeboer</i>	stock-farmer; grazier
<i>veeplaats</i>	grazing farm; stock-farm
<i>velschoen</i>	raw-hide shoe; roughly made leather shoe
<i>vendurol</i>	auction roll
<i>volk</i>	servants and slaves; people
<i>volkstem</i>	voice of the people; popular vote
<i>weduwee</i>	widow
<i>werf</i>	yard; enclosed space surrounding farm buildings
<i>wildsvleisch</i>	venison; meat of any game animal

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Song of the broken string

Because
of a people,
because of others,
other people
who came
breaking
the string for me,
the earth
is not earth,
the place is
a place now
changed for me.

Because
the string is that which
has broken for me,
this earth
is no longer
a place to me.

Because
the string is broken,
the country feels
as if it lay
empty before me,
our country seems
as if it lay
both empty before me,
and dead before me.

Because
of this string,
because of a people
breaking the string,
this earth, my place
is the place
of something –
a thing broken –
that does not
stop sounding,
breaking within me.

Stephen Watson, *Return of the Moon: Versions from the /Xam*,
Cape Town: Carrefour Press, 1991