Prohibition & Resistance: A Socio-Political Exploration of the Changing Dynamics of the Southern African Cannabis Trade, c. 1850 – the present.

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By

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Abstract

Looking primarily at the social and political trends in South Africa over the course of the last century and a half, this thesis explores how these trends have contributed to the establishment of the southern Africa cannabis complex. Through an examination of the influence which the colonial paradigm based on Social Darwinian thinking had on the understanding of the cannabis plant in southern Africa, it is argued that cannabis prohibition and apartheid laws rested on the same ideological foundation. This thesis goes on to argue that the dynamics of cannabis production and trade can be understood in terms of the interplay between the two themes of 'prohibition' and 'resistance'. Prohibition is not only understood to refer to cannabis laws, but also to the proscription of inter-racial contact and segregation dictated by the apartheid regime. Resistance, then, refers to both resistance to apartheid and resistance to cannabis laws in this thesis. Including discussions on the hippie movement and development of the world trade, the anti-apartheid movement, the successful implementation of import substitution strategies in Europe and North America from the 1980's, and South Africa's incorporation into the global trade, this thesis illustrates how the apartheid system (and its collapse) influenced the region's cannabis trade.

Keywords: anti-apartheid movement, apartheid, colonialism, cannabis prohibition, cannabis trade, dagga, hippie movement, southern African cannabis complex

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My family's support and patience with my eccentricities have kept me going throughout my research. This research would have been impossible without that support.

Most of all I must thank all the cannabis users, growers, smugglers and dealers whose openness and co-operation allowed me to gather the information used in this thesis. Particular mention should be made of Slimy, William, R.Asta and Pete, who trusted me with their life stories. Their honesty, even when talking about difficult topics, is highly appreciated and it is my hope that they will be satisfied what I have written.

Note on Sources

The research carried out in the course of this thesis was hampered by a lack of funds, particularly for travel purposes. Difficult decisions had to be made on how to allocate funding for research trips. The decision was made that priority should be placed in areas in which primary sources were most lacking, and be directed to answering the question of how the trade came to its current state in the region. As a result I focused my resources on carrying out a relatively large (considering the subject-matter and other constraints) and widespread oral history investigation with people involved in the cannabis economy. In total thirty-two people consisting of growers, smugglers and dealers from across southern Africa were interviewed, each person having a minimum of fifteen years experience in the cannabis trade (though the majority had twenty to thirty years experience). To supplement these interviews, particularly for the purpose of cross-referencing, I had discussions with a large number of others involved in the cannabis economy.

The investigation began with a series of interviews with 'Slimy' and 'William'. These interviews consisted of in-depth interviews in which they were asked to simply tell their life stories. They were allowed to construct their own narratives of their lives. These two people were selected because of their long-time involvement in the cannabis trade, both having more than 30 years experience. They were also selected for their experiences in different tiers of the trade. Both were involved in dealing, smuggling and growing at different times. The interview guide for this initial section of the project consisted only of biographical questions and their memories of cannabis at the different points in their lives, such as how they became involved with cannabis use and the cannabis trade. From these initial interviews common themes were identified to construct an interview guide to further interviews, with 'Slimy', 'William' and (initially) a few cannabis smokers and finally their dealers acting as gatekeepers. I should also make it clear that not all of the people involved in this research project are still involved in the cannabis trade, though I suspect that some may have suggested this as the case to protect themselves.

Over the course of the research the interview guide was refined as some themes, such as cannabis use in the armed forces (which was initially thought to be an important aspect), were found to be of little importance. Other themes, such as the anti-apartheid movement and the introduction of powerful imported varieties, became more prominent. In every interview, use of the interview guide was kept to a minimum, used to keep the interview moving, rather than

to lead the interview. Each interview was examined thematically, and statements on the dynamics of trade (such as the emergence of different methods of cultivation or packaging) were cross-referenced with each other to make me confident of the information I chose to include in the thesis.

I had to bear in mind that the way people interpret events after the fact often changes. Oral history, after all, is said to tell us less about events than the way in which the narrator constructs meaning. This is particularly relevant in this thesis with regard to anti-apartheid sentiment. That a number of those who were interviewed in South Africa were able to show that they were involved in the anti-apartheid movement and cannabis trading during the same period, as opposed to a claim of simply holding anti-apartheid sentiments at the time, gave me confidence in claiming this link. Interviewees' involvement in the anti-apartheid movement was established in various ways, such as current positions in organisations emerging from the anti-apartheid movement and the ability to act as gatekeepers to others involved in this movement. However, establishing this information was often difficult and took multiple interviews, thus placing further pressure on resources. It is also difficult to know which of the people not directly involved in the anti-apartheid movement placed more emphasis on their anti-apartheid sentiment than was the case during the apartheid period. Despite this there was a near universal mention of the role between their involvement with cannabis and their resistance to state authority during the apartheid period.

There were several other problems encountered in carrying out this oral history research. A police clampdown in early 2009 caused several people in a matter of days to contact me and ask me to delete their recordings and transcripts. This led to me losing roughly a third of the material I had gathered in 2008. There were also some language issues which hampered investigations. For example, I was unable to afford to pay for people who could be trusted and spoke isiXhosa or siSwati to accompany me through these cultivation areas. While this was not a major issue, it does mean that in some interviews the interviewee and I were unable to go into as much detail as I would have liked.

In line with the conventions of oral history research, the interviewees were given certain options with regard to how their information was used. Some have allowed their information to be placed in an archive, others have asked for it not to be. Some have said that transcripts of their interviews (either complete or in part) are acceptable, while others have allowed their recording to be archived. However, given the need to protect the people involved in this

project, certain information, such as peoples and place names, has to be removed from their interview information. Furthermore, as a part of my agreement with some people, none of the information may be used to undermine the cannabis trade, thus a one (and in some cases two) year embargo has been placed on all the interview data prior to it being made available.

The emphasis placed on oral history research and fieldwork for this thesis did cause problems in other areas too. I was unable, for example, to examine many primary sources, such as the minutes of evidence for the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Abuse of Dagga found in the National Archives in Pretoria. Furthermore, police and court records were not examined. This line of research was initially considered important but it was decided that the information, largely because of the geographical area being dealt with, would not prove useful. Valuable information from these records, it was decided, would only be generalisable beyond specific localities if several areas records were examined. This was unfeasible with the resources available. These, and other valuable primary sources, should be included in further studies done on the topic.

Introduction and Overview

In present-day South Africa a large debate exists about the position of the cannabis plant in our society. For many it is nothing less than a poison, while for others it is a panacea, capable of solving humanity's economic, environmental, medical, and often even spiritual, concerns. This thesis avoids both of these extremes, and seeks to establish a middle ground for this polarised debate. What is beyond doubt is that the debate on cannabis is emotionally charged and deeply contested, and that it is often characterised by a very clear lack of objectivity. That is not to say that there are no 'voices of reason' in this debate. These voices do, however, seem few and far between. Perhaps the chief cause of this lack of objectivity in the cannabis debate is the large amount of misinformation disseminated by media reports on the subject.

An elementary example is the so-called 'gateway drug' theory, in which the use of cannabis is said to lead to the use of 'harder' drugs. The most commonly cited evidence for this idea is the fact that for most 'hard drug' users, the use of cannabis preceded the use of drugs such as heroin or crack cocaine. A simple analogy clearly shows the absurdity of this view. In the words of Earleywine, "people who participate in rare events likely participate in popular activities first."[1] Cannabis smoking, a comparatively popular activity, should be expected to predate 'hard drug' use, a comparatively rare activity. Logically, to say "the use of cannabis leads to the use of 'harder' drugs" is analogous to saying, "riding a bicycle leads to riding a motorcycle." The vast majority of people who ride motorcycles begin by riding bicycles, and yet only a very small minority of those who ride bicycles will go on to ride motorcycles. There is no reason to believe that riding a bicycle in any way necessitates the individual later riding a motorcycle. There is no logical connection between the two activities, and likewise, it is incorrect to assert that the use of cannabis leads to, or results in, the use of harder drugs.[2]

The 'gateway drug' theory is often cited by proponents of cannabis prohibition. However, what they fail to recognise is that, because cannabis is illegal, people who use cannabis gain access to other, more dangerous, drugs. Procuring cannabis is often a drug user's introduction to illegal drug markets, and it is interesting to note that it is not only proponents of prohibition who show this gross lapse of reasoning: even so-called 'cannabis activists' are guilty of the oversight. It is often said that cannabis is harmless. Some people say this is

[1] Earleywine, M., *Understanding Marijuana* (New York, 2002), p. 57
[2] Zimmer, L., and Morgan, J. P., *Marijuana Myths, Marijuana Facts: A Review of the Scientific Evidence* (New York, 1997), pp. 37-38

because, as opposed to synthetic pharmaceuticals (whether legal or illegal), cannabis is 'natural'. This argument is similarly problematic, and is guilty of what is known as the 'naturalistic fallacy', where one equates what is 'natural' with what is 'good' or 'right'. The myriad of toxic substances which, like cannabis, occur naturally, effectively refutes the argument that what is natural must also be harmless. (In contrast to synthetic pharmaceuticals, legal or illegal). Others who claim that cannabis is harmless point out its very low toxicity, and draw attention to the fact that the use of cannabis, unlike the use of alcohol or tobacco, has not had any deaths directly attributed to it. However, while cannabis does have a very low toxicity – certainly the lowest of any of the commonly-used intoxicants – this does not mean that its use may not aggravate certain existing medical conditions. For example, the use of cannabis dramatically increases one's heart-rate.

Research conducted in 2000 by the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts, found that there is a correlation between cannabis intoxication and one's likelihood of suffering a heart attack, due to this dramatic increase in heart-rate and cannabis' effect on blood pressure.[3] So, while there are no deaths attributed directly to cannabis, its use might exacerbate certain conditions that may, in turn, cause lethal cardiac damage. It is not cannabis that causes the death, but had it not been for cannabis, the condition that caused the death would not have surfaced. This is similar to the way in which HIV/AIDS works. It is not HIV that kills the person, but another pathogen preying on their weakened immune system. The same logic applies to the use of cannabis, in that it is not the cannabis that causes the death, but the conditions that its use encourages. Thus, to make the assertion that nobody has died from cannabis use is logically identical to saying that nobody has died from HIV. Of course, it is only the reasoning that is identical – cannabis use remains absent from any death certificate, and there is no case in which it has been shown to be directly responsible for a death. Still, if my reasoning is correct, it seems spurious to claim that the use of cannabis is harmless. The evidence does not logically support this assertion.

These examples are cited to highlight the way in which information about cannabis can be misinterpreted to suit the views of those presenting it, and to show the unwillingness of either side in this very polarised debate to concede any ground to the other. Because of the apparent deficiencies in the reasoning of both sides, I attempt to address the topic from an unaffiliated perspective. I avoid joining the legalisation debate, and I do not assess the merits either of

[3] BBC News, *Cannabis 'increases heart attack risk'* (3 March 2000), available online: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/664296.stm, accessed: 21/05/2009

legalisation or the medicinal use of cannabis. In this thesis, a social history of the cannabis plant in southern Africa is presented, with the intention of contributing to an understanding of how the particularly large cannabis trade in the region developed.

In this thesis, southern Africa is taken to include South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland in particular. While Malawi is often included in discussions on the southern African trade, this country has a unique pattern of production and distribution, and is thus not referred to in this thesis. These three countries (South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland) form a kind of self-sufficient, closed cannabis market, known as the southern African cannabis complex. Furthermore, each country is considered a large producer, even when individually compared to the world's largest cultivation areas. Cannabis growth is near universal in the region, and most concentrated in Lesotho, Swaziland and the former Transkei, and the cannabis trade is focused on three specific districts. These are Swaziland's Hhohho district (centred around Piggs Peak)[4], Pondoland (centred around Lusikisiki, in the former Transkei)[5] and Lesotho's Mokhotlong district.[6]

Since the 1990s, the South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland triune has been thought of as one of the largest cannabis-producing complexes in the world. It is hard to estimate either the quantity of cannabis produced in southern Africa or the monetary value of its trade. Most sources are not willing to speculate on the quantity produced at all, preferring to use statistics of seizure and arrest. The markets of the South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland cannabis trade are suspected to be huge, and – although statistics are scarce for the late years of the apartheid government – it is thought that by the transition to ANC government in 1994, these countries were producing one hundred and eighty thousand metric tons annually, with the value of the industry being about US$ 15 billion.[7] The large majority of this produce is traded internally in southern Africa.

These statistics give the impression of a very advanced, multi-billion Dollar industry; one which presumably has been lucrative for those involved in it. In this regard, the statistics are

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[4] Pillinger, S., "Swaziland", in Gastrow, P. (ed.), *Penetrating State and Business Organised Crime in Southern Africa: Vol. 1, ISS, Monograph No.86* (Halfway House, 2003), available online: www.issafrica.org/pubs/Monographs/No86/chap5.htm accessed: 21/02/2007

[5] Kepe, T., "*Cannabis Sativa* and rural livelihoods in South Africa: Politics of Cultivation, Trade and Value in Pondoland", *Development Southern Africa*, Vol. 20, No. 5 (2003), p. 608

[6] Laniel, L., *Cannabis in Lesotho: A Preliminary Survey* (UNESCO, Management of Social Transformations-Discussion Paper No.34) 1998, available online: www.unesco.org/most/dslaniel.htm accessed: 22/02/2007

[7] Baynham, S., 'Southern Africa's Role', in the South African Institute of International Affairs, *The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa: International Dimensions to a Local Crisis* (Johannesburg, 1998), p. 108

misleading. In reality very few people involved in the southern African cannabis trade have managed to dramatically improve their standard of living. Usually, they have only managed to supplement their income, or to create a limited source of extra income. Kepe,[8] Leggett,[9] and Laniel[10] all agree that this is the case. Because each producer seldom cultivates a large quantity of cannabis, the income derived from the crop is limited. In addition, the sheer number of small-scale growers in the producer areas (for example, 70% of Swaziland's Hhohho district's agricultural income is derived from cannabis),[11] means that the southern African market is continually flooded. This is evidenced by the fact that no amount of seizure or arrest has ever been able to drive up the price of cannabis, and although Swazi police claim to have done so in 2002, there is no evidence to support their claim.[12] The perpetually low price of locally-produced cannabis means that even the wholesalers and large-scale dealers of cannabis do not derive an exceptionally large income from it. To state the point clearly, the profit derived from the cannabis trade is so widely distributed amongst producers, wholesalers and dealers, that each earns a relatively insubstantial share.

Another factor contributing to inaccurate estimations of the value of the Southern African cannabis trade is that cannabis statistics are almost always unreliable. This is the case for several reasons. The first is that it is unclear how the police calculate the value of the cannabis that is seized. The price of cannabis in South Africa, in what the police call 'street value', can vary from around 50c per gram up to around R130 per gram, depending on its quality.[13] Furthermore, it is seldom specified which 'street' they are talking about. The cost 'on the street' in Port St. Johns will be substantially lower than that of Johannesburg, for example. Furthermore, what constitutes a 'street dealer'? Does this classification apply to the person who sells cannabis to the consumer? If this is the case, what is the situation when a person buys cannabis from *another consumer*, as often seems to be the case? It is these sorts of questions that undo any attempt to calculate an accurate figure for the value of the cannabis trade in the region. I would go as far as to say that the figures are based on an almost random series of valuations of price per kilogram, and on generalisations about prices

[8] Kepe, "*Cannabis Sativa* and rural livelihoods in South Africa" (2003), p. 614
[9] Leggett, T., *Rainbow Vice: The Drugs and Sex Industries in the New South Africa* (Cape Town, 2001), p. 33
[10] Laniel, L., *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[11] Hall, J., *Africa at Large: Farmers find Marijuana the Most Lucrative Cash Crop* (2003), available online: www.afrika.no/detailed/3864.html accessed: 21/02/2007
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] Author's observation (November 2009)

in different areas. In addition, sometimes figures are politically influenced, and the reported value of seized cannabis is inflated or deflated accordingly.

On the last point, inflating the value of seized drugs is a major problem amongst law enforcement agencies dealing with what is known as the International Drug Economy (IDE). In situations where agencies must justify receiving a large budget, it is often in their best interest to inflate the scope and value of the drug trade. This, in turn, sets the precedent from which the country funding the agency proceeds in its attempts to combat the drug trade. Tom Feiling, writing about the international cocaine trade, draws attention to this problem:

> The Financial Action Task Force, a multinational organisation set up to tackle money-laundering by drug traffickers, also commissioned a study to calculate the size of the illegal drug business. When it's author reported back that the global trade in illegal drugs was probably worth between $45 billion and $280 billion a year, his employers decided not to publish his findings because 'some country members expected a larger figure'.[14]

In the case of South Africa, however, it would be in the best interest of the country to deflate figures concerning the cannabis trade. If the figures for cannabis production were too high, pressure from both public and political spheres may force the government to turn combating the cannabis trade from a low into a high priority. And if the South African government was forced to clamp down effectively on the cannabis trade, it could mean a complete collapse of the economy in certain, already poverty-stricken, areas. Essentially, it is in the government's interest to only give the appearance of attacking the cannabis trade, because actually doing so may lead to far greater issues, including political unrest, in a number of rural areas.

This statement should be qualified by referring to Hajdu, who points out that

> it is likely that there are big differences between villages when it comes to [cannabis cultivation], and that the position of dominant families in the villages when it comes to cannabis growing probably has significant effects on its prevalence. Interviews suggest that the fact that other people in the village grow cannabis and trade it successfully has a high significance for the decision for individuals to get involved in this activity.
>
> The common popular view that rural people in Pondoland survive mostly off growing cannabis is in any case strongly exaggerated. For those few households that engage in this activity in the study area (perhaps 2-3%) it is an important form of livelihood, but other activities are vastly more important on a village-wide scale.[15]

[14] Feiling, T., *The Candy Machine: How Cocaine Took Over the World* (Johannesburg, 2009), p. 4

[15] Hajdu, F., *Local Worlds: Rural Livelihood Strategies in Eastern Cape, South Africa* (PhD Thesis, Linköping University), p. 145, available online: http://www.diva-portal.org/liu/abstract.xsql?dbid=7235 accessed: 10/02/2009

What is to be taken from these comments is that the reliance on cannabis production as a form of livelihood in Pondoland (and in Lesotho and Swaziland, for that matter) is found in small pockets dispersed throughout the region. It is by no means the only source of income in the area, although I would dispute the 2-3% figure given by Hajdu as my own observations lead me to believe it is much higher. Although this discrepancy may be explained by the fact that I specifically went to areas which I knew had high concentrations of cannabis production, I also observed that the majority of the cannabis is grown clandestinely, outside of village limits, and this may account for Hajdu's low figure. Either way, there are certainly areas in Pondoland which would become very volatile if the police eliminated cannabis production altogether.[16]

There should be no doubt, then, that it serves the interests of the South African government to underestimate the value of the cannabis trade in the region. There is no evidence that the South African government has deliberately done so, but there are a number of reports concerning cannabis seizures where the value of the seized cannabis seems to be inexplicably low.

One example of such anomalous reporting can be found in the case of two seizures that occurred in Grahamstown, in November 2008 and on the 27th of August 2009. Calculated from figures in newspaper reports following the August 2009 seizure, it seems that Grahamstown police determine the 'street value' of cannabis at 70c per gram.[17] This is a figure which, in my experience, is extremely low and only possible if the quality of the seized cannabis was pitiful on both occasions. This would be an unlikely coincidence, and so although it was reported that 1.2 million Rand's worth of cannabis was seized, I would suggest that the actual figure was no less than double that.

There are other discrepancies. For example, in 1992 the South African government estimated that 6000 hectares of land were under cannabis cultivation, and while this figure was reported to drop over the next two years, the USA's Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) estimated that 20 to 30 thousand hectares of South African land were under cultivation over the same period.[18] I would argue that, in reality, the figure probably sat somewhere in the middle of

[16] This has also been noted by Gastrow, P., *Mindblowing: The Cannabis Trade in Southern Africa* (Cape Town, 2003), available online: http://www.iss.co.za/dynamic/administration/file_manager/file_links/CANNABIS.PDF?link_id=28&slink_id=283&link_type=12&slink_type=12&tmpl_id=3 accessed: 13/10/2009

[17] Calculated from *Grocotts Mail,* "CSG: Crime Scene Grahamstown", Aug 28th 2009

[18] Gastrow, *Mindblowing* (2003)

these two; the South African government being guilty of underestimation, and the DEA providing the prime example of an agency which regularly overestimates the extent of the international drug trade. However, although I believe this to be an informed opinion, it must be stressed from the outset of this thesis that all estimations concerning the IDE – on my part or anyone's – are highly speculative, and almost impossible to verify.

Still, the figures released in 1994 by the South African government referring to the size of the cannabis trade in the region do seem to be suspiciously low. From my own observations of the region, the cannabis trade seems to be much larger than South African authorities are willing to admit, although its exact size and value remains undeterminable. It seems unlikely that southern Africa is running a $15-billion per year industry, and just how it can be calculated that the region annually produces 180 thousand metric tons of cannabis is unknown. Yet, the cannabis trade in southern Africa is certainly substantial. Its monetary value may well be in the hundreds of millions (or perhaps even billions) of US Dollars range, and thousands of metric tons of cannabis, while perhaps not one hundred and eighty thousand, are very likely produced in the region. Currently, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) accepts the figures of the 2009 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), a document published annually by the US Department of State's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, which claims that "some top-end estimates are that 20,000 to 30,000 hectares of arable land are used to grow cannabis, although most observers estimate the area dedicated to illicit cannabis to be about 1,500-2,000 hectares."[19] Once again, I would say that "most observers"[20] underestimate cultivation, while twenty to thirty thousand hectares (an estimate attributable to the DEA, who are renowned for their "top-end estimates"[21]) does seem excessive.

This thesis traces the development of the southern African cannabis trade, from the introduction of the plant to its current state. It does so by examining the major themes that, at different times, have altered the dynamics of the production, trade or use of cannabis in southern Africa. Thus, while the reader will note that the information contained in the thesis is arranged in rough chronological order, an emphasis was placed on dividing the chapters

[19] Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2009*, p. 527, available online: http://www.scribd.com/doc/17440454/The-2009-International-Narcotics-Control-Strategy-Report-INCSR-voll accessed: 1/11/2009
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] *Ibid.*

thematically. This is the reason for a certain degree of overlap in the timelines of each chapter. The thesis is divided into four main chapters, each dealing with a different theme regarding the development of the southern African cannabis trade.

The relationship between cannabis and human society is one with an extensive history that dates back several millennia. This thesis, however, focuses predominantly on the geographical areas of present-day South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland, and the developments in the area's cannabis trade over (roughly) the last century and a half. In order to fully understand this period, Chapter One provides an introduction to the cannabis plant and cannabis in Africa prior to 1850. This chapter is designed to provide a foundation for understanding the chapters that follow. It provides botanical information on the cannabis plant, as well as clarifying the nomenclature and etymology associated with cannabis. Chapter One continues by discussing the diffusion of the cannabis plant into and around Africa, while providing an introduction to the cannabis trade immediately prior to the arrival of European powers at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. It then goes on to discuss the effect that European settlement had on the cannabis trade, up until attitudes toward the plant began to change amongst the colonial powers in the mid-19th Century.

Chapter One describes the southern African cannabis trade at the time of European settlement at the Cape in 1652, and examines the changes wrought by this settlement on the region's cannabis trade throughout the late-seventeenth, eighteenth and early-nineteenth Centuries. Including a discussion on the pre-colonial use, cultivation and trade of cannabis, this chapter shows both how the European settlers incorporated themselves into the economic environment of cannabis trading, and how they altered this environment after establishing political power in the region.

Early accounts of cannabis in Africa are very often given as sidelines in Europeans' accounts of African people. Almost all sources regarding pre-colonial Africa consist of documents written by Europeans. These accounts are limited, in that although they describe cannabis in a specific time and place, they are not in great enough abundance to show the way in which cannabis was understood over a period of time by a specific group or in a specific area in the pre-colonial period. This makes it very difficult to describe changes in the use, production, trade or social acceptance of cannabis over a period of time, either by a specific group or in a specific region. The evidence often simply does not exist to be speculated about.

In the absence of usable accounts, one must rely on linguistic and archaeological evidence. The linguistic evidence for cannabis' diffusion into and around Africa is mainly the work of B.M. du Toit,[22] whose analysis, while not without problems, is the most comprehensive to date. This thesis makes extensive use of du Toit's work in describing the spread of cannabis around Africa.

Chapter Two addresses the period circa 1850 to 1970, and investigates reasons for the illegality of cannabis. It deals with the growing 'moral panic' surrounding the use of drugs, from the 1850s until the prohibition of cannabis in 1922, and also deals with the request made by the Union of South Africa to have international legislation passed against cannabis in 1923. This section also examines the first five decades of prohibition in South Africa, and the gradual entrenchment of the country's more severe cannabis laws. The institution of 'new', even more severe, drug laws in 1972 marks the point of closure for this chapter. Chapter Two examines how, despite long-term involvement in the cannabis trade, colonial South Africa moved towards the prohibition of cannabis in its territories. This period in South African history (c.1850 – c.1925) is marked by the rise of the segregationist state and the entrenchment of racist laws. I situate the prohibition of cannabis in this greater climate of moral panic over the threat posed by so-called 'primitive' types to the politically dominant colonists. It is argued that the prohibition of cannabis in South Africa was an almost inadvertent result of attempts to scientifically justify colonial oppression. That South Africa became the first country to request that international restrictions be placed on cannabis makes Chapter Two vital in understanding the plant's international prohibition.

The chapter begins by examining the way in which the colonial paradigm, the 'scientific' paradigm of the time, constructed ideas of personhood, and how these constructions were used to portray cannabis as a dangerous drug, the use of which posed a threat to colonists in South Africa. It discusses the construction of the idea that cannabis smokers were 'moral degenerates', and examines the evolution of this idea throughout the hundred-year period starting from 1850. The chapter then goes on to describe the institution of cannabis laws from the mid-19th Century until the 1970s, and the way in which the apartheid government dealt with the advent of 'white' middle-class cannabis users; people from 'good homes' who turned to cannabis smoking. The decision taken by the apartheid government to view this

[22] Particularly du Toit, B. M., *Cannabis in Africa*, (Rotterdam, 1980) & du Toit, B. M., "Dagga: The History and Ethnographic Setting of Cannabis Sativa in Southern Africa", in Rubin, R. (ed.), *Cannabis and Culture* (The Hague, 1975), pp. 81-116

kind of person as being involved in a "cult" rather than being involved in typical, youthful rebellion is also addressed in this chapter. The emergence of this so-called "hippie cult" provides a convenient juncture at which to conclude the chapter, as it leaves a foundation from which to examine the rise of the hippie movement around the world.

In Chapter Three the establishment of the world cannabis trade is discussed. I review the role of the hippie movement in the establishment of this trade, as well as the role played by this group in southern Africa. The rise of the world cannabis trade is used as a rubric for examining the specific conditions in southern Africa which led to dramatic increases in the production and trade of cannabis in the region from the 1970s until 1990. This chapter shows how southern Africa became one of the world's chief centres for the production and trade of cannabis, and makes specific reference to the role played by both apartheid-era social policies and the anti-apartheid movement in this regard. While Chapter Two deals mainly with the legal aspects of the cannabis trade, Chapter Three moves on to discuss the dynamics of the trade itself, as well as the widespread resistance to cannabis laws.

During the period beginning in 1990 and continuing to the present day, the southern African cannabis trade has seen major adjustments, due in part to the collapse of the apartheid system and also due to changing dynamics within the world cannabis trade. Chapter Four discusses these changes, which include the cultivation of high-potency cannabis in Europe and North America, and the introduction of this cannabis into Southern Africa. I discuss the advent of hashish production following this development, and draw attention to the importance of this transition within the cannabis trade.

While there has been some valuable research conducted in the period from 1970 to the present,[23] there has been no attempt to collate its findings since 1980. Since the second half of the 20th Century, as cannabis gained popularity amongst 'Westernised' middle-class youths worldwide, a far greater amount of academic research into cannabis has been undertaken. The popularisation of cannabis, however, has sparked research in some areas more than others. Cannabis literature remains predominantly focused on patterns of consumption, criminology and biology,[24] leaving historians with comparatively little literature of use. Government

[23] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980); Leggett, *Rainbow Vice* (2001); Streek, B., and Wicksteed, R., *Render Unto Kaiser: a Transkei Dossier* (Johannesburg, 1981); Gastrow, *Mindblowing* (2003)

[24] South African Institute of International Affairs, *The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa: International Dimensions to a Local Crisis.* (Johannesburg, 1998); Nahas, G. G., Sutin, K. M., Harvey, and D. J., Agurell, S. (eds.), *Marihuana and Medicine* (Totowa, 1999)

reports, and a few criminological reports, are the main sources of written information concerning the period spanning the prohibition of cannabis to the cementing of the southern African cannabis networks in the mid-1970s. This poses a major problem. Government reports, unless their commissioners have a specific mandate to address existing laws, often rest on the premise that the law is justifiably enforced. Thus, both government reports and criminological studies are inherently flawed methods of researching the illegal drug trade, as both rest on the premise of criminality, and immediately identify all those involved in the trade as 'criminals'. The criminalisation of drugs, and especially cannabis, is a deeply contested issue, and people (such as dealers) involved in the drug trade often do not see themselves as criminals and will resist any attempt to define themselves as such. Thus, because criminology rests on the premise of criminality, subjects will resist attempts by criminologists to study their livelihoods.

The criminological approach is clearly seen in the South African Institute of International Affairs' 1998 publication, "The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa".[25] While they do not attempt to create a historical document, this text is indicative of the general academic trend in writing about drug markets. It is, therefore, an example of the form in which most of the resources available to historians regarding the modern drug trade are set.

It is impossible to study drugs in the social sciences and history from this criminological perspective; it will never provide an adequate answer to the issue under investigation. This is because the nature of the drug trade consists in covert activities, while police or government reports merely furnish information that has already been mediated by the drug trade itself. This mediation might include attempts by those involved in trading to mislead authorities, or the political manipulation of drug-related statistics that I have alluded to previously. Thus, the only way to get meaningful information about the drug trade is to speak directly to those involved in it.

Furthermore, the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) presents a model of law enforcement that is distinctly 'top-down'. This has led to problems in their work regarding the classification of cannabis. The result is that all drugs are grouped into the same category – law enforcement agencies are purportedly combating cannabis as much as they are combating cocaine. In their conception, cannabis production and trade falls into the category of organised crime first, and then only organised drug crime. This neglects the fact that the

[25] SAIIA, *The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa* (1998)

cannabis economy's structure is vastly different to both that of other drugs, and organised crime in general. To illustrate this point, I refer to Baynham, who introduces the SAIIA's report by saying: "The project arose out of a shared concern that increasingly the greatest threat which the region faces [is]… the fear of violent crime."[26] This admission points to the fact that the work of the SAIIA rests on a preconceived idea about those involved in the cannabis trade in all its references to it. It implies that cannabis traders (along with cocaine drug lords) are violent, and cannot be regarded as honest research participants. They are instead considered to be criminals, who will deceive and lie, and even kill, to protect themselves and their profession. I have found the opposite to be the case. Cannabis traders overwhelmingly believe that their profession is morally justifiable. The vast majority believe that the substance is harmless and that is has been unfairly vilified. Some go as far as to say that by selling cannabis they are doing humanity a great service, as they believe that the use of the plant can contribute very positively to society. In light of the hindrances entailed by adopting a criminological approach to the study of cannabis trading, I carried out an oral history and fieldwork investigation with cannabis traders.

The interviews that were conducted provided me with a lot of information regarding the southern African cannabis trade's development and the emergence of southern Africa in the global cannabis market. I encountered many problems common to the research of illegal aspects of society, such as the lack of official records, and very few means of verifying truth. People are seldom willing to discuss their illegal activities and, moreover, their experiences may differ widely, and thus caution must be exercised when making generalisations about the information contained in these interviews. Those interviewed were selected because of the duration of their involvement in cannabis sub-cultures in southern Africa, and their degree of exposure to aspects of the cannabis trade such as production, trafficking and dealing. Evidence of involvement was certified through photographs and extended discussions. No claims were taken at face value.

As is to be expected with an investigation of this nature, there were serious problems encountered during the process of data collection. Several people refused recorded interviews, for example, but were willing to give an unrecorded interview in which I was allowed to take notes. Others said they did not have the time for me to conduct a full interview with them, but were willing to answer any questions I had at the time of our

[26] Baynham, S., 'Introduction' in SAIIA, *The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa.* (1998), p. 1

meeting. The result was the gathering of different kinds of information, varying from full interview transcripts, to notes taken during extensive interviews, to dealers' or growers' price lists scrawled on small pieces of paper outlining the cost of several kinds of cannabis in various European cities. In order to gather a larger amount, and a richer variety, of information, I undertook fieldtrips to the major production areas in southern Africa, the former Transkei, Lesotho and Swaziland. I also conducted an assessment of the markets in South Africa's major urban centres. These fieldtrips were invaluable in providing me with a clear picture of how the cannabis trade functioned, from the grower through to the consumer, and allowed me the opportunity to meet several people who possessed valuable information. The fieldtrips also involved a wide-enough variety of people to enable me to cross-reference sources against each other, making me more confident about the veracity of the information I finally included in this thesis. Then there was the question of how best to use the variety of information I was able to gather. The decision was made that, wherever possible, information from the full transcripts would be used, and references to corroborate this information would be given if I deemed them necessary. Furthermore, I decided not to use information unless there was consensus between a number of informants/interviewees that it was true. The transcripts, it was decided, are a more verifiable source of information, and thus should be used whenever possible. Those interviewed, however, have to remain protected and must be assured that none of the information they have contributed to this research project can be used to cause damage to them or their profession. This means that it is my responsibility to ensure not only that the information I gathered cannot be traced back to the individuals that provided me with it, but also that it cannot be used by authorities to undermine the cannabis trade. This has not been an easy task.

A final note should be made regarding the title of this thesis, *Prohibition and Resistance*. It is argued in this thesis that the two major themes in the development of the southern African cannabis trade are 'prohibition' and 'resistance'. This is another motivation for constructing my dissertation as I have. These two main themes are the focus of Chapter Two (prohibition), and Chapters Three and Four (resistance) respectively. Chapter One is intended to provide a conceptual background for these discussions.

The title *Prohibition and Resistance* is meant to connote more than just a specification of how these two terms relate to the cannabis trade in Southern Africa. In this thesis, prohibition is understood in a more general sense, and is intended not only to describe the proscription of cannabis, but all legal commitment to the total suppression of a certain act.

In this sense, ‘prohibition’ encompasses the entire gamut of oppressive laws in South Africa’s history, and particularly those that were aimed at preventing inter-racial contact and supporting ‘white’ political supremacy during apartheid. The reason for this expansion on the concept of prohibition, which I shall discuss in greater detail in Chapter Two, is that the colonial construction of personhood, which later provided the foundation for apartheid policy, also provided the foundation for the prohibition of cannabis. It is argued, therefore, that the apartheid system and cannabis prohibition rest on the same theoretical foundation.

‘Resistance’, then, is taken to mean resistance to prohibition in this more general sense, and does not only include resistance to cannabis laws, but also resistance to apartheid-era policies. It is argued, in Chapter Three, that this political dimension has contributed significantly to the establishment of the cannabis trade in southern Africa. Chapter Four takes the issue of resistance further, and demonstrates how constant attempts to undermine the enforcement of both local and international cannabis laws have changed the cannabis industry, even to the point where cannabis plants have become biologically engineered.

Chapter 1: An Introduction to Cannabis and Cannabis in Africa prior to 1850

Despite the popularity of cannabis consumption in modern times, little remains understood about the cannabis plant. In fact, cannabis seems to be regarded by the general public first and foremost as a drug, akin to Ecstasy or LSD. So evident is this reductive understanding of cannabis, that in the literature it is often discussed as if it is not a plant at all, but simply a chemical.[1] For this reason, this chapter begins with a brief description of the botany of the cannabis plant. My intention is to elucidate that cannabis is a complex botanical substance, which transcends its societal labels of 'drug', or mere 'weed'.

Like many plants, cannabis presents a uniform pattern of growth. Cannabis is an annual plant, and its growth cycle is divided into two stages, a vegetative stage and a subsequent flowering stage, after which the plant will die.

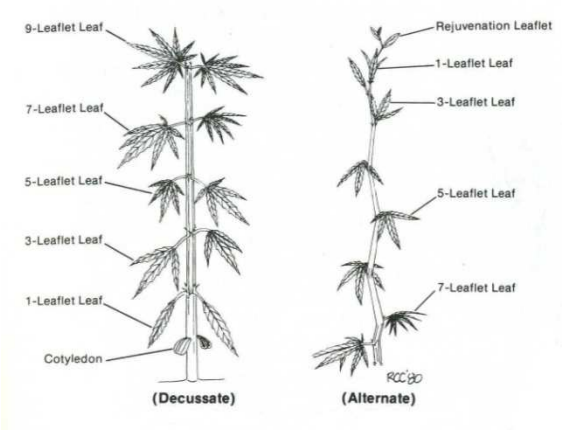

Figure 1: The Phyllotaxy of Cannabis (Clarke, R. C., *Marijuana Botany: An Advanced Study* (Berkeley, 1981), p. 7)

Each of the two growth stages displays a distinctive phyllotaxy (leaf arrangement). In the vegetative stage, the plant will grow with decussate leaves, which are leaves that grow in opposing pairs along the main stem. At the onset of flowering, the plant bifurcates from a point at the base of each decussate leaf – however, on these branches the phyllotaxy is alternate, meaning that the leaf-pairs do not grow opposite one another. Furthermore, in the vegetative phyllotaxy the first pair of leaves show only one leaflet, the second three, the third five, *et cetera*. The distinctive, multifidous leaf of the cannabis plant's vegetative stage can be comprised of up to thirteen leaflets. However, in the floral phyllotaxy, the situation is reversed. For example, should the plant's vegetative leaves have eleven leaflets, the first leaf-pair that grows following bifurcation will show nine leaflets, the second seven, *et cetera*, until foliation consists of a single leaflet.[2]

[1] A good example of typical literature regarding drugs and drug abuse is Searll's *Get High on Life*. In the nine pages dedicated to "dagga", the first seven lines deal with it as a plant. Following this, Searll says: "Dagga is a prime example of a pharmacologically 'dirty' drug, as it contains a wide variety of chemical compounds collectively known as cannabinoids" (Searll, A., *Get High on Life* (Cape Town, 2002), p.181). While this may be true, it sets the tone for her discussion of cannabis, which she clearly views as simply being 'a drug'.

[2] Clarke, R. C., *Marijuana Botany: An Advanced Study* (Berkeley, 1981), p. 7

The cannabis plant is said to have a 'dual-response' to light, with vegetative growth occurring when the plant is exposed to more than twelve hours of light per day, and floral growth occurring when it is exposed to less than this.[3] It is also a dioecious plant, meaning that it has distinct sexes. These are the pistillate, or 'female' plant, and the staminate, or 'male' plant.[4] Hermaphroditic specimens also occur.[5] Thus, a typical plant will be in its vegetative stage during the long days of summer, and will be triggered to flower by the day-shortening advent of winter. During flowering, staminates release pollen, which is carried by the wind to pollinate pistillates, which bear seeds.

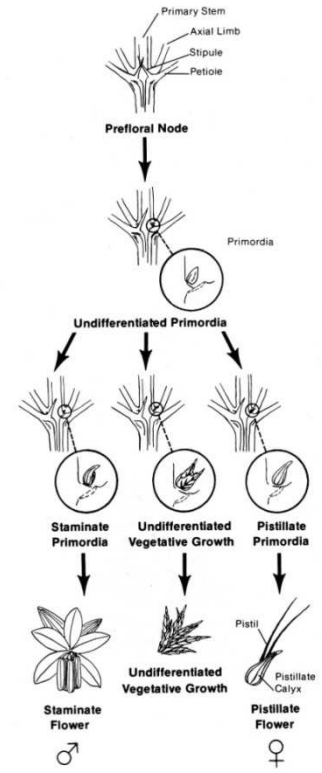

Figure 2: The Sex Differentiation of Cannabis (Clarke, *Marijuana Botany* (1981), p. 4)

Linnaeus first scientifically classified the cannabis plant in 1735 as *Cannabis sativa*, which literally means 'cultivated' cannabis. This is indicative of the close relationship that the cannabis plant has always shared with human society, though the nature of this relationship has been varied, mainly according to the purposes of cannabis cultivation and – to a certain extent – the environmental pressures placed on it. Two more forms, *Cannabis indica* and *Cannabis ruderalis*, are of most interest, as many have claimed that they are separate species of cannabis plant. However, these varieties seem to be at most sub-species, and grow almost exclusively in the wild. *Cannabis indica* is an originally wild species, which grows from Afghanistan, through the Hindu Kush Mountains, and down into Nepal. *Cannabis ruderalis* is found north of this region, in southern Russia. Given the length of time, and the multitude of places in which the cannabis plant has been cultivated by humankind, it seems almost certain that these wild strains at some point 'escaped' the boundaries of cultivation. Furthermore, we can hypothesize that the *ruderalis* variety escaped earlier than the *indica* variety, as it lacks the uniform growth that is found in both *Cannabis sativa* and *indica*, and it does not require a change in daylight cycles to flower. In *Cannabis ruderalis*, flowering is

[3] Clarke, *Marijuana Botany* (1981), p .3
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 8

triggered by age, not light. Thus, it seems that cannabis is a highly adaptive plant species, and that *indica* and *ruderalis* are simply forms of the *sativa* species that have escaped cultivation and undergone botanical evolution.[6]

Even within the classification *Cannabis sativa*, there are a variety of forms that the cannabis plant can take, depending on the purpose of its cultivation. *Cannabis sativa* is one of the most versatile plants used by humankind, and is often considered to be one of the world's earliest cultivated plants. Its presence in human society dates back at least four thousand years, and in its history cannabis has been used as a cereal, a textile[7] and for medicinal reasons, as well as in religious rites and as a social intoxicant.[8]

In Africa, *Cannabis sativa* is used almost exclusively as an intoxicant. This means its growth on the continent has been prized for the psychoactive chemical known as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) that cannabis plants contain.[9] This chemical is found throughout the cannabis plant of both sexes, but it is only found in high concentrations in the flowers of the pistillate plants, and it is these flowers that are used in producing the drug known as *dagga* in southern Africa. The quality of *dagga* is determined by the ratio of stem, leaf, flower and seed in a given sample. Unfertilised flowers contain the highest concentrations of THC, hence the reason for growers to remove staminates from an area of cannabis cultivation. This process is known as 'sensimilla growing' ('seedless growing'), and while it is still rare in southern Africa, it is becoming more popular in the major cultivating regions (and particularly, in Swaziland).

Cannabis sativa is not indigenous to Africa. The region of spontaneous growth, the plant's 'centre of origin' and its centre of domestication, is agreed to be in Asia. Clarke discusses the proposals of three authors, all of whom attempt to identify cannabis' site of domestication. [10]

Li proposes that cannabis was first domesticated in China, along the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers. In support of this hypothesis, we can observe the earliest recorded use of the plant as a fibre. There is evidence that fibre made from cannabis was used to make decorative patterns

[6] du Toit, B. M., "Pot by any other name is still…A Study of the Diffusion of Cannabis", in *South African Journal of Ethnology*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (1996), pp. 127-128
[7] For more information on these applications see Rosenthal, E. (ed.), *Hemp Today* (Oakland, 1994)
[8] Clarke, R. C., *Hashish!* (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 8
[9] Though there are a number of potentially psychoactive components to the cannabis plant, THC appears to be the main source of cannabis' intoxicating properties.
[10] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 8

on pottery dated between 4200 and 1150 BCE.[11] Furthermore, its use both as a fibre and as a cereal is recorded in the *Shih Ching*, dated 770 to 221 BCE.[12]

Other authors, such as Sharma, believe South Asia (that is, the area along the Himalayan foothills, from Kashmir to Bhutan) to be the region of spontaneous growth. There is certainly evidence of extensive utilisation in the area, and it is true that South Asia is home to a great variety of cannabis plants, particularly in Northern India and Nepal.[13] However, while great phenotypic diversity is an indicator of extensive use, it cannot be used as an indicator of the spontaneous region of growth. The example of the banana illustrates this point. The banana, originating in South-East Asia, shows its greatest phenotypic diversity in Central and West Africa, far from its centre of origin.[14]

Considering the information available to us, we must discount these two areas as cannabis' centre of domestication. If, for example, the plant originated in India, it could explain the diversity present there, but could not account for its rapid movement across the Himalayas to China. Similarly, while the earliest accounts of the plant are recorded in China, this cannot explain its rapid diffusion into South Asia, and the resultant phenotypic diversity found there.

Thus, de Candolle's hypothesis of Central Asia as the centre of spontaneous growth is the most convincing. Firstly, this area – west of the Takla Makan Desert and north of Kashmir and the Tibetan Plateau – can account for the *kind* of plant that cannabis is, as it shows certain evolutionary traits in common with other plants of the region. Furthermore, this region can account for the plant's rapid movement south and east into South Asia and China respectively, as well as west into Europe (where it was extensively used as a textile, known as hemp). [15]

Wherever its centre of origin, we can say with certainty that cannabis was known in China by at least the 2nd century BCE.[16] There the plant was known as *ma*, and was used as both a fibre and a cereal. The term *ma* later came to refer to all fibre-producing plants. Furthermore, the psychoactive properties of cannabis were recognised in the distinction *ma fen* and *ma tze*, toxic and non-toxic cannabis respectively.[17] The nomenclature becomes further complicated

[11] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 9
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.,* p. 11
[14] Reader, J., *Africa: a biography of the continent*. (London, 1998), p. 293
[15] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 10
[16] *Ibid.,* p. 9
[17] *Ibid.,* p. 10

by the distinction between *ta ma* ('great hemp') and *hu ma* ('foreign hemp'), *ta ma* referring to cannabis and *hu ma* to other oil- or fibre-producing plants.[18] This introduces a common problem in understanding references to cannabis, since at times a term may be used to refer to the cannabis plant specifically, and at other times it can refer to a similar, or at least similarly used, plant. A reference to *ma* may be referring to cannabis, or it may be referring to other oil- or fibre-producing plants. This creates several instances where only conjecture can be relied upon to identify the plant, causing much confusion for the historian.

Figure 3: A Shiva Temple in Mumbai showing a man smoking a *Chillum* pipe (Author's collection)

Most important in the context of this thesis, is the diffusion of the plant into South Asia. We can see reference being made to cannabis in the *Aratharvaveda*, which is thought to have been written around 1500 BCE.[19] Significantly, while in China the use of cannabis as an intoxicant was largely absent, in South Asia this was the primary use of the plant, and its consumption was religiously sanctioned. The Vedic scriptures speak of *bhang* (cannabis) as being the first plant sown on earth by Lord Shiva, who carried it down from the Himalayas specifically as an intoxicant. As a result, cannabis consumption became associated with the worship of Shiva.[20]In India, the cannabis plant came to be referred to as *bhang*,[21] the dried plant material as *ganjha*,[22] and its resin (hashish) as *charas*.[23] It was around the 1500's, long after cannabis was considered sacred in India, that it became a commonplace intoxicant (which it remains to this day). [24]

Cannabis was also a medicinal plant in India. Its medical uses are outlined in the *Anandakanda*, which is thought to have been written around the 10th century CE.[25] It is in this

[18] du Toit, "Pot by any other name is still…" (1996), p. 128
[19] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 24
[20] Green, J., *Cannabis* (New York, 2002), p. 43
[21] *Ibid.,* p. 46
[22] *Ibid.,* p. 51
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 24
[25] Booth, M., *Cannabis: A History* (London, 2003), p. 292

medical capacity that the plant spread to the Arabic world. By the eighth century, cannabis was incorporated into Arabic medicinal practices,[26] though there is evidence that its inclusion may have been many years before that, in present day Israel in the fourth century, where it is reported to have been used to ease the pain of childbirth.[27] By the thirteenth century, we can see Arabic writing referring to *banj* (from the Sanskrit *bhang*). However, prior to this period, we see references to cannabis as an 'aromatic reed'(*Kanabos* or *Kannabus*) in Arabia and the Middle East; 'reed' or 'cane' being *cana* in Sanskrit, *kaneh* in Hebrew, *keneh* in Aramaic, *kenab* in Persian, *kannab* in Arabic, and *qunnabu* in Assyrian; 'aromatic' being *bosm* in Hebrew and *busma* in Aramaic.[28]

In comparison to other themes regarding the history of cannabis in Africa, a fair amount has been written on the topic of nomenclature. The most thorough examination of this topic is given to us by B.M. du Toit, who wrote extensively on the diffusion of cannabis around Africa in the late-1970s, and continued to publish research in this field up until the 1990s. The following discussion is heavily indebted to du Toit's work.

Cannabis almost certainly entered Africa through Arab trading circles. We know that by the twelfth century, Arab traders had extensive settlements on the East African coast, most notably in Zanzibar and Kilwa. It is also recorded that, when the Portuguese ventured up the Zambezi in 1531, an Arab community was already established at Sena, 200 kilometres inland.[29] It should be no surprise, then, that the Swahili word used to denote cannabis on the East African coast, around present-day Tanzania, is *bangi*.[30] From the East African coast, Swahili traders traded cannabis throughout the Great Lakes region, and we find that the term *bangi* remains used in this area. The term used around the Zambezi River mouth is *mbange*,[31] while further up the Zambezi River cannabis is referred to as *lubange*.[32] As one can see, the root word remains unchanged, only the prefix is altered by the language groups in the different areas. From this linguistic picture we observe that in areas of Arab settlement, the cannabis plant is referred to by Arab terminology. Moreover, as we move geographically further from Arab contact points, we find that cannabis terminology deviates from the Arabic.

[26] Peters, H., "A Brief History of Four Millennia (BC 2000-AD 1974)", in Nahas, G. G., Sutin, K. M., Harvey, D. J., Agurell, S. (eds.), *Marihuana and Medicine* (Totowa, 1999), p. 3
[27] Earleywine, *Understanding Marijuana* (2002), p. 11
[28] du Toit, "Pot by any other name is still…" (1996), p. 129, and Booth, *Cannabis: A History* (2003), p. 2
[29] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 10
[30] du Toit, B. M., "Dagga", in Rubin, R. (ed.), *Cannabis and Culture* (The Hague, 1975), p. 87
[31] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 85
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 87

For example, in southern Zimbabwe cannabis is known as *mbanji*,[33] which becomes *mbanzhe*[34] in the present-day Limpopo Province of South Africa.

Moving further south, towards Lesotho, we find the term *lebake*,[35] and along the East Coast of South Africa, cannabis is known as *ntsangu*.[36] Du Toit's thesis argues that the development of these terms is also due to the linguistic appropriation of the term *bangi* in the aforementioned areas: *ntsangu* can be seen to share the common noun stem of *–ang*, while *lebake*, too, seems to show derivation from the original term.

When examining cannabis terminology in the Congo River basin, as one moves west from the Great Lakes region, one finds the terms *chamba*, *riamba* and *diamba* being used.[37] From this, du Toit hypothesises that the diffusion of cannabis throughout Africa came in two distinct phases. During the first phase, between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, cannabis was introduced between the Great Lakes and Africa's East Coast. It then spread through contact with Arab traders up the Zambezi River, before diffusing further south and west to incorporate present-day Angola and the East Coast of South Africa. As I have mentioned, du Toit bases this claim on the common noun stem *–ang*, found in all references to cannabis throughout this large area.[38] The second phase of diffusion, a westward movement from the Great Lakes into the Congo River basin, occurred some time after the first but prior to the founding of the Portuguese slave trade in the region.[39] By the time the Portuguese had established themselves in the Congo, cannabis – now identified by the noun stem *–amb* – was already known on the West Coast of Africa.[40] It has also been postulated that an independent diffusion occurred from Southern Arabia into Ethiopia.[41]

This hypothesis is not without its problems, and there are certain terms that remain unaccounted for. For example, a common name for cannabis in Lesotho is *matokoane*, and this term is also noted by Livingstone, who was writing near Victoria Falls.[42]

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[33] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 85
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 86
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] du Toit, B. M., "*Cannabis sativa* in sub-Saharan Africa", *South African Journal of Science*, Vol. 70, September 1974, p. 267
[38] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 14
[39] Evidence for this is that terms used in South America for cannabis also show evidence of the noun stem *–amb*, leading some to think that the nomenclature migrated during the transatlantic slave trade.
[40] du Toit, "Pot by any other name is still…" (1996), p. 131
[41] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 87
[42] Livingstone, D., *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London, 1857), p. 540

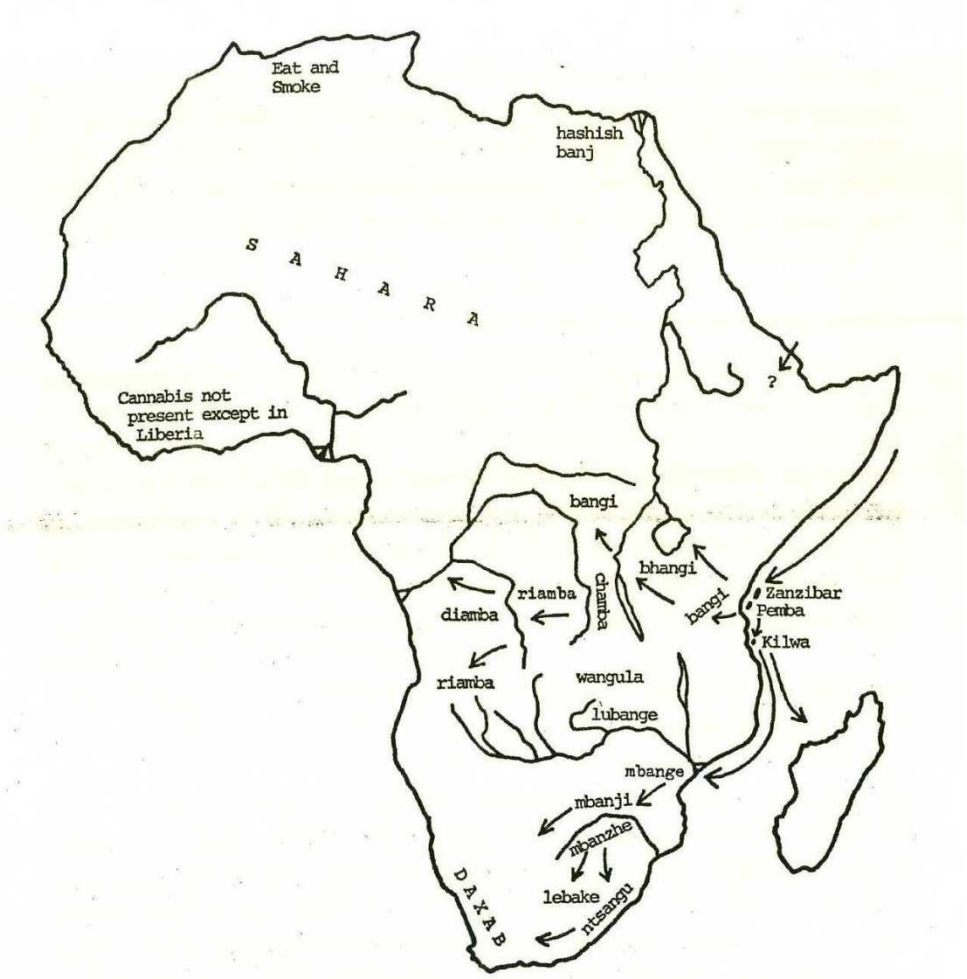

Figure 4: du Toit's diffusion hypothesis (du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 87)

Amongst the Khoikhoi and the San, the term used, with slight variations, was *dagga*.[43] This term requires further elaboration, as – despite its confusing origin – it has become the standard term for cannabis in South Africa. There are several hypotheses concerning the origin of this term. One view, presented by Nienaber (1963), suggests that *dagga* is derived from the Dutch term *tabak* (tobacco). Often simply known as *twak*, it is surmised that this became *twaga*, then *toaga*, and then finally *dagga*.[44] But this theory cannot account for such early references to *dagga* as those found in Van Riebeek's diary (dated 1658), as it allows for only six years in which this large linguistic change was meant to occur. Alternatively, Nienaber proposes that *dagga* was derived from the Khoikhoi word *daXa-b* or *baXa-b*, meaning 'tobacco', which was qualified by *!am* (meaning 'green'), giving us *!amaXa-b*, or 'green tobacco'.[45] But *daXa-b*, it is further argued, is not an original Khoikhoi word, but is

[43] Gordon, D., "From Rituals to Rapture to Dependence: The Political Economy of Khoikhoi Narcotic Consumption, c.1487-1870", in *The South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 35 (1996), p. 65
[44] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 89
[45] *Ibid.*

derived from the Arabic *duXan*, meaning 'tobacco'.[46] This would imply that the Khoikhoi had come into direct contact with Arab traders before migrating south, and prior to the Arabic language's adoption of the Sanskrit term *bhang.* This seems highly unlikely, as it would mean that the Khoikhoi were living around the Zambezi River mouth as late as the twelfth century, before moving south in the wake of Bantu migrations from Central Africa. The Bantu language groups would, in turn, have had to adopt the (then-new) Sanskrit reference to make this possible, as none of them seem to have used earlier Arabic terms such as *duXan*.

Bleek points out that, in certain San dialects, *dahwa* meant 'to be drunk', and *taxa* meant 'to make drunk'.[47] This leads to Gordon's conclusion that "'dagga' could have had an adjectival form (to be drunk) or its noun root referred to some plant that makes one drunk."[48] If this is true, taxonomical problems similar to those encountered with the use of the term *ma* in China emerge, as *dagga* would no longer strictly refer to cannabis, but to any intoxicating plant. For example, in a 1668 reference to *dagga*, spelt *dacha*, it is described as a "certain potent root, which [the Khoikhoi] call dacha, and which they eat to get drunk."[49] Here, it is thought by du Toit that what is being referred to is *Leonotis*, and not cannabis.[50] However, in some European accounts *dagga* does seem to refer specifically to cannabis. A reference from 1668 records that the Officers aboard *Voorman* were asked to bring *dagga* back from "Terra de Natal", because "the Hottentots here seem to make good work about it."[51] This, it would seem, is a reference to cannabis, as there is no other conceivable product that would require import from Natal and at the same time be referred to as *dagga*.

Furthermore, it was recorded by Le Vaillant that the Khoikhoi "smoke the leaves of a plant which they name dagha, and not daka, as some authors have written.[52] This plant is not indigenous: it is the hemp of Europe."[53] And finally, survivors of the shipwrecked *Stavenisse* commented in the 1680's that, "every year at a known time and place...50 to 100 Hottentots, with their wives and children would come to trade coral and copper rings [with the Xhosa]

[46] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 89
[47] Gordon, "From Rituals to Rapture to Dependence" (1996), p. 66
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 92
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] Gordon, "From Rituals to Rapture to Dependence" (1996), p. 73
[52] One should note that the spelling of *dagga* was very varied until the early 20th Century, and reflects the problems of translating from the Khoikhoi dialects. We find several spellings of *dagga*, including: *daccha* (1658), *dacha* (1660), *dackae* (1663), *dagha* (1686), *daggha* (1695), *dagga* (1708), *tagga* (1725), *dacka* (1775), *daga* (1779) and many others. (du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 13)
[53] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 21

…for dagha, which is similar to the leaves of hep [sic.] and is used like opium."[54] These references to *dagga* clearly indicate the presence of cannabis in the Cape by the time of European settlement there.

Unfortunately, the confusing use of the term *dagga* has led many to report that cannabis was cultivated by the Khoikhoi – in fact, it is often argued that the Khoikhoi were the main cultivators of the plant in southern Africa. For example, during a 1689 trading expedition it was noted that Hijkon, king of the Inqua Khoikhoi, was in charge of a large *dakka* supply.[55] But the Inqua were most likely not producing cannabis. The area in which they lived (the present-day Klein Karoo) is unsuitable for cannabis cultivation. It is, however, suitable for the farming of the plants of the *Mesembryanthemum* genus, another natural intoxicant that was valued by the Khoikhoi, and known to them as *canna* or *kon*.[56]

Moreover, the Khoikhoi were largely migratory, and would seldom settle in one place long enough to engage in agriculture. Cannabis, on the other hand, is a plant synonymous with human cultivation. Even its name, *Cannabis sativa*, is translated as 'cultivated cannabis',[57] and its dispersion around the globe is due almost entirely to human settlement (as opposed to being carried by birds or winds).[58] *Mesembryanthea*, in contrast, are plants that are not cultivated at all. Rather, they grow wild in the Klein Karoo area, and can simply be collected. Given the peripatetic lifestyle of the Khoikhoi herders, this seems to be a far more likely scenario than to suggest that they engaged in the cultivation of cannabis.[59]

This should not be taken to mean that there was no cannabis cultivation in the more arid Khoikhoi and San territories, but it must be remembered that this cultivation was necessarily limited by the prevailing ecological conditions. Cannabis almost certainly was found throughout all but the Namib and the western Kalahari deserts,[60] but considering the ecology of the area and the migratory lifestyle of the Khoikhoi and the San, it is unlikely that there was significant cannabis cultivation in these territories. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Khoikhoi and the San, largely unable to produce their own supply, would have relied on trade with their northern neighbours to procure cannabis. There is ample evidence, some of

[54] Gordon, "From Rituals to Rapture to Dependence" (1996), p. 73
[55] *Ibid.,* p. 67
[56] *Ibid.*
[57] Booth, M., *Cannabis: A History* (2003), p. 2
[58] du Toit, "Pot by any other name is still…" (1996), p. 128
[59] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 94
[60] Implied in Gastrow, *Mindblowing* (2003)

which has been mentioned above, that the eastern Khoikhoi traded with the Xhosa for cannabis, for example.

There was a large degree of commercial exchange between the Khoikhoi, the San and the Bantu-speaking groups in southern Africa from early on. It is thought that the Bantu-speaking groups were settled in the Drakensberg foothills by the 1300's, leading to extensive cultural and linguistic interactions between them by the mid-seventeenth century.[61] As a result, there are reports of some Khoikhoi groups adopting a sedentary lifestyle and engaging in agriculture where the ecology was suitable, as well as reports of northern migrants adopting the languages of their southern counterparts (such as the so-called Nama), and subsisting predominantly by hunting. These groups became known as the Damara and Bergdama.[62]

Thus, we find a band of culturally diverse groups extending across southern Africa, reflecting the 'clash' between the Khoikhoi and San cultures and the northern Nguni- and Sotho-speaking groups. It is within these cultural exchanges that one can observe the southern-most cases of cannabis cultivation. This largely ecologically-defined cultivation frontier ranged from the northern Eastern Cape, through the south of the Free State and large tracts of the Northern Cape, and up into central Namibia on the modern map. In this region we find evidence of cannabis cultivation by a number of cultural groups, which included Xhosa-, Sotho- and Nama-speakers.[63]

These southern-most cultivators would have had a near monopoly on trade with the Khoikhoi and San, and so could be expected to have traded cannabis with them. There is evidence of extensive cultivation for trading purposes, and cannabis seems to have been considered of great value to certain groups. The Khoikhoi/Xhosa trade, for example, saw the Khoikhoi exchanging "coral and copper rings" for cannabis, while the Bergdama in present-day Namibia are known to have had "a regular trade with the Ovambo tribes, from whom they got cows, goats, iron and copper in exchange for *dagga*, for *dagga* was at that time the Bergdamas' money with which they could buy anything."[64]

This is not meant to illustrate the state of the cannabis trade in 1650 (the first example is from 1668, while the second is from the 1850s). It is merely meant to show that cannabis was cultivated for trade and was, at times, considered of great value. It may have been especially

[61] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 91
[62] *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94
[63] *Ibid.,* pp. 93-97
[64] Cited in du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 94

lucrative for the southern cultivators, who would have had a virtual monopoly on cannabis trade with the Khoikhoi and San.

Barring a few exceptions, ethnographic reports and traveller's accounts do not exist for the interior of the country in any abundance until well into the eighteenth century. This makes it very difficult to speculate on the historical level of cannabis production in the interior of southern Africa. The ecology of the area is generally suited to the cultivation of cannabis. Particularly, the area circumscribed by the modern '*dagga* belt' – which includes the former Transkei and Lesotho, and stretches along the Natal border regions to incorporate Swaziland as well as parts of southern Mozambique and Mpumalanga Province – has an ideal ecology for cannabis production.[65] However, this does not give us enough reason to say that the cultivation of cannabis has always been widespread. We know that in the history of sub-Saharan Africa, cannabis has been by turns deified and demonised, and it is almost certain that throughout southern Africa the social acceptance of cannabis intoxication varied over the time period discussed here. It is conceivable that cannabis' position in society was even more fluctuant in southern Africa than further north, due to social upheavals during the late pre-colonial period.

But if one examines the ethnographic evidence compiled during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one finds evidence of a very longstanding tradition of cannabis smoking in southern Africa. This tradition had developed to involve complex smoking paraphernalia and rituals by the time of European accounts, which gives an indication of a widespread, and almost saturated, cannabis market. It is clear from this body of ethnographic sources that cannabis was widely available throughout the northern regions of southern Africa, and when the ecology of this area is considered, this abundance is unsurprising.

The issue of smoking is somewhat contested by researchers, although the reason for this seems largely to be confusion stemming from early reports stating that *dagga* was not smoked in the Cape. Du Toit proposes that pipes, and the smoking of cannabis, were introduced simultaneously by Arab traders at some time around the thirteenth century. His evidence is based on the similarities between Arabic water-pipes and those used in Africa.[66] Phillips, however, claims that the smoking of cannabis was not practised in Arab cultures until the seventeenth century. This is a full four hundred years after the Arabs were said to

[65] Gastrow, *Mindblowing* (2003)
[66] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 102

have introduced pipes into Africa by du Toit.[67] Dunhill proposes that southern African pipes developed independently of external sources,[68] although similar pipes may be found in other places, such as South-East Asia (the site of origin for the tool of modern-day Western cannabis consumption, the 'bong').[69] Barring du Toit, there is little certainty amongst scholars about the origins of Africa's smoking traditions and paraphernalia, and such certitude will not be achieved until such a time as greater archaeological research is done.

If a small generalisation is permitted, we can say that the pipes that developed in southern Africa were all varieties of the water pipe.[70] Some, such as were found in areas along the Zambezi, consisted of a calabash gourd which had its top removed and a small hole bored in its side.[71] A reed with a pipe bowl (usually made of clay) affixed to its top was placed in the hole in the side of the calabash, with the reed extending to the bottom of the gourd. The calabash was then filled with water and the clay bowl packed with cannabis or a combination of cannabis and other plant-matter (such as *Leonotis*). The smoker would inhale through the top of the calabash, drawing the smoke through the water to their mouth.[72] A similar pipe was sometimes found amongst the Basotho, Matabele and Xhosa who, instead of a calabash gourd, would use a moulded earthenware container to hold the water for the pipe[73].

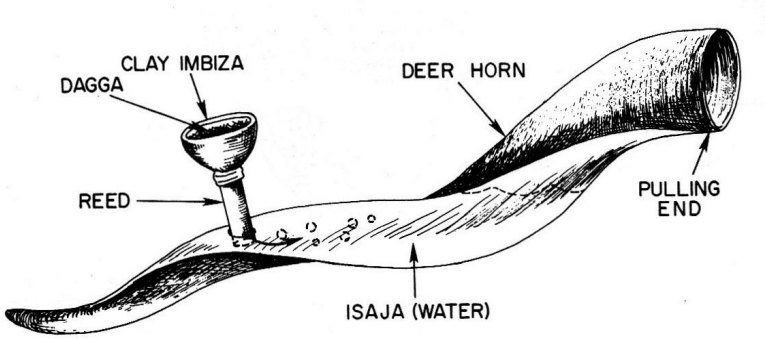

Figure 5: The Principle of the Water-Pipe (du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 35)

A more widespread form of pipe, its use recorded in Natal, the Eastern Cape, Lesotho and the area stretching from the North West Province into south-eastern Botswana, was one in which

[67] Phillips, J. E., "African Smoking and Pipes", *Journal of African History*, Vol.24, No.3 (1983), p. 308
[68] Phillips, "African Smoking and Pipes" (1983), p. 305
[69] Green, J., *Cannabis* (New York, 2002), p. 234
[70] Generically called the 'hubble-bubble' pipe, interestingly the term in isiZulu is also onomatopoeic, *iGdugdu*.
[71] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 102
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.,* p. 103.

the water container consisted of a large antelope or bullock horn.[74] Amongst all the diverse cultural groups in these areas, the horn pipes operated on the same principle as the calabash pipes. Groups in other regions, such as Swaziland, the Limpopo Province and parts of Mpumalanga, did not place the reed in the side of the horn, but rather used a longer reed inserted into the water from the top.[75] The smokers would cup their hands over the top of the horn and around the reed, thus sealing the opening, and draw the smoke through the water by sucking through a small gap left between the flesh of their hands.[76]

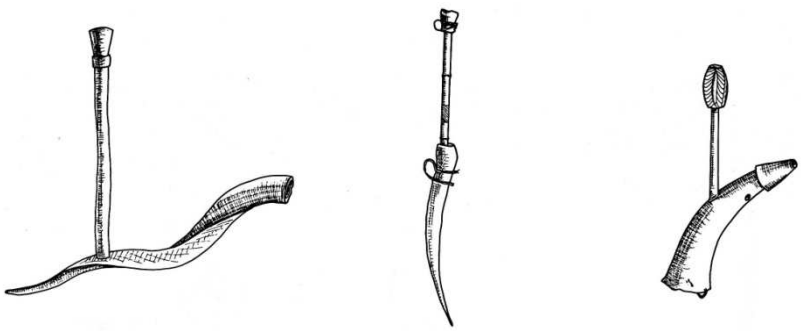

Figure 6: Three Variations of the Water-Pipe (du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 33)

While southern African pipes are usually based on the same principle (the water pipe), they vary considerably in style, and it is the development of the 'ground pipe' that is particularly interesting in this regard. A technique common to a number of social groups, ranging from southern Malawi to Natal and Botswana, who contrived to facilitate cannabis smoking even in the absence of any paraphernalia. Balfour (1922) describes the process:

> Two pits, about 8cm deep are excavated in the ground, the bottoms of which are united by a groove of about a span's length, formed by removing the earth between the pits. Some moistened straws or rushes, are laid along the groove, their ends projecting from both pits. The earth is then replaced in the groove and firmly pressed down and after a short time, the straws are withdrawn, a duct being thus formed. A hollow tube is stuck into one of the pits to act as mouth-piece and prevent particles of earth entering the smoker's mouth. [Cannabis] is then placed in the bowl and kindled. A little water is poured into the duct and the native lies flat or kneels down and inhales the smoke through the water.[77]

Another, even more rudimentary, smoking method involved cannabis being mixed with a small amount of herbivore dung (which, once lit, keeps smouldering and so keeps the cannabis burning), and lit in a small hole in the ground covered with reeds and mud, with an

[74] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 103
[75] *Ibid.*
[76] *Ibid.*
[77] Balfour, H., "Earth Smoking-Pipes from South Africa and Central Asia", *Man*, Vol. 22 (May, 1922), p. 66

opening at the top.[78] The smoker would place his or her[79] mouth above the hole and inhale the smoke.[80] To soothe the smoker's throat, water was often kept in the mouth, making the mouth the water container for this form of pipe.[81] The mouth was also used as the water container for other pipes, such as when cannabis was placed directly into a horn to form a kind of *chillum* pipe, as is popular in India. The horn acted as the pipe bowl in these circumstances, rather than as the water container.

Smoking is usually regarded to have occurred in social situations. Moreover, a kind of game was invented to pass the time spent smoking. It involved people smoking cannabis and then blowing their saliva through a tambootie grass straw to trace a labyrinthine shape on the floor. The next smoker would then attempt to trace over the labyrinth and expand on it, creating ever more complex patterns of saliva in the dirt.[82] Alternatively, the smoker would spit directly onto the ground and trace patterns with their finger.[83] In most versions of the game the saliva bubbles represented armies, while the ground represented a battlefield. The smokers would attempt to encircle the others' armies with their own, thereby defeating them.[84]

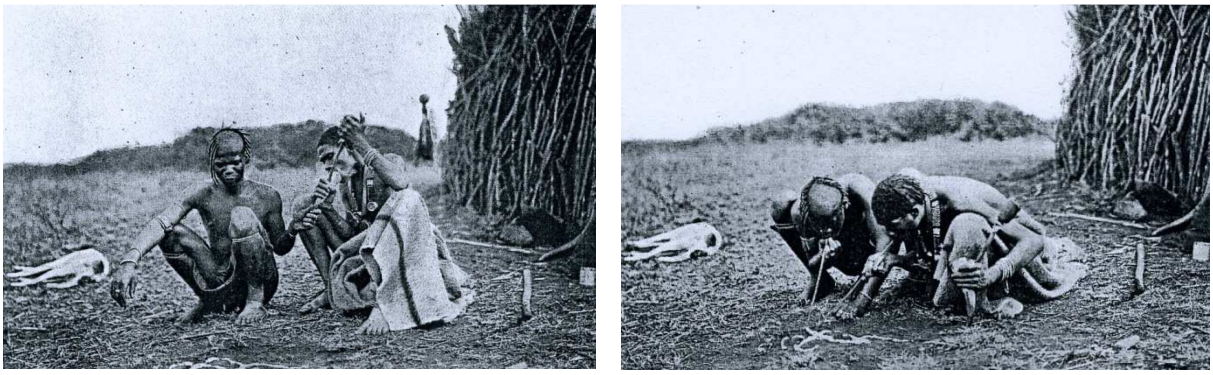

Figure 7: Men in Pondoland playing a 'Saliva Game' (Kidd, D., *The Essential Kafir* (London, 1904), plate 56)

[78] Green, J., *Cannabis* (New York, 2002), pp. 64 – 65
[79] "The practice of dagga-smoking was rare amongst females, and if it did occur it was usually confined to the aged women." (Department of Social Welfare and Pensions, *Drug Dependence and some of its concomitant aspects in the Republic of South Africa* (Pretoria,1970), p. 2)
[80] Booth, *Cannabis: a History* (2003), p. 45
[81] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 102
[82] *Ibid.,* p. 97
[83] Green, *Cannabis* (2002), p. 68
[84] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 97

Similar 'saliva games' are also found amongst Swazi and Tsonga groups.[85] Kidd, while conducting fieldwork amongst the Swazi, noted the game in 1904. He described a Swazi version of the game as follows:

> One man fills his lungs with smoke first, and hands the pipe to his friend who fills his lungs. Then they take small hollow reeds and exhale the smoke through these reeds, making bubbles with their saliva. One man blows the smoke out and forms a row of bubbles on the ground, and his friend tries to outflank him by making his row of bubbles encircle the first line. So they go on, each trying to win. The game is something like a form of chess game played in a dirty fashion.[86]

Here Kidd describes a two-player version of the game. There was, however, almost no limit to the number of players that could be involved. Junod, in his work, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, describes a version consisting of six players. In his highly complicated description (consisting of points designated A through to U), he describes a hypothetical "saliva fight."[87] A simplified description is offered here to give a clearer idea of how such a game might be played.

Consider six cannabis smokers, forming two teams consisting of three members each. The teams will sit facing each other, each member with their own straw, but sharing a single pipe. The teams will alternate smoking between members – Player 1 from Team A will go first, followed by Player 1 from Team B, then Player 2 from Team A, and so on. The game begins with each player, after having smoked, using their straw to draw a 'defensive line' in front of them, with the intention of joining their line to their team-mates', and thus forming one long defensive line in front of the entire team.

After each player has had the opportunity to draw their part of the defensive line, 'round two' begins, in which the objective is to 'attack' the opposing team. This is done, as mentioned above, by encircling the opposition's line so that they may not extend it any further. The attack begins with each player starting to draw from behind the defensive line they have already established. Thus, Player 1 must begin by drawing around the edge of the defensive line of his team and towards the oppositions' line, attempting to encircle an opposing player behind their own defensive line, and thus preventing them from making an attack.

If, for example, a team's initial defensive line was not successfully conjoined, then the opposing team may aim directly for a break in the line, making the encirclement of a player

[85] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 52
[86] Kidd, D., *The Essential Kafir* (London, 1904), pp. 346-347
[87] Junod cited in Bourhill, C. J. G., *The Smoking of Dagga (Indian Hemp) among the Native Races of South Africa, and the Resultant Evils*. (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh) 1912, p. 8

easier to achieve. Or, if an attack cannot be completed, this will give the defender an opportunity to repel the attack by moving around the unsuccessful attempt at encirclement. The game comes to an end when only one player remains in the game; that player's team being declared victorious.

Interestingly, smoking cannabis is known to dry out the mouth by restricting the salivary gland, and the more intoxicated one becomes so does this dryness worsen.[88] Thus, the 'saliva game' would act as an indication of the level of intoxication of the smoker, since as their salivary glands became increasingly restricted, so would their attacks become gradually weaker. It is therefore possible that the game may have been a platform for those involved to show their bravado, in the same way as being able to 'hold your liquor' is regarded in modern drinking cultures.

To compound matters, a distinction was drawn between the kinds of saliva acceptable for these games. The only permissible saliva was that known as *ntjutju*, which is darkened, thick saliva produced by smoking cannabis, as opposed to *matjafula*, the typical "whitish" saliva of one who has not been smoking the plant. According to Junod, "should one of the players try to supplement the blackish with the whitish, he would be disqualified. His enemy would seize him by the forehead, force him to lift his head and stop his attack."[89]

There is evidence to suggest that these 'smoking games' were almost synonymous with smoking cannabis in southern Africa. Consider the words of Zulu chief Swaimana, in his testimony to the South African Native Affairs Commission:

> *What is your opinion of this indiscriminate smoking of hemp by the Zulu; would you like to see a law putting that down, as drink is put down?* The old custom was the proper way, whereby the smoking of hemp was restricted to adults and grown-up men...
>
> *Would you restrict it to grown-up men?* Yes, because the adult is able to control himself; he takes a whiff of the pipe or the horn, and he passes spittle through a stick onto the floor, and makes figures; and passes on the horn to his next neighbour; but he does not use it to excess. The young people smoke it to excess, and they fight with others, and they become mad through it, and rush away sometimes out of the huts like mad people.
>
> *Would you like it restricted to adults?* Yes, those who take a draw, and amuse themselves by making figures on the floor, and then pass the horn on.[90]

[88] Zimmerman, B., Bayer, R., and Crumpacker, N., *Is Marijuana the Right Medicine for You?* (London, 1998), p. 207

[89] Junod cited in Bourhill, *The Smoking of Dagga* (1912), p. 9

[90] *Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903 – 1905* (Pretoria, 1905), pp. 582-583

Considering the complexity and ubiquity of smoking rituals and paraphernalia, it is safe to say that the 'northern market' for cannabis in southern Africa was large. Furthermore, if the ease with which cannabis grows in these areas is considered, it seems safe to assert that cannabis cultivation was widespread. However, because cannabis grows with such ease in these regions, and its use appears to have been so widespread, it seems impossible that cannabis could have played a large role in trading; it seems to have been a much too common commodity to hold any special value in trade.

This should not be taken to mean that cannabis was not traded within this northern region of southern Africa. There are reports that, around the time of Shaka's reign, Zulu groups were sent on trading expeditions to what is now Swaziland, with the specific task of acquiring high quality cannabis.[91] This may indicate that the cannabis of some areas was more sought after than others, despite its widespread cultivation.

Further south, cannabis was not available in such abundance, and hence we see the major commercial cultivation of cannabis in areas where it could be traded with the Khoikhoi and San. The Dutch, upon their arrival in 1652, sought to engage the Khoikhoi and San in trade, and began to impinge on the markets that historically had been under the control of the northern frontier traders.

Very soon after the arrival of the Dutch, the VOC ventured to use cannabis as a commodity in trade with the Khoikhoi and San, and that they did so should not be surprising. The trade of intoxicants, and the "political economies of addiction"[92] which this trade often brought about, almost characterised Dutch economic expansionism. However, the Dutch were not alone in seeking revenue through the trade of drugs, and both they and the British found intoxicants to be very helpful in expanding their economies. The colonial powers did not question the morality of trading intoxicants until the second half of the nineteenth century, by which stage the trade of opium averaged 15% of total revenues for British India.[93] Prior to this time, the sale of drugs was seen by the colonial powers as a purely commercial exercise.

The trade of intoxicants, and particularly physically addictive intoxicants,[94] makes good business sense, because demand is less prone to fluctuation and it requires less effort to

[91] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 107
[92] Gordon, "From Rituals to Rapture to Dependence" (1996), p. 83
[93] Richards, J. F., "'Cannot We Induce the People of England to Eat Opium?' The Moral Economy of Opium in Colonial India", in Mills, J. H., and Barton, P., *Drugs and Empire* (Hampshire, 2007), p. 74
[94] Which does not include cannabis.

establish a stable market. If a monopoly on supply can be achieved, as the British were able to do with opium and cannabis in India, intoxicants make a highly valuable commodity. So, it should be of little surprise that the Dutch quickly turned to intoxicants for trade with the Khoikhoi in the Cape. The political economy of addiction in the Cape, characterised by the 'dop' system, has been thoroughly discussed elsewhere, although cannabis is often left unmentioned in these discussions. Thus, it is worth reiterating that as early as in 1668, Van Riebeek ordered officers aboard the *Voorman* to purchase "daccha" in Natal for trade, because "the Hottentots here seem to make great work about it."[95]

For the VOC (who technically dominated all Khoikhoi/settler trade), cannabis was not as well suited to trading with the Khoikhoi as either alcohol or tobacco was. In the case of alcohol, the VOC merely monopolised European forms of the drug, easily controlling the supply of spirits such as brandy. In the case of tobacco, they not only held a full monopoly on the cultivation of the plant in the Cape, but also controlled much of the world tobacco trade, and could easily acquire tobacco from ships passing by the Cape on their way to the East Indies. Cannabis, in contrast, could not be monopolised in any way, as the Khoikhoi had a number of cannabis cultivators with whom to trade in the north. But even to the Khoikhoi cannabis was considered of secondary value when compared to *Mesembryanthea* (*canna* or *kon*), and so cannabis became a distinctly lesser commodity in the Cape's trading economy.[96]

To prevent the Khoikhoi from "contriv[ing] secretly to procure their own supply,"[97] and thereby undermining the VOC monopoly, the VOC prohibited the cultivation of tobacco by settlers in 1680. Tobacco, an important commodity in the clandestine trade between settler and Khoi, was apparently replaced by cannabis in the thriving black market. Even after the VOC trade monopoly was lifted in 1700, cannabis remained a commodity worth the minimal effort of its cultivation. There are several accounts to confirm this. Kolbe, in 1727, noted that the settler's cultivation of cannabis was "chiefly on account of the Hottentots, who smoke the seeds and leaves as they do tobacco."[98] In 1785, Mentzel noted that Khoikhoi were paid in "a few head of cattle, a little tobacco, *dagga*, some knives, glass beads..."[99] and Le Vaillant,

[95] Gordon, "From Rituals to Rapture to Dependence" (1996), p. 73
[96] *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73
[97] *Ibid.*, p. 80
[98] *Ibid.*
[99] du Toit, "Dagga" (1975), p. 93

writing at the same time, says "some of the colonists cultivate [cannabis], and when they have dried the leaves sell it very dear to the Hottentots or change it for oxen."[100]

The gradual incorporation of the Khoikhoi and San into the Cape Dutch economy throughout the eighteenth century, and the virtual serfdom that it entailed, would have disrupted the pre-colonial patterns of cannabis trading, and created more reliance on settlers as cannabis suppliers. The later inclusion of so-called 'Bantu' groups into the proletariat, and the beginnings of a migrant labour system in the 19th century, brought further structural changes to the cannabis trade. The cultivation of cannabis in the so-called 'Native Reserves', however, continued unabated throughout this time, and was to result in the early twentieth century in the establishment of the patterns of the modern trade.

The cultivation of cannabis by 'white' farmers was not uncommon throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries, but the consumption of cannabis by these farmers was virtually unheard of.[101] So, while cannabis did play an economic role in settler trade, because it was so common and easy to grow, it was not a primary source of income and seems to have been traded as a kind of 'added incentive'. It was not considered of particular value to settlers and was simply grown for labourers. What is important for the sake of this thesis is that the settlers were willing to use cannabis for this purpose – that is, that cannabis was considered as a legitimate commodity in trade. However, this attitude began to change in the early decades of the 19th century, as one begins to find references to the settler's cultivation of cannabis being rendered with disdain. This view is expressed by Thompson in his *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa* (first published in 1827), when he describes his arrival at Elands-Kloof farm, near Cradock in the Eastern Cape. His description, which provides a suitable place to end this chapter, gives a clear picture of the prevailing attitude toward the trade of cannabis in his time:

> The house was locked up and deserted; the family having gone, like many other inhabitants of the higher country, to spend their winter with their flocks and herds in the more genial climate down the Zeekoe River. We took the liberty, however, of breaking into the house, and took up our quarters there for the night. We found a large quantity of the herb called *dacha*, a species of hemp, hung up on the rafters. The leaves of this plant are eagerly sought after by the slaves and Hottentots to smoke, either mixed with tobacco or alone. It possesses much more stimulating qualities than tobacco, and speedily intoxicates those who smoke it profusely, sometimes rendering them for a time quite mad. This inebriating effect is in fact the quality for which these poor creatures prize it. But the free use of it, just like opium, and all such

[100] Gordon, "From Rituals to Rapture to Dependence" (1996), p. 85
[101] du Toit, B. M., "Ethnicity and Patterning in South African Drug Use", in Du Toit, B. M. (ed.), *Drugs, Rituals and Altered States of Consciousness* (Rotterdam, 1977), p. 77

powerful stimulants, is exceedingly pernicious, and gives the appearance of old age in a few years to its victims. It is, therefore, the more extraordinary, that the whites, who seldom use the *dacha* themselves, should cultivate it for their servants. But it is, I believe, as an inducement to retain the wild Bushmen in their service, whom they have made captives at an early age in their commandoes, - most of these people being extremely addicted to the smoking of *dacha*.[102]

[102] Thompson, G., *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa, Part 1* (Cape Town, 1967), p. 52

Chapter 2: The Prohibition of Cannabis in South Africa

Framing the Process of Cannabis Prohibition

> The whole problem evolves itself into a consideration of the interaction between the vice and the environment, in a suitable nidus. Leave a raw savage in his primitive state, leading his own life, let him smoke dagga, when and how he pleases, and it will be found that little or no harm will result. But take a young adult native, with his stunted mental powers, place him in abnormal surroundings, educate him beyond his intellectual capacity, give him hard and unnatural work to perform, let him become ambitious to copy the white man, and outshine his fellows. He then realizes the struggle for existence. Now introduce the vices, Alcohol, Dagga, unnatural sexual practices, etc. what is the result? The interactions of environment and vice proves too much for many; and the feebler brains drop out of the fight – shattered and broken.[1]

This quote, from C.J.G. Bourhill's thesis *The Smoking of Dagga (Indian Hemp) among the Native Races of South Africa, and the Resultant Evils,* is meant to be an explanation of the affliction that he terms "*dagga* insanity". Bourhill's study represents the earliest systematic investigation into cannabis use in South Africa, and his research was based on work done at the Pretoria Native Asylum between 1908 and 1912, his personal experience of being in charge of the mental hospital for a year, as well as surveys of the health of many miners in company compounds.

Bourhill makes many of his beliefs clear in the succinct summary of his thesis quoted above. It clearly highlights the premises on which his argument is based. The first point worth mentioning is that Bourhill makes reference to a "nidus" which, he believes, is the mental locale where an individual's intrinsic characteristics (their 'nature') may be found. We can see in his use of terms such as "raw savage in his primitive state", and a reference to "his stunted mental powers," that Bourhill claims to be dealing with the inherent aspects of a person; that the individuals involved have a 'natural' state of mind. Furthermore, by using terms such as "savage" and "primitive", it becomes clear that these individuals are being placed in diametric contrast to the 'civilised' person. Bourhill thus establishes a hierarchy based on racial essentialism, in which the "Native Races of South Africa" are deemed "savage."

But Bourhill goes further than establishing a racial hierarchy. He also makes reference to "abnormal surroundings," thus claiming that an individual may be in an 'abnormal environment', and perform "unnatural work." Here Bourhill shows his belief that the

[1] Bourhill, *The Smoking of Dagga* (1912), p. 34

individual's specific 'nidus' has a 'natural environment', outside of which the individual cannot function 'correctly'. This shows Bourhill's belief that one *kind* of individual struggles to exist in the *environment* of another. The nidus is only consistent with specific surroundings, and the "raw savage" is only compatible with "primitive" surroundings.

A final point to be made on this extract concerns the reference to vice. Note Bourhill's words "the vices, Alcohol, Dagga, unnatural sexual practices, etc." Clearly, this is not a reference to the use of a chemical compound, as would have been expected, but rather to a moral state of being. Bourhill thus makes a moral judgement here, when he equates vice with turpitude. In addition, elsewhere in his work, Bourhill makes the link between nidus and morality explicit, saying: "judged by the European standard natives are absolutely immoral, in fact they may be described as non moral".[2] Furthermore, the 'vices' are spoken of as if they *cause* moral degeneration, as if engaging in an activity deemed to be a 'vice' leads to more, and apparently more varied, 'immoral' behaviour.

Thus, Bourhill describes a situation in which each individual is positioned in a hierarchy according to inherent characteristics that designate not only the *kind* of person they are, but also their moral capacity. Furthermore, he proposes that the individual has a corresponding environment; an environment suited to their specific nidus.

Bourhill's outlook, it may be argued, is simply the view of a lone racist zealot. Unfortunately, this is not the case: Bourhill's findings represent the 'official voice' of his time. His view was made legitimate by the position which he held in society: a doctor charged with running the Pretoria Asylum; a medical officer serving several mining compounds, and a person awarded a Doctorate by the University of Edinburgh. This work was the dissertation he submitted in requirement for that degree. Not only this, but Bourhill's view perfectly corresponded with the religious and scientific trends of the time, and particularly with that of the growing cannabis prohibition movement amongst South Africa's colonist population. If one examines the way in which other 'official voices' have discussed cannabis in South Africa, we find rather similar views. However, as with any idea in society, these views are not identical. Ideas are not transmitted in a dialogue without variation; even an individual explaining his view on two separate occasions with present the same foundation with different nuances. When an individual explains a view to another, the other's understanding of the idea may vary considerably, according to their comprehension of it and the way in

[2] Bourhill, *The Smoking of Dagga* (1912), p. 25

which it was communicated. Yet, there remain broad intellectual themes which are transmitted through society at certain times. The three premises underpinning Bourhill's thesis – his understandings of nidus, environment and vice – are three such intellectual themes.

Ideas associated with the nidus of the individual became particularly popular in the wake of the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859, and *The Descent of Man* in 1871, which sparked a flurry of writing around the social applications of Darwinian theory. A major consequence of Social Darwinian thinking was the 'scientific' justification of oppression in the colonies. This was because the theory was taken – on a physiological level – to legitimise racism. Another important development was the emergence of criminology in Europe, an intellectual climate which took the now 'scientifically justified' idea of 'primitive types', and broadened it to include criminals. The publication of Lombroso's *Delinquent Man* in 1876 gave rise to a whole body of thought based on the idea that the criminal was inherently so, "because of some anomaly in his physical constitution... The anomalies were throw-backs, atavisms, reflecting some earlier stage of human evolution."[3] 'The criminal' was "a simple and incomplete creature [which] inevitably tend[s] to adopt those simple and incomplete modes of life which are natural to the savage," and "constantly reproduced the features of savage character – want of forethought, inaptitude for sustained labour, love of orgy etc."[4] As Tannenbaum points out in a scathing attack on Lombrosian theory:

> The theory assumes that there is some sort of relationship between personal physical peculiarity and criminality, that there is a relationship between physical 'configuration' and moral status... It assumes that the earlier, more primitive group forms were less social than present ones, and goes back to the ideas of a 'tooth and claw' savage of the popularized Darwinism promulgated by enthusiasts of theories associated with ideas of survival of the fit.[5]

These new views of crime that proliferated in the late-19th century became a matter of great concern to the political administrations of areas with multi-racial populations. The colonies and the American South, particularly, consisted of populations of perceived 'primitive' types, who were seen as being 'naturally more predisposed toward criminality' than Europeans. If the potential threat was so grave in European society, it would have seemed doubly so in these areas.

[3] Tannenbaum , F., *Crime and the* Community (New York, 1957), p. 198
[4] Cited in Chanock, M., *The Making of South African Legal Culture, 1902-1936: Fear, Favour and Prejudice* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 65
[5] Tannenbaum, *Crime and the* Community (1957), p. 198

The idea of atavistic criminality remained entrenched until well into the twentieth century, as did the likeness between 'the criminal' and 'the savage'. The prevalence of the idea that "if criminals were like savages, then all savages were potential criminals"[6] in criminological thinking was great enough for both Sutherland (1939) and Taft (1956) to devote chapters of their works to "Crime in Relation to Race and Nativity,"[7] and "the Negro and Crime,"[8] respectively.

The idea that the nidus of an individual corresponds to a specific environment sprung from similarly extreme Darwinian thinking. The nidus is said to have 'evolved' in a specific environment and then become the 'natural state' of an individual, and so the bogus assertion that a particular person may be placed in an 'abnormal environment' was seen as ('scientifically') justifiable.

However, this idea about 'abnormal environments' could be understood in another way. The growing authority of psychiatry in the medical field in the late nineteenth century had an important effect on the colonies. The overlap between psychology and criminology at the time (and the corresponding fields of psychiatry and penology) resulted in the acceptance of a specific psychological type associated with criminality. Moreover, the instantiation of this psychological type was seen as being dependent on social experience. According to this view, while the nidus of the individual is static, the psychology of a person may change, and this change occurs through their social interactions. By applying this theory to the rubric of a racial hierarchy, as the colonial administrators did, it became considered dangerous to have mere contact between people of different racial groups, as contact could be a source of degeneration for individuals perceived as being of a higher standing in the established hierarchy.

These ideas permeated all academic and 'scientific' research of the time. They were particularly prevalent in early psychiatric thought, which emerged around the time of Darwin's publications. It is within the field of psychiatry, and the resultant studies conducted

[6] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 65
[7] This chapter was printed as late as 1955 in the 5th Edition of the book Sutherland, E. H., and Cressey, D. R., *Principles of Criminology,* (New York, 1955), Chp. 8
[8] Taft, D. R., *Criminology* (New York, 1956), Chp. 7

into asylum systems (with their extensive overlap with penology), that these ideas contributed to the eventual prohibition of cannabis.[9]

That there was such an early overlap between criminology and psychiatry should not be unexpected; the overlap had existed in practice throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, where the asylum system and the penal system had largely performed the same societal function. The role of both of these systems was mainly custodial, not curative, and they focused on containment rather than rehabilitation. Both dealt with the removal of 'undesirables' from society, and in the colonies, the overlap of these two systems was particularly evident. To illustrate this point, several new diagnoses of criminality arose from trends in 19th-century psychiatry, including "moral imbecile," "moral insanity," "degeneracy" and "feeblemindedness."[10]

As in criminology, the psychiatry of the mid-19th century sought to develop methods based on current 'scientific' theories. This led to the new idea of 'moral management' of the insane, an idea that gradually separated the two disciplines in Europe. In the colonies, however, this new, 'scientific' system of asylum management again only acted to entrench already racist views, by addressing the question of how to treat patients. Inevitably, this entailed the hospital staff attempting to readjust the patient's idea of how to act in society – an effort undertaken to make the patient fit for release. This patently is a task in which the perceptions of the doctors involved have a deciding influence, and it does not only show the deficiencies in mid-19th century practitioners' understanding of the mind, but also that they arrogated themselves the right to define the role that the patient was *meant* to fulfil in society. Patients were deemed fit for release if the doctor believed they could fulfil this role.

The medicalisation of the profession brought with it new questions concerning the treatment of patients. It became no longer acceptable to simply quarantine residents. In the colonies, this was a particularly important question. The idea gained prominence that the 'natives,' under colonial supervision, were in need of different treatments than those administered to Europeans, because they possessed an inherently different psyche. The colonial psychiatry, ethnopsychiatry, is characterised by conceptualising the psyche as culture- and race-specific. By the 1860s we can see the emergence of a 'scientific', ethnopsychiatric view, which was to dominate psychiatry in the colonies for at least half a century. An example of this intrinsically

[9] A thorough investigation was carried out by Mills on this topic, in Mills, J. H., *Madness, Cannabis and Colonialism: The 'Native-Only' Lunatic Asylums of British India, 1857 - 1900* (Hampshire, 2000)
[10] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 64

racist psychiatry is given by the Cape's Under Colonial Secretary, Captain Mills, who, in 1879, said:

> With regard to the Kafir, the closer you can assimilate his condition to that of his normal state the better. I think it would be a mistake to confine Kafirs to a house and tie them to one spot. For this reason I think the asylum on Robben Island is particularly suited to natives[11]

The increasing racialisation of psychiatry in South Africa can further be seen in the opening of the first 'whites'-only mental asylum, the Cape's Valkenberg Asylum, in 1891.[12]

The prominence of racialised psychiatric thought cannot be underestimated. These ideas can be found the work of William James, Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, among the three most eminent scholars in the field of psychology during the nineteenth century (and the theorists upon which the field of psychology remains based to this day). Thus, while ethnopsychiatry addressed the perceived 'primitive' mind directly, the foundation of this school was firmly within mainstream psychiatry. While in Europe the fields of penology and psychiatry were diverging, by the late 1800s the overlap of these fields in the colonies was justified 'scientifically,' through the work of criminologists and psychiatrists. The overlap in the colonies between the asylum and prison systems remained. In fact, "as late as 1944 the annual British government report on the asylums in West Africa appeared under a subheading in the section on prisons."[13]

The use of the asylum system to control 'undesirables' in the colonies can be seen in the case of British India, and it also marks a major point in the process of cannabis prohibition. It was through the Indian asylum system that the connection between cannabis use and insanity was first brought into colonial politics.

India, having built a network of asylums across the country throughout the nineteenth century to separate insane Indian soldiers, "found that they were useful places in which to place those that they found dangerous and disruptive in the local population."[14] Mills, in his analysis of the 'Native-Only' asylums of colonial India, concludes:

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[11] Deacon, H. J. "Madness, Race and Moral Treatment: Robben Island Lunatic Asylum, Cape Colony, 1846-1890", *History of Psychiatry*, Vol. 7 (1996), p. 294

[12] Swartz, S., "Changing Diagnoses in Valkenburg Asylum, Cape Colony, 1891 – 1920: a Longitudinal View" *History of Psychiatry*, Vol. 6 (1995), p. 431

[13] McCulloch, J., "The Empire's New Clothes: Ethnopsychiatry in Colonial Africa", *History of Human Sciences*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1993), p. 36

[14] Mills, J. H., *Cannabis Britannica: Empire, Trade and Prohibition, 1800-1928* (New York, 2003), p. 85

> when the new admission to the hospital was dragged in from the street by the police, the superintendents needed to fill the forms in and chief among the issues on these documents was the 'cause of insanity' section. On the whole the asylums of India filled up with vagrants and the poor and as such there was often great difficulty in getting a hold of accurate data with which to complete this section.[15]

In the 1874 report on Bengal mental asylums, Dr. Simpson addressed this issue, saying:

> Among the pauper class information as to the cause, unless the case be that of a known ganja-smoker [sic.], is often not procurable; and as the formal statement of the cases includes a direct question, an imaginary cause is entered... judging from the style of the answers furnished by the police in the descriptive rolls, it would appear that if the man be a ganjah-smoker [sic.] the drug is invariably put down by them as the cause of insanity.[16]

In 1872, the Government of India announced that "of the cases of insanity produced by the excessive use of drugs and spirits, by far the largest number must be attributed to the abuse of hemp."[17] Ironically, in England at the same time, Indian hemp was being experimented with to *treat* insanity.[18]

But the view on intoxication was changing with the rise in the temperance movement, and cannabis became a believable diagnosis in cases where the police were unsure. To many officials at the time, "the use of [bhang] operates much as intoxicating liquors do in England, by stimulating the passions and weakening the power of self-control."[19] Thus, the official number of cases of cannabis-induced insanity contributing 31% of the total cases of insanity in Delhi between 1867 and 1871, only served to re-enforce the establishment's view, rather than force them to question their statistics.[20] The belief in the connection between cannabis and insanity continued to grow throughout the 1880s, as did the numbers of cannabis users in Indian mental asylums. Anti-opium lobbyists came before parliament in 1891 claiming that the "lunatic asylums of India are filled with ganja smokers."[21] Government's response was

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[15] Mills, J. H., *Cannabis Britannica: Empire, Trade and Prohibition, 1800-1928* (New York, 2003), p. 85. A similar statement can be found in Bourhill (1912) who says: "Natives are always brought [to the asylum] by a Kaffir policeman, who probably has only been in charge of the patient for a few hours, and knows nothing of his history. Hence for any information about a native patient, prior to admission, one has to fall back on a short form filled in by the magistrate of the district; and on any facts which may be gleaned from the occasional visitor. These legal forms are hurriedly and briefly completed and are restricted to facts concerning tribe, district, religion, possessions, crimes committed, parents' names and addresses, previous attacks, and so on. No information is ever given about the patient's history or his family history, and even the facts stated cannot be relied upon, owing to the inherent talent a native possesses for 'terminological inexactitudes'." (Bourhill, *The Smoking of Dagga* (1912), pp. 34-35)

[16] Cited in Mills, *Cannabis Britannica* (2003), p. 86

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 82

[18] Mills, *Cannabis Britannica* (2003), p. 73

[19] Cited in Mills, *Cannabis Britannica* (2003), p. 86

[20] Mills, *Cannabis Britannica* (2003), p. 84

[21] Cited in Mills, *Cannabis Britannica* (2003), p. 93

the establishment of the Indian Hemp Drugs Commission in 1894. This convincingly discredited the allegations of the anti-opium lobby, and cannabis remained controlled only by taxation.

The view that cannabis caused insanity amongst the 'natives' in India was quickly adopted throughout the British colonies, especially in places where indentured Indians were shipped. It should be no surprise that one of the earliest available government discussions on cannabis is found in the Natal Indian Immigrants Commission Report (RIIC). This was published in 1887, at the height of 'criminal anthropology', religious zealotry, and concern about cannabis causing insanity amongst Indians. The Commission made it clear they had researched the international trends of thought concerning the drug,[22] and could be expected to have been well-acquainted with the issues surrounding cannabis use. The Commission devoted Chapter Two of the report to cannabis, and the evidence compiled by the Commission against "dakkha-smoking" was presented at the end of the report. It included several comments made by Dr. Richmond Allen and the (unnamed) Protector of Immigrants, men who seem to have spearheaded the prohibition campaign.

Paragraph 4 of Chapter Two begged the Governor in Council to exercise his powers made explicit under Section 70 of Law No.2 of 1870. These included

> prohibiting the smoking, use, or possession by, and the sale, barter or gift to, any coolies whatsoever, of any portion of the hemp plant (cannabis sativa), and authorising the destruction thereof, if found in such use or possession, and imposing penalties upon coolies using, cultivating or possessing such plant for the purpose of smoking the same.[23]

In support of this, the Commission cited the appeal for prohibition made by the Medical Officer of Pietermaritzburg Circle, 1884, where "the Executive Council was divided in opinion, and no rule was issued."[24] The commission noted British Guiana, Trinidad, Mauritius, India and Ceylon as colonies already placing some restrictions on the plant.

The motivation presented by the Commission is worth quoting at length:

> Employers have been familiar, for many years, with the evils consequent upon its use by their Indian servants. They, the Medical Officers of Circles, and the Protector of Immigrants have seen many Indians with their strength and manhood wrecked by the pernicious drug. The opinions of those medical officers are on record. They are unanimous in thinking that the smoking of hemp is injurious to the constitution of Indians, and the majority testify to the widespread habit of smoking it. To its use they attribute unsteadiness in the performance of

[22] *Report of the Indian Immigrants Commission, 1885 - 1887* (Pietermaritzburg, 1887), pp. 7 – 8
[23] RIIC (1887), p. 6
[24] *Ibid.*

> work, incapacity for exertion, undermining of the nervous power, heart disease, asthma, retention of urine, night blindness and amaurosis, incoherent speech, mental imbecility, hallucinations, suicides, death. Even in the milder cases, an individual under the influence of hemp is listless, his eyes are glassy, suffused, and have a vacant stare, he has no disposition to exert himself, his pulse is soft and weak, he complains of languor and debility. Frequently, men, intoxicated by its fumes, become dangerous and are arrested by the police. Homicides are committed by men rendered furious by its toxic properties. We ourselves, when visiting an estate in the Umzinto circle whereon Indians were employed, came upon an Indian, an absentee from work, sitting outside a hut, with his dakkha pipe on the ground by his side. He muttered to himself, then yelled, spoke rapidly and incoherently, lapsed into silence, then yelled again, and it was impossible to make him understand anything. He was, manifestly, in a state of dementia induced by dakkha smoking: he was decidedly dangerous, and the manager was uncertain how to deal with him: finally, the man was left to do as he pleased, the Indians on the estate being afraid to interfere with him, and the Manager knowing that the law provided no punishment for his misconduct.[25]

There are a number of statements here that warrant discussion. The first is the fact that the unanimous view of medical officers concerning the "injurious" properties of cannabis cannot be found on record. Dr. FW Greene, Medical Officer of the Isipingo Circle, made no reference to cannabis. Neither did the Indian Medical Officer of Umzinto, Dr. WP Tritton; the acting medical officer of the Indian Medical Circle of Durban, Dr. JE Neale; nor Dr. J McIntyre, Indian Medical Officer of the Avoca Circle. Of the eleven doctors who appeared before the Commission, only five mentioned cannabis at all in their testimonies, and of the five only one called for prohibition – Dr. Richmond Allen. Conveniently, the commissioners ignored the testimony of Dr. Kretzchmar of Verulam Circle, which concluded "that a prohibition would be harsh and oppressive,"[26] and this testimony directly preceded that of Dr. Mengershausen, who finished his testimony by saying:

> As a great many Indians already use the tobacco I can believe that those, who use the hemp, will be able to change the worse for the better, if necessary, without one being able to call the motive harsh and oppressive.[27]

Four doctors mentioned cannabis as a cause of insanity. One was Dr. J Hyslop, Resident Surgeon of a lunatic asylum, whose testimony on the matter was: "I have noticed that some of the Indians have been addicted to the smoking of Indian Hemp, which may have induced a kind of insanity."[28] A note by Mr. Saunders, who sat on the Commission, followed his testimony. He said: "The proportion of Indian lunatics in the Asylum to the Indian population in the Colony is exceedingly small, so far as I am able to judge."[29]

[25] RIIC (1887), p. 7
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 408
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 409
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 221
[29] *Ibid.*

In contrast to the little said on insanity, the report noted that "it renders the Indian Immigrant unfit and unable to perform with satisfaction to the employer, that work for which he was specially brought to this Colony."[30] Every symptom of a "mild case" of insanity was related either to the effectiveness of the individual in providing labour or was purely descriptive, and the first three conditions which the Commission attributed to cannabis use were "unsteadiness in the performance of work, incapacity for exertion, [and] undermining of the nervous power."[31]

There were several testimonies from estate managers that evinced calls for prohibition. Mr. CP Reynolds, manager of Umzinto Estate during the Commission's visit there, said "I think that the law should provide a penalty for possession of dakkha by Indian immigrants, and I would also punish a man found actually smoking it…I consider that the ill effects from smoking dakkha are greater than those from drinking spirits."[32] Estate managers were not alone in this view. Magistrates also made calls for prohibition, claiming that cannabis use was a direct cause of violence. Here, we see opinions redolent of the Commission's description, "[cannabis users], intoxicated by its fumes, become dangerous and are arrested by the police. Homicides are committed by men rendered furious by its toxic properties." Resident Magistrate of Alexandra County, Cpt. GA Lucas, presented the case of Bhalee as evidence. Cpt. Lucas had been informed by Dr. Tritton (who, remember, did not see reason to mention cannabis in his testimony) that Bhalee, charged with assaulting a woman, "was under the influence of dakkha and [Dr. Tritton] was under the impression that the prisoner was a habitual dakkha-smoker."[33] In court, Bhalee attacked the woman again while she gave testimony, and more seriously again after he had served his sentence and returned to the estate.[34]

While the conclusions of the Commission identified cannabis as a cause of many symptoms associated with cannabis insanity in India, and so did attribute insanity to the use of the plant, this was not their main concern. Instead, it seems as if their main concerns were labourer indolence and violence.

A point worth mentioning about the Commission's findings concerns non-Indian 'natives' and 'dakkha'. Their report stated:

[30] RIIC (1887), p. 7
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 246
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 244
[34] *Ibid.*

> As we are strongly convinced that the smoking of hemp is as baneful to the Kaffir as to the Indian, we consider it is our duty to suggest that chemists, holding special licences subject to stamp duty, should be the only persons allowed by law to sell any portion of the hemp plant, whether wild or cultivated, to any person whomsoever, whether of white, Kaffir, or Indian descent.[35]

But just why this proposition was included is not immediately clear. Many reports attested to the widespread use of cannabis amongst Africans in the Colony and the dangers of its use. But these dangers were not indolence, or crime *per se* – rather, it was apparently the danger posed by Zulu armies under its influence. There were persistent rumours that Zulu armies had been under the influence of cannabis at Isandlwana and Blood River. and that "under the exciting stimulation of the drug [are] capable of accomplishing hazardous feats."[36] "They were to be feared,"[37] says Chanock, because cannabis use was said to cause "extreme moroseness... [and] dangerous and criminal incitement."[38]

It is interesting to note the inclusion of 'whites' by the commissioners, despite there being no reports about cannabis use by 'whites' in Natal. Consider the comments immediately preceding the above statement:

> We have reason to think that much hemp is sold to Indians by Kaffirs and storekeepers; we are aware that, in some parts of the Colony, white traders purchase green hemp from Kaffir growers and retail them, in a dried state, to any customer who applies for them.[39]

It would seem that the main concern here was not cannabis use, but cannabis trading. And while cannabis could have been as "baneful" to Africans as Indians, the above reference was not to the effects of cannabis on Africans or Indians. It appears that inter-racial contact was the concern here. This was supported by the 'scientific' view of criminology that prevailed in the colonies, in which criminality was "infectious: criminality spread from lower races to higher."[40] Inter-racial contact between 'whites' and Indians or Africans, and between Indians and Africans, led to the debasement of the former in each case. Cannabis trading, it was claimed, facilitated this moral degeneration.

The findings of the Indian Immigrant Commission Report framed the future debates on cannabis in South Africa. The themes presented in this report (labourer indolence, crime and insanity) recurred throughout debates on cannabis, up to the point of national prohibition in

[35] RIIC (1887), p. 8
[36] Bryant, cited in Booth, M., *Cannabis: A History* (London, 2003), p. 45
[37] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 95
[38] Bryant cited in Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001) p. 96
[39] RIIC (1887), p. 8
[40] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 65

1922. But, as with the 1884 request for prohibition, it seems "opinion was divided, and no rule was issued." At the time of Union, Natal still had no laws controlling cannabis.

This was not the case in the Cape Colony, where cannabis was prohibited under Act 34 of 1891.[41] As in Natal, the two themes we see in the Cape are fear of crime and labourer indolence, this time in reference to 'coloureds'. It was not until around 1912 that the panic around the use of cannabis grew to the point that there were calls for the enforcement of that law and, as Chanock points out, "there was a marked tendency to consider *dagga* in relation to the racially marginal Indian and coloured populations,"[42] and to disregard *dagga* use amongst the so-called 'white' and 'native' groups.

The limited discussions of cannabis use by Africans showed a very different concern. The South African Native Affairs Commission Report (SANAC) of 1905 is a good example. Consider this extract from the Commission's interview of the Hon. HD Winter, former Minister of Agriculture in Natal (commissioner questions are in italics):

> *Has the departure from Native customs in beer-drinking parties led to a large indulgence by the younger people in those beer-drinking parties and their getting mixed up in those faction fights?* Decidedly so. In former days, the men only were allowed to gather together and drink beer, but now there are the woman, the girl, and the boy; they all seem to gather together and participate in this beer drinking.
>
> *Those beer-drinking parties were really restricted to men?* To the men with "isicocos" on, the "ring" men.
>
> *Now any boy may invite himself to a beer drink?* Yes
>
> *And the women and girls attend too, promiscuously?* Yes
>
> *You think that that is wrong?* Yes, I think that that is wrong
>
> *And in the smoking of hemp weed, the "insangu," do you not think that this is very much demoralising to the youth of the Natives?* Very much indeed; it has been of late years
>
> *That was also an indulgence which was almost entirely restricted to the men?* To the adults, yes.
>
> *But now any youngster, any boy, indulges?* Yes, and women and girls also indulge in it at the present time.
>
> *They all use it?* They all use it
>
> *It is very demoralising both physically and mentally?* Of course, more especially mentally; the great danger is that.

[41] Bourhill, *The Smoking of Dagga* (1912), p. 20
[42] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 95

> *Do you think that restrictions should be brought about in respect of the use of beer by the youths and the girls of the native population, and the use also of this hemp, the "insangu"?* I would not restrict it to that extent. Let them have their beer, but not mixing up and holding their big beer-gatherings, neglecting their homes, and all that sort of thing. I would not restrict the beer, because beer to a native who is feeble and old is the same as what a glass of port or any other stimulant might be to a European. I would not like to deprive the Native of his beer; at the same time I would like to put down those beer-gatherings.
>
> *And keep the younger people away?* And keep the younger people away.
>
> *The promiscuous gatherings of this sort have led to a great loss of respect for elders and grown-up people?* That is so. The heads of kraals have entirely lost their command.
>
> *So you think that the excessive use, or the use at all of this "insangu" by younger people, either boys or girls, unfits them for continuous labour, for effort of any sort, and makes them practically useless?* It is bound to. It affects them generally, mentally and otherwise. I have no objection to the elderly men using this hemp stuff, this "insangu", but I certainly have objection to the women and the girls and the boys using it.[43]

Another example is Natal Magistrate TR Bennet's interview:

> *Do you think that the use of Native beer and their hemp is having an injurious effect on the younger portions of the Native population, and the women?* Yes. I think to a certain extent it is. You find that women now attend these beer drinks in a regular way, which they never did in olden times, and it is having a bad effect on them.
>
> *Their customs and usages in respect of the use of these things have very much altered?* Yes. They have become quite general, whereas, before, they were restricted to men of mature age.
>
> *Does this apply to hemp, and drink as well?* Both[44]

It is clear from the above comments, not only that the Commission was in the habit of asking very leading questions, but their concern was not the use of cannabis in itself, but rather the breakdown of cultural norms, which supposedly resulted in the abuse of alcohol and cannabis, which in turn led to "faction fights" and "promiscuity." This stands in contrast to the manner in which 'white' South Africa dealt with cannabis use amongst the Indian and 'coloured' populations. The idea of outright prohibition comes up only once in an interview with Swaimana, Chief of Amanyuswa, and again the answer was clear:

> *Do you prefer the old custom of the Zulus, where the men had their Kafir beer alone, without the women; or do you approve of the present system where men, women, and children all drink Kafir beer at the same sitting?* I prefer the old custom, by which only men went to beer-drink gatherings, and where no women or children were allowed to attend
>
> *Would you like a law imposed by this country restricting the use of Kafir beer only to men?* Yes

[43] *Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903 – 1905* (Pretoria, 1905), p. 479
[44] SANAC, p. 607

> *What is your opinion of this indiscriminate smoking of hemp by the Zulu; would you like to see a law putting that down, as drink is put down?* The old custom was the proper way, whereby the smoking of hemp was restricted to adults and grown-up men...
>
> *Would you restrict it to grown-up men?* Yes, because the adult is able to control himself; he takes a whiff of the pipe or the horn, and he passes spittle through a stick onto the floor, and makes figures; and passes on the horn to his next neighbour; but he does not use it to excess. The young people smoke it to excess, and they fight with other, and they become mad through it, and rush away sometimes out of the huts like mad people.
>
> *Would you like it restricted to adults?* Yes, those who take a draw, and amuse themselves by making figures on the floor, and then pass the horn on
>
> *Or would you like to see the Government stop it all together, as regards the whole of the Native population?* The Native would then say the government did this, because the Government people themselves did not smoke it.
>
> *Would you allow the full-grown men to use it, but not the younger men?* Yes[45]

The disparity between discussions on cannabis use amongst different social groups is telling. Firstly, the discussions display the racial hierarchy established by the colonists, which formed a continuum ranging from the perceived 'civilized' to the perceived 'savage', and which to their minds justified the differences in the way they treated each 'racial' group. Secondly, it is argued here that the varied concerns show that the discussions are directed solely at protecting the ruling-class colonist population, at the expense of the other designated 'racial' groups.

Discussions around cannabis were distinctly race-specific, and reflected both the degree and kind of interaction between the ruling colonial population of South Africa and the other designated 'racial' groups. In the case of Indians, these were indentured workers brought out to Natal's large estates. Their main job was labour, thus indolence was the focus of discussions about cannabis use. Yet the supposed potential for violent crime was also a concern, and this is possibly explained by the fact that at the time (1887), the number of Indians in Natal was rapidly approaching that of the colonists, thus colonist interaction with Indians was rising fast.[46] In the Cape Colony, this emphasis was inverted. Violent crimes committed by 'coloureds' took precedence over the threat of labour difficulties, but both were an issue. The more urbanised coloured population of the Cape had a higher degree of contact with the 'white' population. Thus, the potential threat of violence was perceived to be higher than in Natal.

[45] SANAC, pp. 582 - 583

[46] Mills, J. H., "Colonial Africa and the international politics of cannabis", in Mills, J. H., and Barton, P. (eds.), *Drugs and Empire* (Hampshire, 2007), p. 170

The African population was still largely rural at the time of the South African Native Affairs Commission Report of 1905. The view of the commissioners (as is evidenced by their line of questioning) was that the major problem was not cannabis itself, but moral degeneration following a breakdown of cultural norms. The threat posed by African interaction with 'whites' could be avoided without resorting to discussions about cannabis; cannabis use was merely another symptom of the root cause of the moral deterioration of Africans – contact with 'white' culture. This could not have been the conclusion of the 'white' population with regard to 'coloureds' and Indians, whom they relied on for labour. In the social sciences of the time, full quarantine of these perceived 'baser types' was the ideal. It reduced the potential threat to zero. And while this may have been an ideal for the Commission, it made little sense in light of the new mining industry in Transvaal. The Commission was specifically set up as a "means of making ['natives'] more useful to the white community."[47]

That the perception of cannabis use amongst Africans had changed by 1908 seems to lend credence to this idea. It was only after major contact with Africans had occurred, that real panic began to emerge. Rapid growth in the mining industry and the consequent urbanisation of Africans brought with it the 'black peril' cases, and often cannabis and alcohol abuse were said to have contributed to these cases. Mine managers were petitioned in 1908 to prohibit the, at the time open and legal, sale of cannabis in their mine stores to miners.[48] The mine managers declined, saying it "was not used to excess,"[49] and apparently even made miners more productive.[50] Interestingly, there is evidence that some commercial, 'white'-owned, cannabis farms emerged to supply the mining trade during this period.[51]

'Cannabis insanity' was well accepted in South Africa, despite its secondary importance in debates. Debates around cannabis in South Africa were focused around three major themes. The two main themes, labourer indolence and violence, could be explained by the third, insanity. Furthermore, this 'insanity' seemed comparable to the delirium caused by heavy cannabis intoxication. In fact, it seems that the symptoms of '*dagga* insanity', if we exclude a propensity for violence and an aversion to work, were nothing more than those of being heavily intoxicated. Consider the rather misleading remarks of Dr. Beatson (Civil Surgeon of

[47] Burton, D. R., *The South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903-1905: An Analysis and Evaluation* (MA thesis, UNISA) 1985, p. 153
[48] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 92
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] Herer, J., *The Emperor Wears No Clothes* (Los Angeles, 2004), p. 93
[51] One such farm was on the property of what is now *Southern Comfort* on the 'Garden Route', Western Cape. **(**Conversation with the owner, December 2006.)

Nagpur, India), who said in 1891 that "the excess in ganja smoking does produce an insanity which is transient if the habit is relinquished but otherwise permanent."[52]

But insanity seems to have played only a minor role in the processes of prohibition. Prohibition, it seems, was chiefly a reflection of the ruling-class colonists' interactions with other social groups. It was a weighing-up of, on the one hand, the threat posed by other groups, and on the other, their use to the colonists. The perception existed that there was a biological hierarchy of *kinds* of person. On one side sat the archetypal 'savage', and on the other, the archetypal 'civilised gentleman'. This was both a biological and moral configuration. Moreover, these inherent traits were seen as being situated in a specific social environment. When placed within a social environment not suited to the individual's nidus, moral degeneration was the result. In a situation such as in the colonies, where the native populations were intended to be utilised by the colonists and contact was inevitable (in other words, where members of the population were inevitably removed from what was perceived to be their 'correct social environment'), these populations were thought to pose a threat to the colonists. Once this threat was seen as being too grave, the 'vices' (seen as a major source of moral degeneration) were controlled. In South Africa, this point was reached around 1908 with the emergence of the so-called 'black peril'.

These ideas of biological and moral configuration, and of social environment, were so accepted in South Africa that they later became the foundation for apartheid law in the twentieth century. It could be said that the reasons informing the foundation of apartheid law and the prohibition of cannabis were almost identical. In each case, it was a body of laws passed to ensure that the 'non-white' population could be made of use to the 'white' population, while trying to minimise the threat that the former posed to the 'white' ruling class. While apartheid laws sought to keep specific kinds of people in specific social environments, minimising contact between groups, the laws against cannabis (and other 'vices' such as alcohol) served to protect the 'white' population in circumstances where such interaction was unavoidable.

<u>The Prohibition of Cannabis in South Africa, 1920 - 1950</u>

In Bourhill's view, cannabis was unrelated to the 'black peril' cases. Instead, Bourhill cites "white women or men [as] largely to blame for setting a bad example."[53] But despite

[52] Mills, *Cannabis Britannica* (2003), p. 84

Bourhill's arguments to the contrary, cannabis was still seen as a major contributor to the 'black peril' cases, and by 1921, there was real panic surrounding cannabis use in South Africa. According to Chanock, this was mainly a concern in the Western Cape, where cannabis is said to have 'caused' criminality. A Department of Justice official is quoted as saying:

> The evil effects are found principally to concern public health and crime; but agriculture is by no means unaffected since the effect upon farm labourers of the smoking of the herb greatly depreciates the quantity and value of the labour they would otherwise be capable of rendering.[54]

Having signed the Treaty of Versailles, which entailed putting measures in place to suppress opiates and cocaine, there was legally-justifiable pressure to include cannabis on this list in the national legislation. The Cape Province and the Orange Free State had both already passed local legislation in 1891 and 1903 respectively, but opinion was still divided on how to legislate cannabis in the Union. Any law would be impossible to police: cultivation and use were widespread, and the area that would need to be policed was vast. A number of officials, including the Secretary of Native Affairs, the Chief Magistrate of Transkei and the Chief Native Commissioner of Natal, all agreed that prohibiting use would be "unenforceable."[55] Interestingly, one major faction supporting full criminalisation was the police, who said that it would be "useful" in "relation to crimes of violence, and offences against morality."[56] The decision was made that full criminalisation of the plant, all its derivatives and the use thereof would be proposed in legislation, but the Native Affairs Department was assured that the law would not be enforced in remote areas where "moderate dagga smoking is of little importance from the point of view of public order and welfare."[57]

In June 1922 the Customs and Excise Duties Amendment Act prohibited the cultivation, sale, possession and use of cannabis, cocaine and a number of opiates. It also allowed search and seizure in the enforcement of the new drug laws, and included provisions to allow authorities to seize drug paraphernalia. Furthermore, the burden of proof was placed on the accused. While the complete debates are unavailable, the *Cape Times* summaries thereof did not make any mention of the clause dealing with "habit-forming drugs." The Cape had passed legislation against cannabis and opium in 1891, so perhaps in the Cape Province, where

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[53] Bourhill, *The Smoking of Dagga* (1912), p. 27
[54] Cited in Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 93
[55] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 94
[56] *Ibid.*
[57] *Ibid.*

cannabis prohibition was nothing new, these parts of the debate were not considered worth mentioning. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing because the *Cape Times* version of the debates seems to be the only one available.[58]

In 1921 the Council of the League of Nations had called for an "Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Dangerous Drugs," and it was in 1923 that South Africa wrote to this committee. The letter read as follows:

> Pretoria November 28th 1923
>
> With reference to your letter no. 12/A/22951/17217 dated September 6th 1922, on the above subject and to my letter no. 29/8/85 dated December last, forwarding copies of the Regulations promulgated under Proclamation no. 181 of 1922, I have the honour to inform you that, from the point of view of the Union of South Africa, the most important of all the habit-forming drugs is Indian Hemp or 'Dagga' and this drug is not included in the International List. It is suggested that the various Governments being parties to the International Opium Convention should be asked to include in their lists of habit-forming drugs the following:
>
> Indian hemp: including the whole or any portion of the plants cannabis indica or cannabis sativa.
>
> Signed, J.C. Van Tyen, for Secretary to the Prime Minister.[59]

This was accepted at the Second Opium Conference of 1924, and came into international law in 1925.[60]

Further, more extensive, legislation was passed in Act 13 of 1928, the Medical, Dental and Pharmacy Act. Parliamentary debate on the topic mentions the "habit-forming drug" clause only once in passing, and the example cited is cocaine, not cannabis. In the Senate debates of the bill, the Minister of Public Health discussed the motives of this section:

> Then another part of the Bill deals with habit-forming drugs. As far as this is concerned we have, not only an obligation to fulfil towards the population of South Africa, but we also have to fulfil an international obligation. According to the Treaty of Versailles to which we are also a signatory, we have undertaken to pass certain restricted legislation as far as the cultivation and manufacture and sale of habit-forming drugs are concerned. Now, in spite of the fact that the Treaty was passed in 1919, we have so far not passed out promised legislation, we have not fulfilled our international obligations.[61]

The Minister admitted that there was at the time financial regulation of habit-forming drugs, but claimed "as everyone will see, this is a most unsatisfactory way of dealing with such a

[58] This was looked for in the South African Library, Cape Town, the libraries of the University of Cape Town, and the Cory Library of Historical Research at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, all without results.
[59] Cited in Mills "Colonial Africa and the international politics of cannabis" (2007), p. 166
[60] *Ibid*. pp. 166 – 168
[61] Senate Debates of the Union of South Africa, 20th March 1928, c. 361

matter. Therefore," he continued, "one chapter of this Bill deals with habit-forming drugs. It is unnecessary however, for me to go into detail with regard to this provision. I think there will be no objection as far as these are concerned."[62]

Following the inclusion of cannabis on the international list of "habit-forming drugs," the need to justify its prohibition fell away in South African debates. This gives the impression that by the 1920s the public view was settled on the issue of cannabis, while in fact it was not. In 1935 the Department of Public Health released a statement lambasting various newspaper reports, which had claimed the laws against cannabis were directed at an essentially harmless substance.[63] The Cape Coloured Commission Report of 1937 also vehemently attacked these reporter's claims. Citing the 1935 statements, the Commission said that cannabis "especially when indulged in simultaneously with alcoholic intoxicants," brought about a mental state that "makes it a cause of crimes of violence."[64] The Commission further warned that the "public conscience should be aroused to a realisation of the evils of dagga [and] more active steps should be taken to eradicate its use."[65]

1937 also saw the passing of the Weeds Act, which further entrenched cannabis laws in South Africa. Again, the issue of 'habit-forming drugs' did not feature in parliamentary and senate debates. This Act placed the onus on the occupier or owner of a property to prevent land being used to produce cannabis, or any other plant declared a 'weed' in South Africa. If the occupier or owner failed to do so they were guilty of an offence, and furthermore, the government was empowered to remove the plant from their land at the owner or occupier's expense. Imprisonment was allowed for a second offence concerning the same weed species, and it was required that the declared weed was destroyed on observation. It also made the movement and trade of seeds of declared weeds illegal. As Senator Naude pointed out, "this is a fairly drastic bill; it is a measure which enslaves the owner and the public"[66] – especially considering it was not directly aimed at 'habit-forming drugs', but at any declared weed. It did, however, give the police a great deal of power with regard to cannabis-related offences.

At this stage, the "more active steps" called for by the Cape Coloured Commission to "eradicate [cannabis] use" included training for police and farmers in identifying the plant, but – as with the 1922 and 1928 legislations – there was very little change in the cannabis

[62] Senate Debates of the Union of South Africa, 20th March 1928, c. 361
[63] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 95
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] *Ibid.*
[66] Senate Debates of the Union of South Africa, 10th May 1937, c. 1062

markets. There was, however, a marked increase in arrests following the passing of the Weeds Act and the publication of the Cape Coloured Commission Report. Convictions for cannabis had always been low, about one thousand per year between 1924 and 1934.[67] But by 1945 there were 9,101 prosecutions per year, and by 1949, this had increased to 16,170 per year.[68]

Apartheid Politics with regard to the "The Dagga Problem", 1950-1970

In 1949 the new National Party government established a commission of enquiry specifically into cannabis. The Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Abuse of Dagga (RICAD) was released in 1952. This extensive report departed from past reports in its dealing with the plant, and established discussions on cannabis for the second half of the twentieth century. The report seems to reflect an attempt to reconcile the deracialised social sciences of the post-war years with the increasingly racialised politics of the newly-established apartheid state. As a document of the apartheid government, the commission had a specifically racialised mandate. It sought to examine the use of cannabis by the designated 'racial' groups, but showed only tacit acceptance of the racial hierarchy inherent to its addressing of the topic. Thus, the Commission satisfied the 'new' approach of the post-war social sciences, while maintaining the racialised approach required by the apartheid government.

The Committee consisted of two representatives from the departments of Social Welfare and Justice and Native Affairs respectively, as well as one representative from the police and one from the Department of Health. In addition, representatives from the British protectorates of Basutoland and Swaziland acted in the capacity of "observer and advisor" to the Commission.

While revising the language used, the committee developed each of the themes found in previous discussions. But, in the context of the post-war years, did so tacitly. For example, the report contended that

> The fact that most dagga offences are discovered when the police make searches and arrests in connection with other offences suggests the association between dagga and crime... where

[67] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 94
[68] *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Abuse of Dagga, 1949 - 1952* (Pretoria, 1952), p. 9

> the individual constitution shows anti-social tendencies or aggressiveness, these qualities are accentuated by the drug and may result in crimes, generally crimes of violence.[69]

The commission did concede that "dagga is apparently the least dangerous of habit-forming drugs,"[70] even continuing to say:

> When used in moderation, as it is apparently used by large numbers of the Natives and when smoked in the traditional manner through water, its effects are not serious; in fact, probably no more deleterious than smoking tobacco. [71]

Still, the commission immediately returned to the former arguments:

> Over-indulgence, however, leads to physical, mental and moral deterioration. Physically, the inveterate dagga addict is emaciated and constitutionally weak, and incapable of sustained work. He inevitably degenerates morally too.[72]

And

> Whilst it is generally agreed that dagga does not produce any permanent psychotic condition, it does produce very definite moral degeneration.[73]

Referring to *dagga* use as "the evil" in their report, the Commission retained the argument of moral degeneration, and in so doing showed its tacit acceptance of racial hierarchy and racism. This was particularly reflected in the Report's discussions of the attitudes toward cannabis use held by different 'racial groups'.

Under the heading *Present Non-European Attitudes Towards Dagga-smoking*, the Report dealt with each 'racial group' identified by the government. "The Native view that there is nothing reprehensible about dagga-smoking in itself," it said, "has not been changed by the fact that the law of the white man now forbids the practice."[74] In the paragraph that follows the Commission addressed cannabis use in "the Coloured community." Here, they made their view known by saying "[the 'Coloured' community] recognise the habit as a concomitant of poverty, backwardness, dirtiness, crime, unemployment and general lack of respectability."[75] This immediately shows (through the use of the term 'recognise') that the authors retained the idea of the 'native's' "backwardness," but that the so-called "Coloured community" was somehow 'less backward' by recognising this 'fact'. Similarly, the Commission said of "Asiatics" that "it is only the poorer classes who take to dagga-smoking and are, in

[69] RIDCAD (1952), p. 42
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] *Ibid.*
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 24
[74] *Ibid.*, p. 4
[75] *Ibid.*, p. 5

consequence, looked down upon by the others."[76] While of "Europeans," it says, "it is hardly ever practised by persons who are, or wish to be thought, respectable."[77] By linking 'respectability' with cannabis use, the Commission portrayed "natives," as unapologetic cannabis users, to be less respectable. And while the "Coloured community" retained a degree of respectability, the presence of use in this segment of society still showed them to be less respectable than "Europeans," who "hardly ever" used cannabis.

It is no surprise that the increase in cannabis use by 'non-Europeans' in the urban centres was of great concern, considering it was this which gave rise to the panic leading up to prohibition half a century earlier. Again, the commissioners seem to resort to a covert presentation of the former arguments, implying that this increase was a direct consequence of a breakdown in cultural norms. They claimed that cannabis abuse would not occur in the "rural areas,"[78] where youths would perform "duties such as herding stock,"[79] and so keep themselves occupied. Excessive freedom from supervision, and a lack of responsibilities, were given the blame for the increase in cannabis use amongst "juveniles." "It is not any particularly deadly quality of the dagga plant itself which presented a social problem," the report said. "Rather it is the economic and social maladjustment of the age which confronts us."[80]

> Our efforts should, therefore, be directed not only towards fighting the evil of dagga as such, but also towards improving those social and economic conditions which inevitably produce evils and maladjustments of various kinds, one of which is addiction to drugs.[81]

Some of the "improvements" recommended to reduce cannabis use amongst youths are telling, and were nothing short of measures to aid political suppression and apartheid social planning:

> With the example of riotous adult behaviour before them, such as resistance to authority (police) and daily law-breaking in connection with beer-brewing and liquor selling; with talk, propaganda and frequent instances of revolt against all discipline and authority, it is small wonder juveniles rebel against any restraint which parents impose upon them... Amongst the economic and social conditions which conduce to the dagga habit, there is one which could be dealt with in a practical way to combat the evil, namely, bad housing. The Committee has had the clearest and most emphatic evidence from several centres that the removal of slum populations to well-controlled housing schemes reduces the dagga evil as it does many other evils. One of the important suggestions it makes to combat the dagga evil is that attention should be given to better housing. But improved housing conditions cannot furnish the full answer to the problem. If juveniles are idle and do not know what to do with themselves; if

[76] RIDCAD (1952), p. 5
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 6
[78] *Ibid.*
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] *Ibid.*
[81] *Ibid.*

> they do not attend school and cannot find employment, then improved housing conditions alone will not deflect them from wayward behaviour. This raises the thorny question of Native juvenile employment.[82]

The point made above is that the 1952 Commission Report, while focused on the issue of cannabis specifically, served to reinforce the political climate and thinking of the time. However, their ideas were presented in such a way so as to mask the racial hierarchy inherent to their ideology. This is not to say that the commissioners were deliberately covering their views, or that they did not openly accept the apartheid models, but simply that apartheid ideology found its way into the report. Thus, even though the manner in which the "dagga evil" was addressed changed in the 1952 report, it still retained the same constructions of 'non-Europeans' found in earlier discussions, and went further to include the claim that cannabis use was a symptom of resistance to state authority. In doing so, the 1952 report established a new kind of language to discuss cannabis in the latter half of the twentieth century, all the while retaining its racist foundation, and keeping the cannabis laws of use to the ruling-class, 'white' minority. It is also interesting to note that it was in the Dagga Commission that Bourhill's thesis first entered debates on cannabis in South Africa, and his work was "reprinted solely for the use of the Dagga Commission."[83]

The recommendations of the Committee proposed almost draconian laws against cannabis. These included confiscation of vehicles used for trafficking; the presumption of possession if cannabis was found in a vehicle, and the removal or suspension of drivers licences for those caught transporting cannabis. Also included was an increase in search and seizure powers, the establishment of mobile police squads for policing cultivation districts, greater border control, the use of police dogs, the fingerprinting of *dagga* offenders, extensive use of the criminal informer system and a large propaganda campaign.[84]

It is possible to see some reason for these extreme measures. While arrests continued to rise, absolutely nothing had changed in the dynamics of the trade since prohibition. Cannabis use was still widespread, and the areas of production remained as they had since at least the nineteenth century.[85] The description of the trade in the 1952 report indicates that there had been no changes in the dynamics of the trade since unionisation in 1910. The trade remained multi-racial, and even farmers were still implicated in the trade to "attract workers or to retain

[82] RIDCAD (1952), p. 6
[83] Bourhill, *The smoking of Dagga* (1912), Front cover
[84] RIDCAD (1952), pp. 30-38
[85] In fact, these areas (Lesotho, the former Transkei, Swaziland and parts of Natal adjacent to these borders) remain the major cultivation districts today.

the services of their workfolk."[86] The laws on cannabis, therefore, so far had been entirely ineffective.

Figure 8: Cannabis being burned by police, April 1970 (Bensusan, A. D., *Drug Exposure: the South African Scene* (Johannesburg, 1971), p. 51)

It was not until 1970 that government approached the topic again. It did so because "illicit traffic in dagga seem[ed] to be increasing tremendously"[87] – in other words, the measures proposed by the 1952 report seemed to have had little effect on cannabis trading. In 1970, the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions published a work entitled *Drug Dependence and Some of Its Concomitant Aspects in the Republic of South Africa*. The first section of the report was entitled *The Dagga Problem*, which relied heavily on the 1952 report for its findings. Other than providing some updated statistical and medical information, the findings presented in this section of the publication were simply a revision of the older report. It retained the use of Bourhill and his "causal trinity – environment, nidus and vice,"[88] and once again presented the same formulation of these ideas (albeit in a different guise), saying:

> Criminal and sexual tendencies which are normally controlled and repressed may... find expression under the influence of dagga. This seems acceptable since it has been proved that all inhibitions are dispelled during dagga-smoking and the true personality emerges. Therefore, a person with tendencies towards murder, theft and other criminal offences would be capable of committing such crimes under the influence of the drug. A further explanation for dagga-smokers' crimes is their increased susceptibility to suggestion. This may account for the massacres of the Voortrekkers and the Mau-Mau acts of violence.[89]

This final line is in reference to the opening section of Part 1 (*The Dagga Problem*) where, under the subheading "Various Uses", it is claimed that cannabis was used by "the Mongol and Chinese hordes since, according to them, it aroused warlikeness and courage in the

[86] RIDCAD (1952), p. 16
[87] Department of Social Welfare and Pensions, *Drug Dependence and Some of Its Concomitant Aspects in the Republic of South Africa* (Pretoria, 1970), p. 3
[88] DSWP, *Drug Dependence* (1970), p. 15
[89] *Ibid.*, p. 16

warrior,"[90] and that "the Zulus were under the influence of dagga at the time of their assaults on the Voortrekkers. According to police statements, 90 per cent of the Bantu arrested during the Kenya insurrections were also under the influence of dagga."[91]

Section Two was entitled *The Hippie Cult*, and it dealt with the rise in drug, and particularly cannabis, use amongst 'white' youths in South Africa. This section also stands as the first attempt to construct an idea of the 'white' cannabis user in South Africa. The most obvious point to be made here is the reference to a "cult", with the presentation of "hippies" as somehow being "drawn into" an antisocial system. In reference to Johannesburg, it was said that

> there are about 300 to 500 persons who answer to the general description of 'hippie'. Then there are a large number of young people who may be said to be on the fringe of the hippie way of life – perhaps several thousand of them according to observations. They are in constant danger of being drawn in.[92]

While, in seeking a definition of those involved, the report said "hippies" may be described as

> individuals or groups of individuals who have no regular or honest means of livelihood, live in small groups in unsavoury living conditions in disorganised areas of the city, are of untidy and 'peculiar' appearance, are in revolt of established modes of behaviour and value systems, and make use of drugs.[93]

In essence, this is a reiteration of the findings of the 1952 report; an agreement that "hippies" were not "persons who are, or wish to be thought, respectable." But this still does not address the question of why this phenomenon of the 1960s and 1970s should be redefined as a "cult," rather than simply another youth rebellion movement. Upon examination it appears that the primary motivation for this was that these youths had no reason to be considered 'unrespectable', and seemed (to 'white' South Africa) to be actively seeking this label. This was deviance, and defiance, which was unanticipated. Consider the following extract:

> An immediate presumption one tends to make is that 'hippie' is a new word or name for the old pattern of teenage revolt, and for the usual deviant and disturbed young people. However, on closer examination this does not appear to be quite true – although of course there are a number of the deviant, neglected and scared young people involved, and though it is a revolt, there is also something very different and new involved.
>
> The 'movement' has appealed basically not to the deprived youngsters from the multi-problem families who essentially form the old duck-tails or juvenile delinquents, but to the

[90] DSWP, *Drug Dependence* (1970), p. 2
[91] *Ibid.*, pp. 2- 3
[92] *Ibid.*, p. 28
[93] *Ibid.*, p. 29

> middle-class young people, from 'good' homes. Not to the kids from working class, 'uneducated homes', but to those from professional or socio-economically secure homes who themselves often have a good education. Further, many are not of the usual 'youth-rebelling' age i.e. 16-18 years, but are often well into their twenties.
>
> One of the two most important 'new' factors, however, appears to be that for the first time there is a large spreading rebellion that is intellectual rather than physical. There is nothing in the new 'underworld' that resembles the teenage violence that for years has characterised youth rebellion. These youths rebel without seeking to take out their frustration and aggression on the outside world...
>
> ... it would appear on the whole that the type of young person who, in the past, was attracted to the gang, and to its violent and anti-social nature, is still participating in such behaviour, and the hippie cult is attracting a new and different type of person. Thus it is something somewhat additional to the old revolt.[94]

Considering that this section, *The Hippie Cult*, is the only section of the report that contains any novel, non-medical information, it would appear that the report was produced especially with this issue (the rebellion of 'white' middle-class youths) as its primary concern. Rebellion, in this case, with its intellectual foundation drawing support from 'good' homes, was perceived to pose a real ideological threat to South Africa's apartheid state – even greater than that posed to the government of the USA, despite "the hippie movement" being more popular there. As a result, the report seems to subordinate even the use of drugs to this concern. The pages devoted to the so-called 'hippie cult' provide ample evidence of this. For example, the author A. T. Winkler listed ten points he considered "characteristics" by which 'hippies' could be "identified". Only two of these "characteristics" contained any mention of drugs. One said "there is considerable trafficking in cannabis, L.S.D. and other drugs and they are used freely; often the hippies are under the influence of these drugs"[95]; while another point dealing with unemployment mentioned that 'hippies' would "get hold of [money] somehow or other – sometimes by peddling drugs."[96] This list of "characteristics", however, included:

> (f) Underlying the hippie cult is the revolt of the young against the established mores, traditions and customs of the adult (the so-called "rebellion against the establishment"). Their contention is that adults "use double standards". They want to be free to do as they please...
>
> (h) They have gatherings in parks or other public places where, for example, inflammatory speeches are made and those present are exhorted to take part in demonstrations and confront the police with passive resistance...

[94] DSWP, *Drug Dependence* (1970), pp. 29 – 30
[95] *Ibid.*, p. 28
[96] *Ibid.*

> (j) The better organised communities distribute their own newspapers or pamphlets which often contain overt or veiled advertisements on such subjects as homosexuality.[97]

One can see, from the above, that there was growing concern in the apartheid government over the political implications of cannabis use. This concern seems to have been officially recognised in the words of the Minister of Social Welfare and Pensions, C.P. Mulder, who, in drawing a mandate for the Committee of Inquiry into the Abuse of Drugs, said that drug abuse in South Africa contained "even political implications."[98] With the increasingly oppressive nature of the apartheid regime, cannabis use showed itself as a politically important issue. Firstly, the prevalence of cannabis use indicated the willingness of people (even those from "good homes") to break the laws of the country. Secondly, it was a concern that cannabis use was a symptom of greater political dissent directed at the government. As is argued in Chapter Three, the apartheid government had reason to be concerned about these political implications. In the case of the 'hippies', however, it was not only in the manner which the apartheid government expected (though youth rebellion was a valid concern) that the political ramifications of cannabis use were felt. It was through these 'hippie' groups that the international cannabis trade was established, and regional trade in southern Africa became boosted by involvement in this international market over the remainder of the apartheid government's existence.[99]

Figure 9: A police dog being used to 'sniff out' cannabis in a demonstration. Note the stereotypical hippie in the role of cannabis user. (Bensusan, *Drug Exposure* (1971), p. 118)

[97] DSWP, *Drug Dependence* (1970), p. 28
[98] *Ibid.*, p. 37
[99] It should be mentioned that there is other major legislation the contravention of which is the most common charge when dealing with cannabis, particularly Act 140 of 1992: Drugs and Drug Trafficking Act (which was established to conglomerate all previous acts dealing with illegal drugs into one piece of legislation, but which did not make dramatic changes) and Act 101 of 1965: Medicines and Related Substances Act (which established the Medicines Control Council and scheduled all medicines by degree of perceived danger).

Chapter 3: Situating Southern Africa in the Developing World Cannabis Trade

"Hippie Trails"... The Hippie Movement and the Establishment of the World Cannabis Trade

Not only did the 1960s see the final stages of development in the southern African trade and production networks, but it also saw the advent of cannabis smoking amongst a significant number of white youths in South Africa.[1] This development can be seen in terms of international trends. From the 1960s, worldwide consumption of cannabis in various 'Westernised' societies exploded,[2] most notably in the USA, but also in Europe, Australasia and South Africa. The result was the establishment of a truly global cannabis network.

The reasons for the establishment of a world cannabis trade can be understood in terms of the rise of the hippie movement. This chapter will not attempt to understand the origins of the hippie movement – however, it will examine some aspects and characteristics that help one understand how the Sixties' counter-culture movement led to the rise of the global cannabis trade.

The most important factors in the creation of the modern cannabis trade are (i) the change from cannabis being a drug used by those of low socio-economic status in the USA to one with widespread use amongst those of middle- and upper-class status, and (ii) the 'LSD ideology' expounded by the hippies.[3]

It should be understood that the hippie movement was far-reaching, and manifested itself in several forms amongst Sixties' youths. Howard somewhat simplistically identifies four kinds of hippie found during the 1960s. These groups were: visionary hippies, 'freaks' and 'heads', plastic hippies, and midnight hippies.[4] In reality, each hippie would fall into more than one of the classes described by Howard, and each class of hippie contributed (to varying extents) to the establishment of the global cannabis trade. The visionary hippies were ideologists, who rejected mainstream American society, deeming it materialistic and corrupt.[5] This group based their ideology on their LSD experiences, and it included several prominent American artists, such as Ken Kesey. The visionary hippies encouraged travels to and contact with other

[1] du Toit, "Ethnicity and Patterning in South African Drug Use" (1977), p. 78
[2] Green, J., *Cannabis* (New York, 2002), p. 125
[3] McGlothlin, W. H., "Socio-cultural Factors in Marihuana Use in the United States", in Rubin, R. (ed.), *Cannabis and Culture* (The Hague, 1975), p. 531
[4] Howard, J.R., "The Flowering of the Hippie Movement", in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 382 (1969), p. 45
[5] Howard, "The Flowering of the Hippie Movement" (1969), pp. 45-46

cultures, which, they believed, would facilitate an understanding of how to manifest the utopian society they envisioned. The visionary hippies most famously conducted their LSD-themed 'experiments' in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury District.[6] The 'freaks' and 'heads' were hippies who focused on the drug-taking facet of the counter-culture movement.[7] They sought out psychedelic drugs, including cannabis, around the world, and were responsible for establishing the reputation of these foreign products in the USA.[8] This created demand for hashish (a product which was more popular in Europe), and also for stronger cannabis in the USA during the height of the hippie sub-culture's popularity.[9]

These two agents of the hippie sub-culture, the 'heads' and the 'visionaries', provided the base upon which the global trade in cannabis could flourish. These hippies, because of their relatively high socio-economic status, were able to travel extensively throughout the world. If the use of cannabis had remained a pastime that predominated amongst people of lower income brackets, it is unlikely that a global cannabis trade would have been established as it was.[10]

Over the course of the 1960s, certain routes became popular amongst the travelling hippies. One route, named the "Hippie Hashish Trail" by R.C. Clarke, was comprised of a collection of traditional Sufi pilgrimage routes that wove their way across India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nepal.[11] The Sufis use cannabis in religious rituals, often very heavily, and were thus very easy contacts through which Western travellers could procure hashish in these countries. This was not the only 'trail' ventured by hippie travellers; neither were all the trails related purely to cannabis. Various other drugs were sought out, such as peyote and psilocybin mushrooms in Mexico. In fact, the Mexican trail, being so accessible from California, was so widely popular that it resulted in the mass deportation of thousands of hippies between 1967 and 1976.[12] The deportations were sanctioned by both the USA and Mexico, who complained about the decimation of several sacred peyote 'hunting' grounds and mushroom fields by the hippies. An extended route, described by Green, began in the Balearic Islands or Morocco

[6] Howard, "The Flowering of the Hippie Movement" (1969), pp. 45-48
[7] Davis, F., and Munoz, L., "Heads and Freaks: Patterns and Meaning of Drug Use Among Hippies", in *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, Vol. 9, No.2 (1968), p. 160
[8] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. xiv
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] McGlothlin, W. H., "Socio-cultural Factors in Marihuana Use in the United States", in Rubin, R. (ed.), *Cannabis and Culture* (The Hague, 1975), p. 531
[11] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. ix
[12] Allen, J., *Maria Sabina: Saint Mother of the Sacred Mushrooms*, available online: http://erowid.org/plants/mushrooms/mushrooms_article6.shtml accessed: 22/07/2007

and continued through Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Nepal and India, before finally finishing in Burma, Thailand or Vietnam.[13] However, these descriptions should not be taken to mean that travelling hippies were only seeking drugs. Their travels were also pilgrimages, seeking enlightenment from Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, and cultures which were more in tune with their 'LSD ideology' than was the prevailing mode of Western Christianity.[14]

Figure 10: A hippie traveller in a Lebanese cannabis field (Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 155)

Thus, many hippies set out for the hashish- and cannabis-producing areas of the world, in order to experience foreign cultures and to seek out the legendary cannabis products, which, until the mid-1970s, were of a far higher quality than the Mexican marijuana usually found in the USA.[15] This, and the return of soldiers from Vietnam, where Thai cannabis was abundant, certainly led to a demand in America for stronger, foreign cannabis.[16] In response to this demand, and partly on a pseudo-ideological basis, several smugglers began to supply the USA and Europe with cannabis products from various countries. Most notable was the Brotherhood of Eternal Love, a hippie organisation that produced and sold LSD, and later

[13] Green, *Cannabis* (2002), p. 129
[14] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. xiii
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 59
[16] Booth, *Cannabis: A History* (2003), pp. 223-224

smuggled and sold hashish and cannabis. This organisation has also been credited with the invention of hash oil, an extremely potent extract of cannabis.[17]

The Brotherhood, combining a quasi-religious movement with drug smuggling, earned millions in its cannabis and LSD operations. With the profits, members of this group funded hippie festivals and peace rallies, earning the respect of the hippies as "the new Robin Hoods."[18] At first, their smuggling routes originated in Mexico and Lebanon,[19] and later they played a large part in the Afghani cannabis trade.

Mexico was the first large supplier of cannabis to those involved in the hippie movement. Up until the mid-1960s, Mexico supplied about 95% of the USA's cannabis. Within a decade, following joint American and Mexican operations against the drug, this had fallen to 5%.[20]

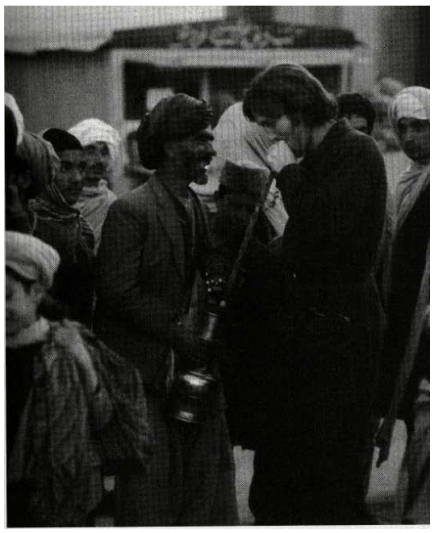

Figure 11: A hippie traveller smoking hashish in an Afghan market (Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. xi)

Hashish, which had always been less popular than herbal cannabis in North America, began to find a market there from the late 1960s onwards. This possibly occurred as a cultural diffusion from European hippies (Europe had favoured hashish ever since the Napoleonic Wars, after it was brought back from Egypt following its use by French troops stationed there), [21] as well as a result of travellers returning to North America from abroad. Lebanon was the first major supplier of hashish to those involved in the original hippie movement, and consistently has supplied 20 to 30 percent of the world trade since this period.[22] During the period 1970-1975, Lebanese hashish was exceeded in availability by hashish from Afghanistan,[23] whose brief period as a supplier for the West had far-reaching effects on the way in which the cannabis trade developed.

[17] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 116
[18] Malyon, T., "Love Seeds and Cash Crops: The Cannabis Commodity Market", in Henman, A., Lewis, R., Malyon, T. (eds.), *Big Deal: The Politics of the Illicit Drug Business* (London, 1985), p. 63
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 64
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 86
[21] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 58
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 231
[23] *Ibid.*

Afghanistan, because it was more remote than other parts of Asia, was a less popular destination for hippie travellers than India and Nepal were.[24] However, some hippies found vast quantities of high quality hashish in Afghanistan, and by the mid-1960s, some European smugglers were bringing Afghani hashish into Europe.[25] In 1968 the Brotherhood of Eternal Love bought 50 kilograms of hashish in a Kandahar bazaar for shipment to California. By 1971, they were smuggling 320 kilograms at a time, and by 1972 it was 600 kilograms.[26] In 1970, Bobby Andrist – a member of The Brotherhood – wrote the 'protocol' for the production of hashish oil, a very powerful and refined extract of cannabis, which was sold as "Honey Oil" (named after its honey-brown colour).[27] This was easier to smuggle and far more lucrative than hashish was, and its trade led to the establishment of hashish oil factories in Afghanistan, an investment which required a large amount of cannabis to fuel production.[28] The Honey Oil program, and the continued smuggling of hashish by The Brotherhood, led to a massive demand that the Afghani farmers could not meet.[29] King Zahir Shah encouraged production of hashish during 1969 and 1970, and even encouraged the use of fertilizers to increase crop yield.[30] Halfway through 1970, the USA began to put pressure on Kabul to eradicate both opium and cannabis production: Honey Oil factories were raided by police, and various hippies were arrested on drug charges.[31] In 1973 Afghanistan accepted a $47 million grant in exchange for the eradication of both opium and cannabis production, and clamped down heavily on both commodities. This campaign marked the end of large-scale hashish production in Afghanistan.[32]

Another major producer that emerged during the hippie explosion was Jamaica, which had previously cultivated cannabis almost exclusively for local use.[33] One hippie trail, which traversed the Caribbean's cannabis cultivation areas, drew many hippies to Jamaica during the late-1960s and early-1970s. Jamaica's relative accessibility from the USA meant that the island saw a large number of hippie tourists, some of whom began modest smuggling operations by purchasing cannabis from small-scale cultivators in rural areas of Jamaica.[34]

[24] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 115
[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 115-121
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] Malyon, "Love Seeds and Cash Crops" (1985), p. 77
[34] *Ibid.*

Following the collapse of the hippie movement in the mid-1970s, the motives and intentions of those involved in the trade diversified, as smuggling became dramatically less hippie-orientated.[35] However, despite these changes in the trade, the methods of procurement and smuggling appear to have remained steady until 1980, with a large number of people, working in their individual capacities, smuggling small quantities to the USA, Canada and the United Kingdom. The total volume of cannabis exported by Jamaica to the USA was estimated to have reached between 2000 and 4500 tons per annum during the early parts of the 1980s.[36] Jamaican cannabis had also been increasing in availability in England, and by 1985, Jamaica was the largest supplier of cannabis to the United Kingdom.[37] This may be attributed to the large Jamaican immigrant communities that had established themselves in England in the 1950s, and the massive boost given to the cannabis trade by the popularisation of reggae music in the 1970s.[38]

A major shift in Jamaican cannabis production, first noted by Malyon during the 1980s, was the centralisation of the industry. He describes this process as follows:

> the difference between $40 per lb obtainable on the domestic market and approximately $120 per lb obtainable from exports puts anyone with bulk transport out of the island in a key position. It has led to the present [1985] situation where small exporters and their farmer customers are being increasingly squeezed. The bulk exporters, who have resources and contacts to pay big bribe money, are taking over an ever-larger slice of the market. Small farmers and dealers, already hard-pressed by the dire straits of the Jamaican economy, are the losers.[39]

Under these conditions it has become possible for bulk smugglers to dictate prices to farmers, and prevent competition through intimidation and corrupt police intervention.[40]

Thus, Mexico, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Jamaica were all major cannabis suppliers to Europe and North America during this period. However, the supply of cannabis products was also buffered by a number of minor producers, who emerged as a result of the growing markets in Europe and North America. South Africa was one producer-country that began exporting cannabis during this period.[41] It is thought that these exports were largely small-scale, and simply involved the purchase of limited amounts of cannabis from growers in the

[35] Malyon, "Love Seeds and Cash Crops" (1985), p. 77
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 78
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] Green, *Cannabis*, (2002), p. 129
[39] Malyon, "Love Seeds and Cash Crops" (1985), p. 81
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 357

traditional producer regions of southern Africa, and then either the carriage or postage of these quantities to their destination, usually thought to be England.

"Because white society was so fucked up..." South Africa's Hippies and the Two Market Explosions

Although South Africa did have a hippie movement during the 1960s and early-1970s,[42] it was far smaller than those observed in Europe and North America. This period marks the advent of cannabis use amongst 'white' middle-class South Africans,[43] a phenomenon that caused a large amount of confusion and panic for the apartheid administration (as discussed in Chapter Two). Dr Bensusan's 1971 publication, *Drug Exposure: the South African Scene*, includes a short note on "South African hippies." He says, "It is doubtful whether the true Haight Ashbury hippie has reached South Africa in any numbers and our own hippie movement is expressed in a different manner."[44] While a number of the 'facts' mentioned in this book are blatantly flawed, and often exhibit the same erroneous foundations that characterised the discussions concerning cannabis presented in Chapter Two, in this case he appears to have been correct. However, there certainly was a hippie movement in South Africa. In government reports, such as the 1970 report, research was mainly concentrated on Johannesburg (even leading to the term "Jippie," the Johannesburg hippie, a term used by researchers but never, it seems, by those it referred to). In reality, though, it seems that the 'scene' was strongly centred in Durban. One dealer who was interviewed, in consensus with a number of others, says:

> ... eventually he caught me at Merchants Passage, which was between West and Smith, and all the hippies used to hang out there. I mean, Durban was the hippie centre of South Africa. And we used to sit there and trip and smoke... There was a Wimpy, we would hang out at the Wimpy. We were all vegetarian there, so we'd only eat chips. Eventually what they'd do is they'd close off the entrances and arrest us all on a Saturday, lock us up for the weekend...[45]

The 'he' referred to in the opening sentence is Basie Smit,[46] the notorious head of the apartheid Security Branch who "made his name as a drug squad officer in Durban."[47]

[42] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[43] du Toit, "Ethnicity and Patterning in South African Drug Use" (1977), p. 78
[44] Bensusan, A. D., *Drug Exposure: The South African Scene* (Johannesburg, 1971), p. 9
[45] 'R.Asta', Interview with Author, 22 January 2009
[46] Basie Smit's name continually came up in interviews, he was mentioned by virtually every person who was interviewed regarding the 1960s and 1970s in Natal, sometimes triggering very emotional responses. It seems his notoriety for almost sadistic violence existed amongst drug users in Durban long before his reputation was cemented across the country in his capacity as head of the Security Branch.

It is also known that some hippies from overseas came to South Africa. One dealer I interviewed recalled meeting Australian hippies on a beach in Durban in 1971, who "came over here to get stoned."[48]

While the hippie scene in South Africa was relatively minor in comparison to the rest of the so-called 'West', their presence in pockets around South Africa's urban centres, such as Johannesburg and Durban, acted as an indicator of broader, countrywide trends. These pockets of what could be called 'true hippies' indicated that the international influence of social and youth movements of the 1960s had reached South Africa. In the words of Bensusan, "our own hippie movement is expressed in a different manner,"[49] but why he classified these people as hippies at all isn't clear. It is possible that all of the social and youth movements of the 1960s were grouped together as elements of the hippie movement because of their association with hippies internationally, but it seems that the "different manner" would best be described in relation to these wider international trends (the environmental, feminist, peace and social justice movements), which developed parallel to the hippie movement but were not strictly part of it.

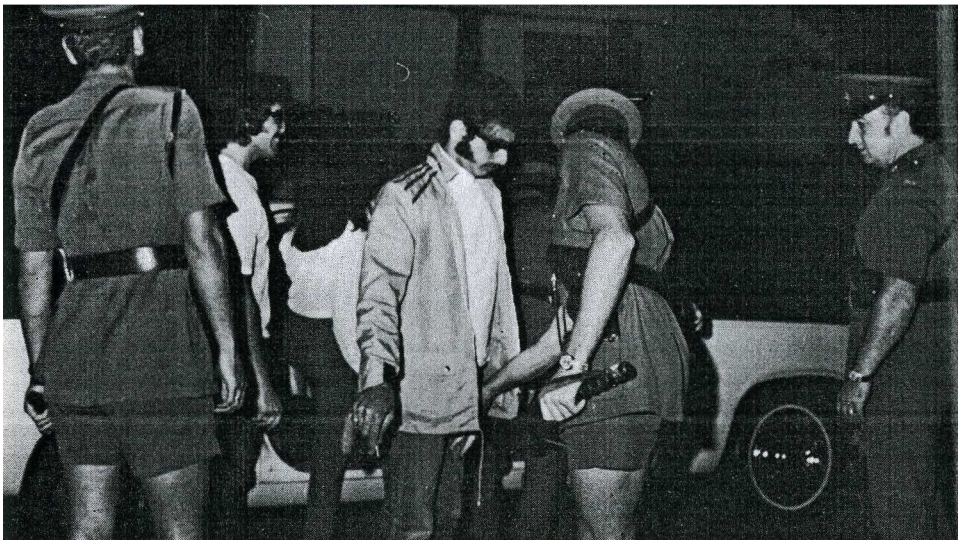

Figure 12: A police "street raid" in Hillbrow, Johannesburg (Bensusan, *Drug Exposure* (1971), p. 118)

While the hippies were the group that laid the foundation for the global cannabis trade, it was not only people who could traditionally be identified as hippies who used cannabis during this time. Cannabis use increased across the board, became a feature of all these 1960s

[47] Allen, J., *Ministers Remorse Opens Way to Prosecutions for Apartheid Crimes* (19 August 2007), available online: http://allafrica.com/stories/200708190096 accessed: 17 August 2009
[48] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[49] Bensusan, *Drug Exposure* (1971), p. 9

movements, and in South Africa this was also the case. It appears, then, that the "different manner" of hippie found in South Africa can be explained by this group's use of cannabis, and their steadfast adherence to the core ideology of the hippie movement, the 'anti-establishment mentality'. In apartheid South Africa, this anti-establishment mentality was somewhat unique, and was expressed through resistance to the segregationist policies of the oppressive government. Consider the words of the abovementioned dealer from Durban: "I spent all my time in the townships, we used to play in the township, guitar, and just hang out and smoke with the merchants and that's how I got into the townships. Basically, because white society was so fucked up."[50] Or, in the words of another dealer who began his career in Johannesburg:

> There's never been an apartheid in the ganja culture, never ever... From the beginning we've never seen an apartheid, or observed an apartheid. We've always like known it was wrong. As we know that the law against cannabis is wrong. We just inherently knew that apartheid was the wrong thing. And it's never been accepted into the cannabis culture whatsoever. Never been a part of it.[51]

Or to cite another example from Johannesburg:

> I started with the ANC in Alexandra... I was experimenting with marijuana and my friends were experimenting with marijuana. And they were all very scared to go into the location to get marijuana. So I used to go and speak to the guys. I went in there and they took a liking to me and the way I was. It first started off with just buying marijuana now and then, going in. And then we became friends and one thing led to the next and eventually I was helping them out with... doing pamphlets actually, against the apartheid system. I came from a rich family. My dad had everything and... so we had a printer and I used to do a lot of printing for them. All the things they wanted done, I would go to the printer and do like two thousand, say, pamphlets saying this or saying there was a meeting at such a place and they could hand it out. [52]

What is being argued here is that the upsurge in cannabis smoking amongst 'white' middle-class youths in the 1960s manifested itself in South Africa, not in the form of a hippie movement (though this did exist), but in an increased resistance to apartheid policy. In essence, the identity of a cannabis user, expressed overseas through association with the hippie movement, was, in South Africa, expressed through opposition to apartheid. Conversely, opposition to apartheid was often expressed through cannabis use. In this way, my thesis argues, cannabis smoking became a political act, a means of resisting the oppressive political climate within South Africa.

[50] 'R.Asta', Interview with Author, 22 January 2009
[51] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[52] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 11 January 2009

So synonymous was 'white' cannabis use with anti-apartheid sentiment, that there are several reports from the 1980s and early-1990s of 'white' cannabis smokers staving off attack with their habit.

William, originally a Johannesburg dealer, spoke about his friend in Soweto in the early 1990s:

> The National Party was still in power, but they were doing a bit of electrification there. There was a bit of sporadic violence one day, so the first thing he did was take out some ganja and he started putting a *skyf* together and when they saw him doing that they tuned "no, he's cool because he's not for this government you can see if he smokes ganja he can't be for this fucking government"... they saw that clearly. They knew it was an act of defiance in itself to smoke ganja.[53]

Al Lovejoy, a cannabis smuggler during the 1990s, describes using a virtually identical tactic to escape harm when accosted by APLA members in Kayamandi, near Stellenbosch in the 1980s.[54]

The comment made by William, "they knew it was an act of defiance in itself to smoke ganja," warrants further discussion. It seems that there was a perception that cannabis users and those who were opposed to apartheid shared common ground in their deliberate infringements of the law. The common ground amongst these 'outlaws' was anti-apartheid sentiment, and this seems to have included cannabis smokers, who were accepted as committing acts of resistance. Thus, those who were opposed to apartheid would be more open to cannabis use as an act of defiance, and cannabis users were more likely to be against the apartheid system due to their experience of persecution under that regime. It is conceivable that the increasing anti-apartheid sentiment of the early-1970s led to a wider acceptance of cannabis, and that cannabis use – being intrinsically an act of resistance to the apartheid legal system – fomented a kind of anti-apartheid sentiment in its users. Another point to make is that 'white' cannabis users, as 'Slimy' noted of his experiences in Johannesburg, in order to purchase cannabis, would be forced into contact with the predominantly 'black' supply network. By being involved in cannabis markets, one's inter-racial contact almost inevitably increased, possibly fuelling anti-apartheid sentiment amongst cannabis-using groups. So-called 'white' middle-class cannabis users began to make journeys from urban centres to producer regions, particularly the Transkei and Swaziland (but to a certain extent the Durban area too), in order to purchase quantities of cannabis to bring back

[53] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[54] Lovejoy, A., *Acid Alex* (Cape Town, 2005), p. 278

to the cities. This movement opened up whole new markets for cannabis trading, and it is thought to have greatly contributed to the increase in cannabis production and use which occurred in the early-1970s.

The local upsurge in cannabis use and production around this time seems to have spread the reputation of southern African cannabis around the world, and it marks the beginning of the region's involvement in the international trade (which, in the early-1970s, was still establishing itself).

In much the same vein as the Jamaican market, several South Africans and immigrants began to export small quantities of cannabis bought from rural farmers in the Transkei, Swaziland and Lesotho. The destinations of the small-scale exports were often Europe and the USA, though predominantly England and the Netherlands (possibly due to the large number of ancestral connections amongst 'white' South Africans, particularly with the United Kingdom).[55]

From fairly early on (the mid-1970s), South African buyers were already sending large quantities overseas, which supplemented the amount exported by a vast array of small-scale smugglers.[56] The most well-known southern African cannabis initially exported from South Africa was 'Durban Poison', and it was the fame of this cannabis that gave South Africa a firm reputation as a producer of high-quality cannabis.[57] The trade in Durban Poison is a very interesting element of the southern African trade, as it incorrectly placed Natal at the centre of the region's cannabis trade in the minds of consumers. In 1998, however, the area of Natal under cannabis cultivation was estimated at about 2,500 hectares, compared to 80,000 in the Eastern Cape.[58] To this day, much of the cannabis sold in Natal is referred to as 'Durban Poison', despite the fact that Natal gets much of its supply from other areas such as Swaziland and the former Transkei (of the several suppliers I met on the coast in Natal, none sold cannabis from the area, all sold either Transkei cannabis or Swazi cannabis or both).[59]

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[55] du Toit, B. M., *Cannabis in Africa*, (Rotterdam, 1980), p. 365. It is interesting to note this was apparently not the first time cannabis from South Africa arrived in the Netherlands. It is reported by Mila Jansen of the Pollinator Company, Amsterdam, that from 1850 to 1920 a number of African ship workers would bring their own supply to Holland, and were "happy to share." (Mila Jansen, Correspondence with Author, 5 November 2009)

[56] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007

[57] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 395 & William, Interview with Author,17 July 2007

[58] Oosthuysen, "Drugs Crime and Justice in South Africa" (1998), p. 138 (while the figures may not be entirely correct, the ratio is telling)

[59] Author's Observation (Notes from Natal, April 2007)

Furthermore, the reference 'Durban Poison' is thought by some originally to have been a European description of cannabis from Lesotho (the name deriving from the 'Durban Port' stamps on packages of cannabis arriving in Europe), after which the name was expropriated by South Africans.[60]

Durban Poison certainly had a reputation amongst 'white' smokers by the late-1970s. In du Toit's mammoth study of cannabis use in South Africa during the late-1970s, most 'white' cannabis users said that Durban Poison was the best cannabis in South Africa. One person also mentioned that it was world-famous.[61] Also of interest is the sample group used by du Toit, which includes several Britons and a Hollander. As du Toit points out, this reflects "the continual immigration of whites into South Africa mostly from United Kingdom and/or former colonies."[62] There is also the possibility that it was Durban's position as the "hippie centre of South Africa" which led to the fame of Durban Poison in the country. This can also account for why Durban Poison was the first cannabis exported to Europe, considering the role that the hippie movement played in establishing the world trade.

Durban Poison had a reputation as a potent strain of cannabis from the mid-1970s. However, according to two cannabis traders interviewed, this was not the case a decade earlier. The traders both referred to 'DP' as a form of packaging of cannabis, not as a unique cannabis plant. One trader kept referring to 'Durban Pencils'.[63] Another said: "they were pencils. They were wrapped in pencils…and we called them pencils because they were pretty much the same size and thickness of a pencil."[64] This same trader only began selling after his connections extended to Swaziland, because with Durban Poison "you didn't see what you were getting 'cause it was all wrapped in brown paper, in sticks."[65] Over the course of the early-1970s, these 'pencils' gradually got shorter and thinner, until your average 'pencil' was about a third of the length and a third of the thickness of an actual pencil (the price of a 'pencil', however, apparently remained constant).[66] And it was around this time, 1974 or 1975, that 'DP' – 'Durban Pencils' – became 'Durban Poison'.[67]

[60] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[61] du Toit, *Cannabis in Africa* (1980), p. 395
[62] *Ibid.*, p. 364
[63] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 04 August 2007
[64] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[65] *Ibid.*
[66] *Ibid.*
[67] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 11 January 2009

So, it seems that 'Durban Poison' existed as a term in South Africa prior to its use in Europe, despite some arguments to the contrary. Perhaps the European idea that Durban Poison was a landrace, similar to Thai or Mexican cannabis, led to the adoption of this understanding in South Africa. According to one smuggler in the early 1990s, the Dutch 'coffee shops' (legal cannabis sale and consumption houses) would "go crazy for this Durban Poison. I kept telling them it wasn't all that, but they had it in their heads that this Durban Poison was the shit to get."[68] It is interesting that many 'seed banks' in the Netherlands sell seeds under the name 'Durban Poison', and all of these strains (discussed in Chapter Four) are crossbred with stronger Dutch strains.[69]

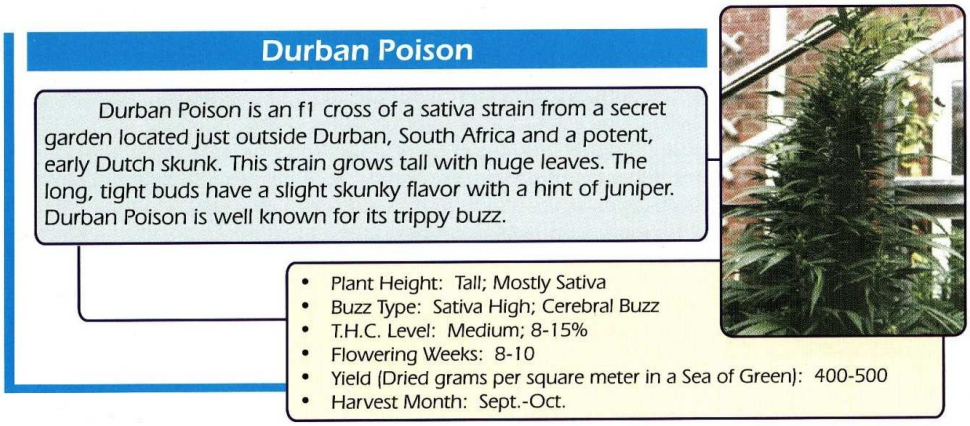

Figure 13: Durban Poison as advertised in the Nirvana Seed Company Catalogue (2005). (Author's collection)

It is very difficult to speculate on the chain of events that led to the emergence of Durban Poison. Whatever the reasons for its fame, it is certain that it does not exist as a specific kind of cannabis in southern Africa. Furthermore, it is certain that Natal does not produce a large amount of cannabis relative to its surrounding regions. However, one trader mentioned that, for a time, Natalian cannabis was very distinctive and of a high quality. This trader claimed that this cannabis, grown in Zululand, was eliminated by South African Narcotics Bureau operations there during the period in which it was led by Basie Smit.[70] Another trader mentioned that he had purchased cannabis grown in Zululand in the mid-1980s.[71] So, while it

[68] 'Ant', Interview with Author, 11 April 2009
[69] There are many examples of this. Durban Poison as a variety is marketed by the Dutch Passion Seed Company, Amsterdam (who deny hybridising their Durban Poison, though it clearly has been, perhaps prior to the seed bank receiving this genetic line), and Nirvana Cannabis Seeds, Amsterdam, amongst others.
[70] 'Pete', Interview with Author, 12 July 2008, corroborated by R.Asta. Bensusan mentions massive seizures in Zululand (in the region of 300 tons, compared to 15 tons in the Transkei) in 1971. (Bensusan, *Drug Exposure* (1971), p. 43) This seems to lend credence to the idea that a large amount of cannabis was cultivated in Zululand before being largely eliminated.
[71] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 4 August 2007

seems that there is cannabis grown in Natal, its cultivation is not nearly as extensive as that of Swaziland, the former Transkei and Lesotho.

Durban Poison (Outdoor/Indoor)
Imported from South Africa, produced in Holland. Exclusively inbred, never hybridized, 100% Sativa. Large long budleaves, buds are also large and long with lots of resin. A sweet licorice or anise flavour. "Up" high similar to Thai. High yields. Well suited for outcrossing with late bloomers to produce earlier flowering. Also does very well under artificial light. A very popular variety.
THC = 8.6%
Flowering period: 8 - 9 weeks
Harvesttime "outdoor": end of Sept.
Order no: 0901 **(Regular)**
Order no: 0902 **(Feminised)**

Figure 14: Durban Poison as advertised in the Dutch Passion Seed Company Catalogue (2005). (Author's collection)

A development, sparked by the beginning of mass exports out of southern Africa, was the compression of cannabis. By compressing one or two kilograms of cannabis into a rigid block, the problem of smuggling such a bulky product is minimised. Traders in the regional market tend to prefer 'loose' cannabis, sold in 'garbage bag' or 'plastic packet' denominations. The vast majority of compressed cannabis is exported, while the vast majority of loose cannabis is traded on the regional market. However, there are small amounts of loose cannabis smuggled to the UK, and there are also quantities of compressed cannabis available in southern Africa. The compressing of cannabis seems to be more popular in Swaziland than in either the former Transkei or Lesotho. It is possible that this is predominantly due to the fact that Lesotho and the former Transkei mainly supply South African markets. Since many farmers in Swaziland have gone as far as to purchase compression machines, Swazi police

associate the ownership of these machines with the concealment of large amounts of cannabis.[72]

Figure 15: A 1kg compressed 'brick' of Swazi cannabis (Author's collection)

The cannabis trade between Europe and southern Africa was dramatically increased when Europe experienced an upsurge in sub-cultural drug use amongst youths during the late-1980s and early-1990s; a period synonymous with the 'Acid House' movement.[73] LSD had a resurgence in popularity, though MDMA (Ecstasy) was considered the drug of the generation (as LSD was considered the drug of the hippie generation).[74] As with the hippie movement, cannabis and hashish product sales also exploded during this period,[75] and southern Africa, it seems, supplied a large part of this demand. The European cannabis market has grown since this time, and continues to grow with supply seldom reaching demand. Because of this, the price of cannabis in Europe remains high, making it a lucrative product for exportation.[76]

It is known that, while Durban Poison was the first southern African cannabis to arrive in Europe, Swazi cannabis was carried through for sale in Dutch 'coffee shops' by the early-

[72] Hall, "Africa at Large" (25 July 2003)
[73] For more information on this see Collin, M., *Altered States: the Story of Ecstasy Culture and Acid House* (London, 1997)
[74] Leggett, *Rainbow Vice* (2001), p. 66
[75] Reynolds, S., *Generation Ecstasy: Into the world of Techno and rave culture* (New York, 1999), p. 261
[76] There was consensus by every person interviewed in relation to the European trade on this point.

1990s.[77] Swazi cannabis, packed into blocks for easier transportation, each block consisting of 1 or 2 kilograms of compressed cannabis, became more widely available in Europe and became popular in the Dutch 'coffee shops'.[78] It is also possible that Lesotho benefited from the cannabis boom of the late-1980s and early-1990s. Laniel writes that Lesotho experienced a massive upsurge in production during this stage,[79] and it is known that cannabis under the name 'Durban Poison' was being sold in the Netherlands at the same time.[80] It seems likely that this massive growth in production was partly a result of the European cannabis explosion.

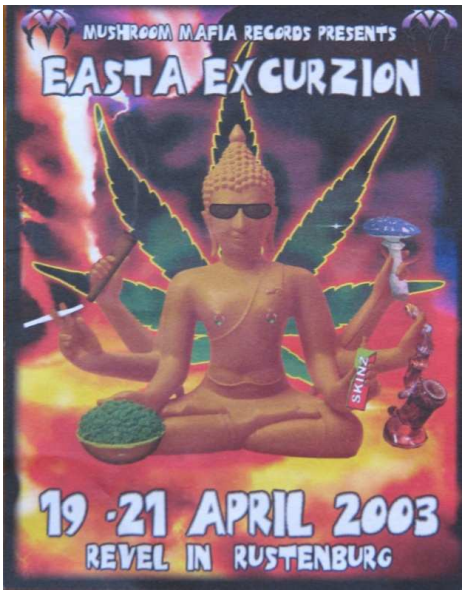

Figure 16: A flyer for a 'Psychedelic Trance' festival in South Africa (Author's collection)

As implied by Leggett,[81] the role of the South African youth in the growth of the southern African drug trade cannot be underestimated. It is quite possible that a number of these individuals, who sought employment in England upon finishing school, began smuggling small-scale quantities of cannabis into the UK. The number of 'white' South Africans smoking cannabis increased during the British 'acid house' explosion, and electronic music sub-cultural movements – branch-offs from 'acid house' such as 'rave', 'techno' and 'trance', all of which are associated with drug-use – began to be established in South Africa.[82] It appears that these cultural diffusions from England gave a further boost to the massive regional cannabis trade.

The 'club drug' market emerged in the country within 'white' youth sub-cultures, and was established, mainly, by 'white' South Africans. This market came together with the emergence of British-derived electronic music sub-cultures in South Africa. According to Leggett, the electronic music scene first emerged in Cape Town in 1988, and in Johannesburg

[77] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 14 October 2007
[78] Hall, "Africa at Large" (25 July 2003)
[79] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[80] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 14 October 2007
[81] Leggett, *Rainbow Vice* (2001), p. 68
[82] An estimated 81% of those involved in the 'rave' and 'acid house' movement used cannabis, according to Leggett (Leggett, *Rainbow Vice (2001)*, p. 84)

by the early-1990s.[83] It has already been mentioned that South Africa was supplying a large portion of the demand for cannabis in the UK; a demand that emerged as a result of the same 'electronic music revolution'. Many involved in the 'acid house/rave' scene soon sought to supply the burgeoning demand for Ecstasy and LSD outside of the UK. Ecstasy was found in great abundance in the UK during the early-1990s, and was a good foundation for South Africans to begin importing the drug to South Africa.[84]

Smugglers of cannabis from southern Africa to the UK could purchase Ecstasy very cheaply with their cannabis profits, bring the pills back to South Africa and then sell them at inflated prices – thereby increasing their overall profit dramatically. This became a fairly common way for small-scale cannabis smugglers to maximise their turnovers. By the early-1990s, South Africans had found a market for their cannabis in the Netherlands, another Ecstasy-producing nation, and a similar relationship began to emerge between the two countries. Soon, South Africans were exchanging cannabis for Ecstasy in both the UK and the Netherlands. One case of this is Al Lovejoy, who purchased cannabis from Transkei farmers, transported it for sale in Dutch 'coffee shops', and then purchased Ecstasy which was later sold within the South African 'rave' and 'trance' scenes during the first half of the 1990s.[85]

The time of this explosion, the late-1980s and 1990s, marks the time in which southern Africa became a major player in the global cannabis trade. Particularly after the lifting of sanctions in 1991, and the full opening of the country to international markets in 1994, cannabis exportation flourished. Between 1991 and the late-1990s, southern African cannabis could be found on many Dutch 'coffee shop' menus,[86] and the region was supplying a near-majority of the cannabis imported into the UK by the turn of the century. It was only around 2002, right at the end of this upsurge, that news reports took note of the enormity of this trade between South Africa and England.[87]

Thus, there were two major upsurges in cannabis production in southern Africa. The first occurred in the early-1970s, when new markets opened for cannabis in South Africa following the advent of 'white' middle-class cannabis use; this use, I have argued, being a result of international trends influencing South Africa's 'white' youth. The second was

[83] Leggett, *Rainbow Vice* (2001), p. 67
[84] *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36
[85] Lovejoy, *Acid Alex* (2005), p. 306
[86] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 04 August 2007
[87] At this stage we find reports such as Mabasa, T., *Citizen*, "SA a big supplier of dagga to Britain", 3 May 2002, p. 6, and, *Cape Argus*, "SA smugglers 'are swamping UK with dagga'", 4 November 2003

related to the emergence of the electronic music sub-cultures, first overseas and, a few years later, in South Africa. This seems to have been the larger upsurge, with massive quantities of cannabis being sent ("40 foot containers that were packed to the hilt with ganja")[88] from South Africa to Europe in particular; an operation made possible by the removal of sanctions following the collapse of apartheid.

It is also interesting to note the ideological connection between the hippies and the electronic music revolution.[89] Many traders who identified themselves as hippies in the early-1970s found that this electronic music sub-culture that emerged, at least in South Africa, was closer to the ideal prescribed by the hippies than the hippie movement itself. "Like when this rave sub-culture started happening in Joburg," William said, "my daughter was into that, and she convinced me to go along and my observations actually blew me over because here was a culture that was *truly* walking the walk of the ideology of love and peace."[90] Another said, in reference to the 'psychedelic trance' scene, that it "reminded [him] of [his] dreams when [he] was 15," at the height of the hippie movement.[91]

<u>"I don't invite you to go and investigate such matters..." The Anti-Apartheid Movement Preying on the Structure of the State, 1970-1994</u>

Besides these two large upswings in the southern African cannabis one can observe a gradual increase in production and use over the period from 1970 to the present. This occurred in line with the anti-apartheid movement, and may be partly due to the idea of common acts of resistance I have already discussed. However, the relationship between the structure of the apartheid state and resistance to this structure, can also account for this increase over the course of the apartheid state's existence.

What the apartheid government failed to note was that, despite their constant cries to crush the cannabis trade, it was *their* policies that allowed the trade to expand and flourish. By placing their emphasis on protecting 'white' South Africa's interests, they, time after time, chose policies which (while protecting 'white' hegemony) prevented them from controlling cannabis.

[88] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[89] This is also something touched on by Leggett (Leggett, *Rainbow Vice (2001)*, p. 66)
[90] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[91] 'R.Asta', Interview with Author, 22 January 2009

Particularly during the 1980s, apartheid South Africa bore a striking resemblance to other states in social upheaval, such as Colombia and Afghanistan. There was widespread distrust of government structures and a rising anti-apartheid sentiment, as well as a dramatic increase in activity by anti-apartheid organisations, and a concomitant arming (and increase in activity) of their corresponding paramilitary wings. As a result, we see a fulfilment of the basic conditions usually only seen in so-called 'narco-states'. As Graubner points out,

> When mapping areas of illicit drug cultivation, it becomes apparent that illicit drug crops are primarily cultivated in areas characterised by violent conflict, weak state control and social turmoil. Money generated by the IDE (International Drug Economy) has been proven to finance non-state (and sometimes also state) armed groups not only in Afghanistan and Colombia, but also in many other places of the world.[92]

What was unique about the apartheid period was that South Africa, designed according to the 'grand apartheid' schema, managed to create these same conditions that many countries actively try to avoid, as they seek to maintain stability and prevent the emergence of the so-called 'narco-state'. In other words, rather than non-state agents creating these conditions, the apartheid state created these conditions itself, simply by implementing its 'grand apartheid' plan.

Where in a state such as Colombia or Afghanistan, drug-yielding land would be won by agitating factions and thereby divide government control, in South Africa territories such as this were effectively ceded by the government in the creation of the Bantustans. In creating the Bantustans, most importantly the Transkei, the South African government abnegated their ability to police these areas. This allowed cannabis production to continue without interference from the South African police. Consider also that these areas, ostensibly run along more 'traditional' lines, were administered by groups whose tolerance for cannabis cultivation was far higher than those of the apartheid government. This idea is borne out by the words of a Transkei MP in 1979:

> I want this trafficking in dagga to be made a money-making proposition... I think the government itself should have large plantations. The use of dagga can be controlled as in the case of liquor. You will remember we used to be fined and imprisoned for drinking liquor but this did not stop us drinking... I think there should be general planting of dagga and everybody will realise the importance of having large plantations.[93]

---

[92] Graubner, C., *Drugs and Conflict: How the mutual impact of Illicit Drug Economies and Violent Conflict Influences Sustainable Development, Peace and Stability* (Eschborn, 2007), p. 9, available online: http://www2.gtz.de/dokumente/bib/07-0470.pdf accessed: 20/06/2009

[93] Streek, and Wicksteed, *Render Unto Kaiser* (1981), p. 245

And even though there was apparently laughter during his speech, there is little doubt that tacit acceptance was so strong that a *de facto* legalisation of cannabis existed within the Bantustans.

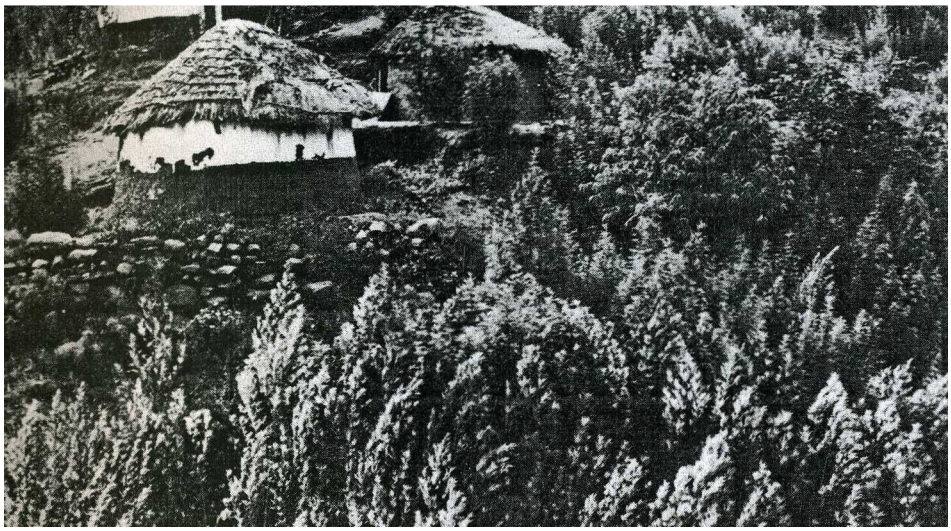

Figure 17: A rural home surrounded by cannabis (Bensusan, *Drug Exposure* (1971), p. 50)

To compound this acceptance, by forcing large numbers of people into these Bantustans with very little opportunity for economic growth or farming potential, the apartheid government created the perfect environment to 'drive' people towards cannabis cultivation. Where as in Afghanistan and Colombia this population displacement, and the problems associated with it, has been caused by violent conflict, in apartheid South Africa this was a process actively carried out by the government as a part of their Bantustan policies. Apartheid South Africa, in a sense, created a society in conflict, created social upheaval, leading to a situation where the country bore a striking resemblance to societies in which drug crop cultivation is one of the only possible means of earning a liveable income. As G.M. Mabandla, Transkei MP, noted:

> During the regime of the South African Government the white people saw that we had no mines from which we could derive revenue and because of the fact that we tried to improve our financial situation by growing dagga our former masters discouraged the growing of this plant.[94]

During the period of Transkei 'independence', however, the cultivation of cannabis was certainly not discouraged. As Bizana MP, W.M. Madikizela, said: "it is a money-making commodity and in my area there are many youngsters who own cars because they have found

[94]Streek, and Wicksteed, *Render Unto Kaiser* (1981), p.249

the sale of dagga very lucrative. I do not invite you to go and investigate such matters..."[95] And in the words of Streek and Wicksteed,

> It is clear that dagga is an important element in the Transkeian economy, one might even say an indispensable element. Indeed, for a peasant farmer, without security of tenure and little opportunity to live off the land, dagga growing is more than a means of making a living, it is a survival technique.[96]

The above references all refer to the Transkei, but this was not the only region affected by these conditions. Lesotho and Swaziland had very similar ways of approaching the issue of cannabis cultivation, and to a certain extent, they still do. In Lesotho, for example, cannabis was believed to provide the third-highest source of income for the country, behind migrant labour and international aid grants.[97]

In addition, the migrant labour system, on which the apartheid economy was based, forced large numbers of people to travel from these 'states' and protectorates to urban centres for work. Lesotho and Swaziland feature prominently here, as they were effectively included in the Bantustan policies by the apartheid state as labour reservoirs. This facilitated the transportation of cannabis to urban centres, especially following the emergence of the minibus taxi industry.

Again, one can see a similar situation in Afghanistan and Colombia – however, in these countries there was not migration of labourers, but rather of combatants. On the other hand, South Africa did have a number of combatants and paramilitary organisations, and displacement did not only occur through migrant labour. However, due to the transportation networks established to aid itineration, migrant labour played a far bigger role in the displacement of southern African communities, and hence also in the rise of the cannabis markets.

The *Marashea* are a good example of how these circumstances allowed the cannabis trade to flourish. The Russians, *Marashea*, are a group of loosely-affiliated, almost exclusively Basotho gangs, who, from 1947, established themselves in South Africa's mining districts. These groups were able to become very powerful in the country's mining districts through cannabis trading, illegal liquor sales and prostitution.[98] They would smuggle cannabis in from

[95] Streek, and Wicksteed, *Render Unto Kaiser* (1981), p. 248
[96] *Ibid.*, p. 253
[97] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[98] Kynoch, G., "Marashea on the Mines: Economic, Social and Criminal Networks on the South African Gold Fields, 1947-1999", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2000), p. 85

Lesotho (where it also enjoyed widespread tacit acceptance) while moving to work in the mining industry. To this day, cannabis from Lesotho still appears to predominate in these mining areas.

While the militarisation of the various banned political organisations, such as the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress, may have contributed to the increase in cannabis production, there seems to be very little evidence of this. Yet, the general fundraising exercises of these organisations are thought to have played a very large role in this increase over the course of the 1970s and 1980s. Under the conditions outlined above, it is cogent to surmise that banned political organisations would have found an ideal fundraising tool in cannabis.

One trader, 'Slimy', was approached by the ANC to smuggle cannabis on their behalf. His words are worth quoting at length:

> **Slimy:** The ANC approached me and they said to me, right, we would like to smuggle some…the head of the ANC [in the area] came to me and said…I don't know if I should tell you his name?
>
> **Interviewer:** You can if you want. It'll be taken out anyway.
>
> **Slimy:** It was * and he said this is what their position is, "we want to buy marijuana so we can sell it to our own people 'cause a lot of our own people do smoke it and when they come into power they will make sure that marijuana is legalised." That was the main thing about the ANC, they've always told the youth that they would legalise marijuana and we believed it. We all, all us [smokers], we all voted for the ANC. We all supported the cause because they were going to legalise…it was a big thing for the youngsters, the youth to actually know that there's a party out there that will, if you vote for them, will legalise marijuana… and that's why even now we are very upset that they've made the laws even stronger now… Anyway they said to me, "right, we are going to give you R10 000 and I have to bring it from *Hluleka* to *.They will take it back to *." I must just pass the * bridge 'cause the * bridge is the biggest problem… I went through the border there with 10 tons only because *ek kan die taal praat*… And that big truck, that space was only 2 tons. When I think about it now, its mad…mad things... I did about four of those trips.[99]

Their relationship continued beyond these four 'assignments', and Slimy sold cannabis to the ANC for the purpose of raising funds (apparently for printing "pamphlets *et cetera*")[100] from

[99] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 04 August 2007
[100] *Ibid.*

the mid-1980s[101] until, presumably, the ban on the ANC was lifted, and they were allowed the opportunity to gain legitimate income.

In a later interview, Slimy said:

> We had to get money. That's where the marijuana came in. We had to get money. Without money you couldn't do bullshit. So what the ANC did is they had farms in the Transkei and around Lusikisiki... that game reserve was the main reserve where they planted marijuana for the ANC.
>
> **Interviewer:** Okay, but when you say "they planted marijuana for the ANC" are these... who are these people who are growing? Are they just ANC members? Or was it specifically organised?
>
> **Slimy:** They were ANC members. No, they're friends. Like me and you. We've got a place and they sold us the marijuana, we paid them a ridiculous price, really, just so they could grow it and then they would tell us when it was ready. We would organise transport and a driver to drive it through. Now who would be better to be able to drive the stuff through than me?[102]

Slimy had been involved with the ANC since 1973, and was a prime candidate for cannabis trafficking. Being 'white', and fluent in Afrikaans, made Slimy the ideal agent for smuggling cannabis to raise funds for the organisation. But during the late 1980s, Slimy began to purchase cannabis with the ANC in mind:

> I had to say select it, first grade and second grade. Second grade would go all to the ANC, every single bit [of] that was for them. So when I smuggled and say I had 20-30kgs of second grade, I would go and say, "how much will you give me for that?" And they would give me 5 times whatever I would pay for it. So I still made money out of it, but I didn't make as much money as I would have if I had sold it.[103]

His account of the structure of these smuggling networks shows how the unique structure of the anti-apartheid movement differed to, say, that of the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC). In the case of the AUC, coercion is used to dominate farmlands on which coca is grown. The coca is then taken by AUC militias to a processing plant, where the process of conversion to cocaine takes place. Thus, the AUC, as an organisation, is directly involved in cocaine production.[104] However, in South Africa, it was people who harboured anti-apartheid sentiments who co-operated to raise funds for resistance organisations. The cannabis farmers did not work for the ANC – they were ANC supporters who were given financing from other ANC members to grow cannabis. These farmers, in contrast to the way

[101] *Ibid.*
[102] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 11 January 2009
[103] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 04 August 2007
[104] Graubner, *Drugs and Conflict* (2007), p. 11

in which the AUC grows coca, would not have been forced to grow cannabis, but were rather cannabis farmers who happened to support the ANC. As Suttner pointed out, there was more to "being ANC" than "those who were formally inducted and provided with membership cards," as this "excludes the large numbers who associated themselves as 'freelance' ANC activists, not being able to link up with formal structures or not trying to for security reasons."[105] It seems that fundraising through cannabis took place, not necessarily within the ANC's formal structure (though "inducted members" certainly were involved and seem to have established the operations),[106] but was undertaken under the broader understanding of the 'ANC' as an anti-apartheid movement. In short, this was not systematic production on the part of the ANC, it was a number of ANC supporters using any means necessary to raise funds for the banned organisation, and cannabis was a convenient means of achieving this end.

When asked about the value of the trade carried out by the ANC, Slimy said: "they'd make about two, three hundred thousand out of it." That is, two to three hundred thousand Rand per load carried by Slimy. After one interview Slimy also remarked that, in his opinion, the ANC smuggled more cannabis during apartheid than any other single group.

The gradual increase (as a result of the anti-apartheid movement) of cannabis production and trade discussed in this section was an increase in South Africa's internal trade, and it seems unlikely that this would have supplied much cannabis for exportation. The vast majority of cannabis cultivated in southern Africa supplies this internal trade. By the time of apartheid's collapse this internal trade (along with the export trade) was nothing short of thriving. The result of both the opening of new markets in the early-1970s and the late-1980s, and the gradual increase over the course of these two decades, had established southern Africa as one of the world's largest cannabis-producing complexes by the mid-1990s. It had set up the region as one of the world's largest consumer-areas of cannabis, and made it a major player in the global trade. However, this was not to last long, and it seems that the 1990s were to be the heydays of the southern African cannabis trade. It was around this time, possibly partially as a result of the collapse of apartheid, that a process started by the hippies – ironically, a group who played a major role in the establishment of the southern African trade – began

[105] Suttner, R. *The ANC Underground in South Africa to 1976: A Social and Historical Study* (Auckland Park, 2008), p. 2

[106] Slimy was one such inducted member who formed a vital link in the chain of these operations, as were those who directed him in the operation. As for the dealers and growers, I have no indication of their involvement in the formal ANC structure.

influencing the region's trade, and, it seems, started a process which will not only mean the closing of vital markets for southern Africa's cannabis farmers, but may eventually mean the destruction of southern Africa's cannabis plants.

Chapter 4: The Post-Apartheid South African Cannabis Trade

The Dynamics of the Contemporary Cannabis Trade in Southern Africa

It is important to understand the dynamics of cannabis trading in southern Africa if one is to understand the way in which the cannabis trade is currently changing, and the impact that this is having. In order to facilitate this understanding, this chapter begins with an outline of the cannabis trade in southern Africa. The dynamics of production and trade discussed below, by all accounts, have been in place since at least the early-1970s. It seems that only the size of the trade has increased.

The process of cannabis production in the major cultivation areas is summed up by Leggett:

> The producers of dagga are an army of small farmers, mostly poor and black, who supplement their subsistence agriculture with a patch of easy-to-grow cash crop… According to the South African Narcotics Bureau, there is little evidence of plantation-scale cultivation anywhere in the country, and little recorded involvement of large-scale white farmers.[1]

This "patch of easy-to-grow cash crop" may be grown, logically, either within the homestead or outside of it. These two options reflect a distinction that is commonly made in Europe and North America between 'home growing' and 'guerrilla growing'. 'Home-grown' cannabis is that which is produced on private property; 'guerrilla growing' involves growing in public areas, where the plant is hidden and cannot be associated with the grower.

Kepe documents the methods of guerrilla growing in Pondoland, pointing out that some growers, especially those who grow cannabis "as a key aspect of their livelihood,"[2] tend to grow in forested ravines rather than within their homesteads. This would not only reduce the likelihood of being charged with possession of cannabis, but would also ensure that minimal effort is required in the cultivation process. As Kepe notes, these areas tend

[1] Leggett, T., *Rainbow Vice* (2001), p. 33
[2] Kepe, "*Cannabis Sativa* and rural livelihoods in South Africa" (2003), p. 609

to remain damp and thus reduce the need to water the plants (an activity which may give away the location of the crop).[3] According to Kepe, those who grow within the homestead tend to be adult males, who grow for their own consumption and sell the surplus,[4] as is usually the case in Lesotho.[5]

The process of purchasing cannabis reflects these means of production. William described it as follows:

> What you do is you go and camp somewhere in the middle of all of this [cannabis-producing land] and people come to you, [you] check this sample, [you] check that sample. They know what you are doing there and they come and bring you ganja to look at.[6]

He noted that some of those who came to purchase cannabis would appear "hippie-fied," but most bore no resemblance to the 'archetypal cannabis user'. Rather, these buyers appeared to be "typical working people."[7] Another trader, Slimy, said:

> The people around Lusikisiki sometimes they would take two days to walk over the mountains with their stash of marijuana. And I would be there and I would stand and look, they would open their bag and I look inside it and I look at the quality of the marijuana they grew… So I would be standing there and they would come, families, babies, children. Some would have 10kgs, some would have 5kgs some would have 20kgs and I would sit there like… "okay, can I look at your marijuana? Okay R30, R200" or whatever it was you know? I would pay them a certain amount.[8]

One person spoke about his experience of purchasing cannabis (for his own consumption) in Swaziland:

> We used to go up on the road to Piggs Peak with empty two-litre ice-cream tubs. There was this guy who lived there called *. He would leave his house at about 9am with your ice-cream tubs and walk over the mountain. He would walk the whole day and only get back the next evening but when he came back he would have your ice-cream tub full of ganja. They would cut the heads to fit the ice-cream tub, laying them all on top of each other. That was around 2000 and the tub would cost R400. I think it was the stuff they used to export, but this guy had the connection. It was the best ganja I've ever seen in Swaziland.[9]

This method of purchasing cannabis was common in southern Africa, at least from the 1970s onwards, and remains typical of the buyer's experience of rural areas.

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[3] *Ibid.*
[4] Kepe, "*Cannabis Sativa* and rural livelihoods in South Africa" (2003), p. 609
[5] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[6] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 04 August 2007
[9] 'Brother', Interview with Author, 11 April 2009

From the producer regions, the majority of the cannabis is transported to the major urban centres (Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town most notably). Other routes are minor and involve *ad hoc* purchases on the part of small-time dealers and consumers.

In the case of the former Transkei, the majority of the cannabis is moved south, towards Cape Town, with quantities sold in all the major urban centres (East London, Port Alfred, Port Elizabeth, George). A large amount is transported north towards Durban. Quality is highly variable in the case of this region's cannabis, though this may be a fairly recent development (as will be discussed later in this chapter).

While some Lesotho cannabis does head south towards the Cape, the vast majority of it is sold on the Highveld, particularly in mining areas, while almost all of the high-quality cannabis produced in the region is moved east into Natal for export to Europe from Durban.[10] Lesotho is renowned for its low-quality cannabis, largely because of the grower's reluctance to remove the staminate plants and prevent pollination.[11] This reluctance is to ensure there is seed for the next planting season. As a result, Lesotho cannabis is not only extremely cheap,[12] but is also available in abundance.[13] The quality of Lesotho's cannabis is so low that one smuggler, attracted by the extremely cheap prices, went to purchase cannabis there, arranged for 200 kilograms to be delivered to him, and upon seeing the cannabis refused to accept it, saying the amount he could sell it for was less than the one cent per gram price he was asked to pay.[14]

Cannabis farmers in both Lesotho and the former Transkei usually take advantage of two harvests per year. In the former Transkei, these occur between January and April for a major harvest, and a smaller, lower-quality harvest between September and November.[15] The discrepancy in quality can be attributed to the increasing hours of daylight during this second growing season. When the plants are exposed to more than 12 hours of sunlight per day, efflorescence halts, and the plants must be harvested immediately if they are to be of any use at all. Laniel says that in Lesotho, a first harvest is "probably carried out in January,"[16] and he

[10] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[11] There was consensus on this by every person interviewed in relation to the trade in Lesotho.
[12] 'Pete', Interview with Author, 12 July 2008
[13] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[14] 'Pete', Interview with Author, 12 July 2008. I have heard versions of similar incidents from other sources.
[15] Author's Observation (September 2006 and April 2007)
[16] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)

deduces that these are the "male plant[s] of cannabis" that are harvested.[17] This harvest, he claims, "represents a thinning of the plots, leaving only the female plants."[18] However, Laniel fails to explain with this hypothesis why the "matekoane" harvest (the main, highest-quality harvest, which occurs around March and April and is seen in contrast to the "majaja" harvest, which is being discussed here) is so notoriously seed-filled – an obvious indication of pollination. In light of this, I would argue that the "majaja" harvest occurs earlier, at the same time as the second harvest in the former Transkei.

This is in contrast to Swaziland, where the winter harvest is considered the only harvest of the year. While a few growers do plant twice a year, the majority do not.[19] Swaziland certainly produces the most consistently high-quality cannabis in the region, and as a result, Swazi cannabis fetches slightly higher prices on the South African market.[20] This cannabis is transported mainly to supply Johannesburg and Durban, though large quantities make it as far as Cape Town.[21]

It should be noted that these transportation operations, undertaken by large-scale smugglers, refer to the majority, and not the entirety, of the cannabis crop of these producer-areas. There remain a large number of people who will go and purchase relatively small quantities of cannabis in each of these regions, and bring it back to their area of residence for sale.[22] It should also be remembered that these areas are not the only areas in which cultivation takes place. Cultivation of cannabis is near universal in southern Africa; these areas are simply the largest producers.

It is also interesting to note that if the regions of Lesotho and the former Transkei are visited, the quality of the cannabis being sold openly in the region is usually of a lower quality than that which is found for sale outside of the region.[23] The reason for this is that the large-scale smugglers and dealers usually take the highest quality produce. Again, this can be seen in contrast to Swaziland, which almost invariably has higher quality cannabis being sold inside the country (as opposed to the Swazi cannabis being sold in the major urban centres of South

[17] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] Author's Observation (Notes from Swaziland, April 2009)
[20] Author's Observation (Notes from Cape Town, January 2009)
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] Author's Observation (Notes from Swaziland, April 2009)
[23] Author's Observation

Africa).[24] Thus with these major production regions, there is also a visible distinction between the trade which goes on in the region, and that which supplies areas outside of it.

One can look at Swaziland as an example. In Swaziland, cannabis is usually sold in matchbox denominations. The cost of a matchbox is usually 5 Rand during the harvest season, going up to around 15 or even 20 Rand during the summer 'dry' season.[25] Dealers will buy cannabis in plastic shopping packet denominations, seldom more than this at a time, to divide up into matchboxes. At one site in Swaziland there is a kind of marketplace for cannabis, where a number of merchants sit and sell "firewood". It looks like a firewood market, although my observations lead me to believe that there is only one merchant who actually sells the firewood, providing 'cover' for the rest. When you approach, all you need to do is show the correct signal, and a number of hands, each proffering a matchbox, are thrust towards you. The matchboxes are pushed open so that you can select the best quality cannabis. You select a matchbox and replace it with 5, 10 or 15 Rand (depending on the time of year). Sometimes, it varies day to day, there can be up to twenty people who appear with matchboxes. Often you don't even see the face of the person whose matchbox you choose because you are so swamped. To improve profits and sales, some merchants have taken to packing the cannabis in layers in the matchbox, with a higher-quality layer on top (which is shown to the prospective buyer), and a lower-quality layer hidden underneath it.[26]

Figure 18: A matchbox of Swazi cannabis (Author's collection)

No such marketplace exists for large quantities of cannabis. Rather, large sales are negotiated through a kind of growers' union. The industry is certainly large enough to warrant the existence of such a union (which is known to have been around since 2003). For this reason, much of the highest-quality cannabis is negotiated for sale to Europe, where the Euro's exchange rate provides a high incentive. The lower-quality cannabis is negotiated for sale in Rands to South African smugglers. Dealers in Swaziland, because of the quantity they

[24] Author's Observation (Notes from Swaziland, April 2009)
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] *Ibid.*

purchase at a time, get the highest grade, which – if sold in large quantities – would be sold in Euros. Local dealers, essentially, bypass union negotiations and thereby secure the highest-quality cannabis. This union is also known to arrange the supply of irrigation equipment and fertilisers to the farmers whom they represent. [27]

Lesotho and the former Transkei's cannabis trade have not developed to the complexity of the Swazi trade. There is no union to protect the interests of the growers. As a result, almost all of the cannabis is sold in Rands – meaning even less return for the grower. Another threat to the interests of growers in Lesotho and the former Transkei is that of organised crime.

South Africa, shielded from the growth of the international drug trade through its isolation during apartheid, found itself in a situation of having "the right profile for exploitation"[28] by organized crime syndicates. South Africa's experience of a boom in free trade, the massive increase in movement of both people and products through South African borders, and the inability of the new bureaucracy to contain the boom, have all contributed to the increased capacity of South Africa as a base for organized crime.[29] Aided by widespread corruption and a world-class banking system, organized crime groups found mid-1990s South Africa an ideal place to expand their business interests.[30]

In a phenomenon very similar to that which followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, more organised, syndicated crime became prevalent in South Africa (such as car hijacking syndicates and money laundering operations), and many foreign crime groups also entered the fray to take advantage of the perfect conditions for organised crime. It was estimated that about 300 criminal syndicates operated in South Africa by 1998, one third of which were thought to be involved in the drug trade.[31]

The most important development with regard to organised crime and the drug trade in southern Africa, was the influx of Nigerian crime groups between 1991 and 1996.[32] These groups exhibit characteristics that are shared with much of the organised crime in southern

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[27] Pillinger, S., "Swaziland", in Gastrow, P. (ed.), *Penetrating State and Business Organised Crime in Southern Africa: Vol. 1,ISS, Monograph No.86,* (Halfway House, 2003), available online: www.issafrica.org/pubs/Monographs/No86/chap5.htm accessed: 21/02/2007

[28] Baynham, "Southern Africa's Role" (1998), p. 105

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Gastrow, P., "Main Trends in the Development of South Africa's Organised Crime", in *African Security Review*, Vol. 8, No. 6, 1999, available online: www.iss.co.za/ASR/8NO6/MainTrends.html accessed: 04/07/2007

[31] Baynham, "Southern Africa's Role" (1998), p. 105

[32] Baynham, S., "The Nigerian Nexus", in The South African Institute of International Affairs, *The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa: International Dimensions to a Local Crisis* (Johannesburg, 1998), p. 91

Africa. In contrast to the (now-defunct) Medellin cocaine cartel and the Sicilian Mafia, the Nigerian syndicates lack a hierarchical organisational structure. This works in the favour of these groups, who resist penetration, and potential exposure, by outsiders through maintaining "highly personalised relationships" based on loosely-defined family ties.[33] While South African-run crime syndicates do not tend to emphasise family ties, they are often loosely ethnically-based, and also tend to lack a hierarchical structure. However, it is common that street-level dealing is carried out by gangs, which may entail a hierarchy of control, especially in the Western Cape. The Nigerian gangs have particular involvement in the cocaine trade, for which South Africa acts as a transit point, and have been identified as one of the main reasons for South Africa's crack cocaine explosion.

Increasingly, Nigerian groups are becoming involved in the cannabis trade.[34] The abundance of cannabis in southern Africa, and the country's position on a transit route for cocaine and heroin, has given incentive to those involved mainly in the cocaine and heroin trade to use cannabis as a currency in bartering for the preferred, harder, drugs.[35] The result has been attempts at monopolising certain parts of the market chain. For example, a group may approach a cultivator and extort a portion of the produced cannabis. In this way, they establish control of the area's cannabis production through ensuring all cannabis plantations in an area are sanctioned by them and taxed accordingly. Such actions by these Nigerian groups in Swaziland, where, around the turn of the century, they gained greater control of the Swazi cannabis trade,[36] may have contributed to the establishment of the growers' union.

Barring these more aggressive, organised syndicates, there is a sense of loyalty which seems to exist between the growers and their larger clients in all three major cultivation areas.[37] Often, European smugglers will supply the grower with irrigation equipment or fertilizers, forming a business relationship with a specific cultivator.[38] At times, it is found that Dutch or British smugglers will purchase farms and employ a number of trusted growers to farm the land.[39] This has been noted in the former Transkei, but is apparently more common in Swaziland, and may be an attempt to avoid dealing with the union. Importantly, it is these smugglers who have prompted serious changes in the southern African trade, through the

[33] Baynham, "The Nigerian Nexus" (1998), p. 92
[34] Pillinger, "Swaziland" (2003)
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Gastrow, *Mind-blowing* (2003)
[37] Author's Observation
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] 'Pete', Interview with Author, 12 July 2008

introduction of seeds of specific strains of cannabis, that have became more sought after in Europe and North America.

The Development of the 'Higher-Grade' Strains

The development of incredibly strong strains of cannabis, mainly North American or Dutch in origin, is a fascinating part of the history of cannabis, and can be traced back to the original hippie movement. During this period, hippies from the United States visited various cannabis-producing areas of the world. They brought back stories of these areas' cannabis products, and created a market for the smuggling of these products into the USA and Europe. In doing so, the hippies formed the foundation on which the global trade in cannabis could develop. There was another process that was begun by the hippie movement, namely, the 'taking-home' of seed stocks from these cannabis-producing areas.

By returning cannabis seeds to North America and Europe, hippies could attempt to produce their own high-quality cannabis. Thai strains, returned by soldiers who served in Vietnam, as well as Colombian, Jamaican and Mexican strains, were brought back to Europe and North America for experimental growing. These attempts were met with initial disappointment. Many of the tropical *sativa* landraces of cannabis would not grow to maturity in the northern areas of Europe or North America, being destroyed by the winter frosts. This prevented cannabis being commercially produced in these areas.[40]

A major defining moment in the history of cannabis was the return of seed stocks from Afghanistan during the period of the hippie movement. The return of these seeds, and the misunderstanding of their genetic nature, allowed cannabis to be produced in North America and Europe. To understand how this occurred, one must examine aspects of the hashish trade from Afghanistan, and some basic cannabis botany. First, a description will be provided which outlines the relevant parts of the Afghani hashish trade. Following that, a description of the genetic botany of Afghani cannabis will be given, to enhance an understanding of the influence that this cannabis has had on the world cannabis economy.

The boom in Afghani hashish has been discussed elsewhere in this thesis. A vital point when discussing the Afghani influence on the global trade in cannabis, is that the massive increase in demand for Afghani hashish during the 1960s meant that many growers either merely abandoned, or substituted their *Cannabis sativa* crops with the wild *Cannabis indica*

[40] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 126

variety.[41] *Cannabis sativa* can be more than 3 metres high and has small, strongly psychoactive floral clusters.[42] *Cannabis indica* varieties, which are found wild in Afghanistan, are characteristically far smaller, with a maximum height of 2 metres, and with less – but more dense – floral clusters, which produce more resin than the *sativa* varieties.[43] The resin produces a more sedative effect than the *sativa* varieties, which slowed its acceptance in hashish production until demand made it a necessary adjustment. Gradually, *sativa* has become less popular, as more resin can be extracted per area under cultivation from *indica* varieties, leaving the *indica* plants as the mainstay 'hash plant' of the world today.[44]

This goes against modern Western cannabis mythology, which holds that *indica* varieties are traditionally for hashish production and *sativa* varieties are traditionally for herbal cannabis production. However, it was documented by Vavilov in 1924 that, while *indica* was present in the wild in certain areas, it was not used for hashish production. Only *cannabis sativa* was used for this purpose.[45] By 1965, when hippie travellers began to flock to Afghanistan, many farmers had substituted their *sativa* crops with *indica* varieties.[46] As Clarke points out, this means that the very distinctive qualities of this period's Afghani hashish existed because the hashish was produced using very distinctive cannabis resin[47] (which is removed from the cannabis plant and pressed to produce hashish). It was a combination of *sativa* resin, *indica* resin and resin from hybrids of the two. The strength of late-1960s Afghani hashish can be attributed to this hybridised resin.

Cannabis growers note a phenomenon called 'hybrid vigour'. 'Hybrid vigour' occurs when two distinct cannabis varieties are crossed. By 'variety', I mean cannabis that has a stable genetic pool from which all the individual plants draw. The stabilising of cannabis into a specific variety can occur in two ways. The first way is that by which landrace varieties developed (Swazi Gold, Congo Black, Acapulco Gold, Madagascar Red etc.), the second way is by developing strains, or cultivars (Skunk, Big Bud, Orange Bud, Haze, etc.). Strain development will be discussed later in this chapter.

[41] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 125
[42] *Ibid.*, p. 126
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 122
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 123
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 122
[46] *Ibid.*, p. 124
[47] *Ibid.*, p. 122

Figure 19: *Cannabis sativa* (from www.overgrow.com, site no longer available)

Figure 20: *Cannabis indica* (Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. CS6)

Landrace varieties have developed over a long period of time through selective cultivation.[48] They result from a gradual thinning of the gene pool of a specific area, according to the characteristics desired by generations of growers, and ecological factors contributing to natural selection (such as high winds giving plants with a short, stocky stature a genetic advantage and gradually eliminating all tall, lanky plants, thus producing uniformity in genetic material). A small distinction should be made here between the 'genotype' and the 'phenotype' of an organism. 'Genotype' refers to the genetic content of an organism,[49] while 'phenotype' refers to the characteristic content of an organism.[50] The genotype consists of a number of genes, some of which will be exhibited in the phenotype. Certain genes are exhibited over others, and will be exhibited whenever the gene is present in the genotype. These genes are known as dominant genes.[51] In a landrace, certain characteristics of the genotype will be exhibited in every plant because a specific set of dominant genes prevails throughout the population.

[48] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 371
[49] Clarke, *Marijuana Botany* (1981), p. 175
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 177
[51] *Ibid.*, p. 175

When a situation occurs in which two plants of distinctive landraces are crossed, the dominant characteristics of each landrace are exhibited in the first generation of plants. This is because the dominant genes of each landrace are most likely present in the genotype of the first generation of hybrid plants.[52] In Afghanistan, the 'hybrid vigour' created by the crossing of *indica* and *sativa* varieties meant that the dominant characteristics of each of these very different gene pools were exhibited in the late-1960s Afghani cannabis plants. *Sativa* varieties contributed characteristics of large size, strong psychoactivity and pleasing flavour, while *indica* varieties contributed dense floral clusters, high resin content and shorter flowering cycles. This is why the Afghani hashish was of such a high and distinctive quality.

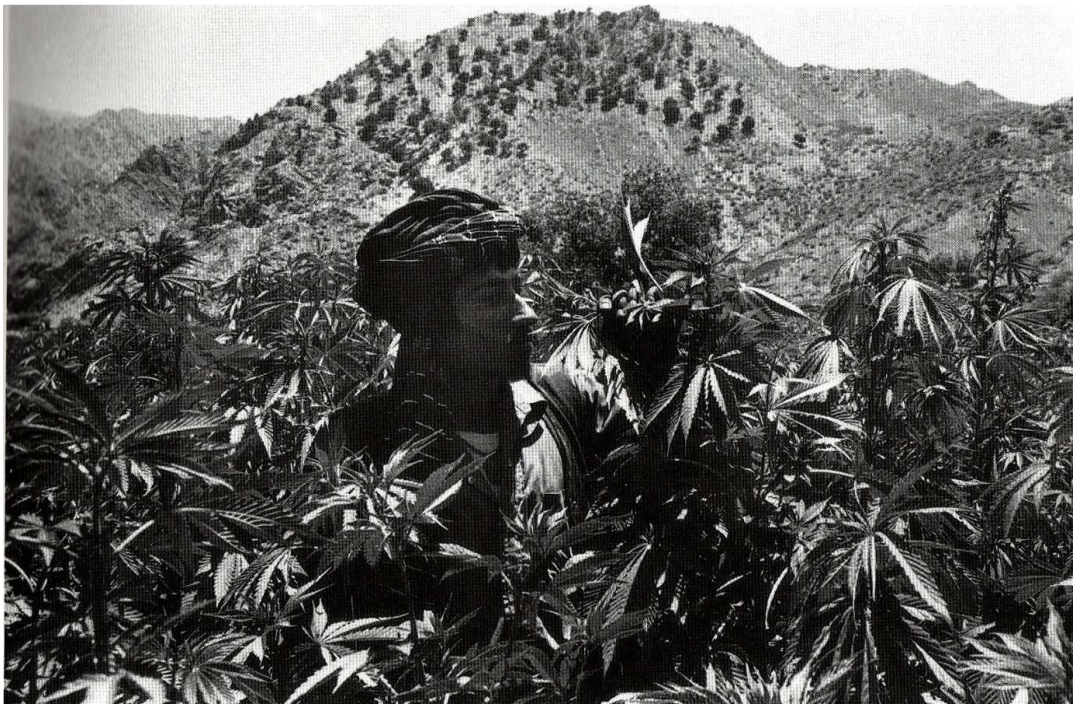

Figure 21: An Afghani farmer examines his crop (1970s). (Green, *Cannabis (2002),* p. 53)

While the first generation of hybridised cannabis plants coming from two stable varieties usually shows dominant genes and is therefore fairly uniform, if a second generation of hybrids is created from the first, there is far less certainty that the dominant genes will be transmitted. This creates massive phenotypic diversity.[53] The plants may look, smell, and yield completely differently, and potency will vary considerably. This is, essentially, destroying the quality of cannabis in areas where large-scale cross-pollination has occurred.

[52] Clarke, *Marijuana Botany* (1981), p. 176
[53] *Ibid.*, p. xvii

This is a major drawback to those who cultivate cannabis as a cash crop to supplement subsistence farming (which includes a large portion of world cannabis producers), as it is the quality of their crop on which they rely, and which is now being placed in jeopardy. This process has occurred to a noticeable degree in Swaziland and the former Transkei.[54]

This information on the genetics of *Cannabis* was not understood by the hippies, hence the confusion surrounding Afghani cannabis and hashish. The seed stocks which returned with the hippies were, unbeknownst to them, actually unique hybrid seeds. These seeds, because they more easily adapted to the climate and short daylight cycles of winter, grew better in the northern latitudes of North America and Europe than did the more tropical *sativa* varieties. Furthermore, these plants were of a much higher quality, due to hybrid vigour, than the other *sativa* varieties available in these regions.[55]

When the second and third generation of the Afghani seeds were grown in Europe and North America, it was realised that the vigour of the cannabis had been lost, and the phenotypic varieties which were exhibited had dramatically increased. Some people attempted to prevent this by crossing it with other varieties, such as Mexican, Colombian, Thai or Jamaican, but these people still lacked proper understanding of cannabis botany. This rendered much of the genetic stock from Afghanistan useless. It has also resulted in modern Western cannabis strains exhibiting undesirable characteristics, such as a susceptibility to grey mould and high CBD content. CBD is another chemical that exists alongside THC in the cannabis plant, and it is thought to 'moderate' the effects of THC, thereby affecting the way the user 'gets high'. It has also been credited with the sedative effect of *cannabis indica*.[56]

Towards the late-1970s, North American and European cannabis enthusiasts were failing dismally in their attempts to supplement their consumption with locally-produced cannabis. Their troubles with climate and a lack of botanical knowledge (considerations which make the achievements of the hippie cannabis breeders remarkable), led to an amazing discovery. In the process of accidentally producing poor quality cannabis, a number of recessive genes, never seen before because they had always existed in conjunction with dominant genes, exhibited their characteristics in the phenotypes of plants.[57] These included: a citrus flavour

[54] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[55] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 126
[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127
[57] *Ibid.*

and scent, purple leaves or floral clusters, enormous floral clusters, a strong (unmistakable) aroma known as the 'skunk aroma', and a number of other unusual characteristics.[58]

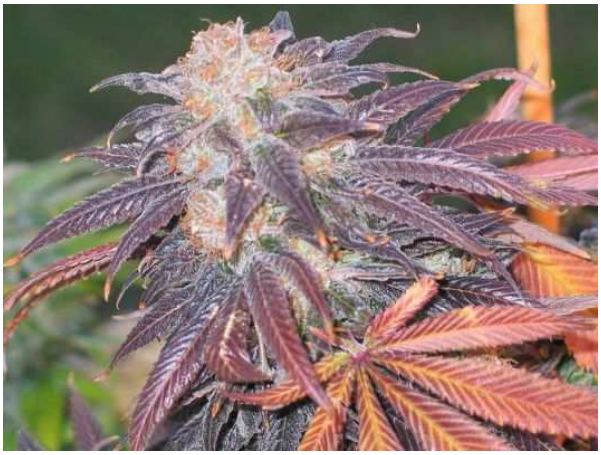

Figure 22: 'Purple Power' (from www.overgrow.com, site no longer available)

In what is described as a "flurry of activity around 1980,"[59] several strains were developed that have formed the foundation of modern cannabis breeding. By adopting better breeding techniques, cannabis breeders managed to stabilize the recessive genes into new varieties, ensuring that these characteristics would emerge in each seed. Then, by selectively crossing powerful varieties with these new varieties, problems of yield and potency were bred out. About a dozen of these strains, which were mainly developed in California, have been used in the production of virtually every one of the thousands of varieties available today in Europe and North America. Some of the more important strains developed during this period include: 'Skunk', an easy-growing, potent variety with a characteristic aroma;[60] 'Big Bud', a variety of moderate strength with an incredibly high yield;[61] 'Haze', a cross between Colombian, Mexican, Jamaican and Thai *sativa* varieties, which is well-known for its desirable 'high' and characteristic flavour;[62] 'Orange Bud', a variety with a citrus aroma and orange hairs (pistils);[63] 'Blueberry', a variety which has lavender-blue hues and a blueberry taste, with a long-lasting high and long-term storage potential;[64] and 'Hash Plant', which is a direct derivative of Afghani and Hindu Kush mountain *indica* varieties, with massive resin glands and a 'knock-

Figure 23: A 'Big Bud'/'Northern Lights' hybrid (from www.overgrow.com, site no longer available.)

[58] Nirvana Cannabis Seed Company Catalogue, available online: www.nirvana.nl accessed: 22/02/2007
[59] Pollan, M., "America's No. 1 Cash Crop", New York Times Magazine, 19 February 1995, available online: www.erowid.com/plants/cannabis/cannabis_media11.shtml accessed: 15/03/2007
[60] Booth, *Cannabis: a History* (2003), p. 310
[61] Nirvana Cannabis Seed Company Catalogue
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] Dutch Passion Seed Company Catalogue, available online: www.dutchpassion.nl accessed: 22/02/2007

out' effect (one strain catalogue from the Netherlands proudly proclaims that "even experienced Dutch smokers have trouble finishing a ['Hash Plant'] joint").[65] This gives an indication of some of the various characteristics that were stabilized in cannabis plants around 1980.

06-09-2005

Seeds of Passion
Global Seed Store

Dutch Passion - 10 s.	€
Passion #1	30,00
Trance	27,00
Hollands Hope	27,00
Purple #1	27,00
Purple Star	30,00
Shaman	22,00
Twilight	27,00
Voodoo	32,00
Durban Poison	32,00
Khola	32,00
Skunk #1	20,00
Skunk Passion	35,00
Power Plant	35,00
Orange Bud	30,00
Oasis	35,00
Green Spirit	35,00
Masterkush	32,00
Super Haze	35,00
Cal. Orange	35,00
Mazar	40,00
White Widow	45,00
Euforia	35,00
Blueberry	60,00
Flo	60,00
Blue Moonshine	60,00
Skywalker	70,00
Dream Weaver	65,00
Delta 9	75,00
Ultra Skunk	40,00
Strawberry Cough	50,00
Feminised seeds:	
Passion #1	60,00
Trance	60,00
Shaman	50,00
Purple #1	60,00
Twilight	55,00
Voodoo	75,00
Durban Poison	72,00
Khola	72,00
Skunk #11	45,00
Skunk Passion	77,00
Power Plant	77,00
Orange Bud	60,00
Oasis	85,00
Ultra Skunk	85,00
Green Spirit	90,00
Masterkush	72,00
Euforia	77,00
Hempstar	77,00
Mazar	90,00
White Widow	105,00
Blueberry	120,00
Flo	120,00
Isis	125,00
Skywalker	125,00
Sacra Frasca	80,00
Dolce Vita	100,00
Strawberry Cough	95,00

African Seeds - 10 s.	€
Swazi Rooi Bart	27,00
Swazi Skunk	32,00
Durban Poison Natural	19,00
Malawi Gold	32,00

Paradise Seeds - 10 s.	€
Amsterdam Flame	50,00
Dutch Dragon	50,00
Sensi Star	70,00
Nebula	60,00
Belladonna	27,00
Sweet Purple	18,00
Sheherezade	55,00

Spice of Life - 12 s.	€
Sweeth Tooth #3	100,00
Adventure Mix	30,00
Blue Satellite	120,00
Blockhead	75,00

Serious Seeds - 15 s.	€
AK-47	80,00
Chronic	70,00
Kali Mist	80,00
White Russian	70,00
Bubble Gum	70,00

KC Brains - 10 s.	€
Brazil X K.C.	12,50
California Special	12,50
Haze Special	12,50
K.C. 33	12,50
K.C. 36	12,50
Leda Uno	12,50
Mindbender	12,50
Mango	12,50
Northern Light Special	12,50
Swiss-xT	12,50
T.N.R.	12,50
White K.C.	12,50

Soma Seeds - 10 s.	€
Somango	80,00
Rock Bud	80,00
Buddha's Sister	80,00
Haze Heaven	80,00
White Willow	80,00
Afghan Delight	80,00
White Light	80,00
NYC Diesel	130,00

Sensi Seeds - 15 s.	€
Northern Lights	109,00
Jack Herer	150,00
Black Domina	96,00
NL#5 Haze	137,00
Juicy Fruit	99,00
Early Pearl	55,00
Early Girl	55,00
Early Skunk	33,00
Silver Haze	88,00
Shiva Shanti	33,00
Mothers Finest	80,00

Nirvana - 10 s.	€
Master Kush	20,00
Misty	25,00
K2	20,00
Top44	20,00
Ice	25,00
Snow White	25,00
New Purple Power	15,00

Sagarmatha - 10 s.	€
Matanuska Tundra	100,00
Bubbleberry	80,00
Stonehedge	70,00
Blue Thunder	90,00
Kwik Kali	90,00
Yumbolt	70,00
Magnolian Indica	55,00
Early Riser	40,00

T.H.Seeds - 10 s.	€
S.A.G.E.	70,00
Chocolate Chunk	55,00
KAL-X	45,00
Mr. Bubble	70,00
Heavy Duty Fruity	72,50
Puna Budder	55,00
The HOG	100,00
MK-Ultra	95,00

Quantity Discount
Mengen Rabatt
Réduction de Quantité

TOTAL :
€ 500,- : 10% discount
€ 1000,- : 15% discount
€ 2000,- : 20% discount

Utrechtsestraat 26
1017 VN Amsterdam
tel: 0031-20-6251100

Figure 24: Stock list for Seeds of Passion, owned by the Dutch Passion Seed Company. This gives an indication of the varieties available. (Author's collection)

It was during the first half of the 1980s that the USA and Canada became significant suppliers of their own, still growing, local demand. By 1984, cannabis production was being undertaken on a large scale. This development was made possible by the breeding of the new strains – a technique facilitated by the hippie movement. However, the massive increases in

[65] Sensi Seed Bank Catalogue, available online: www.sensiseeds.com accessed: 22/02/2007

production in North America in the early-1980s should be understood as stemming from a successful adaptation of cultivation techniques, in response to law enforcement strategies that aimed to prevent the production of cannabis.

"There has been no indication of a sudden explosion of tomato growing in the shires of England": The Technological Advances of Cannabis Agriculture and Western Crop Substitution

The law enforcement strategies used against cannabis cultivation have moulded the cannabis trade into its current state. Every time cannabis is cultivated, it is done with a certain amount of risk of police intervention. In the USA this risk has been particularly high, as the amount invested into the 'war on drugs' is substantial, and consequently, US agencies fighting the drug trade are well-equipped and well-trained.[66] This has limited the extent to which cannabis can be produced in the USA. However, the determination to produce cannabis rather than just to import it was persistent, because increased border control from the 1960s onwards had caused higher risks to be associated with smuggling the plant.[67]

The USA government had, since the 1960s, highlighted the role played by foreign producers (such as Mexico) in the trade in cannabis. Consequently, the focus of many of their efforts was on the elimination of foreign crops.[68] During the 1970s, the USA funded cannabis crop eradication efforts in Mexico, Afghanistan, Colombia, and Jamaica amongst others.[69] The massive efforts undertaken by the government to prevent foreign cannabis from entering the United States meant that if this part of the supply chain could be severed, the risks associated with the cannabis trade could be greatly diminished.

To overcome the threats of police intervention at border crossings or areas of locally-cultivated cannabis plots, cannabis growers began to experiment with the cultivation of the plant indoors, under artificial light, from the early-1970s.[70] The feasibility of indoor projects was greatly enhanced by the widespread availability of high-intensity lighting, most notably

[66] Lautenbach, D., "Like Hitting Mercury with a Hammer… The US Approach to the Problem" in The South African Institute of International Affairs, *The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa: International Dimensions to a Local Crisis* (Johannesburg, 1998), p. 63
[67] Malyon, "Love Seeds and Cash Crops" (1985), p. 72
[68] *Ibid.*, p. 66
[69] *Ibid.*, pp. 63-107
[70] Booth, *Cannabis: a History* (2003), p. 310

metal halide and high-pressure sodium floodlights.[71] Initially, as with their attempts at crossbreeding cannabis, the hippie growers failed. The tall, tropical *sativa* varieties widely available could not plausibly be grown indoors because of their size, and techniques were not well understood.

Metal halide floodlights are used during the first growth stages of the plant, and the blue-hued light that they emit stimulates leaf growth.[72] For the flowering of the plant, the metal halide light is replaced with high-pressure sodium light, which is a redder light that stimulates floral cluster growth.[73] The extreme amount of light emitted means that the plants will grow at their maximum rate, and the potential for indoor growth (in both quality and quantity of cannabis) is greater than that for outdoor growth, since climate has been eliminated as a factor. The competitive edge of indoor growing was further enhanced through the development of hydroponic farming, which involves a completely artificial environment with roots being saturated in nutrient solutions a number of times a day. This led to faster growth and higher yield for indoor growers. The most recent (21st-century) development in growing techniques is aeroponics, in which even the artificial soil of hydroponics is removed and a fine mist is sprayed onto the root system every four minutes for a period of between thirty seconds and two minutes.[74]

Indoor growing became more ubiquitous at around the same time as the new varieties of cannabis became available, as their small stature, high yield, short flowering cycle and high potency made them perfectly suited to indoor cultivation.[75] With the added control over the cultivation process afforded by indoor growing techniques, the breeding of cannabis varieties grew exponentially again. 'Northern Lights' is one strain that was perfectly suited to indoor growing. Its small stature, dense and large floral clusters, and powerful psychoactivity made it a perfect crop to maximize space, yield and potency. This became the major focus of cannabis breeding: to produce the smallest plant with the highest yield and potency.[76] By growing potent strains one could maximize the value of the final product, and the same holds

[71] Rosenthal, E., Gieringer, D., and, Mikuriya, T., *Marijuana Medical Handbook: a Guide to Therapeutic Use* (Oakland, 1997), p. 139
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.*
[74] Jones, A., *Aeroponic Supersonic* (1998), available online: www.cannabisculture.com/articles/1378.html accessed: 17 July 2009
[75] Jansen, A. C. M., *The Economics of Cannabis Cultivation in Europe* (2002), available online: www.cedro-uva.org/lib/Jansen.economics.html accessed: 26/06/2007
[76] Jansen, *Cannabis Cultivation in Europe* (2002)

true with high-yielding strains. Moreover, quick-flowering strains minimize the time over which one's growing operation may be detected.

Thus, growing these cannabis strains indoors quickens the cultivation process and improves the value of the final product, and furthermore, it affords privacy to the cultivator's operation, reducing the risk of intervention by law enforcement. In every way, the move indoors and the breeding of plants since this time has been aimed at minimizing the risks of cultivating an illegal product, while at the same time maximising its rewards.[77]

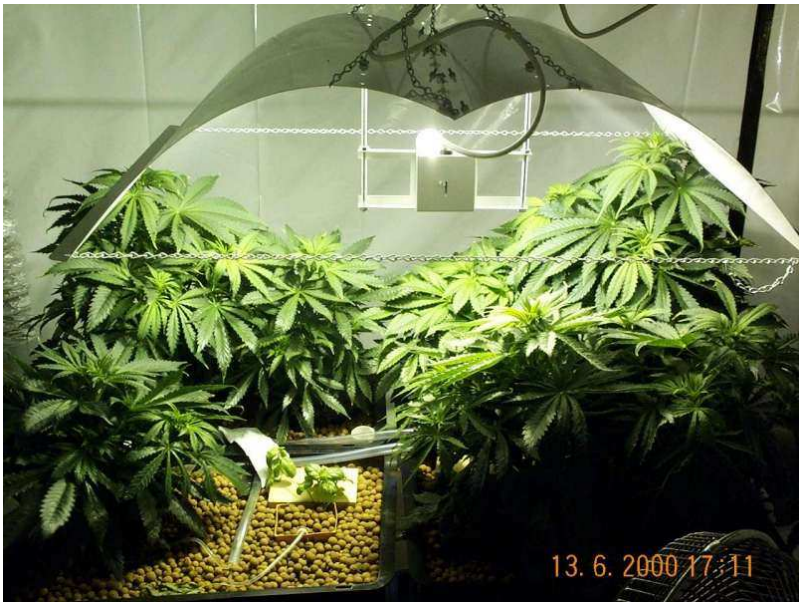

Figure 25: A 'grow room' using hydroponic cultivation techniques (from www.overgrow.com, site no longer available)

The massive effect that the advent of widespread indoor cultivation had on the USA's production of cannabis is highlighted by the estimate that between 1983 and 1984, the rise in indoor cultivation managed to increase local production by twenty percent.[78] Malyon describes this increase in cannabis cultivation in the United States:

> The US Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control itself concedes that 4,000 tons of marijuana were cultivated in the US in 1984, up from 700 tons in 1980. A California committee on law enforcement and forest services experts has explicitly stated that 'Californians are concerned that marijuana is surpassing the nations top cash crops….' In Hawaii a similar committee reported that 'marijuana is surpassing pineapples as Hawaii's number-one cash crop'. NORML, the US National Organisation for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, is a Cannabis legalization lobby which has over its 15-year existence established a reputation of cautious reliability. Based on reports from all its state organizations, it estimates that '55 per cent of marijuana consumed in the US was grown domestically…Marijuana is ranked as one of the top

[77] Jansen, *Cannabis Cultivation in Europe* (2002)
[78] Malyon, "Love Seeds and Cash Crops" (1985), p. 73

> three cash crops in 22 states, and is the number one crop in 10 states.' It estimates the total value of the 1984 US domestic Cannabis crop at $16.6 billion, second to corn but surpassing soybeans. Even if the low DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) estimates are accepted, Cannabis is still a more valuable crop in the US than tobacco.[79]

According to Jansen, this technology only became available in Europe after it showed its potential by becoming popular in the USA in the first half of the 1980s.[80] During the second half of the 1980s, these techniques and strains became popular in Western Europe just prior to the 'Acid House' movement there, and from this period on, locally-produced indoor cannabis has been a steadily growing source of supply to consumer countries in Europe. This process began in the Netherlands, which – due to its liberal policies concerning cannabis – had perfect conditions for indoor growing.

The Netherlands, importantly, had no restrictions regarding the production of hemp seeds, which, because these are the seeds of the cannabis plant, was taken advantage of by cannabis growers. Several 'seed banks' emerged during this time, to supply growers with high-quality seeds and information. This resulted in a large number of people growing small amounts of cannabis (usually less than 10kg per year), in much the same way as a Lesotho farmer may smoke cannabis from his own supply and sell the excess. During the late-1980s and the early-1990s, the Dutch cannabis industry, in a sense, became a very popular cottage industry. Cannabis came to be cultivated in small amounts (sometimes even being grown in a small cupboard) by a large number of people, while facilities existed for the expansion of cultivation. To supply seed stock, 'seed banks' emerged. To supply equipment and information, 'grow shops' appeared, and 'coffee shops' already existed to facilitate the sale of one's excess produce.[81]

It is interesting that despite the ever-growing demand for cannabis in Europe, Europe had still managed to supply a quarter of its local demand just a decade after very little cannabis was produced at all.[82] This is a very rapid rate of growth, and was particularly so in Switzerland and the Netherlands, where import substitution is now thought to account for three-quarters of cannabis supply.[83] The Dutch and Swiss cultivation of cannabis has been so successful that these two countries have begun exporting cannabis to the rest of Europe. The United Kingdom had its own so-called 'home-grown explosion', later than the Netherlands and after

[79] Malyon, "Love Seeds and Cash Crops" (1985), p. 73
[80] Jansen, *Cannabis Cultivation in Europe* (2002)
[81] *Ibid.*
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] *Ibid.*

the process of import substitution was already well underway there. From August 2001 to April 2002, the sales of hydroponic farming equipment in the UK trebled.[84] This was the first indication of a boom in local cannabis cultivation, for, as one police officer pointed out in 2002, "there has been no indication of a sudden explosion of tomato growing in the shires of England."[85]

From every conceivable business angle, the production of cannabis in Europe is a better decision for cannabis retailers than is the importation of foreign cannabis. The quality of the product is reflected in the price it fetches. According to one source, Swazi cannabis is sold in the United Kingdom for approximately £50 for half an ounce (approximately 14 grams, or £3.50 per gram). 'Skunk' fetches £100-£150 for the same quantity.[86] In 2005, in an examination of a variety of Dutch 'coffee shop' menus, only one non-Dutch cannabis strain was found, and it consisted of a compressed Thai 'brick', selling for €4 (about £3) per gram (whereas up-market Dutch strains, again, would sell for three times as much).[87] Furthermore, the role of the smuggler and smuggling is removed, which not only further reduces the distribution of costs because growers can sell directly to dealers, but also reduces the risk of law enforcement intervention.

Interestingly, the trade in hashish has been largely unaffected by the production of European cannabis. In 2005, hashish from Morocco, Pakistan, Nepal, Lebanon and small amounts from the Netherlands were all available on 'coffee shop' menus.[88] This may be attributed to a number of factors. Europe traditionally has a taste for hashish, and the growth in the number of people smoking cannabis products has ensured that the hashish trade has grown alongside it.[89] Hashish is far less bulky, and therefore far easier to smuggle. Also, its price per gram is higher, making its smuggling more economically viable. Finally, and most importantly, the amount of cannabis required for hashish production is extremely large (the production of one kilogram of the finest hashish may require one ton of cannabis).[90]

These developments may have a large effect on southern Africa's export trade. South Africa is the largest supplier of cannabis to the UK, but it is in the last few years that import

[84] Booth, *Cannabis: A History* (2003), p. 426
[85] *Ibid.*, p. 427
[86] Quote given to Author (December 2007)
[87] Author's Observation (September 2005)
[88] *Ibid.*
[89] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 58
[90] Jansen, *Cannabis Cultivation in Europe* (2002)

substitution has occurred in the UK. The extent to which the process of European cannabis import substitution has affected the export trade from southern Africa is as yet unclear, however, it is certain that it has had some effects, some of which were visible from as early on as 1990.

Western Cannabis' Entry into Southern African Trade

By 1990, the lucrative market for southern African cannabis in Europe was already beginning to show signs of what was to come more than a decade later, when this market began to crumble. Around this time, a hybrid cross between Dutch Skunk and Swazi cannabis became available on the southern African market.[91] It may be that 'Swazi Skunk', as it is known, was made available due to the reduced exportability of Swazi cannabis. This would imply that Skunk had been crossed with Swazi for the purpose of export to the Netherlands prior to this period. It is also noted that the price of Swazi Skunk was only marginally higher than that of regular Swazi,[92] which may indicate that the growers did not understand what they were growing, or that the introduction was accidental. Slimy reported that Skunk was present in the Transkei in as early as 1984. He says: "Some foreigners were bringing it, this different seed. They would ask the guys to grow this particular seed for them… there were only very few people who had it… I saw that it was definitely different."[93]

Europeans brought seeds and gave them to South African growers comparatively early on, and, apparently, over the course of the late-1980s the Skunk genetics spread from these areas. Slimy continued to say: "There was one guy who was doing this… After the third year the people wanted to know why the white people were buying from this guy and not from them. They went and stole a couple of plants and planted them. And from then you would see it all over, with clumps here and there that they stole from this main dude's garden."[94] It seems plausible that Skunk entered the former Transkei, not as a hybrid, but as pure Skunk. The hybridisation, if Slimy's version is to be accepted,[95] seems to have been uncontrolled and accidental, and occurred during the course of the second half of the 1980s.

The European genetics now found in Swazi and (less visibly) in Transkei cannabis, by destabilising the genetic pool of southern African cannabis, could have a substantial,

[91] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[92] *Ibid.*
[93] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 14 October 2007
[94] *Ibid.*
[95] This can only be corroborated by one other dealer, Pete ('Pete', Interview with Author, 12 July 2008). Every other person put the date of contact with Skunk in these areas about 5 years later than this.

potentially disastrous effect on the quality of the cannabis produced in southern Africa. So far, it seems to have slightly improved the quality of Swazi cannabis, though the plants are apparently no longer as homogenous as they used to be,[96] while the quality of Transkei cannabis has been dramatically decreased.[97] This can possibly be explained by the larger degree of cross-pollination that occurs in the former Transkei region. Swazi cannabis cultivators, to improve the quality of their yields, have adopted the process of removing staminate plants on a far larger scale than have cultivators in the former Transkei, and so the degree of cross-pollination is higher in the latter region. Also, having two planting seasons in the former Transkei effectively doubles the rate at which cross-pollination can occur. There are also indications that Swaziland only had Skunk introduced to it a few years after the former Transkei. Unfortunately, all of these factors indicate a delay in, and not an avoidance of, the collapse of the quality of Swazi cannabis.

The real 'infiltration' of European cannabis into South Africa occurred in the same years as it did in the UK, around 2001/2.[98] 'Northern Lights', which was grown indoors, became available in South Africa around this time, and the amount of strains of this kind of cannabis available in South Africa has grown exponentially since then.[99] This may give a certain amount of credence to the idea that the emergence of European cannabis in South Africa is the result of connections between the UK and southern Africa. The consumption of European cannabis strains in South Africa is largely limited to 'Westernised' (and wealthier) South Africans, and production and trade is usually carried out in these 'Westernised' circles.[100]

This situation may be elucidated through a description of a case study from Johannesburg. One trader started selling Swazi Gold and Swazi Skunk (bought by a friend in Swaziland) during his years at university in the late-1990s, and continued doing so until 2001. During the final months of his small-scale operation, his friends began the cultivation of an outdoor-grown Dutch Skunk. Following the arrest of a number of those with whom he was involved, he stopped selling for a while, but resumed in mid-2003 after another friend began producing indoor European cannabis. In 2001, he would make R100 for every fifteen grams of cannabis that he sold. However, in 2007, with his stock now consisting of the finest indoor-grown European cannabis, he could make up to R550 by selling a five-gram bag. Furthermore, his

[96] 'Ant', Interview with Author, 11 April 2009
[97] 'Pete', Interview with Author, 12 July 2008
[98] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[99] *Ibid.*
[100] Author's Observation

cannabis is produced and sold in Johannesburg, which lowers the risks involved with transportation and eliminates expensive 'middleman' transporters or smugglers.

Another person interviewed, R.Asta (as he likes to be known), when asked about the first time he heard of these 'high-grade strains', said:

> **R.Asta:** Ja, I started hearing about it in the trance scene in Cape Town
>
> **Interviewer:** So it was also early '90's?
>
> **R.Asta:** Ja, but it wasn't around then. The first time I actually saw it was when I got to the farm and * had it, so it was 2001.
>
> **Interviewer:** And what about indoor?
>
> **R.Asta:** Well, there at the same time, he was doing an indoor/outdoor situation. That was when we first, well, when I first encountered it. Then when we first came into Joburg, into the market there, with the outdoor, we had varieties of that… I'd hybridised around the stuff that I liked. And when we started selling it in Joburg, there was nothing like that in Joburg. 2001/2002. I remember the first parcel that I sold of this indoor in Joburg. I sold it for five Rand a gram. And they sold it immediately, in front of me, for twenty Rand a gram… That was probably 2002, so from 2002/2003 we actually put the prices up from 20 to 30 to 40 to 50 to 60 to 70, and now we're at 120. That's about the highest that's going retail at the moment. 120. But it's in how many years? 5 years. It's incredible.[101]

In Cape Town the process of substituting outdoor- for indoor-grown cannabis is far more evident, and consequently, the price of the product is often lower. The highest quality cannabis in Cape Town, however, is slightly more expensive than in Johannesburg, around R130 per gram at present.[102] The amount of cannabis grown in Cape Town may be far higher than many may suspect. This topic requires further investigation, though every attempt on my part to investigate this market was met with hostility, apparently due to gang involvement.

While the structures of the networks seem to be the same in Johannesburg and Cape Town, Cape Town seems to be more reliant on coercive and violent tactics than Johannesburg is. For example, in both cities there will be a three-tier structure, in which a number of growers will supply an individual, who will in turn supply a number of dealers.[103] It is this central individual[104] who negotiates between the growers and the dealers. These negotiators, therefore, replace the role of smugglers. While in Johannesburg this largely seems to be done

[101] 'R.Asta', Interview with Author, 22 Jan 2009
[102] Quote given to Author (October 2009)
[103] Less commonly there is a two-tier system, where a single independent grower and a single independent dealer will establish a relationship.
[104] Sometimes the growers will supply more than one individual to mediate between themselves and the dealers.

with fairly even profit across the three tiers, in Cape Town it is not uncommon for the central individual to use force, violence and intimidating tactics to ensure that the growers continue to produce cannabis at a price dictated by the middleman. Furthermore, in Cape Town there seems to be a distinct link between the dealers in indoor cannabis and other drugs. In Johannesburg it is much less common, though not unknown, to find dealers selling indoor cannabis and other drugs. At times in Cape Town, it has been reported that if a middleman hears of a person growing high-quality cannabis, even if just for their own consumption, they will use intimidation to force the grower to grow for them.[105] As a result of this, my research in Cape Town, despite the abundance of high-quality cannabis found there, was often met with hostility or evasiveness, the most common line given to me being "I have no idea what you're talking about. Please don't contact me again."

Little is known about the potential effect that European cannabis and indoor production will have on southern Africa's rural cultivators. This is because it is impossible to know how much of the cannabis they supply is consumed in Europe, or how much of it is consumed by 'Westernised' South Africans. However, as indoor production continues to increase both in South Africa and abroad, what can be expected is the closure of these markets to rural producers. Dutch-style 'grow shops' already exist in Cape Town and Johannesburg.[106] It is clear that the quality of cannabis being produced in southern Africa's traditional production areas is declining fairly rapidly, while the improvement in the quality of indoor cannabis produced in South Africa is leading to its increased popularity. Many users are more than willing to pay the 30 to 50 Rand per gram for average-quality indoor cannabis, though the popularity of this kind of product has led to an increase in price, making the highest qualities almost prohibitively expensive (as mentioned, this is currently between 120 and 130 Rand per gram).

A fascinating development in the southern African production of cannabis is the recent establishment of hashish production in southern Africa. This seems to have come about as an attempt to curb the fallout caused by the circumstances described above.

For a number of decades, hashish originating in Pakistan and Central Asia has been supplying about 30 percent of the world's hashish market.[107] It has been primarily smuggled to North America and Europe by boats that depart from either Mumbai or Karachi, and travel around

[105] I have heard several reports of this though nobody has been willing to provide confirmation.
[106] Author's Observation
[107] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 231

the Southern Cape and then north to either North America or Western Europe. In the post-apartheid era, much Pakistani hashish passes by land through Kenya and Mozambique into South Africa for re-exportation.[108] This is confirmed by an increase in confiscations of hashish in South Africa, and has apparently been the case since around 1988.[109] According to Slimy,

> that came from Pakistan, no, Afghanistan… they went to Mozambique in big tankers and they offloaded it there. It was going very cheap so guys bought 4, 5, 6 hundred kilo's… We bought it from them in Africa and Africa sold it back to Europe. Everything at a big profit. A big profit, let me tell you… [110]

South Africa is not traditionally a hashish-consuming country. It has been largely unfeasible to produce hashish here, as the climate is usually too damp (which causes cannabis resin to be sticky and not easily extracted), and – with the widespread availability of cannabis – hashish has traditionally lacked a market in South Africa.[111] Laniel, in examining the Lesotho trade, attempts to account for reports of hashish in Lesotho. His hypothesis is that since South Africa lacks a market for hashish and is not known to have commercially produced it, and because South Africa is known to act as a transit route for Pakistani hashish, it is likely that the hashish found in Lesotho is Pakistani hashish being stored for re-exportation.[112]

This hypothesis is unreasonable for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is not sensible that hashish imported into South Africa for re-exportation would be further imported into Lesotho for storage. Lesotho is a large cannabis producer, and as a result, is watched for cannabis smuggling. The added risks of bringing hashish into Lesotho when it will have to be smuggled out again is against smuggling sense.

Secondly, a hashish market has been growing in South Africa amongst 'Westernised' youths since the early-1990s. At this stage, many South Africans developed a taste for hashish overseas and, more importantly, a large boat carrying several tons of hashish from Pakistan

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[108] Oosthuysen, G., "South Africa in the Global Drug Network", in The South African Institute of International Affairs, *The Illegal Drug Trade in Southern Africa: International Dimensions to a Local Crisis* (Johannesburg, 1998), p. 128

[109] It is interesting to note that this was the year of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and hints that the re-opening of Afghani borders with the 'West' allowed large quantities of hashish to be smuggled out of the country.

[110] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 14 October 2007

[111] Laniel, *Cannabis in Lesotho* (1998)

[112] *Ibid.*

lost its cargo in the Mozambique Channel.[113] Whole slabs of hashish (weighing as much as 10kg each) washed up on the shores of central and northern Mozambique. Mozambiquan children were reportedly standing on the side of the road selling slabs of hashish worth thousands of Rand for a mere R10.[114] It is known that some Johannesburg entrepreneurs went to Mozambique and bought large quantities immediately after the event.[115] As a result, 'Afghan Gold Seal' (though apparently being just low-quality Pakistan/Afghanistan border-region hashish) flooded the South African market, which did a great deal to create a market for hashish in South Africa. Some of these entrepreneurs would smuggle the hashish back into Mozambique each December holiday to take advantage of the myths circulating amongst South African cannabis users about the shipwreck. Such was the quantity washed ashore that in December 2004, the remainder of this hashish was still being sold in Mozambique by South Africans who first removed it from the country more than a decade ago,[116] despite the fact that the 'shelf-life' of cannabis is no more than four years. In reference to this period in South Africa, Slimy said:

> We're talking tons and tons and tons, through Africa into this area. Joburg was full of it. PE was full of it. Everyone had… We'd sold it all and we tried to get it again but all of a sudden it had dried up. Finished. It was that year run, or two years of a big run of the stuff, all the South Africans made a killing…[117]

A third reason why Laniel's hypothesis seems to be spurious is that Pakistani and Afghani hashish is dark, almost a chocolate colour,[118] while the hashish from Lesotho is light green and far more powdery than the resinous Pakistani hashish.[119] The light green colour and dry, powdery texture can be attributed to excessive plant material in the hashish. This condition may occur through sieving hashish in areas that are not suited to the hashish-making process. This seems to fit the case of Lesotho, which is too damp to effectively sieve hashish resin powder without rubbing the cannabis onto the sieve (a process which would force amounts of plant material through the sieve, thereby making the resin powder appear greenish).[120]

[113] 'William', Interview with Author, 17 July 2007
[114] *Ibid.*
[115] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 14 October 2007
[116] Author's Observation (December 2004)
[117] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 14 October 2007
[118] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 344
[119] Author's Observation (September 2003)
[120] Clarke, *Hashish!* (1998), p. 77

From 2003 onwards, one has occasionally been able to find Lesotho hashish in South Africa. In 2003, 5- and 10-gram discs of Lesotho-produced hashish were available in Johannesburg. One side of each disc had a large logo bearing a cannabis leaf, with a border around it in which was printed 'END MARIJUANA PROHIBITION'. Under the cannabis leaf on all of the discs was an indecipherable South African cellular phone number.[121]

Figure 26: Pakistani hashish (Author's collection)

This shows us, firstly, that hashish is being produced on a commercial scale in southern Africa, and secondly, that 'Westernised' cannabis users are producing it. This is strongly suggested, not only by the needlessly attractive packaging of the hashish, but by the use of the catchphrase, 'end marijuana prohibition', which employs the American term 'marijuana' – a term that would not have been used by 'non-Westernised' cannabis users.

Lesotho is not the only area of southern Africa to have begun producing hashish on a commercial scale. Over the course of the last few years, hashish similar to hand-rubbed Indian *charas*, has appeared on a commercial scale in Cape Town, reportedly sourced from the former Transkei.[122] This hashish is characteristically very soft and pliable, like putty, eliminating any chance that it is Pakistani hashish, which is harder due to the industrial pressing processes which are employed there. In 2005 I was offered hashish by a Coffee Bay local,[123] who claimed that it was produced nearby. This story seems to corroborate the idea that hashish is being produced on a commercial scale in the former Transkei, though this hashish cannot be confirmed to be the same as the supply which has emerged in Cape Town,

[121] Author's Observation (September 2003)
[122] Author's Observation (Notes from Cape Town, January 2009)
[123] Author's Observation (July 2005)

as it was not available for examination. Furthermore, this production seems to be along the lines of what Slimy calls "the old way."

> The women used to make in the Transkei. That was the dark, black, black, black hash, pure… they used to do it with their fingers… every family would have a little box, usually the guy of the house would smoke it himself. So it's like special stash… and it's damn delicious.[124]

This fits again with the description of soft, hand-rubbed hashish, and further corroborates the idea that this hashish came from the former Transkei. What is of particular interest here is that this hashish was produced in a large enough quantity to be made available on a commercial level.

Reports from Swaziland hint that a similar process is occurring in that country. Moreover, these reports give an indication of the reasons for the emergence of southern African hashish production. A report from 2003 says: "European buyers no longer fancy cannabis in its original weedy state…Rather, the demand is now for 'chocolate', a thick brown resin…Extracting machines needed to produce 'chocolate' are not usually obtainable by poor peasant farmers… As a result, unsold stashes of marijuana are being found by regional police in record amounts."[125] A thick brown resin, the production of which requires extraction machinery, clearly fits the criteria for hashish. If 'chocolate' is indeed hashish, then it is being claimed in this article that the market for Swazi cannabis is crashing, making hashish the only feasible export product. Furthermore, it describes a worsening situation, as Swazi farmers fail to meet the market's demands.

This fits well with the thesis that hashish production has emerged in South Africa in response to the shrinking of two major markets (namely, the European and more 'Westernised' South African). In an attempt to maintain a share of these markets, southern African cannabis producers have turned to hashish production. However, there are indications that these farmers' efforts are not enough to sustain them in the face of the collapse of the cannabis market.

Over the last two years (2008 and 2009), there has been a marked increase in the amount of 'water hash' being produced in the region. This development has been noted on at least one occasion in each of the major regions that were visited, though it seems to be becoming fairly popular in the former Transkei, particularly in coastal areas less frequented by tourists.

[124] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 14 October 2007
[125] Hall, "Africa at Large" (25 July 2003)

'Water hash' is a fairly recent development, especially in southern Africa, and is part of the vast array of technological innovations that have emerged in Europe over the last decade.

Hashish consists of the resin glands of the cannabis plant, which are removed and collected. This has always been a process carried out by sieving the cannabis on a mesh screen, allowing the resin glands to fall to the bottom and leaving the larger plant matter on top of the screen. When it was realised that resin glands, being solid, sank in water while the plant material floated, industrious cannabis enthusiasts set about trying to develop a technique of extracting the resin using water.

After a number of largely unfeasible inventions since the 1970s, a successful method was developed in the Netherlands by Mila Jansen. Her invention is marketed as the Ice-o-later, under rights of the Pollinator Company (the Pollinator is another resin extraction machine developed by Jansen). The process involves two material bags, which are perforated, and have different 'pore sizes'. The outer bag has a pore size of either 70 microns (for indoor cannabis) or 45 microns (for outdoor cannabis). The inner bag has a pore size of 220 or 125 microns respectively.[126] The reason for the difference in pore size is that cannabis grown under artificial light usually has larger resin glands. The dried cannabis is placed inside the inner bag and washed in cold water. Low temperatures make the resin glands more brittle, easing removal. The pore size of the inner bag allows the resin glands to pass through into the outer bag, while preventing larger plant material from passing through. The outer bag is designed to allow dust and smaller bits of plant material to be washed out of the bags. The result is the collection of an exceptionally pure resin powder in the outer bag, which can then be dried and pressed.[127]

This innovation may overcome many of the problems associated with hashish production in southern Africa, which traditionally has been too humid, meaning that the sieving of cannabis to remove resin has been ineffective. These 'water hash' bags, sometimes referred to as 'bubble bags', are known in some cases to have been given to growers by their 'Westernised' clients, specifically to help them produce hashish because the users prefer it. One can expect a large increase in this sort of hashish production in the region, as cannabis cultivators continue to adapt to the new climate of cannabis production in southern Africa. In many

[126] These are the pore sizes available commercially through the Pollinator Company website, www.pollinator.nl
[127] Jansen, M., and Terris, R., "One Woman's Work in the Use of Hashish in a Medical Context" in Russo, E., Dreher, M., and Mathre, M. J., *Women and Cannabis: Medicine, Science and Sociology* (New York, 2002), pp. 138 - 140

cases, it seems 'water hash' production may be their only hope of maintaining an income in the years to come.

Figure 27: An advertisement for the Pollinator Company showing some of their products for manufacturing hashish (Author's collection)

These findings demand a re-evaluation of the current situation of the southern African cannabis complex. It is widely believed that because the complex produces so much cannabis it must be thriving, but this is not necessarily the case. The former Transkei in particular has seen an increase in production and a decrease in value of trade, due to a reduction in the quality of the cannabis being produced there, and a demand for higher quality in the market.

Gastrow argued in 2003 that "it is likely that a major expansion in the production and exportation of cannabis from Southern Africa will take place during the next few years."[128] It may seem that the opposite has been argued here, but it appears that he is correct. However, what he has ignored is the transition to hashish production that is happening in southern Africa. If anything, this will mean an even greater expansion than Gastrow predicted in cultivation over the next few years. The quantity of cannabis required to produce

[128] Gastrow, *Mindblowing* (2003)

commercially-viable amounts of hashish is considerably more than is the case when selling cannabis in its raw state. In fact, the amount required is so much greater that it is the reason Europe is still relying on imports of hashish. Europe cannot yet produce the large quantity of cannabis required to manufacture enough hashish to supply their local demand.

An interesting point, which warrants discussion, is one of the factors Gastrow presents in motivation of his (above-quoted) statement. That is,

> the involvement of skilled, strategic and internally experienced organised criminal networks – for example, Nigerian networks – in the trafficking of cannabis from Southern Africa to other parts of the world, who are elevating the illicit trade to a more 'professional' level than it has been in the past.[129]

The involvement of crime syndicates and criminal networks has briefly been mentioned in relation to the Cape Town indoor market, the market for 'club drugs' like Ecstasy and LSD, and cultivation in Lesotho and the former Transkei, but it is not restricted to these facets of the drug trade. The abundance of cannabis in southern Africa, and the region's position on a transit route for cocaine and heroin trafficking, has given incentive to those involved mainly in the cocaine and heroin trade to involve the use of cannabis as a currency in bartering for the preferred, harder, drugs.[130] The result has been attempts at monopolising certain parts of the market chain.

It is likely that the organised crime element of the cannabis trade will shape the industry in southern Africa, particularly with the continued involvement of Nigerian syndicates attempting to capitalise on the trade. Contemporary organised crime groups have a capacity for bulk exportation that is far higher than the independent smugglers found in the early-1990s. They have the funds to corrupt law enforcement and to organise bulk transportation and packaging, just as occurred in Jamaica during the 1980s.[131] In contrast to the free market of earlier traders, organised crime groups are willing to use extortion to gain their monopoly.[132]

All these factors indicate that as long as the demand for cannabis remains steady, the involvement of organised crime in the trade will grow. This isn't to say that the cannabis trade has been completely dominated by syndicates; their involvement is relatively minor

[129] Gastrow, *Mindblowing* (2003)
[130] Leggett, *Rainbow Vice* (2001), p. 37
[131] Malyon, "Love Seeds and Cash Crops" (1985), p. 81.
[132] Baynham, "The Nigerian Nexus" (1998), p. 92.

when compared to the more lucrative heroin and cocaine markets. The majority of intercontinental cannabis trading is still carried out by a number of individuals, almost exclusively 'white', who are making large amounts of money through their enterprises.[133]

The links that have been established between the trade in cannabis and the trading of cocaine, heroin and Ecstasy, have put southern Africa in a paradoxical position. In order to slow the influx of cocaine, heroin and Ecstasy into southern Africa, authorities have to keep other illegal drugs (such as cannabis and hashish) within the borders of the country.[134] By doing so, South African authorities can prevent the use of southern African cannabis as a currency in the global drug trade, and slow the distribution of these other drugs in southern Africa. In this schema, proposed by Leggett, the regional market should be left to itself, essentially ignored. The dangers of widespread cannabis use are said to be far outweighed by the benefits of stimulating the economies of the poverty-stricken cultivation areas.

[133] 'Slimy', Interview with Author, 04 August 2007
[134] Leggett, *Rainbow Vice* (2001), p. 39

Conclusion

It is often forgotten that a substance which is illegal was not always so. This is the case with cannabis, often even amongst those vying for its legalisation. Just why this is so is an anomaly, for, upon close examination, one finds that the foundations of prohibition are based on outdated, racist understandings of social science that are now widely considered to be archaic and flawed. This is not enough to support the arguments of proponents of legalisation, but it certainly does render their arguments in a new light. Of particular interest here is that prior to this period of prohibition, the trade in cannabis, while perhaps considered to be morally problematic, was accepted by the colonists in South Africa.

But even this legal trade in cannabis by the colonists was drenched in the racially-situated political economy of addiction established at the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch and, later, by the British. Politically dominant 'white' South Africa took advantage of the popularity of the plant as an intoxicant amongst the groups that the colonists sought to yoke into virtual serfdom, thus entrenching this politico-economic situation.

As was mentioned in the Introduction of this thesis, the view is taken here that the development of the southern African cannabis trade can be understood in terms of the broad themes of prohibition and resistance, both in relation to cannabis and in terms of apartheid law. In this respect, the relationship between prohibition and resistance provides a direct link between cannabis law and apartheid law.

The motivation for the prohibition of cannabis is found in the broader political context of making the 'non-white' population of use to the colonists, while keeping the perceived threat of these groups to the colonists at a minimum. Even prior to prohibition it could be said that the acceptance of cannabis as a trading commodity indicated that it was used as a tool to ensure that the so-called 'non-white' population was made of use to the colonists, as it was used as an "inducement to retain [the 'non-white' population] in their service."[1] It was only after the emergence of the nineteenth-century social sciences, relying on the Darwinian model of evolution, that the prevailing 'logic' indicated a real threat posed by cannabis to the political status quo.

But, it should be stated again, cannabis use was not a political issue until such a time as the 'non-white' population came into great enough contact with the politically dominant 'white'

[1] Thompson, *Travels and Adventures* (1967), p. 52

population to make this contact seem like a threat that needed to be reduced. Cannabis use was not a problem unless there was great enough contact between the 'white' colonists and the cannabis-using 'non-white' population, and, in this sense, cannabis laws may be located in the greater schema of the so-called 'grand apartheid' design. At the very least, both cannabis law and apartheid law rest on the same ideological foundation. Stemming from this 'scientifically-justified' racism and (not coincidentally) the prohibition of cannabis, we find a direct correlation between resistance to institutionalised racism and resistance to cannabis laws.

This is not to say that it was only the interplay of these two themes (prohibition and resistance) that led to the development of the southern African cannabis trade. There certainly were external influences from the increasingly globalised world of the twentieth century (most obviously, the hippie movement), but even in these external influences we can see a pattern of the prohibition of cannabis being related to wider elements of social control and planning, and resistance to cannabis laws being related to resistance to this control. In the USA, for example, it was not specifically drug laws that were being resisted, but the entire lifestyle of the USA's 'Golden Age' of consumerism and capitalism. In this light, any resistance to this social mode was seen to lend implicit support to (amongst others) the civil rights movement, the feminist movement and the environmental movement. In South Africa, it seems the scope of what is interpreted as a kind of general prohibition in this thesis was more rigidly defined by the more oppressive apartheid government – and so any infringement of the innumerable apartheid laws, such as the use of cannabis, could be seen as resistance to the very structure of the state.

When we look at cannabis prohibition in South Africa chronologically, we can see the development of apartheid law occurring alongside the gradual entrenchment of more draconian laws against cannabis, beginning with the South African Native Affairs Commission in 1905 and the subsequent petitioning of mine managers to prohibit cannabis in 1908 (concomitant with the 'black peril' cases). Later, we see the Department of Health statements in 1935, and the almost-simultaneous Weeds Act and Cape Coloured Commission Report in 1937. Moreover, one of the first acts of the newly-established apartheid government in 1949 was the founding of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Abuse of Dagga. At this stage (during the early years of the apartheid government), 'white' hegemony was considered to be firmly entrenched; there was no strong threat to this political order. Only when apartheid South Africa saw a threat to this political dominance in the form of the

hippie movement, defined by the apartheid government as almost any youth movement resisting state authority, did the government make further moves against cannabis.

This last move is particularly telling, because – as was described in Chapter Two – the focus was certainly not on cannabis, but on resistance to authority. Thus, while in public opinion the hippies were most infamous for their drug use, and virtually every government phrased their concern as a public health issue centred on drug-taking, this was not the focus of the apartheid government (or the American and European governments, for that matter).

One can clearly see that the so-called 'War on Drugs', regardless of which country wages it, finds its campaign subsumed by its government's wider political agenda. This view is not new. It has been posited several times and there are countless examples of it. The most well-known is arguably that of the Nicaraguan Contras and their involvement with the CIA and cocaine implicating two former US presidents, Ronald Reagan (the president at the time) and George Bush Snr. (then head of the CIA).[2] Another is the CIA involvement in the heroin trade in South-East Asia (in what became known as the Golden Triangle) and Central Asia (in what is known as the Golden Crescent).[3] In both cases, the USA subordinated attempts to combat drug trafficking in order to further its ideological war against communism.

Apartheid South Africa was not spared from this phenomenon. We now know, through the investigations of the TRC, that South Africa's chemical and biological weapons program, Project Coast, produced large amounts of Mandrax and MDMA during the course of its work. It is also noted that at one stage a consignment of confiscated cannabis was used in the program.[4] The South African government, in line with governments around the world, consistently manipulated its mandate under international law to suppress drug use in order to pursue a wider political goal. In the case of apartheid South Africa and cannabis, clamping down on the use of the plant suited its political agenda because of the threats it posed to the authority of the apartheid state. Some of these threats, such as the cannabis trade's links to the anti-apartheid movement, appear to have been real.

These links were multiple and had far-reaching implications for the cannabis trade in the region. An important element that should be addressed is what seemed to be a mutually re-enforcing relationship, situated in a paradigm of civil disobedience, between cannabis use and

[2] Scott, P. D., and Marshall, J., *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies, and the CIA in Central America* (Los Angeles, 1998)
[3] McCoy, A. W., *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade* (New York, 1991)
[4] Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, Vol. 2, Chp. 6, "Special Investigation into Project Coast"

the anti-apartheid movement. In this thesis I have argued that this dynamic played a role in making cannabis use more widespread in South Africa and, essentially, in helping establish the modern cannabis trade in the region by opening new markets and by stimulating cultivation. This makes this dynamic vitally important in understanding how the trade developed, and therefore, it demands adumbration.

There is evidence to suggest that those who used cannabis and those involved in opposing apartheid saw each other as sharing common ground in their illegal acts. Cannabis users appear to have been far more likely to be opposed to the apartheid government through experiences of persecution under that regime. To those holding anti-apartheid sentiments, cannabis use was seen as a way of expressing disdain for the law. Hence, cannabis users would often be accepted as being anti-apartheid in virtue of the fact that they used cannabis. In short, those involved with the anti-apartheid movement and cannabis users 'saw eye-to-eye'.

This was most evident amongst 'white' cannabis smokers, but was certainly not restricted to these groups. It is simply that the strongest evidence for this paradigm of civil disobedience comes from cases where 'white' cannabis users entered predominantly 'black' anti-apartheid circles, and were accepted because of their cannabis use. These cases are in abundance.

It is also clear that there was a stronger sense of cannabis use being an act of resistance amongst 'white' groups than amongst 'non-white' groups. To state this point clearly, a cannabis user who was classified as 'white' was more likely to be accepted as anti-apartheid by others holding anti-apartheid sentiments, than a cannabis user not classified as such. I would hypothesise that this is because of the very small amount of cannabis use that occurred amongst 'white' South Africans prior to the 1960s, compared to the other 'race' groups in which the use of cannabis was a long-standing tradition. Using cannabis was far more of a departure from the social mores of 'white' South Africa than it was for other social groups.

The advent of cannabis use amongst the 'white' population of South Africa indicates South African society (and particularly the youth) was influenced by international trends, most noticeably from the late-1960s onwards. The worldwide social movements of the 1960s were characterised by a "revolt against the established mores, traditions and customs"[5] of society,

[5] DSWP, *Drug Dependence* (1970), p. 28

whether they took the form of the civil rights movement, the environmental movement, the feminist movement or, more importantly for the sake of this thesis, the hippie movement.

The existence of the hippie movement in South Africa, particularly in Durban, indicates that these international trends were influencing South Africa, and – while the hippie movement was the most well-known for its drug use – cannabis use increased across the board by dint of all these various social movements. In South Africa this groundswell of revolt was expressed in the anti-apartheid movement amongst 'white' South Africans. The use of cannabis increased, as it had throughout all of so-called 'Western society' at the time. This new market opening in South African society went a long way to bolster the cannabis trade in the region, and likely increased its size quite substantially.

This resistance to authority and cannabis laws described above certainly stimulated the trade of the late-1960s and early-1970s, as did the related emergence of the new, 'white' cannabis user market. It was not, however, in the emergence of new markets that the relationship between the cannabis trade and resistance to apartheid was most evident. Rather, this is attested to by the direct involvement of anti-apartheid political organisations, who found ideal conditions to raise funds within the cannabis trade. Evidence indicates that the ANC in particular raised funds through the cannabis trade during, at least, the 1980s, and it is thought that this trade was quite substantial.

Their motives for doing so are simple. As a banned political organisation, the ANC had no legitimate form of income, and as a result had to seek funding through illegal means. Due to the structure of the South African state during apartheid, cannabis trading was an ideal moneymaking venture.

In creating the Bantustans, the apartheid government ceded control of large parts of their territory, and placed these 'homelands' under the control of groups with whom cannabis cultivation had a higher degree of acceptance. Forcing more people into these areas than the land could sustain further reduced the paltry amount of arable land available to them, entrenching poverty and leaving cannabis as the only viable cash crop. Cannabis cultivation became the logical, if not the only, choice for subsistence farmers. This almost certainly increased the already widespread cultivation of cannabis, and the ANC, seeking funding for their anti-apartheid operations, took advantage of this situation. The abundance of cannabis and the ever-increasing market for it over the course of the 1970s and 1980s made cannabis an ideal commodity through which to raise funds. Furthermore, establishing the supply chain

for the sale of this cannabis would have been simple. Possibly because of the connections that existed amongst cannabis users and those involved in anti-apartheid activities, the ANC already had each link of the commodity chain sympathetic to their cause. All that was required was to find growers, dealers and smugglers who supported the ANC and this, it seems, was very easily done.

It would be wrong to understand this as an official fund-raising drive by the ANC, though it appears to have been masterminded by official ANC members (some quite high-ranking). It was more a collection of people, working under the broader mandate of the ANC as an identifiable enemy of apartheid, raising funds for the organisation by any means possible. Still, the amount of cannabis used for fundraising by banned political organisations during apartheid was apparently substantial, and – between the burgeoning markets and increases in cultivation – these organisations filled the vital link between the cultivator and consumer.

This trend apparently continued throughout the apartheid period, with cannabis prevalence increasing just as the anti-apartheid movement grew. The overlap between the anti-apartheid movement and the cannabis trade, however, means that cannabis use and trading is viewed by many as acceptable, though perhaps risky, in post-apartheid South Africa. This is not necessarily due to a conscious connection between the anti-apartheid movement and the cannabis trade, but rather because the increasing popularity of cannabis over the apartheid period meant that by the time the apartheid state was dismantled, cannabis already had a degree of acceptance. A large amount of people see nothing morally reprehensible about using or trading cannabis. Whether or not this is positive or negative is open to debate, and I will not venture into such controversial territory here. However, the certain degree of acceptance that cannabis enjoys in South African society means that cannabis use, cultivation and trading is often allowed to continue almost unabated.

The level of this acceptance can be astounding at times. I recall an incident at a party held at a friend's house in Durban. The police arrived to deal with a noise complaint at one stage in the evening, just as one reveller was lighting a joint. The police turned off the music and approached this person, to whom a police officer said: "I have been a police officer for ten years and not once have I arrested someone for dagga." He then pulled a lighter out of his pocket and assisted in lighting the very nervous partygoer's joint. This occurred in 2004.

The dynamics of prohibition and resistance influenced the South African cannabis trade in another way than has been discussed above. Changes in the dynamics of illegal markets occur

not only through market demands, but also through attempts by law enforcement authorities to eliminate the trade, and the responses of those involved to avoid these agencies and continue their operations. Drug markets adapt to the legal climate in which they operate: as the legal climate changes so must the illegal market evolve to cope with its strictures.

For example, following cannabis prohibition in South Africa in 1922, cannabis laws were not enforced in rural areas on the grounds that "moderate dagga smoking is of little importance form the point of view of public order and welfare"[6] – thus, cannabis cultivation became the domain of farmers in these rural areas, where interference from law enforcement was minimal. Later in the century, after police attempted to enforce cannabis laws in these cultivation districts, cultivators avoided arrest by moving a large amount of their cultivation to forested ravines where they couldn't be associated with the crop, or by disguising it by planting it amongst legitimate crops such as maize. When in the 1980s, police began to intercept large consignments of cannabis leaving the country, the introduction of compression machines meant fewer consignments needed to be sent. And in the late-1990s, when sending any large consignments became too hazardous, small consignments were sent over with the expectation that a few would be intercepted, but that the majority would not.

In the United States, in particular, the amount of money invested into combating cannabis trafficking was enormous, and the agencies involved were well-trained and well-equipped. Similarly, the resources available to those involved in the cannabis trade were far greater than in most parts of the world. As a result, the rate of development of the trade was far more rapid. Law enforcement was quicker to respond to changes in the trade, and cannabis traders were more prepared to deal with those responses. For example, by beginning to cultivate cannabis in the USA, the main strategy of law enforcement, border controls, could be avoided. The US government, in response, began aerial crop spraying and surveys to identify and destroy plantations. By developing new strains and moving their production indoors, cultivators managed to avoid the dangers of having their fields located and identified. In the years since, partly because the quantity of cannabis in possession often dictates the severity of the sentence when one is arrested, cannabis cultivators have worked to improve their cultivation methods and strains, to produce the highest yield of the most powerful cannabis in the shortest possible time (a measure which also reduces the risk of detection). This

[6] Chanock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture* (2001), p. 94

minimised danger and maximised profit, and the result was the production of the modern 'higher-grade' strains of cannabis.

The increasing size of the southern African cannabis trade over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, as well as both the reputation of the region's cannabis (Swazi and Transkei cannabis, and the elusive Durban Poison) and South Africa's re-incorporation into the world economy following the demise of apartheid, put southern Africa's cannabis smugglers in an ideal position to take advantage of the upsurge in cannabis demand in Europe beginning around the late-1980s. The result was not as mutually beneficial as it has been made out to be in articles dealing with the thriving export trade to Europe. In reality, Europe and the wealthier markets of South Africa dictated terms to the rural cultivators in the region: they had no option but to follow orders in order to earn the money for which they grow their cannabis. From this time until the present, the southern African cannabis trade has been coming to terms with the new market forces at work, both internally and abroad, and it is still a long way from finding its niche in the global cannabis market.

The problems caused by the process of southern Africa's incorporation into the world trade are myriad and have been detailed in Chapter Four. There are two aspects of this incorporation that deserve special mention. The first is the transition to hashish production, and the second is the element of organised crime.

The development of commercial hashish production in southern Africa since the turn of the century gives us an indication of the degree to which the introduction of more powerful European cannabis into southern Africa has influenced cannabis trading in the region. With the reduced quality of southern African cannabis, and the dramatic increase in popularity of these powerful imported cannabis strains (in both Europe and South Africa), the southern African cannabis farmers have been forced to find a new way to market their produce. By April 2009, the last time I was in the cultivation districts, hashish production was still relatively rare (though it has increased quite dramatically since 2007), and it seems that the process has been slow to take off. Considering the global trends, it is safe to say that this process is a long way from being complete.

Commercial hashish production is perhaps not ideal for cannabis cultivators in the region. A far higher quantity of cannabis is required to produce commercially-viable quantities of hashish; as a result, the chance of police intervention increases. It appears to be a risk many are willing to take, though the vast amounts of cannabis that are required are no doubt

slowing this process. An important point to be made is that the rate at which cannabis users are converting from local varieties to the stronger European varieties is happening far faster than the rate at which hashish production is growing. The effect that this discrepancy could have on the cannabis cultivators in the region is unknown, and most probably, unknowable.

The involvement of organised crime in the cannabis trade has increased dramatically over the last few years. The result has been an increasing overlap between the cannabis trade and the trade in other drugs. Cannabis trading has, historically, functioned along chains of supply that exist independently of the supply-chains of other drugs. Involvement with the more violent trade in cocaine and heroin, and the coercive tactics used by organised syndicates implicated in the trade of these 'harder' drugs, may be increasing the threat posed by the cannabis trade to the security of the country and its residents. Furthermore, the use of cannabis as a currency for purchasing these other drugs means an increase in the quantities of these more dangerous drugs on the South African market. As was mentioned in Chapter Four, the involvement of organised crime (and hence, the way in which law enforcement structures deal with these syndicates) is likely to determine the way in which the cannabis trade develops in southern Africa.

This thesis has traced the development of the southern African cannabis complex from the arrival of cannabis in Africa up until the present day. It has shown how southern Africa has become one of the world's largest suppliers of the world's most popular illegal drug. It is important that the process of this development is understood, as it allows us to understand an industry which affects the lives of many people by injecting millions in untaxed currency into some of the world's most poverty-stricken areas. It also allows one to gain some perspective on a very heated and confused debate, in which cannabis is seen either as the saviour of humankind or as an evil menace to society. I hope that the impression I have given the reader is that the debate needs to be depolarised, and that cannabis cannot be seen as either intrinsically good or intrinsically bad. Commonsense, so often lacking in the cannabis debate, needs to be appealed to.

However, this was not the main aim of this thesis. This thesis has merely shown the trends which have developed in the southern African cannabis trade, so that a clearer picture of the state of the trade could be provided. Hopefully, this will contribute to a greater understanding of how southern African society should deal with the cannabis trade.

Unfortunately, very little research has been conducted into the role of the cannabis plant in southern Africa. Most work focuses on the criminological aspects of the cannabis trade, which almost inevitably reduces it to simply another field of organised crime. By now it should be clear that it is not. The cannabis trade in southern Africa is a multi-faceted issue, being influenced by both international and regional trends. It is in identifying these trends and understanding their influence that a proper picture of the industry can be seen. Only once this trade is properly understood can an effective way of dealing with it be devised. The way in which this plant is perceived will dictate the direction in which the major cultivation districts in southern Africa develop, and as a result – despite my avoidance of these controversial debates – nobody should be without an informed opinion on the issue. However this issue is resolved, what is most important is that it is understood that cannabis is here to stay, that it has become a feature of both the geographical and social landscape of southern Africa, and total elimination of the plant is simply not an option.

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