A COMPARATIVE READING OF THE DEPICTION OF AFRIKANER ANCESTRY IN TWO WORKS BY C. D. BELL

Richardt Strydom

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Supervisor: Ms. M.C. Swanepoel

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the contradictions and similarities regarding the depictions of Afrikaner ancestry in two works by Charles Davidson Bell: *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (1850) and *Cattle boers' outspan* (s.a.). The works were discussed and compared from a conventional perspective in order to establish the artworks' formal qualities, subject matter and thematic content. This reading was extended by employing postcolonial theoretical principles in order to contextualise these two artworks within their Victorian ideological frameworks, social realities and authoring strategies. The extended comparative reading revealed a number of similarities and contradictions regarding the artist's depiction of Afrikaner ancestry in these two works. Postcolonial theory further facilitated a more comprehensive and dense reading of the chosen artworks, as well as of the artist's oeuvre.

Keywords: Afrikaner, Bell C. D., boer, British Imperialism, colonialism, colonizer, culture, explorer art, hybridity, *Other*, pictorial convention, postcolonialism, postcolonial identity, representation, settler, South Africa 1652 – 1901, trekboer, Victorian art.

OPSOMMING

In hierdie verhandeling is die ooreenkomste en verskille in die uitbeelding van Afrikanervoorsate in twee werke van Charles Davidson Bell, *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (1850) en *Cattle boers' outspan* (s.a.) ondersoek. Die kunswerke is eerstens vergelykend gelees en geïnterpreteer vanuit 'n konvensionele perspektief om sodoende die formele eienskappe, die onderwerpsmateriaal en tematiese inhoude te bepaal. Die konvensionele interpretasie is uitgebrei deur 'n postkoloniale lees wat betref die Victoriaanse ideologiese raamwerke, sosiale realiteite en outeurstrategieë in beide werke. Die uitgebreide vergelykende lees van bogenoemde werke het verskeie verskille en ooreenkomste rakende die uitbeelding van die Afrikanervoorsate blootgelê. Deur middel van postkoloniale teoretiese begrondings is 'n dieperliggender en indringender vergelykende lees van sowel die gekose kunswerke, as die kunstenaar se oeuvre bereik.

Sleutelwoorde: Afrikaner, Bell C. D., Britse Imperialisme, kolonialisme, kolonialis, kultuur, Afrikana, hibriditeit, *Ander*, pikturale konvensie, postkolonialisme, postkoloniale identiteit, representasie, setlaar, Suid Afrika 1652 – 1901, trekboer, Victoriaanse kuns.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Eurocentric history deliberately promulgated the myth that Africa was a 'dark continent' replete with cannibals, savages, and inferior, uncivilised, backward, primitive peoples, devoid of knowledge and culture ...(Hoskins, 1992:248).

1.1 Introduction

European explorer artists, through their depiction of the African continent and its inhabitants, played an important role in promulgating the popular view that it was the duty of the colonialists to bring the light of civilisation to the "dark continent" (cf. Hoskins, 1992:248; Jacobs, 1995:9). With explorer art once considered outside the canon of European high art, the critical redress of explorer artists and their work has long been neglected (cf. Bradlow, 1998:10). Similarly the name and legacy of Charles Davison Bell (1813-1882) have until fairly recently been generally overlooked in artistic circles, being better known to philatelists as the designer of the much sought-after Cape triangular stamp (Bradlow, 1998:10).

Very few publications are dedicated to Bell or his work. The first to attempt to provide a detailed biography of Bell was undertaken by Anna Smith in an article published in 1954, seventy-two years after Bell's death. Smith drew most of her information from contemporaneous nineteenth-century sources such as newspapers, as well as information gathered from documents in the Cape Archives (Bradlow, 1998:10). A later contribution by Smith was the biography of Bell contained in the *Dictionary of South African biography* (1968, vol. 1). In this instance, Smith included information from Bell's obituary written by his long time friend Charles Piazzi Smyth (Lipschitz, 1992:27). *The life and work of Charles Bell* by Brooke Simons (1998:1-176) remains the only contemporary publication to date dealing exclusively with the biography of Bell and his oeuvre as artist.

Most South African art historical reference books and compendiums contain only passing references to Bell (these include: Brown, 1978:5,8,9, 12,21,24); Fransen, 1981:129-130; Ogilvie, 1988:53-54) or, otherwise, completely omit any mention of

him (cf. Alexander, 1940:i-171; Alexander & Cohen, 1990:1-179; Battis, 1941:1-43; Berman, 1983:1-368; Bouwman, 1948:1-134). Some of these references, Fransen (1981:129) and Ogilvie (1988:53) for example, also contain errors and inconsistencies. This is supported by Godby (1998:140) who asserts that knowledge about Bell, especially as an artist, is at best sketchy and often greatly distorted. The only academic research document registered on the national research database concerning Bell is Lipshitz's Master's dissertation (1992:1-215), which catalogues and critically surveys the *Bell Heritage Trust Collection*[1]. Lipshitz (1992:1-28) includes a biographical survey of Bell in this dissertation, researched primarily from unpublished and secondary sources such as documents from the Surveyor General and Colonial Office, housed in the Cape Archives. Lipshitz (1992:1-28) gathered further information from letters written by Bell, kept in the Cape Archives and the *Bell Heritage Trust Collection*. However, the most comprehensive biographical reference concerning Bell to date remains Brooke Simons (1998:1-176). This author (1998:6-7) draws from a wide spectrum of sources both in South Africa and Scotland, including the *John and Charles Bell Heritage Trust Collection*, the South African Library, South African Cultural History Museum, MuseumAfrica, the Cape Archives, Crail Museum and the National Museums of Scotland.

According to Bradlow (1998:10), chairman of the John and Charles Bell Heritage Trust Collection, there are a number of reasons for the lack of knowledge about Bell, especially among art historians, one of these being the status accorded to explorer art at the time. Godby (1998:140) further suggests that the loss of up to two-thirds of Bell's artistic output has prejudiced the general perception regarding Bell's abilities and artistic stature.

Bell can be described as an explorer-painter who also worked as a book illustrator (Brown, 1978:4-6; Ogilvie, 1988:54). As an explorer artist Bell painted many subjects including portraits, landscapes and scenes of African life, or, "historical scenes", as these were also dubbed by Ogilvie (1988:53). Bell's art can also be placed into the categories of social documentation and social commentary (Godby, 1998:141). While working in the Surveyor-General's department, Bell produced a number of ethnographic paintings that reflected events relating to aspects of the behaviour of

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[1] This trust was established in 1978. The contents of the trust are on permanent loan to the University of Cape Town.

indigenous peoples, an example of which is *Bushmen driving cattle up a kloof - Boers in pursuit* (s.a.) (*fig.1*) (Record, 1994:64). These works are described by Brooke Simons (1998:52) as "... spirited depictions of the appearance and customs of the indigenous people of the subcontinent". These depictions served the purpose of illustrating the curious and the exotic for a European audience.

However, artistically Bell is best known for his large oil paintings, *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (1850) (*fig.2*) and *The isle of the Holy Cross* (1850) (*fig.3*) displayed in the South African Library (cf. Bradlow, 1998:10). Painted two centuries after the actual event, *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* is an epic scene of inflated heroism depicted in the Romantic style and assimilated into the nineteenth century genre of history painting which, in Britain, held primacy over other genres for much of the Victorian age (Strong, 2004:9, 55). I concur with Lambourne (1999:7) when using the term Victorian as referring to the epoch spanning the life of Queen Victoria i.e. 1819 - 1901, and not the period of her reign. Chu (2003:311) further states that the term Victorian at the same time refers to the social customs, moral values, literature, art and architecture of this epoch, and is often used synonymously with the nineteenth century

Guy (2002:314) posits that the reception of much of Victorian art was centred on the notion of artworks' representational qualities and verisimilitude. A conventional reading of such artworks would thus reveal its formal qualities, subject matter and thematic content. A primary function of Victorian art, however, was also to socialise individual viewers into the moral values of their culture (cf. Guy, 2002:314). With regard to *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* this may be evidenced in Record's (1994:65) claim that this artwork bears little relation to the actual event, and is rather concerned with the perceptions and values of nineteenth-century British colonial power and to all intent and purposes represents a "jingoist appropriation" of Dutch history for British imperialist motives. Strong (2004:41-42, 109) points out that Victorian artists frequently used the past as a vehicle for their own contemporary comment. The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a deliberate attempt by artists to create national mythologies to captivate the minds of the masses. Many pictures in the British history painting genre of the time often represented scenes of heroism and patriotic self-sacrifice (Strong, 2004:21).

Furthermore *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* can be seen to reflect colonial and Victorian attitudes of racial and cultural stereotypes. Depicted in a glow of light and further highlighted by a number of pictorial devices, Van Riebeeck's party with their richness of dress and weaponry as markers of wealth, status and military superiority signifies the prosperity of civilisation which they have come to bestow on a primitive and exotic corner of Africa, whereas the non-European characters converge in the surrounding shadows. In many respects Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* conforms to Wa Thiong'o's (1993:43) description of stereotypical colonialist paintings:

> In many paintings of the colonial period, the white adventurer was always at the centre of the action with rays of light radiating outwards from him. Africans were background shadows merging with the outer darkness and natural landscape.

As a mode of cultural of analysis, postcolonialism has succeeded in making visible the history and legacy of European imperialism that are represented in, and by, such colonial representations (cf. Loomba, 2005:2). More so, Moore-Gilbert (2000:6, 8) points out that postcolonial analysis highlights the interconnectedness between cultural production and issues such as race, ethnicity, nation and empire. One of the major concerns prevalent in postcolonial criticism is the European concept of the *other* (cf. Said, 1978; Janmohamed, 2006:20; Barry, 2002:194-196). Thus, a postcolonial reading of colonial artworks would serve to expose notions of colonial power as well as the demarcation between the European *Self* and the African *other*.

In Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* the imbalance of power and the demarcation between European *Self* and African *other* is significantly evident. However, whereas *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* depicts English imperialists masquerading as heroic Dutch conquerors central in bearing the light of civilisation into a dark continent, Bell's *Cattle boers' outspan* (s.a.) (*fig.4*) depicts the descendants of these early Dutch settlers as simple folk on the edges of the Empire, cut off from civilisation, and lost in Africa for more than six generations. These two depictions represent a time difference of approximately two centuries. Consequently it can be asserted the two works under discussion, represent two different and opposing depictions of Afrikaner ancestry. In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*, the first colonisers are depicted as heroic conquerors bringing the light of civilisation to the southern tip of the African continent, thus affirming Hoskins' assessment

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(1992:248) of Eurocentric history's *modus operandi* in representing Africa as exotic, backward and uncivilised. A similar strategy is at work in *Cattle boers' outspan,* but here the colonisers and the colonised are both framed as exotic *others*.

In light of the above, this research proposes to explore the contradictions and similarities regarding the depictions of Afrikaner ancestry in two works by Charles Davidson Bell, *The landing of Van* Riebeeck, 1652 and *Cattle boers' outspan*. In order to facilitate these comparative readings, Bell's works will first be considered from a conventional perspective. Such a reading will serve to establish the artworks' formal qualities, subject matter and thematic content. This reading will be extended by employing postcolonial theoretical principles in order to contextualise these two artworks within their ideological frameworks, social reality and authoring strategies, as put forward by Lerner (1991:335). Postcolonialism's ability to combine "history with a theorised account of contemporary culture" (Young. 2001:61), and its debunking of the universalist liberal humanist claims of the Western canon, will serve to provide a new perspective on Bell's work and his divergent depiction of Afrikaner ancestry in *The landing of Van* Riebeeck, 1652 and *Cattle boers' outspan* (cf. Barry, 1995:191).

1.2 Specific research questions

The following research questions will be addressed:

1.2.1. How does the biographical history of Afrikaner ancestry during the epoch 1652 - 1901 relate to a colonial Victorian worldview?

1.2.2 How does Bell's Victorian cultural background and artistic context influence his depiction of colonial subjects, in particular Afrikaner ancestry?

1.2.3 How does postcolonial theory assist in demystifying colonialism and colonial heritage?

1.2.4 By which means does postcolonial theory assist in exposing contradictions apparent in the depictions of the Afrikaner ancestry in Bell's two works *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan*?

1.2.5 What aspects regarding the depiction of the Afrikaner ancestry in Bell's two works *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan* come to light in a comparative reading?

The aim of this study is to arrive at a more comprehensive interpretation as to the differences in the depiction of the Afrikaner ancestry in Bell's two works *Cattle boers' outspan* and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* by extending a conventional reading in considering these works within the contexts of their ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and social reality.It is argued that reference to style, postcolonial theoretical principals will provide a more contextualised perspective on the artist's work.

1.3 Specific objectives

The general objective of this research gives rise to the following specific objectives:

1.3.1 Examine the biographical history of Afrikaner ancestry 1652 - 1901 as this relates to a Victorian worldview.

1.3.2 Determine how Bell's Victorian cultural background had a bearing on his depiction of Afrikaner ancestry.

1.3.3 Establish by which means postcolonial theory assists in demystifying colonialism and colonial heritage.

1.3.4 Determine how postcolonial theory assists in exposing contradictions apparent in the depictions of the Afrikaner ancestry in Bell's two works *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan.*

1.3.5 Determine in which aspects the depictions of the Afrikaner ancestry differ in Bell's two works *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan* differ.

1.4 Central theoretical argument

In this research I argue that Bell's depiction of Afrikaner ancestry in the two works *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan* differ to a large extent and may be said to contradict each other. In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* the Afrikaner ancestry is depicted as English imperialists masquerading as heroic Dutch conquerors, represented with pomp and glory; whereas *Cattle boers' outspan* depicts the descendants of these early Dutch 'heroes' as simple folk on the edges of the Empire, cut off from civilisation – nomads in the African hinterland. These two works are representative of two genres in Bell's oeuvre, which are consistent with the Victorian genres of history painting and explorer art.

I concur with Barry (1995:191) who propounds that postcolonialism debunks the universalist liberal humanist claims of the Western canon. These Western claims are centred on the concept of a fundamental universal human condition, which through its insistence on universal significance and timelessness has traditionally disregarded cultural, social, regional and national differences in terms of point of view and experience. Representation within this context becomes the unquestioned norm, favouring and ennobling the white Eurocentric perspective – thereby marginalising all other perspectives. In this regard Hassan (1998:63-65) further posits that race is not a prerequisite for colonisation, and that social theories of constructivism alone cannot satisfactorily explain differences within the same class, gender or race.

Therefore I will argue that complementing a conventional interpretation of these two works by Bell with a postcolonial reading will facilitate a more profound interpretation that will aim to do justice to underlying complexities in these works.

According to Godby (1998:140) Bell's depictions of "social life" in the interior of South Africa reflected the values of his time and these depictions can therefore not be accepted as objective records; they should rather be approached as particular constructions of reality. Thus it can be assumed that Bell's depictions of Afrikaner ancestry will also reflect these same colonial values and perceptions (cf. Record, 1994:12, 64). Therefore, Bell is used as exemplary of nineteenth-century European subjectivity, and it can be inferred that his work, like the work of other such artists, such as G.F. Angus and Thomas Baines, will reflect the values and perceptions of the nineteenth-century British colonial paradigm.

1.5 Method

The method consists of a literature overview that provides the contextual and theoretical background for the analysis of C. D. Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan*, which will be done by means of a comparative conventional reading, and an extended reading based on a postcolonial analytical approach. As indicated, the conventional reading will ascertain the formal qualities, subject matter and thematic content of the artworks. In order to facilitate a comparative reading of the artworks, each will also be considered within the contexts of their ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and social reality, as put forward by Lerner (1991:335).

A postcolonial analytical approach based on the notion of the *other* as one of the prevalent major tenants in postcolonial criticism (cf. Barry, 2002:194-196; Said,1978) will be incorporated at this level in an attempt to better expose the underlying principles of the artworks and with a view to demystify the Victorian depictions of the Afrikaner ancestry in these two works.

1.6 Brief overview of chapters

Chapter 1 of this research provides introductory comments, outlines the research hypothesis and research questions and also provides an overview of the workplan and structure of the dissertation. Following this, Chapter 2 establishes a contextual and theoretical overview of postcolonialism and the manners in which postcolonial theory can assist in demystifying colonialism and colonial heritage. In Chapter 3 the focus is on the biographical history of the Afrikaner ancestry in relation to a Victorian worldview, using 1652–1901 as a timeframe. Following this, Chapter 4 provides a biographical overview of Bell, highlighting aspects pertinent to this study in an attempt to determine how his biographical circumstances influenced his depiction of Afrikaner ancestry. In Chapter 5 Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan* are considered with regard to their formal qualities as well as the contexts of their ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and the social realities that surrounded their production. Following the conclusions reached in this chapter,

Chapter 6 entails a concluding remarks regarding a comparative reading of Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan* in order to determine the differences and similarities between these two works.

CHAPTER 2

GENERAL SURVEY OF POSTCOLONIAL THEORY: CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a contextual and theoretical overview of postcolonialism with a view to address the research question concerned with how postcolonial theory can assist in demystifying colonialism and colonial heritage. Firstly the terms colonialism, imperialism, their apogees anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, as well as the notions of decolonisation and neo-colonialism will be defined both historically and conceptually, before considering the field of postcolonialism and the notion of the postcolonial *Other/other* within the contexts of their respective ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and social realities.

2.2. Concepts, terminology and main theoretical tenets

2. 2.1 Colonialism and imperialism

The word 'colonialism' is derived from the present-day word *colony,* which stems from the Latin *colonia*, in turn derived from *colonus* that means 'farmer' and *colere* that means to 'cultivate' or 'dwell' (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2007).

The contemporary English definition of the word colony as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2007) is as follows:

> A settlement in a new country; a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with their parent state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their descendants and successors, as long as the connexion with the parent state is kept up.

It is important to note that this definition makes no reference to the colonised or displaced communities. No doubt this contemporary definition draws strongly on the

mid-nineteenth century inference by Roebuck (in Young, 2001:20) who defined a colony as a territory or land devoid of indigenous peoples whose sole inhabitants still called England (in this instance) home. According to Young (2001:20), within the European context the original signification of the word colonisation did not indicate notions of exploitation and oppression, but was similar to the contemporary notion of migration. In this sense colonisation referred essentially to the transplanting of communities whose intent were not to relinquish their original culture, but who were in pursuit of better economic, political and religious conditions. Although such communities' primary goal was not to rule others or extort their resources, subjugation and exploitation were usually the by-product of European settlement in these colonies.

Similarly the word *colonialism*, which was first used in the English language in 1853, did not at first convey any loaded meanings. It was only after the word colonialism was revived after the Second World War that it acquired an anti-colonial tinge, becoming a pejorative term for the colonial system and its associated economic and socio-political systems (Young, 2001:26). Hence, the contemporary Oxford English Dictionary's (2007) definition of the term *colonialism* does acknowledge the colonised, albeit in a denigratory manner, and reads as follows: "The colonial system or principle. Now freq. used in the derogatory sense of an alleged policy of exploitation of backward or weak peoples by a large power". Loomba (2005:8), on the other hand, takes cognisance of the colonised and defines colonialism as, "the conquest and control of other people's land and goods", and stresses the point that existing communities in colonised areas necessarily became "de-established" or had to re-establish themselves with the establishment of coloniser communities.

In the Western historical tradition the advent of colonialism coincided with the epoch of the 'Great Discoveries', circa the fifteenth[2] and sixteenth centuries (Ferro, 1997:1). However, colonialism as phenomenon is not confined to the European expansion of the sixteenth century and onwards, but is a common and recurrent hallmark of human history (cf. Fieldhouse, 1991:3; Ferro, 1997:viii). Hassan

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[2] Young (2001:4) cites 1492 as the symbolic starting point of European colonialism.

(1998:63-65) propounds that race is not a prerequisite for colonisation, as the drive to domination may be basic and the motives of colonisation are diverse. For example, race was irrelevant for the Arabs in Africa and Asia, the English in Ireland, the Swedes in Finland, the Danes in Norway, the Russians in the Ukraine and the Japanese in Okinawa. Hence, according to Loomba (2005:2, 8) the encompassing geographical and historical expanse of colonialism (by the 1930s 84.6 % of the world's land surface had at one point been under some form of colonial rule) complicates the extrapolation of the notion of colonialism.

Related to the idea of colonialism is the notion of *imperialism*. The terms *colonialism* and *imperialism* are often used interchangeably in spite of their long tradition of popular and academic usage (Williams & Chrisman, 1994:1; Loomba 2005:7). Although both the notions colonialism and imperialism involve forms of subjugation by one group over another, Young (2001:15) argues that the terms *colonial/ism* and *imperial/ism* are not synonymous.

The historical meaning of the word *imperialism* is difficult to trace, especially considering that its meaning had changed as many as twelve times between 1840 and 1960 (Koebner & Schmidt, 1964:xii). When considered in a general sense, however, imperialism refers to the process by which one nation extends its domination over other nations or countries, resulting in the formation of an empire. As such, this applies to all historical periods and incidences of such activities and can thus be seen as recurring trademark of human history (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:122). Whereas traditional forms of imperialism tended to be geographically confined to a single landmass, sixteenth century advances in maritime technologies radically extended the reach of empire. During the late nineteenth century the word *imperialism* came to denote a "conscious and openly advocated policy of acquiring colonies for economic, strategic and political advantage" (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:122) and developed a strong Marxist flavour in the early twentieth century, signifying economic domination (Young, 2001:26). The current definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary (2007) reads as follows:

The principle or spirit of empire; advocacy of what are held to be imperial interests. In nineteenth-century British politics, the principle or policy (1) of seeking, or at least not refusing, an extension of the British Empire in directions where trading interests and investments require the protection of the flag; and (2) of so uniting the different parts of the Empire having separate governments, as to secure that for certain purposes, such as warlike defence, internal commerce, copyright, and postal communication, they should be practically a single state (Oxford English Dictionary, 2007).

The above quoted definition, however, does not subsume Marxist critique and simply implies a relationship of consensual collusion between empire and another nations. In contrast, Young (2001:27) interprets the notion of imperialism to imply a distinct imbalance of power, and states that:

Imperialism is characterised by the exercise of power either through direct conquest or (latterly) through political and economic influence that effectively amounts to a similar form of domination: both involve the practice of power through facilitating institutions and ideologies. Typically, it is the deliberate product of a political machine that rules from the centre, and extends control to the furthest reaches of the peripheries...

This definition can be seen to correspond with what Baumgart (*In* Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:122) refers to as "classical imperialism". Classical imperialism, which is generally associated with the Europeanisation of the globe, can be divided into three phases. The first phase spanning the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is seen as the age of discovery, followed by age of mercantilism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, culminating in the imperial age of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:123). These different phases, however, often overlap and merge into one another (Ferro, 1997:19).

Young (2001:31) further states that nineteenth century imperialism constituted an international system of rivalry between colonial powers for the control of territories

and access to resources[3]. At the same time, colonisation came to symbolise a nation's power to reproduce itself in different places (Ferro, 1997:11). The main motivating drivers behind modern European imperialism were to colonise and expand their territory and to disseminate Eurocentric culture - coupled with the perceived need to civilise non-Europeans. To this may be added national vanity, as European nations came to view themselves as the custodians of the balance of world power, especially with regard to one another (Ferro, 1997:11-12; Young, 2001:31) in what Boehmer (1995:86) likens to a "conflict between virilities".

To facilitate the distinction between colonialism and imperialism, Young (2001:16-17) suggests that imperialism should be analysed as a concept, since it represents the policies and mechanisms of a central state relating to issues of power and control. Boehmer (1995:2) corroborates by suggesting that imperialism does not only refer to enforced authority of one state over another, but also to the way in which such authority is expressed, for example through symbolism and pageantry. Colonialism, on the other hand, should be analysed as a practice, since it in turn functioned as a marginal economic activity. Furthermore, Young, (2001:16) suggests that the term *empire* was over time often used in a manner that did not necessarily signify imperialism and further distinguishes between empires based on ideological and/or financial motivators that were bureaucratically controlled by a central government, and empires that developed through settlement by individual communities or a trading company. In this distinction the first type of empire is associated with imperialism and the later with colonialism. Colonialism and imperialism can therefore also not be treated as homogenous practices, but rather as heterogeneous and often conflicting operations. Said (1993:8) further elucidates by offering the following distinction: "'Imperialism' means the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; 'colonialism', which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory".

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[3] According to Young (2001:31) postcolonial theory tends to focus largely on British imperialism but with attention being paid to French imperialism with regards to its historical and theoretical paradigms. This is partly because Britain and France are considered as the two foremost imperial powers of the nineteenth century and because historically the reactions against British and French imperialism have led to the development of postcolonialism as a form of political and theoretical critique.

Williams and Chrisman (1994:2) suggest that a Marxist approach allows for the most succinct differentiation between the notions of colonialism and imperialism. By considering imperialism as the 'globalisation of the capitalist mode of production', colonialism, which is an act of conquest and control, can consequently be regarded as a particular phase in the history of imperialism. Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:124) further state that the merchant capitalism of the pre-industrial age was a significant feature of the various European national agendas with regards to the acquisition of colonies. By this time European rivalry was no longer based on religion, but rather on acquiring wealth. Hence the acquisition of colonies, with the possible promise of mineral riches, was seen as beneficial, but also a means of depriving another adversary of potential wealth. It can therefore be seen that the development of the modern capitalist system of economic exchange went hand in hand with European colonial expansion. According to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:46) this interrelation also determined the relation between coloniser and colonised, subjecting the colonised to a "rigid hierarchy of difference" - one that did not allow for just and unbiased exchanges.

However, in context of postcolonial discourse, Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:126) point out that, of far greater consequence than the conquest of profit, was the European desire for - and belief in its own cultural superiority. The adherence to this belief of cultural dominance translated into a perceived right to exploit and dominate[4], and was advanced by the perpetual "imperial rhetoric" and "imperial representation" to which non-Europeans had been subjected unabatedly since the fifteenth century (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:126). During the age of classical imperialism, colonialism had developed into a "system of ahistorical categorisation" that viewed European society and culture as intrinsically superior to others (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:48). This was interwoven with the moral justification that modernisation was to the benefit of the subjugated (Young, 2001:5). Loomba supports this notion by suggesting that

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[4] The urge to dominate, in this context of European over non-Europeans is also referred to as the 'Prospero complex' (Cf. Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:29).

Modern European colonialism was distinctive and by far the most extensive of the different kinds of colonial contact that have been a recurrent feature of human history (Loomba, 2005:2).

Hence, in context of postcolonial discourse the word *colonialism* is associated with European expansion and its resulting cultural exploitation over the past 400 years. As stated, European empires came into their own and distinguished from traditional forms of empire during sixteenth century, greatly due to advances in maritime technologies. According to Young (2001:16, 20) ships capable of crossing the oceans were the key to modern European colonisation and the global expansion of European empires, and went hand in glove with the development of capitalism in Europe. Not only did these vessels enable Europeans to reach and populate the outer limits of the globe, but also enabled them to return and keep in regular contact with their countries of origin. This ability to cross great distances with relative ease meant that empires were no longer confined to unified geographical areas. It also meant that far-off settler populations could remain subject to their respective Motherlands.

Although the geographical dispersal of European foreign colonies was well established by the advent of the eighteenth century, the exact motives behind early European expansionism and settlement are difficult to discern. Eco (2004:142) states that exploration by travellers of the late Middle Ages were partly driven by their fascination with the idea of the 'marvellous', whereas Ferro (1997:3, 6-7) lists religious zeal - as most potently manifested in the Crusades, the conquest of wealth, retribution by means of subjugation and a passion for adventure as the most common motivations accounting for European discovery and colonisation. In addition, Young (2001:16, 19) cites religious persecution, the desire for expanded living space as well as the extraction of wealth as some of the driving forces behind the occupation and settlement of certain foreign territories. Fieldhouse (1991:5) further suggests that the colonising process was often haphazard and influenced by circumstantial occurrences that tended to alter initial intensions, and cites the Portuguese discoveries in west and northwest Africa as a result of anti-Islamic crusades as example. Another example of colonial activity that ran counter to

imperial intensions is the Dutch outpost at the Cape of Good Hope that rapidly developed into a sizeable settler colony soon after 1652 (Fieldhouse, 1991:5, 8).

In light of the many different motivating factors, driving forces, practices as well as the diverse cultures and locations involved, European colonialism cannot be regarded as monolithic enterprise. Furthermore, according to Loomba (2005:19), European colonialism, "…employed diverse strategies and methods of control and representation". However, some similarities in terms of the stages of development as well as common distinguishing features, which set European colonialism apart from other forms of colonialism, can be identified. As suggested, European expansion can be divided into three phases, of which the first phase spanning the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries can be seen as the age of discovery (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:123). One of the factors that contributed to European expansion during this stage can be traced back to the invention of the compass in the thirteenth century. The compass made it possible to undertake long sea journeys without having to follow the coastline (Giliomee, 2007a:40). According to Ferro (1997:17) this phase can be considered similar to the preceding types of colonisation such as those by the Turks, Arabs and Romans, since the military, technological, economic and trade imbalances between the colonisers and the colonised were relatively small. This coincided with an extremely bureaucratic form of imperial rule that was pre-capitalist and tended to function along the lines of the Roman and Ottoman paragons (cf. Young, 2001:25).

The age of discovery was followed by the age of mercantilism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, ultimately culminating in the imperial age of the later nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:123). According to Ferro (1998:16-19), whereas the earlier stages of European colonialism coincided with a stage of free competition in the development of capitalism, the mercantile colonial practices often brought about the ruin of the indigenous economies and colonised peoples, as was the case with the textile industry in India, for example. Similarly, the mercantile market economy came to oppose the traditional subsistence economy in black Africa. Ferro (1997:17) further posits that the most significant

difference between the colonial expansion of the sixteenth and seventeenth century and later imperialism is that the Industrial Revolution provided the means and resources that forever altered the relationship between Europe and its colonies.

Correlating with the three phases of European expansion identified above, Fieldhouse (1991:377-378) further suggests four common phases in the development of European colonies prior to decolonisation. The first of these four phases is conquest, which can be correlated with the imperial age of discovery during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This epoch of conquest was advanced by the "adventurous spirit and questing mind" characteristic of the Renaissance as well as the pursuit of wealth (Giliomee, 2007a:40). In its effects the period of conquest was often construed as the most devastating period in the colonisation process as it brought about, among others, land seizures, slavery, forced labour and the introduction and spread of diseases (Fieldhouse, 1991:377-378).

The second phase, described by Fieldhouse (1991:378) as 'trusteeship' followed approximately one generation after occupation and can be seen to correspond with the mercantile phase of imperialism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. According to Young (2001:32), the imperial period starting around the 1860s, especially in Britain and France, was intimately connected with the developing cultural ideology regarding race. Hence, the notion of *trusteeship* was almost always accompanied by a paternalistic approach to colonial subjects and was especially marred by neo-Darwinist theories regarding race during the early 1900s (Fieldhouse, 1991:378). Darwin proposed that a species' survival depended on its ability to adjust to changes in its environment, and that those fittest to do so will reign supreme. By the end of the nineteenth century this notion had crystallised into a widespread belief among Westerners that these same principles not only applied to the natural world, but also to social organisms. According to Howard (1998:7) this belief system suited the age and increased economic competitiveness and imperial rivalry prevalent in America and Europe at the time, as consequently colonial empires came to be associated with national greatness, power and ambition (Louis, 1998:91). According to Louis (1998:91) the imperial appetite was instrumental in encouraging a "ruthless

militarism" that not only threatened the as yet uncolonised but also the empires of lesser colonial powers. A compelling force behind empire building was the common faith among colonial powers in their own superiority, right to govern and divine duty to civilise the non-European world (Louis, 1998:92). This was coupled with the moral justification that western expansion and modernisation were to the benefit of the colonised – a notion that has been effectively challenged throughout the twentieth century (Young, 2001:5).

The period of trusteeship was followed by the third phase in the development of European colonies, which saw the paternalistic attitude morph into a drive towards development. By the time of the First World War, nine-tenths of the globe was under some form of imperial occupation or control (Young, 2001:2). At the same time, imperialism had become the vehicle of social and economic change that ended the natural evolution of indigenous societies forever – either by means of modernisation or, in certain cases, assimilation (Louis, 1998:91-92). On the one hand this phase was driven by European self-interest in order to render colonies more useful to their owners, and on the other by a European moral concern for the low living standards in some colonies (Fieldhouse, 1991:378-379).

The last phase prior to decolonisation was ushered in during the world economic slump of the 1930s. During this phase, for example, the British and Dutch colonial powers cancelled free trade agreements with their colonies and tightened tariff systems to safeguard markets for European manufacturers and ensure outlets for colonial foodstuffs and raw materials. Nonetheless, at the same time investment in non-commercial ventures as well as capital grants and aid to the colonies were increased. In the aftermath of the Second World War a strong sense of nationalism emerged in many colonies. Whereas most European states had not considered giving up their colonial interest before, many suddenly started planning for the succession of power. At first minor concessions were made, such as incorporating local representation in colonial councils and including non-Europeans into the higher echelons of colonial bureaucracy (Fieldhouse, 1991:379-380). In time, it became clear that the progress to independence could not be curbed.

Among the former European colonial powers Britain, France, Belgium and Portugal managed to maintain empires well past the first half of the 20th century. When comparing the colonies of these imperial powers a number of similarities emerge. Each of these colonial powers imposed a rudimentary version of their own government on their colonies. Apart from a justice system; defence and civil order were held in check by military, police and administrative structures. Revenue systems generally entailed the taxation of agricultural produce. Thus, as European administrative constituents, these colonies represented nascent states in the process of adopting the characteristics of modern European states - characteristics that have remained part of independent states in the postcolonial period (Louis, 1998:96).

The above-mentioned phases of European expansion, discovery, mercantilism and imperialism produced a number of colonial models as well as a chronology of developments common to most European colonies. Fieldhouse (1991:295) identifies five models of European colonial administration that had been established by the end of the nineteenth century. Of these five models the Spanish, whom Young (2001:25) credits with creating the first modern European empire, devised two. The first is a model of assimilation, as employed by the Spanish in parts of the Americas where sufficient numbers of settlers allowed for the incorporation of Amerindians into European-styled society as full subjects. Hence early Spanish colonisation often developed into mixed creole societies (Young, 2001:20). The second was the 'Spanish frontier' system. In more remote territories this system entailed that non-Europeans, although liable as a source of labour, were not assimilated into European settler societies, but left under native hereditary rule. For the most part these native inhabitants' only contact with European society was through missionaries (Fieldhouse, 1991:295).

The Dutch provided a further two models of colonial administration. Unwilling to be burdened by a territorial empire, the Dutch settled for a method of 'indirect' control in many parts of Indonesia. Through treaties with protected states, the Dutch controlled all foreign relations and extracted endowments whilst leaving internal indigenous

power structures intact. The other Dutch model is what Fieldhouse (1991:295) calls "Javanese indirect rule". In this scenario native law and social custom were maintained under native hereditary rule with local chiefs acting as regents, but governed by Dutch officials in whom real power was vested. This system of colonial administration was relatively cheap to maintain and had the added advantage of keeping up the appearance of self-rule, thus maintaining social stability in the colony.

The final model of colonial administration is what Fieldhouse (1991:295) calls "Indian direct rule", as was the instance in British India. By means of a small non-native civil service the British managed to govern as well as tax a large non-European population many thousands of kilometres from Europe. According to Fieldhouse (1991:295) the success of this model depended on three conditions. Firstly, a colony needed to possess adequate wealth in order to support a network of professional colonial administrators. Secondly, such a colony needed to be advanced enough to yield a sufficient number of educated non-European subordinates, and lastly, it had to be sufficiently detribalised to willingly accept foreign governance.

Together these various phases of European expansion and related chapters of development of European colonies, as well as the different models of colonial administration gave rise to three main distinguishable types of European colonies. These are: settlement colonies, exploitation colonies[5] and so-called 'maritime enclaves' (Young, 2001:17). Ashcroft et al. (1998:211), however, emphasise that such classifications should not be seen to denote exclusive categories, but should rather be viewed as "abstract poles on a continuum" since many examples, such as the Caribbean, Ireland and South Africa, do not conform neatly to this mould.

Maritime enclaves are territories such as islands and harbours that were occupied for strategic naval or military purposes. In some cases such territories would also

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[5] Ashcroft et al. (1998:211) also refer to settler colonies as settler-invader colonies and to exploitation colonies as colonies of occupation (cf. Young, 2001:32). For the purposes of this study these terms will be used interchangeably.

additionally serve as commercial bases for conducting trade with adjacent regions (Young, 2001:17). A contemporary example of a maritime enclave is British Gibraltar. The original intent of the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) to establish a victualling station at the Cape of Good Hope would serve as a historical case in point, since it was not the intention of the company to establish it as a Dutch colony, but rather to confine the reach of the settlement as much as possible in order to save costs (cf. Giliomee, 2007a:42). On the other hand, countries such as India and Egypt can be described as exploitation colonies or colonies of occupation - in such colonies the coloniser was only in the position of administering power, whilst the indigenous peoples remained the majority of the population (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:211). Settlement colonies and resulting settler/invader, or "deep settler" societies, on the other hand, represent former colonies such as Australia and Canada in which the colonisers or their descendants had become the majority through the displacement, disenfranchisement or annihilation of the local populations (cf. Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:211, Steyn, 2001:xxiii). Within the postcolonial context the term settler is generally understood to refer to Europeans who have left their countries of origin to settle in European colonies with the intent of permanent residence. Furthermore, these settlers and/or their descendants also do not leave the colonised country after the time of independence (Whitlock, 1997:349). Due to the ruinous consequences such settlement most often had on the indigenous populations of the territories of colonial settlement, the term settler-invader, which refers to European settlers specifically, has become frequently used (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:210).

However, as mentioned, these three distinguishable types of European colonies - settlement colonies, exploitation colonies and maritime enclaves - represent abstract positions on a continuum. Hence, due to their unique settlement patterns as well as racial and cultural patrimonies, countries such as South Africa, Ireland and Algeria occupy positions that fall somewhere between the two well-marked types of European colonies: colonies of occupation and settler/invader colonies (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:211). In addition, Young (2001:19, 60) contends that all former settler colonies including Canada, the USA and South Africa are today "doubly positioned". This denotes that such colonies have liberated themselves from the colonial rule of a metropolitan centre but that settlers in these colonies had, in turn, acted as

aggressors and oppressors of the indigenous peoples in the territories that they came to occupy. Furthermore, the settlers in these countries often – in historical terms – obscure the boundaries between the categories coloniser and colonised.

Having considered the notions of colonialism and imperialism both from a historical and conceptual perspective, the next section will focus on their apogees: anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and decolonisation.

2.2.2. Anti-colonialism, neo-colonialism and decolonisation

It has been highlighted above that by the time of the First World War, nine-tenths of the globe was under some form of imperial occupation or control (Young, 2001:2). Although the common view at the start of the twentieth century held that the imperial *status quo* would remain for at least a millennium (Louis, 1998:93), the post-World War One dismantling of most European colonies occurred rather rapidly (Young, 2001:3). This dismantling, however, seldom occurred through the voluntary disengagement of the colonial power. More often, the secession of power was due to a concerted internal struggle for self-determination by the colonised or the often-violent opposition movements within a colony (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:49).

According to Young (2001:6,19), Marxism has been at the heart of anti-colonial resistance throughout the twentieth century. As such it played a central role in advancing anti-colonial forms of cultural resistance that encouraged the critical examination of common forms of representation and epistemologies. Over and above that, Young (2001:2, 6) maintains that anti-colonialism has been around for as long as colonialism itself, but it has often been too exclusively regarded as a mode of 'provincial nationalism'. Hence, in the context of the postcolonial he defines anti-colonialism it as follows:

> Like postcolonialism, anti-colonialism was a diasporic production, a revolutionary mixture of the indigenous and the cosmopolitan, a complex constellation of situated local knowledges combined with radical, universal political principles, constructed and facilitated through international networks of party cells and organisations and widespread political contacts between different revolutionary organisations that generated common political and intellectual ideas (Young, 2001:2).

In spite of their association with revolutionary tendencies, Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:154) suggest that anti-colonial movements were not always as radical as would be believed. Even though the anti-colonial movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries often proffered the notion of a pre-colonial past as a position of difference and as means of opposition, the very same notion was ironically not employed in order to reclaim a pre-colonial condition. Instead, often through the use of national myths, the notion of a pre-colonial past was applied in order to construct a post-colonial nation state that was based on European nationalist models. It is this strong relation that many postcolonial states bore to the European nation states that allowed for the relative ease with which neo-colonial forces enveloped them (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:154).

The term *neocolonialism* was coined in 1961 (Young, 2001:46). Extended by Kwame Nkrumah[6] (1909-1972) in a 1965 text titled *Neo-colonialism: The last stage of imperialism*; neo-colonialism literally means *new colonialism*. Nkrumah used the term to refer to previously colonised countries' continued subjugation at the hands of ex-colonial powers as well as newly manifested superpowers such as the USA. From this perspective, the former and emerging empires continued to maintain and uphold their hegemonic status in international financial institutions such as stock markets, monetary bodies and multinational companies, as well as educational and cultural institutions - often to the detriment of the rest of the world (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:162).

As a consequence, Nkrumah considered neo-colonialism to be even more surreptitious than the previous, more overt forms of colonialism (Ashcroft *et al.*,

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[6] Kwame Nkrumah was the first president of Ghana after colonial independence and a chief advocate of Pan-Africanism (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:162).

1998:163). In contemporary usage the term has come to refer to all forms of external and internal control exerted on former colonies. This may include such wide-ranging practices as the complicit actions of post-independence new élites within the former colony itself, the enduring cultural and linguistic dominance of former colonisers or their settler decedents, as well as the inability of Third World countries to establish their own independent political and economic identities in the face of globalisation (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:163; Young, 2001:48). In this context the notion neo-colonialism provides a useful Marxist-based account of postcolonial economic systems that have also led to other forms of cultural and political analysis by the likes of Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Young, 2001:48).

It is also true that many of the concerns that are bound up in the neo-colonial discourse can be attributed to the manner in which decolonisation had often occurred. According to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:63), decolonisation involves the uncovering and dismantling of colonial power in all its manifestations, including the disassembling of covert institutional and cultural practices that served to uphold the colonialist hegemony. Often, many of these covert institutional and cultural practices remain after political independence. In spite of, or possibly to a degree as a result of this, early processes of resistance in many colonised countries - even exploitation colonies - tended to appropriate the very same institutions and *modus operandi* of the colonising culture they were opposed to. Of course, many of these early nationalists were edified to value and aspire to European cultural models and came to perceive themselves as the heirs to European political institutions, as these came to be regarded as the benchmarks of a civilised modern state – such attitudes contributed to perpetuating certain colonial *modus operandi*. Consequently these nationalists became the new local élites of post-independence nations (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:63-64).

On a symbolic level, Boehmer (1995:3) suggests that decolonisation is not only involved with the change of power, but also demands a redress and refurbishment of dominant meanings. This may be achieved by subverting, either thematically or

formally, the hegemonic discourses of imperialism, of which racial classification and representation of the subordinate are but two instances.

Therefore, in the process of considering the historical and conceptual meanings of colonialism and that of its associated concepts such as imperialism, anti-colonialism and neo-colonialism and decolonisation, it becomes clear that as a phenomenon colonialism stemmed from many various philosophies, manifesting in vastly different ways. Further complicating the elucidation of colonialism are the heterogeneous practices associated with colonialism and the myriad of responses to such practices. It is therefore not uncommon that attempts to define, schematise or summarise a complex institution such colonialism inevitably result in a degree of reductionism and over-simplification. Therefore, in this study, rather than attempting an exhaustive summary of the extensive field of postcolonialism, certain relevant key points will be highlighted with reference to the work of individual critics within these specific debates. This is in accordance with the strategy employed by Childs and Williams (cf. 1997:vii) as such a *modus operandi* allows for a more in-depth extrapolation of particular topics in the face of the improbability of a comprehensive coverage of the many manifestations and discourses within the field termed postcolonialism. The next section will deal with the notion of postcolonialism accordingly.

2.3. Postcolonialism

> History is called upon to judge, in turn, the terrible misdeeds of the slave trade, the tragic toll of forced labour and God knows what else! Drawing up a final balance sheet for the French, Dutch, or British presence, one cannot find a single orange that was not defiled, a single apple that was not rotten (Ferro, 1997:vii).

In 1961 Franz Farnon published *The wretched of the earth* in which he critically addressed France's colonial enterprise in Africa, effectively setting in motion the first wave of anti-colonial literature (Barry, 2002:193). Around the same time other intellectuals from the colonies such as Césaire (1913-2008) (*Discourse on*

colonialism, 1950), Memmi (*The coloniser and the colonised*, 1957), Mannoni (1899-1989) (*Prospero and Caliban*, 1956) and Retamar (*The weapon of theory*, 1966) were beginning to address the impact and ramifications of European imperialism (Patke, 2006:369). However, it is Edward Said's 1978 publication *Orientalism* that is generally regarded as the first definitive postcolonial text (Barry, 2002:193; Moore-Gilbert, 2000:16). Postcolonialism gained further currency through the influence of such works as *The Empire writes back* (Ashcroft, 1989), *In other worlds* (Spivak, 1987), *Nation and narration* (Bhabha, 1990) and Said's *Culture and imperialism* (1993).

The term postcolonialism was first used in the early 1970s in the field of political theory to describe the difficult situation of former colonies that had disposed of European imperialism after World War II (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:9). By the mid-1990s postcolonialism was officially adopted by academia, taking its place alongside feminism, psychoanalysis and poststructuralism as one of the pre-eminent theoretical discourses in the humanities (Gandhi, 1998:viii). According to Patke (2006:370) this was partly due to postcolonialism's reinforcement of minority discourses and the rising interest in such discourses at the time. Another contributing factor was the development of academic curricula devoted to gender, feminism and diaspora, internationally. Since its adoption by academia, postcolonialism has succeeded in exposing the history and legacy of European imperialism - whether past or present (Loomba, 2005:2) and had a considerable impact on modes of cultural analysis by highlighting the interconnectedness of cultural production with issues such as race, ethnicity, nation, migration and empire (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:6, 8).

According to Gandhi (1998:4) postcolonial studies can be seen as a "theoretical attempt to engage with a particular historical condition". Young (2001:4, 5) agrees and suggests that postcolonialism is concerned with the history and aftermath of western colonialism. More specifically, it reappraises the colonial past from the perspective of the colonised. It also transcends this reappraisal by reconsidering the residuum of a colonial past in the contemporary socio-cultural milieus of the formerly colonised. Hence postcolonialism's tendency to intermingle the past with the present

in its active attempts to transmute the present from the tyranny of the past, or as Young (2001:61) posits: "It [postcolianilism] combines history with a theorised account of contemporary culture".

However, in considering the operativeness of the term 'postcoloniality', Patke (2006:370) suggests that it does not only denote a period, but also functions as an epithet for a complex paradigmatic position or provides a contingent term for what he refers to as "the internalisation of asymmetries". With "the internalisation of asymmetries" Patke refers to the ongoing struggle of native inhabitants and non-European migrants in settler societies to assert their own voices and identities within the hegemonic (European) culture. Moore-Gilbert (2000:9-10) further points to the increasing practice of employing postcolonial discourse to claim a postcolonial identity for former settler colonies such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, as well as to address the histories and current positions of what is referred to as 'internally colonised' cultures. The term 'internal colonialism' refers to subordinate and marginalised societies within the contemporary nation state who are subject to continual processes of what is essentially continual forms of colonialism or neo-colonialism (cf. Steyn, 2001:xxiii). An example of this is South Africa under apartheid: the situation in this country can be viewed as internal colonialism in its extreme form, since the subordination of non-whites extended beyond social and cultural spheres – it was also entrenched in the systems of law and government and enforced by military control (cf. Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:211; Steyn, 2001:xxiii).

Patke (2006:370) further suggests that the circumscribed view of postcoloniality as a period concept can be seen to delineate the period following European colonialism - in other words the interval separating the formation of a nation from that of the development of new social institutions free of colonial residue. The cessation of colonial power was gradual, as was the society's progression from suppression to autonomy. Furthermore, these transitions did not necessarily coincide with cultural change, societal transformation or economical advancement (Patke, 2006:370). In this regard Ashcroft *et al.* (2006:1-3) reiterate that postcolonialism refers to a confusing conglomerate of concepts, identities, ideologies, timeframes and cultural

as well as political practices, all concerning the interactions between coloniser and colonised, whether past or present.

Patke (2006:369) suggests that words marked by the prefix *post-* not only defer to, but also differ from the terms they qualify, as in the case of *postcolonial* which acquires its meaning from a "complex relation" with the word *colonial*. The word 'colonial', in turn, is derived from *colony*, which refers to the notion of a territory annexed or administered for profit or purposes of settlement. Another problematic issue arises regading the *-colonial*, as - according to Loomba (2005:20) - analysis of postcolonial situations too often negate the existence of a pre-colonial history, thus citing colonialism as the only history. This leads to the discounting of whatever indigenous practices, ideologies and social structures there may have existed prior to or alongside colonialism. In this regard what used to be referred to as the "dark centuries", i.e. before the colonial account of history, is now rather referred to as the "opaque centuries", since pre-colonial history is incomprehensible to those foreigners who came in contact with it (Ferro, 1997:viii).

It can be postulated that, semantically, the terms *post-colonial* and *postcolonial* have come to denote different meanings to different pundits. Some theorists regard the hyphenated form as signifying the epoch and process of decolonisation (Ashcroft, 2001:10; Boehmer, 1995:3), in which case the term *post-independence* may be used synonymously (Young, 2001:69). Withal, Ashcroft (2001:10), propounds that the prefix 'post' of post-colonial does not simply denote a historical marker, since the hyphen emphasises the "…discursive and material effects of the historical 'fact' of colonialism". Other critics question the notion of an implied chronological separation between colonialism and its wake. Instead they insist that the postcolonial epoch commenced with the onset of colonialism and not with its demise, and therefore prefer the un-hyphenated usage of the word, as this represents the entire history of colonialism and all its repercussions[7]. In short, the theory that grapples with this

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[7] In this study I concur with the postulation that the postcolonial epoch commenced with the start of colonialism and not with its demise. Therefore, I will use the un-hyphenated form of the word: postcolonialism, as this represents the entire history of colonialism, all its repercussions and cultural manifestations.

particular historical condition is known as *postcolonialism* and the condition itself is conveyed through the notion of *postcoloniality* (Gandhi, 1998:3,17). De Alva (1995:245) further suggests that postcoloniality does not only signify subjectivity after the colonial experience, but rather a subjectivity in opposition to imperialism and colonialism. Boehmer (1995:3) corroborates by stating that postcoloniality refers to a "condition in which colonised peoples seek to take their place, forcibly or otherwise, as historical subjects". And so considering these opinions, Ashcroft (2001:10) suggests that the term *postcolonialism* represents many considerations regarding a multitude of divergent cultural differences and marginalities, whether as a consequence of the historical experience of colonialism or not.

Culturally speaking, the notions of postcolonialism and postcoloniality have been extended to also apply to the unbalanced legacy that affects power, notably over canons and the institutions of knowledge, as well as the domains of belief and cultural practice, and with regard to artefacts, access to outlets as well as access to audience. Patke (2006:371) elucidates the scope and complexity of the term's significance as follows:

> The idea is applied to multicultural as well as monocultural societies, and to the features that complicate such distinctions (e.g. English/French Canadian cultures). It is used to refer to the cultural changes in former colonisers (e.g. sonnets and serials on the British Raj), in the formerly colonised (e.g. cricket in the Caribbean), to the relation between them (e.g. Dub poetry in Black Britain), to the infiltration of one by the other (e.g. Parisian Beur culture...), or to the internalisations of the colonial relation (e.g. natives in the Americas, aborigines in Australia, Maori in New Zealand, coloured and black people under apartheid) ... At its widest, the oppressive and exploitative dimension of colonialism provides 'postcolonial' with an application that takes in every form of victimisation perpetrated by custom, prejudice or ideology on grounds of belief, gender, sexual preference, religious persuasion or linguistic and ethnic affiliation.

Thus, despite its official embrace by academia, postcolonialism has remained a divergent and often contested field of study with a remarkably broad scope of engagement (cf. Slemon, 1997:45). A contributing factor to the varied and often

idiosyncratic usage of the term postcolonialism is that the field of postcolonial theory is still being articulated. It is also being developed from diverse disciplines and points of view, drawing much of its vocabulary and terminology from a diverse selection of theoretical positions that include history, philosophy, psychoanalysis, sociology, anthropology, feminism, Marxism and poststructuralism (Young, 2001:67).

It therefore becomes evident that defining postcolonialism is not merely a simple exercise of compiling a definition (cf. Childs & Williams, 1997:vii). Loomba (2005:2) concedes that it is impossible to satisfactorily describe what the study of the term *postcolonialism* encompasses, since its application has become so heterogeneous and widely promulgated. One possible reason for this may be that the totalising effect of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations cannot be estimated or demarcated, or limited to any one particular field. Another, more academic reason is the interdisciplinary nature of postcolonialism which may range from literary analysis to theories regarding anthropology and economics (cf. Loomba 2005:2-3). It is within this context of multiplicity that post-colonial discourse is compelling but also complex. The terms *post-colonialism* and *postcolonialism* refer to a confusing conglomerate of concepts, identities, ideologies, timeframes and cultural as well as political practices, all concerning the interactions between coloniser and colonised, whether past or present (Ashcroft *et al.*, 2006:1,3). Also, postcolonialism is a transcendence rather than a follow-up of colonialism (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1989:2); in other words, postcolonialism is not only moving beyond the hegemonic philosophical (as well as aesthetic and political) paradigms of colonialism, but also points to the closure of that historical period and the passage into a new one. However, as Shohat and Stam (1995:39) point out, there is a tension between these two teleologies, the philosophical *vs.* the historical.

According to Gandhi (1998:viii) the principal influence on the history and practice of postcolonial theory has been the polemic between Marxism and "post-structuralist/postmodernist"[8] theory. Marxism has consistently critiqued the

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[8] Gandhi (1998:viii) here equates poststructuralism and postmodernism, a view further reiterated by Adam and Tiffin (1990:viii) who describe poststructuralism as the "...theoretical and critical practice intrinsically interwoven with post-modernism".

ramifications of Western imperialism (Young, 2001:6) and equates European colonialism to the rise of capitalism in the West (Bottomore, 1983:81-85). In addition, one of the assumptions of postcolonial studies is that a great deal of injustices against humanity is a result of the economic command of the West over the rest of the world (Young, 2001:6). Indeed, the historical legacy of Marxism in anti-colonial resistance ensures that it remains a major part of the fundamental structure of postcolonial thought. Hence, according to Young (2001:6), "postcolonial theory operates within the historical legacy of Marxist critique on which it continues to draw but which it simultaneously transforms ..."

According to Loomba (2005:24-25) Césaire analogously relates the brutality of colonialism to the Marxist analysis of capitalism. Like Marx who suggested that capitalism objectifies humans and human relationships by means of commoditisation, Césaire suggests that the colonial subject is not only exploited by colonialism, but also dehumanised and objectified thereby through a process he calls 'thingification'[9]. However, although the strident Marxist approach to colonialism was inspirational to many anti-colonial campaigns, the Marxist notion of class had to be extended, since it was generally race - and not class - that tended to be the defining differentiator in the context of European colonialism (Loomba, 2005:24). Race therefore served as surrogate for class within imperialist discourse (Steyn, 2001:18). Moreover, critics such as Miller, Sonyika and Gilroy (in Moore-Gilbert, 2000:3) accuse Marxism of reproducing earlier attempts of Western humanism by imposing universal narratives with regard to social development and modes of cultural analysis. According to Williams and Chrisman (1994:9), Young further takes to task the Marxist approach for its parochial adherence to a Hegelian interpretation of history. Such a view of 'history-as-progress', often referred to as historicism, presupposes that all of history - including complex historical relationships such as those between coloniser and colonised - can somehow be accessed in an unmediated fashion by the modern historian, and is therefore reducible to historicist methods[10].

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[9] This relates to Marxist philosopher Lukács's notion of reification (Hockheimer & Adorno, 1989:xv).

[10] In response to Young's criticism of contemporary Marxist and post-structuralist approaches to postcolonialism, Williams and Chrisman (1994:10) suggest that: "There remains, of course, the

According to Young (2001:7) postcolonialism also digresses from steadfast Marxist principles by combining the critique of material conditions with a thorough investigation of their individual effects, thus displaying a culturalist tendency that some critics decry as a telling symptom of contemporary capitalist culture. This would imply that postcolnialism does not attempt to excavate the causes or question the foundation of contemporary socio-economic conditions, but is merely able to describe their effects. However, in vindication of postcolonialism, Young (2001:7, 8) makes a strong case for the culturalist approach and also points out that Western Marxism itself had increasingly referenced the likes of the Frankfurt School and the British cultural materialists.

The culturalisasion of academic knowledge and epistemologies heralds the consideration of individuals and their subjective experiences. This supports the inclusion and recognition of various cultural differences, ranging from gendered to transnational positions, and the recognition of different forms of knowledge pertaining to such diverse positions. It further extends the traditional modes of analysis that focussed on economic and political systems by also examining the social aspirations of individuals, groupings and communities[11] (Young, 2001:8). In this sense, the locating of meaning in the social - but also in other instances such as the validation of the individual position, the acceptance of local and micro narrative, the study of the local, marginal and decentred as well as the rejection of humanism and the culturalist approach - seem to share much common ground with the postmodern (cf. Rosenau, 1992:22, 41, 48, 66, 136; Patke, 2006:370).

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question of whether any knowledge of theory is pure, whether Young's deconstructive moves are in the end any less appropriative of their objects of knowledge (Marxism, colonial discourse analysis) than the theories he criticises".

[11] This corresponds with the methodology employed in this study, which entails that texts are not only considered within the contexts of their ideological frameworks and authoring strategies, but also taking into consideration their social realities (cf. Lerner1991:335).

According to Young, postmodernism can best be defined as "…European culture's awareness that it is no longer the unquestioned and dominant centre of the world" (quoted in Williams & Chrisman, 1994:13). Adam and Tiffin (1990:viii) extend this argument, but propound that the West retains its control, since postmodernism operates as a

> Euro-American western hegemony, whose global appropriation of time-and-place inevitably proscribes certain cultures as backward and marginal while co-opting to itself certain of their cultural "raw" materials. Post-modernism is then projected onto these margins as normative, as a neo-universalism to which "marginal" cultures aspire, and from which certain of their more forward-looking products might be appropriated and authorised…Post-modernism as a mode is thus exported from Europe to the formerly colonised, and the local "character" it acquires there frequently replicates and reflects contemporary cultural hegemonies.

In this view postmodernism replicates capitalist and colonial practices in subjugating the discourse of the *other* by appropriating that discourse. Adam and Tiffin (1990:x) further suggest that although there seems to be similarities in the manner in which postmodernism and postcolonialism employ certain conventions, techniques and devices, the motivation behind such interventions stem from different intensions, cultural contexts and political positions. Closer inspection may therefore reveal the unequal power relationships between postmodernism and postcolonialism. For example, within these two discourses notions such as polyphony, discontinuity and parody may take on radically different forms and directions. However, it is within the realm of representation and fetishisation of difference that most contention occurs. According to Adam and Tiffin (1990:x) postmodernism fetishises "difference" and the "*other*", whereas "… those "*Othered*" by a history of European representation can only retrieve and reconstitute a post-colonised "self" against that history wherein an awareness of "referential slippage" was inherent in colonial being".

On the other hand, Ashcroft (2001:12) suggests that both postmodernism and postcolonialism are "discursive elaborations" of postmodernity, albeit in uniquely different culturally located respects. And, he concurs, this echoes the way in which

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imperialism and Enlightenment philosophy can be seen as discursive elaborations of modernity. Postmodernism and postcolonialism share other problematic relationships with modernism - as a period term, for example - postmodernism rejects modernism, while paradoxically at the same time also reinscribing it. Postcolonialism, on the other hand, partly derives from the spread of modernist European texts and discourses to the colonies. Some postcolonial critics also point to both modernism and postmodernism as discursive responses to the European encounters with "other" cultures. While the tone of Euro-American postmodernism is informed by the disappearance of modernist grand narratives and 'the crisis of representation', these very notions represent promise and the opportunity for decolonisation within the discourse of postcolonialism (Adam & Tiffin, 1990:viii-x).

The relationship between the postmodern and poststuctural and also the postcolonial increases in complexity when considering the former white settler colonies of Canada, New Zealand and Australia (Williams & Chrisman, 1994:13), and more so in South Africa, as these spaces are constructed through complex relationships with the former coloniser (and therefore the European traditions of discourse). According to Adam and Tiffin (1990:x), postcolonial readings of the postmodern discourse must compensate for postmodernism's European metropolitan biases by focussing on local historical and geographical specificities. Because, in spite of postmodernism's insistence on de-centredness, fragmentation and opposition to totalising culture of modernity – and in spite of both postmodernism and postcolonialism's disavowal of the distinctions between high and popular culture (Gilbert-Moore, 2000:8) – the former continues to emphasise and perpetuate a global culture; one predisposed towards the Western hegemony.

The debates regarding Marxism as well as postmodernism and poststructuralism's interrelation with postcolonialism are ongoing (cf. Williams & Chrisman, 1994:13-14). However, the contestation between Marxism and poststructuralism has influenced postcolonial analytical discourse by pitting ongoing debates against each other, such as nationalism versus internationalism and strategic essentialism against hybridity. While the materialist philosophies of Marxism are influential in providing a support

base for postcolonial politics (cf. Young, 2001:4,6), poststructuralism is vital for its critique of Western epistemologies and the postulation of cultural difference and alterity. Furthermore, the concept of a singular linear progression of history had been debunked by new approaches in the field, favouring a "multiplicity of often conflicting and frequently parallel narratives" akin to poststructuralism (De Alva, 1995:245). Barry (2002:196) explains the motivation behind the poststructuralist approach as follows:

> Post-structuralism is centrally concerned to show the fluid and unstable nature of personal and gender identity, the shifting, 'polyvalent', contradictory currents of signification within texts, and the way literature itself is a site on which ideological struggles are acted out. This mind-set is admirably suited to expressing the numerous contradictions and multiple allegiances of which the postcolonial writer and critic is constantly aware.

Strategies akin to this are often employed by Gayatri Spivak, Henry Louis, Gates Jr. and Homi Bhabha. According to Barry (2002:197) all three these authors exemplify an intricate Derridean-Foucauldian approach to textuality and fields of discourse. Since both post-structuralists and feminists have discredited master narratives (Loomba, 2005:17), this critical approach also bears a resemblance to French feminist criticism associated with, among others, Kristeva and Cixous. In contrast, Barry (2002:197) suggests that Said's approach resembles the manner of Anglo-American feminist criticism[12]. Said's work scrutinises the motives, mechanisms and the effects of colonialism and tends to be less overtly theoretical, and also has a stronger political leaning (Patke, 2006:370).

In spite of the vast body of academic writing dealing with the topic and the inclusion of poststructuralist and deconstructivist approaches (cf. Barry, 2002:196), postcolonialism lacks a coherent methodology or uniformity of approach. This is

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[12] One main difference between the French and Anglo-American feminist approaches concerns the role of critical theory in critique. French feminism has readably incorporated psychoanalytic and post-structuralist criticism, whereas Anglo-American feminism has taken a circumspect view of much recent critical theoretical developments, preferring to engage with the conventional liberal humanist approach (Barry 2002:124).

partly due to its inter-disciplinary nature which assimilates 'mutually antagonistic' theories such as Marxism and poststructuralism (Gandhi, 1998:viii,3) and because postcolonialism also intersects with critical and literary theory in general (Loomba, 1998:xii).

Furthermore, within the realm of postcolonial studies, many distinguish between the different discursive practices that view postcolonial theory pitted against the wider field of postcolonial criticism and postcolonial reading. Whereas postcolonial theory is characterised by a strong methodological affiliation to what Moore-Gilbert (2000:1) describes as "French 'high' theory", postcolonial reading is a method of reading and rereading colonial texts in order to expose the complicity of colonialism in representational accounts in fields as diverse as literature and anthropology, as well as scientific writing and historical and administrative records (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:192). Ashcroft (2001:7) reiterates that postcolonial studies developed as a discursive means whereby the cultural production of societies affected by colonialism may be addressed. As such it was thus never conceived of as a grand theory, but rather as a methodology.

Postcolonial reading attempts to expose underlying assumptions, colonialist ideologies and processes implicit in the works produced by the coloniser, but may also be applied to the works of the colonised (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:192). Although postcolonial criticism tends to remain highly theorised – whether implicitly or explicitly – it tends to be rhetorically more accessible than postcolonial theory (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:2).

As suggested, when considering the complexity of the field it would seem more conducive to consider the main concerns and themes as addressed within the practice of postcolonial discourses, rather than to attempt arriving at a simplistic definition of such an encompassing discourse (cf. Childs & Williams, 1997:vii). In *Beginning theory*, Barry (2002:194-196) identifies four major tenets or concerns

prevalent in postcolonial criticism. These are: cross-cultural interaction, the authority of language, the question of hybridity and the European concept of the *other*.

Regarding these tenets, few models have been developed to analyse cultural interaction (Young, 1996:4). Early nineteenth century models such as diffusionism and evolutionism view cultural interaction as part of the 'civilising' process, whereby less powerful societies were Europeanised through deculturation, whereas dominant contemporary models tend to ignore the process of acculturation.

With regards the authority of language, the idea that language defines cultural difference is not new. It was prevalent in early nineteenth century European ethnology, especially through the work of J.C. Prichard as well as R. Latham (Young, 1996:67), but it is through the act of colonialism that language came to designate power, privilege and superiority, as Shohat and Stam (1995:192) put it: "for the colonised to be human was to speak the colonising language".

The reactions of postcolonialism against linguistic imperialism are varied, but two prominent responses can be distinguished, namely rejection and subversion. Rejection - as the first alternative – requires a denial of the colonising language, because to speak a language is to subscribe or submit to the values its usage implies. In contrast, the strategy of subversion relies on the insurgent questioning of the oppressor's language by appropriating it to suit cultural specifics (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1997:283-284). Thus, through subversion and appropriation the purity of the colonising language is contaminated and its claims to authority undermined.

In some instances indigenous languages were employed as an oppositional tool in the process of decolonisation. Where indigenous languages were aligned with the decolonisation process, a form of social programme mostly accompanied it. In some instances such programmes profess to democratise culture by appealing to the indigenous language speakers who often make up the bulk of the population. In other

cases social programmes endeavour to facilitate cultural recuperation and cultural re-evaluation. In these instances the return to indigenous language facilitates shifts in attitudes regarding the local and the indigenous (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:65).

The emphasis on identity as doubled or hybrid is another important characteristic of post-colonialism (Barry, 2002:196). Hybridity refers to cultural mutualism, and as a product of postcolonialism, it undermines purist Eurocentric values regarding race, nation and culture (Bhabha, 1997:34). It is then not surprising that most postcolonial writers regard hybridity as a strength (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1997:183). Young (1996:26) summarises it as follows: "hybridity makes difference into sameness, and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, the different no longer simply different". If colonial identity is based on difference (Lawson & Tiffin, 1994:230), then hybridity's denial of distinct categories undermines the power relationship between coloniser and colonised.

For the purpose of limiting the scope of this study, I shall focus on the concept of the *other* as one of the four major tenets of postcolonialism as identified by Barry (2002:194). Furthermore, in the next section, the notion of the *other* will be considered within the contexts of ideological frameworks, social reality and authoring strategies, as propounded by Lerner (1991:335) in order to facilitate a comparative reading of the depiction of Afrikaner ancestry in two works of C D Bell.

2.3.1 Postcolonial discourse of the other

The concept of the *Other/other* is concerned with representations of the non-European as exotic or immoral *other* (Barry, 2002:194). According to Childs and Fowler (2006:164) the term *other* appears seemingly unproblematic in everyday usage. In a broad sense the notion of the 'other' applies to anybody distinct from oneself. As such, the notion of others assists in locating one's own position in the world and play an important role in defining what is considered the norm (Ashcroft *et*

al., 1998:169). However, when considered within the ideological framework of colonialism, it is important to be aware that the *other* does not merely represent the direct opposite of the self in a straightforward manner (Childs & Fowler, 2006:164-165). Rather, the relation between the *self* and *other* is a complex paradox that runs counter to any superficial notions regarding the interrelation of *self/other*, and by extension between inside/outside and centre/margin. Instead, as a category, the *other* is rather unstable and mutable. Childs and Fowler, (2006:164) suggest that the *other* is "...best thought of as a site or location upon which we project all the qualities that we – as individual subjects, social groups or even nations – most fear, or dislike, about ourselves".

The above assertion gives rise to the notion of the *other* as construct. The construct of the *other* is informed by culturally and historically specific discursive practices. In this context the construction of the *other* represents the norms and values of the entity that constructs the *other*, as opposed to the actual qualities of the other (Childs & Fowler, 2006:164). However, since the *self* is dependent on the existence of the *other*, and the *other* represents qualities of the *self*, the *other's* position as somehow external and marginal is subverted.

According to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:169) the use of the term *other* in a postcolonial context derives from Freudian and post-Freudian analysis regarding the shaping of subjectivities, predominantly via the work of Lacan. In Lacanian terms the *other* signifies one opposite of a subject-object dialectic (Payne, 2000:392). The opposition between *self* and *other* is never neutral but rather hierarchical, with the self representing the positive[13] to the alterity of the other. Ergo, the power balance in this binary construction favours the self and leads to the subjugation of the *other* (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2006:266). Once constructed as inferior, such constructions of the *other* may crystallise into a cultural projection of negative concepts and may then serve as justification for a number of material practices such as colonisation. Moreover, in time

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[13] According to Childs and Fowler (2006:165) the self as representative of the positive in the self-other binary may be conceived of as representing the male, white, European and heterosexual position.

such negative constructions assist in naturalising said material practices (Childs & Fowler, 2006:165; Edgar & Sedgwick, 2006:266).

Regarding the *other*, Lacan distinguishes between the *Other* – with a capital 'O' – and the *other*[14]. Lacan suggests that the *other* – written with a small 'o' – identifies the *other* that represents the *self*, yet at the same time is sufficiently disconnected to be separate. In a typical Freudian analogy it is compared to a child looking in a mirror at the exact point of becoming aware of him/herself as an autonomous entity. This encounter with the reflection of the self illicits an imagined "anticipated mastery" that is to form the basis of the ego, and as such this *other* is instrumental in defining the identity of the subject (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:169-170). Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:170) further extrapolate this notion of the *other* by suggesting that: "in post-colonial theory, it can refer to the colonised *others* who are marginalised by imperial discourse, identified by their difference from the centre and, perhaps crucially, become the focus of anticipated mastery by the imperial 'ego'". At variance is the notion of the *Other*. When capitalised, the term *Other* refers to the symbolic and the unconscious (Payne, 2000:392). Lacan describes this *Other* as the *grande-autre*, or the grand *Other*. It is within the gaze of this grand *Other* that the subject gains identity. As such, according to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:171): "in colonial discourse, the subjectivity of the colonised is continually located in the gaze of the imperial *Other*, the *'grande-autre'*".

According to McFarlane (2004:175,176), the colonial gaze serves to denigrate and objectify the colonial *other*. Furthermore, it essentialises and fixes the identity of the colonised according to an entrenched European hierarchy of same-other/coloniser-colonised dialectics (Yancy, 2008: 2-4). This dialectic of difference, however, was based on pre-existing racial categories propped up by European myths and beliefs regarding the *other* (Yancy, 2008:3, 4). In turn, the colonial gaze reinforced these

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[14] According to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:172) quite a few critics use these spellings interchangeably, they state that in such cases for example: "the Empire's construction of its 'others' is often referred to as the construction of the 'Other' (perhaps to connote an abstract and generalised but more symbolic representation of empire's 'others')".

racial categories, and the racial categories, again, served to reinforce the colonial gaze (Yancy, 2008:2).

Weheliye (2005:40) ascribes the power of the colonial gaze to the hegemonic position of vision and "ocularcentric discourse" in Western modernity and exposes the complicit role thereof in the construction of race and racism. In addition Goldberg (1996:184) exposes the role of representation in colonialism's attempts to uphold the "ideological and discursive image it has created of the colonised".

In the context of postcolonialism the *Other* can be likened to both imperial discourse and the imperial centre as well as to empire itself (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:170). This interrelation functions on two levels: on the one hand the *Other* represents the vehicle by which the colonised subject's perception of the world is mediated. By the same token the *Other* – like imperial discourse, the imperial centre and empire – sets the standards by which the colonised subject is defined as different or *other*. However, the process whereby the colonial *others* come into being at the very same time abides the construction of the grand imperial *Other* itself (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:171).

European discourses regarding the *other* are related to the diverse strategies and methods of control and representations employed in varied and vastly different locations and circumstances (Loomba, 2005:19). This relates to Spivak's notion of 'othering', which describes the various ways in which colonial discourse produces its subjects, employing such processes as labelling and characterisation (cf. Boehmer, 1995:83). Ashcroft *et al.*, (1998:171) propound that in Spivakian terms othering is a dialectic process "... because the colonising *Other* is established at the same time as its colonised *others* are produced as subjects". Childs and Fowler (2006:165) further suggest that the *other* simultaneously destabilises and delineates the boundaries of the *self*.

Prior to colonial expansion and more sustained contact with non-Europeans, the *other* was located closer to home. As Fredrickson (2002:23) suggests, the intolerance and bias directed at the Irish and specific Slavic peoples in Europe, prefigured "the dichotomy between civilisation and savagery that would characterise imperial expansion beyond the European continent". Before that, it was the late medieval European notion of the 'wild man' that represented the barbaric *Other* to the European notion of civilised *Self*, as Loomba (2005:53) illustrates:

> The late medieval European figure of the 'wild man' who lived in forests, on the outer edges of civilisation, and was hairy, nude, violent, lacking in moral sense and exceedingly sensual, expressed all manner of cultural anxieties. He and his female counterpart were 'others' who existed outside of civil society, and yet they constantly threatened to enter and disrupt this society.

Loomba (2005:53) suggests that such myths intersected with images of non-Europeans and were perpetuated in colonialist constructions of the *other*. Jacobs (1995:9) adds that, "fact and fiction have always coexisted in the perception of foreign lands". Furthermore, discourses such as cannibalism and primitivism served to establish the binary opposition between coloniser and colonised and assisted towards naturalising and upholding the hegemony of the colonising culture and *Weltanschauung* (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:169). Accordingly, colonial representations of the *other* were marked by a pervasive degree of stereotyping. Stereotyping served the purpose of providing familiar labels, which simultaneously designated and disguised the disconcerting *otherness* represented by colonised peoples (Boehmer, 1995:79).

In spite of such stereotyping, however, European representations of the *other* were shaped and reshaped over time and through different means of contact and social realities (Loomba, 2005:53). Because of the heterogeneous and capricious nature of colonial relations the construction of the *other* — rather than representing the indiscriminate — were based on manifold differentiations. In light of this, any particular group of people or culture may at a certain time be associated more directly with, or distinct from, the notion of European self, depending on the context or prevalent

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imperial interest (Boehmer, 1995:82). Boehmer (1995:83) stresses that the colonial *other* was not merely a simple negative antithesis of the coloniser but propounds that the *other* should be seen as " a historical palimpsest – or layering of interpretations – which combined different and changing ways of characterising the alien condition". For example, European associations made with Muslims in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries – such as promiscuity, barbarism, tyranny and degeneracy – bear a remarkable resemblance to the perceived characteristics of the Orient identified by Said in his 1978 *Orientalism* (Loomba, 2005:53-54). Another example, which is not based on a white/black binary opposition, is an early seventeenth century portrayal of the Irish, employing words such as 'profanity', 'cannibalism', 'incest', 'witchcraft' and 'bestial', that correspond with nineteenth century English portrayals of Africans (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:202).

It was during the colonial epoch that negative and biased representations of the *other* became affirmed and cemented[15]. Even though the fifteenth- and sixteenth centuries did not mark the first contact between Europeans and non-Europeans, the writings of this period heralded a new manner of positioning these two groups as binary opposites (Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:20). Furthermore, the new protracted contact between Europe and its *others* resulted in an avalanche of ideas and images regarding the hitherto unknown colonised peoples and places (Loomba, 2005:54).

According to Smith and Pheiffer (1993:20) it was simpler to justify and rationalise colonialism when the colonised was depicted as sub-human. In contrast with the superiority afforded the representations of an expanding Europe in such images, the colonised were either represented in generic terms such as faceless masses or as lesser terms such as being uncivilised, subhuman, child or animal-like (Boehmer, 1995:79). As European expansion gained currency, these representations of the *other* informed and legitimised colonial processes and conduct (cf. Boehmer, 1995:80). Ashcroft (2001:5) further suggests that the coloniser uses the strategies of representation to position the colonised as marginal and inferior. Ashcroft (2001:141)

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[15] In contrast however, these very same biased portrayals of the colonial other were not always the product of an assertive colonial authority, but according to Boehmer (1995:90) are also evocative of "extreme colonial uncertainty".

regards surveillance and observation in the same league as the most powerful authoring strategies of imperial dominance – that is because

> … it implies a viewer with an elevated vantage point, it suggests the power to process and understand that which is seen, and it objectifies, and interpolates, the colonised subject in a way that fixes its identity in relation to the surveyor.

By means of perspective, modes of surveillance and cartography, Europeans translated their control of space into cultural control (Ashcroft, 2001:15). Jacobs (1995:9) suggests in this regard that art played as important a role in promoting fanciful Western mythologies about foreign lands, as did literature. According to Carruthers and Arnold (2000:22) the reason why amateurs such as explorer artists were able to make such a contribution may be attributed to the facts that the demarcation of knowledge was still broad and non-exclusive and that specialiation in particular fields had not yet become entrenched.

With regard to art's role as agent of imperialism, Ashcroft (2001:141) suggests that both Arcadian and Sublime modes of colonial painting function as an allegory of imperial control, because it is through the representation of the surveillance that the surveyed comes into being. According to Boehmer (1995:94-95) the colonisers' motive for documenting the colonised landscape and its peoples stemmed from two main pretexts. On the one hand there was a desire to understand and control the unfamiliar, and on the other, a need to fight, shy off and demarcate that which seemed uncontrollable. In the process the coloniser employed a number of strategies such as highlighting the unfamiliar as strange and exotic or, conversely, omitting the inscrutable altogether. Whatever the motives behind the documentation of the colonised peoples and lands, such representations reinforced perceptions regarding the dominance of Empire by making imperialism seem part of the natural order of things (Boehmer, 1995:2-3). According to Boehmer (1995:94) these strategies only served to frustrate the situation as it exposed the actual "*unreadability* of the *other*".

Boehmer (1995:92) suggests, somewhat ironically, that the colonisers faced a difficult task in their attempts to graft their own hermeneutic structures onto the colonised environment. The Europeans' ineptness to fully describe the unfamiliar surroundings they encountered did incur a certain sense of unease (Boehmer, 1995:93):

> Even at the time of established Empire, difference or alterity remained shocking, vertiginous, a source of distress. For a system of domination founded on scrutiny, scientific observation, and the collection of knowledge, the inadequacy of Europe's descriptive capacity was threatening. It did not inspire confidence that the colonial interpreters could not trust to the completeness of their vision.

Hence, those documenting this new environment were constantly depended on their own familiar concepts, narratives and metaphors in order to describe and encompass their unsettling new surroundings (Boehmer, 1995:92). Jacobs (1995:9) further suggests that European perceptions of foreign lands invariably incorporated both factual and fictitious conceptions. And so, when confronted with the non-native aesthetics of their new milieu

> ...[European] travellers adapted the familiar concepts of hill, meadow, brook and so on to give shape to their experience. They sought out features conforming to their own aesthetic schemes – misty tones, a heterogeneity of natural and geological features, the idealised landscapes associated with the seventeenth-century French painter Claude. So, it was as we now tend to believe, that the reality most feasible for a colonial culture to occupy was one of its own making, described in its own language (Boehmer, 1995:92).

According to Jacobs (1995:9), even though words were more suited for evoking the tremendous fantasy of the earliest accounts[16], art played as an important a role as literature in promoting fanciful Western mythologies about foreign lands. The way in

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[16] Travel writing is often considered one of the significant contributors to the European process of constructing difference between the *Self* of the *Other* (Pratt, 1992:5), since as a practice, it was an attempt to make sense of the unfamiliar but, moreover to differentiate and fix that which seemed uncontrollable (cf. Boehmer, 1995:94, 97).

which art assisted the fantasy of exploration is persuasively illustrated by Carruthers and Arnold's (2000:22) narration of a landscape depiction by colonial artist, Thomas Baines:

> ...spaces uninterrupted by mountains and rivers which, when crossed, permit further territorial exploration. The viewer (and by allusion the explorer/coloniser) is invited to enter and travel through pictorial space, and – through the gaze – to take possession of a real spatial situation. By using illusionistic devices such as linear perspective, the artist convinces the viewer that space can be traversed and conquered, imaginatively and literally.

More so, apart from exploration, the coloniser's process of settlement also encompassed various different practices of control, such as negotiation, warfare, genocide, plunder, trade and enslavement, most of which were documented or decreed by official writings, leaving evidence in the form of letters, records, trade or government documents, scientific recordings, fictional writing and other forms of representation such as illustrations and artworks. According to Loomba (2005:72), even though such texts can not always be considered as objective, they tend to represent a particular account of reality for a specific audience, allowing for the analysis of their narrative strategies and rhetoric devices. In addition, Boime (1990:xiv) suggests that products of visual culture may serve to illustrate the power relations and struggles between oppressors and oppressed. Much of this evidence included ostensible ethnographic accounts and illustrative narratives that served the purpose of upholding the imperial status quo, or as Boehmer (1995:97) suggests, to "produce an illusion of permanence", and in this way effectively assisted in the expansion of colonial interests. According to Boehmer (1995:79), the representation of the colonised *other* remains one of the most significant facets of European self-projection. Furthermore, Loomba (2005:54) posits that the hegemonic view concerning the inferiority of the non-European served as vindication for a myriad of colonial practices such as settlement, missionary activities, trade relations and military interventions. In support of this, Boehmer (1995:80) further states that

Within the terms of colonialist representation, it was possible to style any incident or conquest as demonstrating the power of the invader and the inferiority of the conquered. Such characterisations provided the epistemic or the ideological violence, to draw on the terminology of Gayatri Spivak, which aided and abetted the more overt brutalities of occupation[17].

In addition, recent literature and critical theoretical approaches have also stressed the textual nature of historical and social processes, because similarly these processes are made available to a contemporary audience via their representations, and have corresponding rhetorical and ideological implications (cf. Young, 2001:390). Boime (1990:xiii) further suggests that all images may be read as texts, since visual representations ultimately coalesce with linguistic principles. Thus, it was the control of the means of representation, rather than the means of production, that ultimately established European hegemony. According to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:126-127) the belief in European cultural dominance resulted in a persistent "development of imperial rhetoric and imperial representation" from the fifteenth century onwards. By means of education and publication, European thought was easily promulgated across the globe; defining the relationships between Europe and its colonies. These processes and resulting evidence are exactly what the study of colonialism and postcolonialism attempts to scrutinise and make sense of (Loomba, 2005:8, 82).

As mentioned, postcolonialism - through its association with other critical discourses (most notably feminism and deconstruction) - has significantly altered the modes of analysis within the field of broader cultural investigation. With regard to the aesthetic realm, postcolnialism has challenged hitherto dominant notions by advancing the hypothesis that power relations are mediated through culture in ways similar to more public or visible forms of oppression, albeit in more indirect and subtle ways (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:6,8). In light of this, postcolonialism seeks to erode formerly static boundaries between text and context in order to expose the symbiotic relationship

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[17] According to Boehmer (1995:80): "the characterisation of colonised people as secondary, abject, weak, feminine, and other to Europe, and in particular to England, was standard in British colonialist writing".

between the material practices of colonial power and the methods of representation of subjugated peoples (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:8).

Postcolonialism debunks the universalist liberal humanist claims of the Western canon. These Western claims are centred on the concept of a fundamental universal human condition, which through its insistence on universal significance and timelessness have traditionally disregarded cultural, social, regional and national differences in terms of point of view and experience. Representation within this context becomes the unquestioned norm, favouring and ennobling the white Eurocentric perspective and thereby marginalising all other perspectives (Barry, 2002:193). According to Barry (2002:193), Said lays bare and critiques this notion of Eurocentric universalism in his 1978 publication *Orientalism,* exposing the European or Western belief in its own superiority and the subsequent inferiority of that which is not European or Western.

Not only did Europeans ordain themselves superior through various practices and actions – as those mentioned above - they also decreed so by means of science. According to Loomba (2005:56,101-102) modern discourses regarding race evolved out of eighteenth century Western natural history. The new scientific zeal of the time did not alter the existing suppositions and prejudices regarding race. Based on the observation of racial migration, race was regarded as a result of an immutable biological hierarchy with Europeans at the pinnacle. The pseudo-science of physiognomy purported that aspects such as facial or bodily features were representative of an individual's mental and moral properties (Lambourne, 1999:259). Hence, the scientific discourse of the time advanced the notion that biological features, such as race, somehow divined a person or a group's social and psychological character as well as its traits and was therefore also responsible for historical development and cultural formation. Until the emergence of the biological sciences in the nineteenth century, the debate around the causes of racial difference was polarised between the notions of descent versus environment, after which descent was considered pre-eminent (Aschcroft *et al.,* 1999:200). Thus, race became the outward marker of people's "civilisational and cultural attributes" (Loomba. 2005:101). In this sense, propping up scientific justification was the binary notion of

the civilised versus the savage, which in Western cultural thought can be traced back as far as Homer's *Odyssey*[18] (Aschcroft *et al.*, 1998:209). This further locked non-Europeans in an inferior position within an inescapable binary opposition. The authority of science went unquestioned and unchallenged, as it was presented to be value-free, neutral, objective and universal.

According to Loomba (2005:58-59), both racial and gender biases were presented as objective truths, as theories regarding these classifications were often used for mutual justification. According to Stephen (cited in Loomba, 2005:58) perceived feminine characteristics were assigned to "the lower races" during the mid-nineteenth century, as Caucasian women, for example, were deemed closer to Africans than white men. Within this hierarchy African women occupied the lowest rung. They were considered so lowly and 'primitive' that they were seen not to possess the self-awareness to even be able to go insane. In other instances the colonised landscape, and not necessarily the people may be feminised, as in certain explorers' accounts of Africa (Boehmer, 1995:87). None of these biases were likely to be challenged because most scientists were European and male. Questioning the *status quo* did not serve the hegemony, and challenges by those constructed as inferior were dismissed out of hand (Loomba, 2005:58).

One instance contravening the upholding of this hegemonic *status quo* was the European desire to 'civilise' the *other*. According to Ferro (1998:20) the Western account of history was codified by its own history and laws and left no doubt as to its relation to Christianity. Loomba (2005:99) posits that a missionary zeal and efforts to convert natives went hand in hand with most colonial enterprises. In many instances the bestowal of Christianity was employed as justification for the economic pillage of colonies. However, conversion to Christianity meant a person's race no longer bound them to its associated moral dissipation. Thus, if the *other* can be redeemed, it also implied that the Self might also become corrupted. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries images depicting, among others, natives and Moors being

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[18] Homer's *Odyssey*, along with his *Iliad*, are considered the earliest existent examples Western literary works. Reverence for these works has endured since the dawn of Greek civilisation (Nelson, 1969:vii).

converted to Christianity, served to suppress European anxieties regarding 'going native'[19]. The term going native refers to the colonisers' fear of contamination by absorption into native life and custom, as these cultures were construed as the inferior and often primitive and degenerate part of the cultural binary. The idea not only encompassed the threat that inter-racial sex and miscegenation posed to the coloniser's pure stock but also referred to lapses in European behaviour. The latter includes taking part in local native ceremonies or the adoption of native customs and lifestyles (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:115). According to Ashcroft (2001:42) one such example that bears witness to European anxieties of going native is the *trekboers* of South Africa. The *trekboers'* adoption of aspects of Khoikhoi culture such as a nomadic pastoral lifestyle, living in semi-permanent mat huts and developing an "aesthetics of cattle", at the time greatly disturbed genteel Cape Town residents and enhanced their fear of contamination.

Together with science, such European fears of contamination extended and complicated European associations with the terms 'race' and 'nation'. Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries for example, the word 'race' often denoted various forms of consanguinity such as 'linage', 'kinsfolk', 'family' and 'home', and in other instances it became synonymous with 'caste'. During the seventeenth century Europeans often equated differences in colour with difference in culture, that easily extended to notions of the *other*, as proposed by Giliomee (2003:14):

> To seventeenth-century Dutchmen blackness was the opposite of what they considered normal, beautiful and attractive. This attitude towards colour was reinforced by the cultural superiority Christians felt towards heathens. Yet negative views were not restricted to people of colour. In Shakespearean England, stereotypes about blacks as sinful, lustful and murderous abounded, but the same negative imagery was also applied to Jews, 'sodomites' and other groups.

In this regard one may consider Anderson's concept of 'race' as marker for an 'imagined community' (cf. Loomba, 2005:102). To elucidate, Loomba (2005:102)

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[19] This term extends the notion of 'turning Turk', a phrase that entered the English language during the Renaissance and denoted aspects of desertion and betrayal (Loomba, 2005:99).

employs the formation of the English nation and its colluding 'articulation of the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race' as an example in this regard. Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:202) further elucidate the imperial English usage of racial difference towards constructing their own superiority:

> The usefulness of the concept of race in both establishing the innate superiority of imperial culture as it approached its zenith, and at the ·same time lumping together the 'inferior' races under its control, can be seen in the example of English commentary on the 'races' of Britain itself – particularly the Irish. In early writings, although the Irish were initially seen to be physically much the same as the English, Irish culture was alien and threatening.

In 1885 the president of the English Anthropological Institute, John Beddoe, reinforced the perceived otherness of the Irish in his 'index of Nigrescence'. In an extraordinary attempt, Beddoe aimed to illustrate that the people of Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Scotland were 'Africanoid' by referring to their physical attributes, such as 'long slitty nostrils' and 'jutting jaws', and thus suggesting that they were originally immigrants of African descent (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:202). This suggests that Loomba's (2005:98) assertion that "colonial discourses fluctuated in tandem with changes in political situations within the same place over time" can be understood to include the discourse of race.

Loomba (2005:109-113) further suggests that the European discourse of race, propped up by an ideology of racial superiority, easily translated in to class terms, as the latter was shaped by racial ideologies en representations. Leatt *et al.* (1986:77) stress that race is not only a biological concept, but is also a social psychological term that engenders a "genetically derived group consciousness" that may evince discrimination, prejudice and exclusivity. However, according to Hassan (1998:63-65), "we are all culturally constructed, socially produced"; he also suggests that constructivism cannot explain differences within the same class, gender, race and even family. Furthermore, Hassan postulates that one is not only constructed, but also constructs back through interaction with others.

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With regards the construction of *others*, Barry (2002:193-194) interprets Said to suggest that the *other* becomes the repository of those aspects that westerners do not choose to acknowledge of themselves such as cruelty, sensuality, decadence and laziness. At the same time, the *other* is viewed as a homogeneous anonymous whole, rather than individuals; their actions determined by racial considerations rather than individual will and circumstance.

According to Janmohamed (2006:20), the *other* becomes the site of projection for the coloniser's inner demons, even though the *other* is negated by the coloniser's inverted image of him/herself; the *other's* presence as absence can never be cancelled. Janmohamed calls this binary the 'Manichean allegory'[20]. Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:134) further posit that the postcolonial usage of the term Manichean references "the implication that the two realms of spirit and matter were always and eternally separate and could never be linked", therefore implying an "extreme form of binary structure". Thus the Manichean allegory illustrates the way in which all aspects regarding the relationship between coloniser and colonised are polarised through imperial discourse to create a binary opposition that pits good against evil - superior against inferior. In addition, according to Hall (In Wiesner-Hanks, 2001), hierarchies of categories such as race and gender, where and whenever such distinctions were being contested, were often reinscribed by what she terms the "rule of difference". Furthermore, this rule of difference was not only operative in the metropole, but also in the colonies as well as between the metropole and the colony.

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[20] Manicheasim refers to the teachings of the Persian prophet Mani (c. 216-276). Mani's teachings were based on the primeval conflict between light and darkness (Wordsworth, 1995:319). The term *Manicheasim* itself is adapted from the 'Manichean heresy'. The Manichean heresy dates to 3 AD and put forward a dualistic theology in which Satan was proffered as co-eternal with God. According to Manichean theology all matter was evil, and by His nature, God could not intercede in the realm of evil matter. This implied the impossibility of Christ's birth into flesh, suggesting his nature to be purely spirit. This constituted heresy against the doctrine of Christ's dual nature as both Man and God (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:133).

Spivak (1997:24) affirms Janmohamed's notion of the Manichean allegory, by suggesting that the *other* becomes the site of projection by relating the *other* to the *self's* shadow. This is also illustrated by Edward Said in his text *Orientalism*:

> The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilisations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience (Said in Frascina & Harris, 1992:136).

Thus, in context of the colonial/Western paradigm, representation functions on the basis of difference or alterity. European identity depends on the existence of the *other*, which is in turn defined by the projection of European fears and desires, and supported by the universalistic claims of Eurocentric master narratives (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1997:85).

In the light of this, post-colonialism examines the one-sided Eurocentric projections of identity made at the expense of the *other* and rejects the universalistic claims of canonical Western thought in order to overcome the boundaries of enforced colonialist identity stereotypes (cf. Barry, 2002:199). However, Robert Young (1996:5) warns that representation in postcolonial discourse is a constructed Manichean division that threatens to implode on itself. According to Young, postcolonial viewpoints regarding representation tend to focus on the *other* as one half of a binary opposite, and only knowable through a necessary false representation, and that this view together with the Manichean division of identities threaten to reproduce the same static essentialist categories it seeks to debunk. The vast cultural, racial, ethnic and social differences within both the coloniser and colonised categories, as well as their commingling, further challenge a simple binary construction.

Ironically European settlers in the colonies were frequently subjected to the same processes of representation as non-European indigenous peoples. This is supported by Fredrickson's (2002:54) reference to the Same-Other dualism that also functions as part of the class-based social inequality prevalent in European society itself. Hence, according to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:211) settlers repeatedly suffered discrimination as colonial subjects as they themselves were constructed within a discourse of difference and inferiority by the metropolitan centre. As such the subject position of settlers was ambivalent and contradictory. They found themselves occupying an ambiguous in-between space since; according to Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:212), settlers were "simultaneously both colonised and coloniser". Even though they were themselves colonisers, settlers did not occupy the centre of power – that was vested in metropolitan authorities back in their home countries. Therefore, whilst settlers depended on the metropolitan centre for protection and security, they were also oppressed by it[21].

Notwithstanding the fact that settlers were subject to oppression from the centre, they were not in the precarious position of the colonised indigenous peoples. As already stated, indigenous peoples were expelled, exploited, subjugated and annihilated by both the colonial centre and the settlers themselves. Young (2001:20) further points out that it was often the case that even settlers who had left their countries of origin due to persecution or forced migration became complicit in the oppression and subjugation of indigenous minorities in the colonies. As such, European settler minorities often replaced colonial rule with a form of internal colonialism, as was the case in Chile, Peru and apartheid in South Africa.

Furthermore, due to their displacement, settlers often found it difficult to establish their identity in their new surroundings. In order to strengthen their own self-representation, settlers in some instances attempted to appropriate the symbols of indigenous peoples (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:212). Such borrowings sometimes led

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[21] In South Africa the relationship between the free burghers and the VOC during the seventeenth century serves as an example in this regard (cf. Giliomee, 2003:xiv).

settlers to establish a new cultural identity for themselves. This culture generally contained elements borrowed from both the metropolitan culture and the local indigenous culture but in itself represented an idiosyncratic and distinctive culture that was not representative of either the original contexts. Conversely, however, the act of appropriating indigenous symbols may constitute new forms of oppression, since such symbols may lose any social or sacred significance once attributed to it by the indigenous culture (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:212). In my opinion the construction of such a hybrid culture further complicates settlers' position within the discourse of difference and inferiority through which they are, in turn, constructed by the metropolitan centre. Furthermore such a hybrid culture, by way of adopting native customs, lifestyles and symbols, is likely to amplify European anxieties regarding cultural purity and the notion of going native.

In cognisance of the above discussion, Whitlock (1997:349) argues that settler cultures represent "an array of identifications and subjectivities that refuse to cohere neatly into oppositional or complicit post-colonialisms". Furthermore a number of theorists describe settler societies as spaces characterised by the ambiguity and ambivalence of both complicit and oppositional positions (Whitlock, 1997:349). It can be argued that this can also be interpreted as an inherent conflict between the boundaries of *Self* and *Other*.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the of notions colonialism, imperialism, anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, decolonisation and postcolonialism were contextualised and discussed through which definitions pertaining to this study were established. By considering the phases of European colonial expansion and stages of colonial development it was possible to contextualise the South African colonial history and legacy. In considering the field of postcolonialism, its theoretical relation to the Marxist, postmodern and post-structuralist paradigms was established. In light of this the notion of the postcolonial *Other/other* was located and discussed within the context of

postcolonial discourse.   From this discussion it emerged that postcolonialism provides the means whereby the assumptions of the Western colonial canon may be addressed and critiqued.

In the next chapter the history of Afrikaner ancestry will be discussed within the context of South African colonial history using the arrival of the Dutch in 1652 and the end of the Victorian age in 1901 as time frame.

CHAPTER 3

BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF THE AFRIKANER ANCESTRY 1652 – 1901 WITH IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter put the emphasis on postcolonialism as a means to address and critique colonialism and colonial heritage. In this chapter the focus is on the history of the Afrikaner ancestry in the context of South African colonial history, with specific emphasis on the Victorian epoch.

3.2 Contextual background

Even until relatively recently many history books presented the arrival of European settlers in 1652 as the dawn of South African history[22] (cf. Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:viii). This supports Loomba's (2005:20) claim that the existence of pre-colonial history is often negated, resulting in the citation of colonialism as the only history. Although the present study is concerned with history of the Afrikaner ancestry in relation to British Imperialism, and employs 1652 as starting point, I concur with Thompson (2006:1) that the pre-colonial history of South Africa is not only significant in its own right, but also contributes significantly to understanding the course of history in colonial as well as postcolonial South Africa. However, for the purposes of this research, the discussion is limited to aspects that elucidate the focus of this study. This will include considering pre-colonial indigenous cultural practices and lifestyles in order to compare these with colonial and settler practices, specifically

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[22] Notable exceptions are the *Oxford history of South Africa* (1969) edited by Wilson and Thompson, *An illustrated history of South Africa* (1986) edited by Cameron and Spies as well as the *Reader's Digest illustrated history of South Africa* (1988). Recent contributions include *A history of South Africa* (2001) by Leonard Thompson and *New history of South Africa* by Giliomee and Mbenga (2007), all of which include coverage of pre-colonial South African history.

those pertaining to *trekboers* and the Afrikaner ancestry. This will serve to facilitate a comparative reading of the depiction of Afrikaner ancestry in two works by Charles Davidson Bell; *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan.*

The pre-colonial history of South Africa's *opaque centuries* is difficult to ascertain, as is the case with reconstructing the history of preliterate societies. The historian has to rely on other scientific disciplines such as archaeology, physical and social anthropology and linguistics in order to construct a more complete picture – however, no one of these disciplines can be considered conclusive either. Therefore much writing on pre-colonial South Africa - prior to written accounts by literate observers - is based on theory, informed speculation and propinquity (Thompson, 2006:xi, 2). Eyewitness accounts and history recorded by aliens is problematic, however, as such accounts may reflect the author's cultural, ideological or political bias and historical context, and as suggested in Chapter 2, pre-colonial history generally proved incomprehensible to those foreigners who came into contact with it. Thompson (2006:2) further warns that records of eyewitness accounts may be further impaired by interpretation and language barriers.

It is generally accepted that the first modern human inhabitants of the Southern African subcontinent were the San. An ancient people, the San has the oldest genetic stock of all contemporary humanity. For the most part the San is characterised by a hunter-gatherer lifestyle. San society consisted of kinship groups that varied in size from approximately twelve to twenty five close members (Mountain, 2003:7, 22-24). Accounts by early travellers suggest that these hunter-gatherers tended to inhabit mountainous areas and the seashore in recognised demarcated territories. The notion of property and the custom of inheritance did not exist (Ross, 1999:10), although certain rights over *veldkos* and water resources were passed on (Wilson, 1982:47,50). According to Mountain (2003:26) a patriarch could hand down territorial rights to his son or a relative. This meant that successive generations might inhabit the same territory resulting in a strong bond with the landscape. The bond with a specific territory was reinforced by legends, myths and stories relating to its particular characteristics. The term *topophilia* refers to this

tendency, described by Deacon (quoted in Mountain, 2003:26) as: "the affective bond between people and the landscape in which they live that extends into a desire to stress the individuality of the group".

The second prominent group of indigenous African people in the Cape region were the Khoekhoen or Khoikhoi[23]. The Khoikhoi were former hunter-gatherers who adopted domesticated livestock via West and Central African Iron age peoples (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:viii). According to Mountain (2003:7, 41) the Khoikhoi were immigrants from the Zambezi Valley who arrived in the Western Cape region about 2 000 years ago. The Khoikhoi were affiliated with approximately twelve chiefdoms including the Namaqua who were settled in the north-eastern Cape region and what is today known as Namibia, whilst the Korana were concentrated along the Orange River and the Gonaqua settled among the Xhosa in the Eastern Cape (Elphick, 2007:19-20). The Khoikhoi were nomadic pastoralists and travelled seasonally, taking their portable *matjieshuise* (houses made of woven basketry) with them. When settled in a particular location, they lived in village encampments consisting of roughly a hundred clan members. Territories for grazing were more or less defined, but the low nutritional value of *fynbos* and droughts meant that clans often had to move beyond their own territory to find grazing (Mountain, 2003:40-46). Probably because the afore-mentioned local conditions necessitated the sharing of resources, the Khoikhoi's notion of private ownership related only to livestock and did not extend to land (Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:17). Thus, early transactions between the Dutch and the Khoikhoi would later be misconstrued by both parties. Since they regarded land as inalienable, the Khoikhoi assumed that gifts were exchanged only for the use of resources, the Dutch on the other hand bartered with the intension of obtaining realty rights (Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:17). The Khoikhoi were a plutocratic society, where the wealth of an individual determined their political standing. Wealth

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[23] These pastoralists, who were called Hottentots by the Dutch, used the term Khoikhoi to refer to themselves. The term Khoekhoen reflects the correct spelling according to modern Nama orthography (Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:79). With regard to the naming conventions of African communities and languages I concur with Smith and Pheiffer (1993:79) who use the commonly accepted term Khoikhoi as opposed to Khoekhoen, and Giliomee and Mbenga (cf. 2007:x) who, according to convention, use epithets sans prefixes (for example Pedi as opposed to Bapedi). Also, in keeping with convention, the terms 'Africans', 'blacks' and 'Bantu speakers' are used interchangeably; however, this in cognisance of the more recent usage of the term 'African' as inclusive of all who live on or identify with the African continent. Furthermore, the term 'whites' refers to people of European decent and 'coloured' refers to people of mixed race.

was primarily measured in terms of livestock. Thus after European settlement, the cattle trade with the Dutch actually eroded the traditional power structures and social cohesion of the Khoikhoi (Ross, 1999:10, 22).

Although the Khoikhoi had to compete with the San for water resources and game, the vastness of the region, scant population numbers and their different economies did for the most part allow for relatively peaceful cohabitation between these two groups. According to Mountain (2003:40-46) the ethnic boundaries between the San and the Khoikhoi were not immutable; even though they did speak different languages, led different lifestyles and practiced different economies. In some instances San were hired by Khoikhoi as herders and it was also not uncommon for Khoikhoi to take San wives. In some regions, such as the southwestern Cape, the distinction between the San and Khoikhoi became vague as recently impoverished Khoikhoi were often referred to as San and the more well-to-do San in many cases became part of Khoikhoi society. Similarly, in other regions Khoikhoi who fell on hard times would often join San groups and revert to a hunting-gathering lifestyle. It is in light of this, and in spite of numerous differences between the San and the Khoikhoi, that many earlier scholars found it convenient to group these two societies together under the moniker *Khoisan* (Elphick, 2007:20-21).

By 250 AD Bantu-speaking farmers had migrated south of the Limpopo River (Mountain, 2003:7,22). Theirs was an emigration spurred by growing numbers as well as the need for agricultural land and trade potential. These farmers brought with them not only domesticated plants and livestock, but also knowledge of pottery craft as well as mining and metal working (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:viii) which included the production of fine quality carbon steel (Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:10). They settled largely in the east of the country, in territories where rainfall exceeded twenty inches per annum (Thompson, 2006:10) because of their summer rainfall crops that prevented them from settling in the southwest of the country (Mountain, 2003:7,22). By 1 000 AD Bantu-speaking farmers were present in much of the north-east of Southern Africa, in what was to become Natal, Transvaal, Swaziland, the north-eastern Orange Free State, eastern Botswana and the Cape east of the Kei River.

With settlement came established social institutions such as the homestead as basic social unit and hereditary chieftainship, as well as cultural phenomena such as the ideological significance of cattle (Iliffe, 2007:100-103).

Culturally, physically and economically these people differed significantly from the San and the Khoikhoi. Apart from keeping livestock, the Bantu-speaking farmers also grew cereal crops, allowing them to settle in semi-permanent villages yearlong. The mixed farming economy was more productive and offered higher levels of material security than both hunter-gather and pastoralist economies, thus giving rise to more densely populated communities. Furthermore, the nature of a settled society also meant the Bantu-speaking farmers' political organisations were stronger and more complex than those of the hunter-gatherers to the west[24] (Thompson, 2006:10, 11, 16, 20) - a fact that would enable them to resist European colonialism more astutely than the San or the Khoikhoi could. Due to these very same reasons, however, the San were also vulnerable to Bantu-speaking farmers. According to Thompson (2006:28), initial mixed farming communities moving into areas occupied by hunter-gatherers would have been too few in numbers to significantly impact on these indigenous communities; whereas mixed farming and pastoral economies were more or less compatible, in time indigenous hunter-gatherer communities were sublimated killed or driven out (Thompson, 2006:15).

As social dynamics between migrating Bantu-speaking farmers and the San and the Khoikhoi were being established in the hinterland, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to come into contact with the San and the Khoikhoi along the southern African coast and adjacent interior. In 1488 Bartholomew Dias and his ship's complement became the first Europeans to round the southern tip of Africa. Then at the height of their colonial power; the Portuguese pioneered the Cape maritime route

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[24] In spite of the difference, the Bantu-speaking farmers did share a number of characteristics with the San and the Khoikhoi, especially in relation to Europeans conventions. Most pertinent to this study are the notions of property and ownership. Neither the San (cf. Ross, 1999:10) nor Khoikhoi (cf. Mountain, 2003:40-46; Ross, 999:10, 22), or Bantu-speaking farmers (Thompson, 2006:23) entertained the European notion of individual land ownership.

to the East and dominated it until 1595 (Katzen, 1982:187). After a number of hostile skirmishes with Khoikhoi herdsmen the Portuguese remained circumspect of the region and its inhabitants[25], although trade continued between the Portuguese seafarers and locals for at least the next century and a half (Mountain, 2003:46-47). The Portuguese, however, showed little interest in the Cape - preferring to stop over in Mozambique, St Helena and the Azores. When the Dutch and English broke the Portuguese monopoly of the Cape maritime route European interest in the Cape became more pronounced (Katzen, 1982:187).

The English were the first to challenge the Portuguese monopoly of the Cape sea route Eleven years after Francis Drake rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1580 as part of his around-the-world journey, James Lancaster sailed into Table Bay. Four years later in 1595 the Dutch, under Cornelis de Houtman, anchored in Mossel Bay and traded with the local Khoikhoi (Cameron & Spies, 1987:59). According to Ferro (1997:7) neither the Dutch nor the British colonial endeavours grew from the same causes and conditions as those that triggered Portuguese and Spanish processes of colonisation. The impact of the fourteenth and fifteenth century conflicts and the decline of social status among the Portuguese and Spanish nobility had a profound impact on their colonial expansion. In contrast, by the time the Dutch and British rose to prominence in the late sixteenth century, new political structures had become firmly established domestically in both the Netherlands and in Britain (Cameron & Spies, 1987:59; Ferro 1997:7). The emerging mercantile capitalism in the Netherlands and Britain saw both the Dutch and the British establish chartered companies to look after their colonial interests. In 1600 the English East India Company was chartered. Initially financed by groups of merchants within the company itself, it was later financed by terminable joint stocks and from 1657, by means of a permanent capital fund. The Dutch established the *Vereenigde Oostindiche Compagnie* (the Unified East India Company or the VOC) in 1602. The

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[25] Seventeenth-century European accounts of the Khoikhoi were disparaging with regards to their appearance, lifestyle, culture, intelligence and often accused them of ferociousness and even levelling false and unfounded accusations of cannibalism (cf. Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:12, 16-17) as illustrated by the following quote circa 1623: "…these wretches…are man eaters: they had killed and eaten seven men of these English on their outward journey (Olafsson quoted in, Raven-Hart, 1967:111).

VOC was an open investment company that operated on a joint stock basis and was chartered by the Dutch States General (Hunt, 2005:5).

In 1601 a fleet of the English East India Company anchored in Table Bay. Almost two decades later in July 1620 Fitzherbert and Shilling took possession of Table Bay in the name of their monarch - King James I. The king, however, showed no interest in their largesse (Cameron & Spies, 1987:59-60). Thus initial intensions by the English to establish a victualling station were soon abandoned.

Having briefly considered the pre-colonial history of South Africa, the next section will focus on dawn of European colonial enterprise and settlement on the sub-continent, starting with the arrival of the Dutch at the Cape in 1652, with specific focus on the emergence of the Afrikaner as an identifiable group.

3.3   Biographical history of the Afrikaner ancestry 1652 – 1901

After a resolution passed by the VOC's Council of Seventeen in 1616, Dutch fleets started stopping over at the Cape on a more regular basis in order to rest their crews and take on fresh water (Hunt, 2005: vii-12). During the following decades Dutch interest in the East intensified (especially after the VOC established its trade headquarters in Jakarta, renamed Batavia by the Dutch, in 1619). In 1651 the Council of Seventeen issued instructions for the establishment of a staging post at the Cape of Good Hope. Johan Anthonisz (Jan) van Riebeeck (1619-1677) was appointed commander of the expedition, which left from Texel in 1651. Almost three and a half months later on 6 April 1652 the three ships under Van Riebeeck's command, the *Dromedaris*, *Reijger* and *Goede Hoop*, arrived in Table Bay (Hunt, 2005: vii-13).

Consequently the history of the Afrikaner can largely be traced back to this historical instance - the establishment of a refreshment station by the Dutch East India

Company at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 (cf. Giliomee, 2003:xiii). By the 1650s the Dutch were the leading trading nation in the world (Giliomee, 2007a: 40) and thus it transpired that colonial South Africa was founded by the VOC, the pre-eminent capitalist corporation of the seventeenth century (Ross, 1999:3; Thompson, 2006,32-33). The Cape became the first European settlement in Africa south of the Sahara. Yet in spite of its strategic military and geographical advantages (cf. Katzen, 1982:188), the Cape was not an ideal colony for European settlement, as it presented a number of drawbacks (Giliomee, 2007a:41; De Klerk, 1975:7). The Cape provided, for example, no staple products that could be traded internationally. This situation was further complicated by a hinterland that was characterised by poor soil and a harsh climate. In addition the Koikhoi and San were technologically and culturally far less developed than the indigenous peoples in the East, and presented no trading opportunities beyond bartering livestock (Giliomee, 2003:3). Furthermore the Cape's geographical isolation limited its market to local consumption and visiting ships (Katzen, 1982:198, 202), thus severely restricting its economic potential.

However, Katzen (1982:190) maintains that the advantages of a refreshment station at the Cape were always greater than the disadvantages, in spite of the high cost of maintenance. In light of this the VOC envisaged a small establishment at the Cape and Van Riebeeck's orders were restricted to erecting a fort and a lodge near a freshwater spring and to procure suitable land for gardens as well as pastures for livestock (Katzen, 1982:189).

The initial number of Europeans to disembark with Van Riebeeck and settle around the area of the company fort counted around ninety. These immigrants were mostly illiterate or semi-literate men from the Dutch peasantry, or criminals on the run. In time some left the Company's service to become farming free burghers (Gilomee, 2003:xiv, 1, 4). Dutch female orphans and French religious refugees would later bolster the numbers of the first settlers. The settlement of the Cape hinterland by burghers supports Fieldhouse's (1991:5) assertion (discussed in Chapter 2) that the colonising process was often haphazard and influenced by circumstantial occurrences that frequently altered initial intensions, since the refreshment post at

the Cape of Good Hope rapidly developed into a sizeable settler colony soon after 1652 (Fieldhouse, 1991:5, 8). The Afrikaner stems from these lowly origins and circumstantial events - they are the progeny of "weak and ignorant people", as Van Riebeeck described the first settlers. Giliomee (2003:xiv, 4) states that these very settlers would become among the first colonial peoples to develop a distinct sense of self-consciousness by cutting most of their family and community ties with Europe.

At first, apart from the occasional conflict, contact between the VOC settlement and the indigenous Khoikhoi was limited to bartering or raiding sheep and cattle. However, the arrival of Europeans, on what transpired to be a permanent basis, would prove to have profound effects on socio-political structures of the indigenous peoples of the region (Cameron & Spies, 1987:60). The Khoikhoi being transhumant meant that a steady supply of labour was not available to the company settlement, and thus the Dutch garrison had to be self-reliant in all endeavours from guard duty to woodcutting, brick-making and building. The hard toil and unrelenting conditions caused many company servants to desert. The VOC was concerned that administrating the Cape was becoming too costly and labour-intensive and it soon became clear that the company would have to cut back on costs (Katzen, 1982:189). In order to curtail expenses it was decided in 1657 to release a number of company servants to farm as 'free burghers'. Demographically burghers had to be married and be from Dutch or German stock (Hunt, 2005:31-32; Katzen, 1982:193-194). Free burghers were company employees who had been released from their contracts in order to pursue independent farming. In spite of the moniker, free burghers remained subject to VOC regulations as well as the decisions of the Cape authorities and Dutch law (cf. Giliomee, 2007a:41) and were obliged to remain in South Africa for at least twenty years (Hunt, 2005:31-32). Giliomee (2003:xiv,2) suggests that these preconditions made the free burghers victims of Dutch imperialism, since such provisos effectively amounted to being colonised, and meant that the burghers often suffered the contempt of the VOC[26]. The Company was in a position to exert such

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[26] This serves as evidence of Fedrickson's (2002:54) notion of Same-Other dualism that functions as part of the class-based social inequality prevalent in European society itself, resulting in settlers suffering discrimination as colonial subjects as they themselves were constructed within a discourse of difference and inferiority by the metropolitan centre (see section 2.3.1).

control since it was a power onto its own, having had the jurisdiction to manage its own military operations to the extent of declaring war (De Klerk, 1975:5-6). The restrictions placed on these first free burghers were prohibitive and strict; for example, they were to concentrate primarily on grain production that was to be sold only to the Company. Burghers were also not allowed to grow other cash crops such as tobacco or to cultivate vegetables for reasons other than self-consumption. Furthermore, the VOC placed price restrictions on the cattle trade with the Khoikhoi (Giliomee, 2003:xiv, 2).

These restrictions led to dire poverty among some burghers, ultimately giving rise to a burger petition against company officials in the early eighteenth century. This incidence of burgher dissent also heralded the emergence of a new collective identity among a certain sector of Cape white society. In light of this, De Klerk (1975:9-10) maintains that the majority of Europeans that found their way to the Cape came from a long history of struggle against oppression in their own countries. In 1688 the arrival of the French Huguenots, who were fleeing religious persecution in their own country, was to strengthen this tradition (De Klerk, 1975:9-10, 144-145). It was this common experience of resistance to oppression that would unite the burghers in their opposition against corrupt VOC officials at the Cape (De Klerk, 1975:10), resulting in the Lord Seventeen's recall of Willem Adriaan van der Stel an a number of company officials in 1707 (Giliomee, 2007a:48, 61). In a jubilant display of triumph and resulting fracas involving the landrost of Stellenbosch, upon hearing the news of the Lord Seventeen's edict against Willem Adriaan van der Stel, a young burgher, Hendrik Biebow, defiantly refered to himself as an *Africaander*. Prior to this, the term tended to refer to the Khokhoi or locally born slaves and free blacks. Giliomee (2007**a**:62) speculates that Biebow's use of the term might have been an effort to distinguish between locally born Europeans and those company officials who were European immigrants. This may be seen as evidence of the burghers' burgeoning awareness of themselves being different or *other* than their European con-temporaries.

Therefore, the term *Afrikaner* as designation for whites was first used in the eighteenth century - at the time, however, it was used synonymously with the epithets *burgher*, *Dutchmen*, *Boer* and even *Christian*. The equation of the term

Afrikaner and *Christian* is significant, since much has been made of the importance of religion, specifically the burghers' inherited Calvinist tradition, in the development of the Afrikaner as a *volk* (cf. De Klerk, 1975:12). This view emphasises the burghers' belief in what Giliomee (2003:42) terms a "covenant theology" - this refers to the notion that the burghers came to view themselves as a chosen people by appropriating the biblical covenant between God and the Jews (cf. Giliomee, 2003:42). However, Thompson (2001:51) maintains that during the eighteenth century Christianity had little influence on South Africa society as a whole. Although white colonists did perceive of themselves as a distinct community and tended to identify themselves by the label of 'Christian', this distinction was essentially a racial one, and one denoting *baasskap* (or a state of being a master). Giliomee (2003:41-42) corroborates that until the late eighteenth century, few burghers could be considered very religious. It was only from the 1790s onwards that religion experienced a revival in the Cape Colony. The somatic inference of the label 'Christian' remained, however, as suggested by Giliomee (2003:42): "It was birth rather than personal conversion that determined who the 'real' Christians were". Hence, the designation 'Christian' in this case denoted a distinct social group rather than a collective sharing a common faith[27] (Giliomee, 2003:42). During the course of the nineteenth century the term *Afrikaner* became more commonly used, but only acquired its most cogent meaning – referring exclusively to white Afrikaans speakers - by the mid-twentieth century. From the 1980s the term again acquired a more racially inclusive meaning (Giliomee, 2003:xvi, xix).

In terms of naming convention I concur with Giliomee (2003:xix) who uses the term burgher to denote Dutch or Afrikaans-speaking whites prior to 1875 and the term Afrikaner after this date. Furthermore I will use the terms *trekboer* to denote white migrant subsistence farmers who were no longer considered burghers. As indicated, the *trekboers* became deculturated by altering their material culture in order to adapt successfully to their changed environment, and this process of becoming indigenous and Africanised found expression in the moniker *Afrikaner* (cf. Leatt *et al.*, 1986:70; Sparks, 1990:43; Giliomee, 2003:31). According to Hunt (2005:108) the trekboers are

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[27] The most notorious association between Afrikaner identity and Calvinist dogmas were forged later during the twentieth century with the theologising of Afrikaner Nationalist politics (cf. De Klerk, 1975:204-206, 212-217, 221-222) and civil society through the establishment of Christian Nationalist private schools (cf. Gilomee, 2003:269-270).

generally regarded as ancestors of the Afrikaners. Hence the terms *trekboer* and Afrikaner may be used interchangeably, especially when approaching the late eighteenth century. Prior to this, variations of the term *Afrikaander* were intermittently used in a political sense in opposition to the Cape government (cf. Giliomee, 2003:22, 52). The use of this moniker in such a political sense further suggests that there was a growing awareness among burghers of their own status as colonial subjects[28].

Apart from giving rise to an emerging Afrikaner identity, the free burgher system inadvertently paved the way to further European settlement at the Cape. Although initially resistant to the concept of establishing a colony at the Cape, the Council of Seventeen gave orders in 1671 to cease official crop production where possible in favour of freemen, adding impetus to the process. This move was partly necessitated by the increase of maritime traffic making the Cape their port of call[29]. Between 1672 and 1679 the free white population increased from 168 to 259. At the same time a renewed drive towards colonisation in the East together with the threat of the British capturing the Cape during the South African War (1899-1902), further advanced Dutch settlement at the Cape (Katzen, 1982:195-196).

In order to extend the settlement and establish a proper colony, Ross (1999:22) suggests that the Dutch had to meet two important conditions: the first was the procurement of land and the second the establishment of a suitable social order for colonial rule. The first, procurement of land, was done by force - resulting in two short wars between the Dutch and the Khoikhoi. The first war between Dutch settlers and Khoikhoi took place between 1659 and 1660 and the second time intermitted between 1673 and 1677 (Thompson, 2006:37). Elphick (1985:112) suggests that the difference in worldview led to the Khoikhoi's vanquishment. Since the Khoikhoi measured wealth in terms of cattle, their tactic was to steal Dutch stock in an attempt

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[28] In addition, the terms *voortrekker* and *trekker* refer to those frontier *boers* who took part in the Great Trek. I will use the term *boers* to refer to Dutch or Afrikaans-speaking white farmers who were no longer considered burghers. According to Giliomee (2003:24, 52) the term *boeren* was a term commonly used to describe rural Afrikaners well until the early twentieth century. In addition I will use the term *Boer* when referring to white Afrikaans-speaking nationals of either of the two Boer republics, OFS (Orange Free State) and ZAR (Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek) (cf. Giliomee, 2003:179).

[29] In the decade between 1662 and 1671 three hundred and seventy VOC ships as well as twenty-six French, nine British and two Danish ships docked in Table Bay (Hunt, 2005:93-94).

to sabotage their enemy's means. In light of this, Dutch fatalities during these wars were negligible. On that account Smith and Pheiffer (1993:17) suggest that had Dutch casualties been higher at such an early stage of colonisation, the VOC might have reconsidered its position at the Cape.

The second of Ross's conditions for the establishment of a colony, namely the establishment of a social order that would accept and allow for colonial rule, required settlement by foreigners (1999:22). European immigration accelerated with Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Large numbers of French Huguenots fled their home country, many to Holland, which was viewed as a safe haven for Protestants[30] (cf. Hunt, 2005:136). The VOC envisaged that sending a number of the Huguenots to the Cape would not only alleviate the situation in Holland but would also significantly aid the skills shortage at the Cape. The Huguenots were offered free passage to the Cape as well as granted free land on arrival. However, relationships between the Netherlands and France were still strained, and the Huguenots had to swear allegiance to the Dutch prior to departure. In 1688 nearly 200 French Huguenot refugees arrived at the Cape (Hunt, 2005:136). The Cape government, under command of Simon van der Stel, interspersed the new arrivals among the settled Dutch farmers in order to precipitate their assimilation (Katzen, 1982:196). In 1701 the Lords Seventeen decreed what Gilomee (2003:11) calls a "policy of forced cultural assimilation", ordering Willem Adriaan van der Stel, successor to his father, to ensure the gradual extirpation and disappearance of the French language in the Cape. This incentive quickly paid off as the Huguenots brought stability to the Cape white population. Since they viewed South Africa as their permanent refuge, the Huguenots intermarried with the other burghers without hesitance (Katzen, 1982:196). Katzen (1982:213) further suggest that by the early eighteenth century, the Cape's white settler community had become "African-based and self-perpetuating, knowing no other Fatherland".

The Cape European population, bolstered by new numbers after the arrival of the Huguenots, soon extended the already existing settlement around Stellenbosch to include the Drakenstein and Berg River valley region (Hunt, 2005:139, 143). In

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[30] As suggested in Chapter 2, religious zeal was one of motives behind early European expansionism and settlement (cf. Ferro,1997:3, 6-7); in this instance it was religious persecution.

addition to the increase in the European population, the first slaves arrived in the Cape in 1658, imported from Angola and Dahomey on the west coast of Africa. Soon other destinations were sourced and records of slave imports between 1680 and 1731 show that at least half were from Madagascar and another third from India and Indonesia combined. The desire for the importation of slaves had been expressed repeatedly, since the San and Khoikhoi proved to be unwilling labourers. Furthermore the VOC vetoed the proposal to enslave the Khoikhoi in fear of jeopardising the company's cattle trade (Hunt, 2005:53).

According to Giliomee (2003:12) slavery fundamentally changed the course of history at the Cape, transforming "...the social ethos of society, defining freedom and the status hierarchy". As the European community expanded, the demand for cheap labour swiftly increased. Between 1652 and the British abolishment of slavery in 1807, nearly a further 60 000 slaves were imported into South Africa (Ross, 1999:23). During the first approximately 175 years of Cape colonial society slave labour was the predominant form of labour. All aspects and strata of society from institutions such as the family and the church, to the legal system and the economy, were imbued with the spectre of slavery (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:ix). The employment of slaves and destitute Khoikoi as a labour force had rendered the Cape a multi-racial society from early on; one in which Europeans held hegemony and the master-slave relationship model became the blueprint for all other interactions (Gilomee, 2003:12; Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:ix).

Racial stereotyping of slaves was at the order of the day, crudely attributing characteristics and skills according to nationality and geographical origins. As such Malays were considered deceitful and riotous, whereas Mozambicans were seen as mild and even-tempered, for example (Shell, 2007:53). Giliomee (2003:12) supports this notion by stating: "the great European colonial expansion provided the context in which the interaction with *Others* served to crystallise the Europeans' sense of Self. At the core of this lay a sense of being heirs and beneficiaries of a superior civilisation and religion", and further reiterates the point with the following statement:

...seventeenth-century Europeans made more than a passing note of differences in colour that corresponded with difference in culture. To seventeenth-century Dutchmen blackness was the opposite of what they considered normal, beautiful and attractive. This attitude towards colour was reinforced by the cultural superiority Christians felt towards heathens (Giliomee, 2003:12).

Despite racial, cultural and religious differences and the status hierarchy, there was no rigid racial division and frequent interracial mixing occurred due primarily to the considerable gender imbalance of the white population. By 1700 there were twice as many adult men in the Cape district as women and further inland men outnumbered women three to one (Giliomee, 2003:18). According to Giliomee (2003:18) because of this imbalance, marriages between fair-skinned non-European women and white men were rather common during the first seventy-five years of Dutch settlement, even though marriages between Dutchmen and non-white wives were not allowed in Holland at the time (Iliffe, 2007:129). Initially children born from these interracial unions were accepted into the Cape European community. However, during a visit to the Cape in 1685 High Commissioner Van Rheede prohibited marriage between Europeans and full-blooded slave women[31], and only condoned marriages with women of mixed race with the intension of assimilating them into the European population (Giliomee, 2003:18)[32].

As the number of European settlers increased, both the San and the Khoikhoi attempted to resist the advance of settlers, but the fragmented nature of the indigenous societies made it difficult to challenge and confront colonial advancement. The San had to witness the invasion of their ancestral hunting grounds, and as the colonisers advanced many fled to the hinterland and those remaining were at the mercy of the colonists (Ross, 1999:20-22). The growing burgher settlement's steady encroachment on Khoikhoi grazing land, leading to heightened tensions in the Cape

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[31] According to Giliomee (2003:19), this ban was never enforced.

[32] Giliomee (2003:19) continues to state that, according to genealogical researcher J.A. Heese, an estimated seven per cent of contemporary Afrikaner families have a non-European progenitor, citing Afrikaans families such as Volschenk, Pretorius, Myburgh, Brits, Slabbert and Van Deventer as some examples.

region. The settlers' and the Khoikhoi's opposing views on landownership further exacerbated the situation. In line with the mercantile capitalism of the time, the settlers regarded land as a commodity. This implied that land could be privately owned, inherited, sold or exchanged[33]. By the 1680s the Khoikhoi's loss of social and political cohesion meant that they had become a subordinate class within the colonial hierarchy, many working as servants in burgher society (Thompson, 2006:37). Not only were the subordinated Khoikhoi cut off from their traditional means of production; they had no means to access to the Dutch mercantile capitalist economy. Over time the servant class Khoikhoi became acculturated, adopting many aspects of European culture such as western styled clothing, Christianity and the Dutch language. But, more so they also came to adhere to the ideological acceptance of their own subordinate rank in the prevailing status hierarchy. Those Khoikhoi who were not incorporated into colonial society became impoverished refugees, and often joined San groups, reverting to a lifestyle of hunting and raiding (Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:11, 18).

The Dutch had always regarded the Khoikhoi as a lower-class people (Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:18). Whereas the VOC's attitude towards the San and the Khoikhoi were at best circumspect, the burghers' on the other hand were less tolerant. The Khoikhoi the San, being hunter-gatherers, had nothing to barter or offer the colonists economically; and many burghers considered them to be vermin (Mountain, 2003:25, 29). The Dutch colonists' view of the San is elucidated by Penn (quoted in Mountain, 2003:30):

> To European observers, the San seemed to possess no property, political structures, religion, houses, literacy, decency or even an intelligible language. Somatically, too, they were as far removed from the European norm as any people the Dutch had ever encountered. Conscious of the achievements of their own nation, and imbued with a sense of their own superiority under God's guidance, it was hardly surprising that the colonists should imagine the San to be completely 'other' than themselves. Fear, contempt, hatred and the almost

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[33] The Khoikhoi on the other hand, as stated, had no regard for private real estate and viewed land as common property whose usage was subject to particular customary practices, and believed that land itself could not be owned.

unrestrained licence to violence provided by the context of legitimate war on the furthest frontiers of European expansion, ensured that the war against the San would be marked by genocidal atrocities.

As time passed social attitudes became entrenched into the legal and social fabric of the Cape. Although the authoritarian governance of the VOC eventually gave way to the principles of government by consent, imparting political participation to all men of all races, the racially stratified nature of Cape society meant that the power balance remained bias towards Europeans (Davenport, 1982:273). Furthermore, the many proclamations passed to control interaction between settlers and indigenous peoples steadily entrenched an incumbent social hierarchy that further subjugated the San and the Khoikhoi. In this tripartite hierarchy company servants occupied the highest rung, followed by free burghers, free blacks, slaves and lastly the Khoikhoi and San (cf. Ross, 1999:23).

The Khoikhoi resisted colonisation and remained fiercely independent ever since the Dutch's arrival, but due to loss of territory, biased treaties favouring the colonisers, restrictive Cape governmental proclamations and direct interference with traditional interrelationships and traditional practices (cf. Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:17), they were eventually subjugated into subservience. The effects of European colonialism on the San and Khoikhoi were devastating, almost wiping out both the San and Khoikhoi's status as coherent ethnic entities. The San fell victim to European diseases, forced emigration and genocide whereas the Khoikhoi were subjected to dispossession and acculturation (Mountain, 2003:7, 51-54). The extent of the impact of the Dutch settlement on the Khoikhoi is illustrated by Elphick (quoted in Thompson, 2006:38):

> The Company and settlers in combination ... assaulted all five components of independence together: they absorbed livestock and labor [sic] from the Khoikhoi economy, subjugated Khoikhoi chiefs to Dutch overrule and their followers to Dutch law, encroached on Khoikhoi pastures, and endangered the integrity of Khoikhoi culture.

After 1690 the remaining San and Khoikhoi populations beyond the Cape mountain ranges were forced further inland by the advancement of less-affluent burghers who had turned to pastoral stock farming (Ross, 1999:25). The Khoikhoi, paralysed by social and political collapse and decimated by an outbreak of smallpox in 1712, were defenceless in the face of this territorial onslaught by the burghers (Thompson, 2006:45). This migration of settler farmers was partly due to the growing *trekboer*-economy, which provided an alternative to the sedentary farming practices at the Cape (Hunt, 2005:184). Over the course of the eighteenth century stock farming would surpass arable farming and by 1770 two-thirds of all farmers in the Colony would be stock farmers, many leading a migratory pastoral *trekboer* lifestyle (Giliomee, 2003:31).

Giliomee (2003:31) does not consider the *trekboers'* migration into the hinterland as systematic colonisation. This view correlates with the original signification of the word colonisation within the European context, which did not indicate notions of exploitation and oppression, but was similar to the contemporary notion of migration (cf. Young, 2001:20). As indicated in section 2.2.1, in this sense the process refers essentially to the transplanting of communities whose intent was not to relinquish their original culture, but who were in pursuit of better economic, political and religious conditions. Although such communities' primary goal was not to rule others or extort their resources, subjugation and exploitation were usually by-products. Hence, the *trekboers'* migration into the hinterland did have a profound impact on the indigenous populations in those areas, gradually subjecting the indigenous pastoralists and hunter-gatherers to various degrees of clientage or tenancy (Thompson, 2006:48). Since their vast herds required considerable tracts of grazing land, the *trekboers'* nomadic pastoral lifestyle became entrenched. The aridness of the hinterland furthermore meant that the *trekboers* had to adapt their range according to seasonal rainfall patterns, an observance they gleaned from the Khoikhoi herdsmen (Ross, 1999:25).

The European-descendant population in the Cape hinterland doubled every generation, necessitating the procurement of significantly more land. By the end of

the eighteenth century colonial expansion on the eastern frontier extended west of the Fish River and to the north, encompassed most of the territory south of the Gariep (Ross, 1999:26). At the same time, however, *trekboer* expansion had reached its margins. Severe aridity prevented migration beyond 300 miles north of Cape Town; in the northeast hunter-gatherers in the Sneeuberg region resisted expansion and toward the east beyond Algoa Bay Xhosa-mixed farmers together with indigenous pastoralists prevented further *trekboer* migration (Thompson, 2006:45).

Even though the *trekboers* were now contained within a geographical area, effectively most of this population were beyond the political control of the VOC government - only acknowledging the Company's jurisdiction and institutions when it suited them (Ross, 1999:26). Due to their isolation and relative distance from the Cape, Sparks (1990:43) suggests that the *trekboers* became more like the indigenous Africans as their lifestyle started to echo that of the local tribesmen. Like their indigenous neighbours, the *trekboers* now favoured a pastoral lifestyle above agriculture, establishing them as semi-nomadic cattle herders with a subsistence economy and similar materially meagre existence. Furthermore, the *trekboers* tended to live in temporary dwellings such as tented wagons or simple mud-walled cottages similar to those of the surrounding black tribes. In short, Sparks (1990:43), probably with reference to David Harrison (cf. Leach, 1989:xi), suggests that the Afrikaners had become a "white tribe of Africa". Giliomee (quoted in Leatt *et al.*, 1986:70) corroborates by suggesting that: "The process of becoming indigenous or Africanised found expression in the term "Afrikaner", by which the colonists came to call themselves"[34]. Sparks (1990:43) suggests that this process of deculturation was probably slow and unselfconscious, as most of these schismatic people were largely illiterate with no organised social structures or community base. However, according to Giliomee (2003:33), a degree of anxiety and sense of insecurity did accompany their gradual disengagement from the cultural and material norms of their European contemporaries, or at least the semblance of European society at the Cape. Steyn (2001:28) affirms this notion by stating that these early people who came to call them selves Afrikaners still fervently attempted to cling to those cultural, and racial, markers that distinguished themselves from the indigenous black peoples.

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Nonetheless, many first-hand accounts by late eighteenth-century travellers describing the *trekboers*' lifestyle corroborated fears of their going native (cf. Giliomee, 2003:33-35; Lichtenstein, 1928:446-8; Sparrman, 1971:122). One such account by Menzel describes the *trekboer* way of life as such: "Some of the Boors [sic] have accustomed themselves to such an extent with the carefree life, the indifference, the lazy days and the association with slaves and Hottentots that not much difference may be discerned between the former and the latter" (quoted in Giliomee, 2003:33). Indeed the *trekboers* did borrow many cultural aspects from the Khoikhoi and San as their environment forced them to adopt a fairly pragmatic way of life in order to survive (Giliomee, 2003:33). Hence, by the late eighteenth century the *trekboers,* as well as most of the burghers - now often called Afrikaners - had lost their sense of identification with the Netherlands and had become a fragment culture. The term fragment culture refers to: "a culture in which consensus is heightened by gradual disengagement from Europe, and by participation in conflicts not experienced in Europe" (Leatt *et al.,* 1986:70), for example the Frontier conflicts and climatic differences. Furthermore, due to their isolation, this fragment culture was not significantly influenced by the Enlightenment processes that their European counterparts were experiencing. Instead the *trekboers* and burghers were developing a national identity[35] as a substitute for the European identity they were losing (Leatt *et al.,* 1986:70). This developing national identity, that was native and bound to the African continent, led to what historian De Kiewiet refers to as the formation of the Boer race (cf. Giliomee, 2003:34-35). Furthermore, as opposed to British settlers, these Afrikaners could never rejoin a European motherland[36] (Sparks, 1990:48). As the eighteenth century drew to a close, a strong sense of Afrikaner identity had

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[35] This emerging consciousness correlates with the first of Van Jaarsveld 's proposed stages in the history of, what he terms *Afrikaanssprekendes* (*in* De Klerk, 2008:344). According to van Jaarsveld this first stage, the process of *volkswording,* was already evident during the time of Dutch rule, and was followed by a phase of *nasionale selfbewuswording* (1868-1877) and the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism (1977-1881). With regards Afrikaner Nationalism however, there exists many differing opinions regarding the nature and time frame of this phenomena (cf. De Klerk, 2008:339).

[36] According to Leach (1989:254) the English-speaking South Africans had retained strong bonds with the British Isles because of the continual influx of new British immigrants. Furthermore, lacking a central myth, like the Great Trek, knitting their community together, the English speaking South Africans "united around the Victorian principles of mercantilism and self-improvement. For the English, the glamour of empire-building took the place of the Great Trek" (Leach, 1989:255).

emerged among the European settlers, as opposed to being Dutch, German or French. At the same time the term *Afrikaner* also became more commonly used (Giliomee, 2003:51). The Afrikaner had become 'sociologically indigenous' (Steyn, 2001:xxiv). In spite of this, however, these Afrikaners still considered themselves superior to the local indigenous peoples whom they regarded as heathens (cf. Thompson, 2006:51).

Adding to the Afrikaner's disengagement from Europe, the late eighteenth century also saw the end of the longstanding Dutch colonial hegemony at the Cape, as the fortunes of the VOC declined. Between 1795 and 1814 the Cape changed hands three times. In 1795 the British took control of the colony in an effort to secure its leverage in the war with France. Due to the Treaty of Amiens, Britain returned the Cape to Batavian[37] rule in 1803 (Mountain, 2003:56; Ross, 1999:35). At the time, the Cape had progressed little in terms of European notions of colonial settlement, still functioning as a mere stepping-stone to the East. In this regard the Cape made no significant contribution to the metropolitan economy of Europe (Thompson, 2006:50). However, Britain took control once more in 1806, this time with the intension of making it a Crown colony and to develop, expand and 'civilise' it (Giliomee, 2003:193, 196). In Great Britain the European desire for, and belief in its own cultural superiority (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1989:126) reached its apogee at the start of the nineteenth century in what Ferro (1997:13) describes as Britain's "will to dominate". Ergo, the British occupation of the Cape, would over time lead to significant social and political ramifications in the region. As Ross comments, English nationalism was the "prime nationalism to which both Afrikaner and African nationalism reacted" (quoted in Giliomee, 2003:194).

At first, however, the British left intact many of the political institutions put in place by the VOC. The Dutch settlers were culturally different, speaking a foreign language, adhering to a different religious persuasion and governed by a different system of law. The British experience in governing French Canada had led to a policy of

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[37] The Dutch state was known as the Batavian Republic at the time (Ross, 1999:35).

minimal interference when it came to local institutions[38] (Davenport, 1982:277-278). Thus, the existing system of law was retained, leading to South Africa's adherence to the basis of Roman-Dutch law up until this day. The British also initially maintained alliances with the pre-eminent landowners in the colony. In a sense, also, the British liberated the Cape colonial economy. The stringent restrictions enforced by the VOC were lifted and the reach of British colonial power ensured a more expansive market for Cape products.

Arguably the most dramatic impact on the Cape economical and social structures was the banning of the slave trade to British colonies circa 1807/1808 and the abolishment of slavery[39] *per se* in 1834 (cf. Ross, 1999:36-37, Thompson, 2006:56). The preclusion of the slave trade deprived Cape colonial farmers of their customary steady supply of labour, resulting in worsening labour conditions for the residential slave community. In 1828 the British government repealed all previous legislation governing Khoikhoi, Hottentot and free people of colour, granting them equal status before the law with the same legal privileges as those enjoyed by Europeans in the colony (Thompson, 2006:56, 59). However, according to Thompson (2006:59-61) the emancipation of slaves and indigenous employees did little to alleviate their subjugation, or change the *status quo* of white hegemony in terms of power and economy. In the pre-industrial and largely rural Cape society, landownership was a precondition for autonomy – and since European colonisers were occupying the vast majority of productive land in the colony – indigenous people and emancipated slaves had little choice but to remain in white employ. During the same period the growing influx of British capital and immigrants bolstered the accelerating transformation of Cape society. Surprisingly there was little initial resistance to British rule from the resident Cape Dutch population. As stated, the burghers' relationship with the Dutch government was contentious (cf. Giliomee, 2003:xiv), leading to their experience of British rule as being much less autocratic (cf. Katzen, 1982:213; Davenport, 1982:278). Furthermore Katzen, (1982:213) and Davenport (1982:278)

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[38] Here, as in Canada, this refers to local colonial institutions, since local indigenous societies were perceived as having no political structures and social institutions (cf. Mountain, 2003:30).

[39] The abolition of slavery is often cited as one of the motivations that sparked the Great Trek (1836-1854) (cf. Thompson, 2006:86).

both suggest that Cape Dutch society had become African-based, or sociologically indigenous, and had lost most of its cultural associations with the Netherlands. The lack of regular instruction of Cape Dutch youth in their own language and literature also led to an underclass which could easily be cajoled. The final consolidation of British power South Africa with the peace settlement in 1814 came about without the consultation of either black or white South Africans (Thompson, 2006:52).

In 1820, fourteen years after the British permanently occupied the Cape in 1806, the first group of some five thousand assisted British settlers arrived in South Africa, known today as the 1820 Settlers. This occurred in the face of rife unemployment and the threat of social unrest in Britain (Thompson, 2006:54). According to Giliomee (2003:193) the arrival of the 1820 Settlers contributed significantly to the transformation of the Cape into an English colony – furthermore, he states, it was also conducive to the anglicisation of upper-class Afrikaners – also called the "loyal Dutch" and "Queen's Afrikaners". Initially the British immigrants were settled on the eastern frontier of the Cape colony in the Albany district, in part as an attempt to secure and fortify the region (Thompson, 2006:54; Davenport, 1982:278, 281).

The settlement of the eastern frontier heralded a significant shift in the power balance between the colony and the Africans beyond its borders. Previously the extent of Xhosa numbers countermanded the technological supremacy of the European settlers. According to Ross (1999:38), prior to 1811, "the frontier between the colony and the Africans was still imprecisely defined, both spatially and socially". The settlement of the frontier supported the maintenance of the British army, which in turn provided significant opportunities for the local economy. Through its military supremacy the British laid waste to Xhosa infrastructure, often with severe brutality. The Xhosa were further impoverished in that the large areas of land captured during the frontier wars were made available for European settlement, particularly to bolster the bourgeoning wool industry in the region (Ross, 1999:38-39).

However, in spite of facing many dangers and tribulations together, the British settlers on the eastern frontier did not integrate with the established burgher

communities, as the French did under the Dutch. The 1820 Settlers, although drawn from various parts in the British Isles (England, Wales, Scotland as well as Ireland), represented a distinctly different community from the local white population regarding language, religion as well as cultural traditions (Thompson, 2006:55). According to Davenport (1982:281) the British settlers, "though in many cases of humble origin, were an articulate community, by contrast with the relatively unlettered boers among whom they were placed". The official status of English as language of communication and education further led to the fact that British settlers, to a large extent, remained a separate community[40]. There was, furthermore, no policy of forced cultural assimilation like the Dutch imposed on the French Huguenots in the seventeenth century (cf. Gilomee, 2003:11). In addition, the inherent racism of nineteenth-century British culture became accentuated by the Settlers' tribulations in their new setting (Thompson, 2006:56). In light of this, the British settlers' segregation no doubt fuelled their perception of superiority over the boers, as echoed in Dundas, the acting governor's description of the frontier burghers as a "troublesome and disaffected race" (Giliomee, 2003:76).

According to Streak (1974:2-6, 17) the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century English opinion of the Afrikaner was to a large extent determined by the English philanthropic drive to civilise the black African. The English not only held the Afrikaners accountable for the underdeveloped state of the colony, but also for the fate of the local peoples. To the English this included the Afrikaner's disruption of the black Africans' tribal lifestyle as well as the undoing of Rousseau's notion of the *noble savage* by subjugating the indigenous populations into an "ignoble and oppressed state" (Streak, 1974:3). However, cultural differences between the British and the Afrikaners further contributed to the British sentiment towards the Afrikaner. There was a great contrast between the enlightened metropolitan Europe of the late eighteenth century and the largely isolated rural societies of the Cape. Furthermore, the English and Cape Dutch persisted in regarding each other as separate groups, with the Cape Dutch viewing the British as foreign conquerors (cf. Gilomee, 2003:195). The Cape Dutch perception was reiterated by John Barrow, one of the

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[40] Although intermarriage between the 1820 Settlers and Afrikaners did occur, this is generally not reflected in the recorded histories of those settler families whose biographies have been published (Davenport, 1982:281).

key figures instrumental in shaping English public opinion regarding the Afrikaner (Streak, 1974:6,12,22), who suggested that the reluctance of the Cape Dutch to engage with the British reflected the manner a "vanquished people" generally reacted to their conquerors (Streak, 1974:88,91).

Since the initial contact between the British and the Cape Dutch Afrikaners was limited, the early British accounts of the Afrikaners were restricted to those by individuals directly involved with colonial administration at the Cape. These accounts tended to be very negative and disparaging (Streak, 1974:6, 121). Barrow laid the ills of the colony squarely at the feet of the Afrikaner. His critical accounts and descriptions of frontier boers were generally accepted as representative of all Afrikaners in the colony and were to persist throughout the nineteenth century (cf. Streak, 1974:22, 130). A contemporary of Barrow, the English traveller Robert Percival, reiterated this perception by equating Afrikaners in the Western Cape with those on the colonial periphery in stating that: "the same unsocial and selfish character is conspicuous in both" (*in* Streak, 1974:32). Percival echoed Barrow's opinion of the Cape Afrikaners as an uncultured and wayward society; in fact, "the most indolent and prodigal of all nations", whose "powers of body and mind were less capable of exertion", and added that they exercised a "perverse bigotry to their own customs" (quoted in Streak, 1974:14, 17). In another account Dundas described the boers as "the strongest compound of cruelty, of treachery and cunning, and possessing most of the bad qualities with few very few of the good ones, of the human mind" (*in* Streak, 1974:55).

The above characterisations of the Afrikaner by Barrow, Percival and Dundas echoed nineteenth century British depictions of the Malay, who formed part of the British Empire in the East (cf. Alatas, 1977:204). The negative portrayal of certain sectors of society in this manner had its roots in Britain itself, where the working class were considered as indolent, morally inferior and dim - characteristics that were readily projected on colonised peoples. However, as Alatas (1977:30) points out, a negative portrayal of the British working class was no indictment of the British nation as a whole, whereas in the case of the colonised, entire ethnic groups were easily

arraigned to such prejudice. According to Alatas (1977: 120,125) such negative stereotypes served as justification for colonial domination and territorial conquest. For the most part these negative stereotypes were based on superficial observations that were already premised on prejudice. Furthermore, these accounts were not scholarly but generally contributed by the likes of civil servants, sailors and travel writers (Alatas, 1977:112).

Hence, the attitudes of among others Barrow, Percival and Dundas towards the Afrikaners were shared by English civil society at the Cape. According to Streak (1974:42, 94) the local English disregarded and disdained all that could be considered Cape Dutch. Apart from considering themselves morally superior to the Afrikaners, the English found the Afrikaners' nonobservance regarding class, rank and title particularly irksome. The British sense of superiority was a recurring issue in English/Cape Dutch relations since the first number of years of the former's occupation of the Cape Colony (Gilomee, 2003:194). An 1834 account by Howison illustrates the extent to which the British adhered to the notion of their superiority:

> Unhappily the British do not possess the art of conciliating those people whom they bring under their subjection; because, considering themselves superior as a nation and as individuals to all other inhabitants of the earth, they never have intercourse with foreigners without allowing them to perceive how thoroughly they despise them. Whenever they observe manners or modes of thinking different from their own, they pronounce sentence of condemnation against those who have adopted them; and, wrapped in a supercilious self-complacency, weigh and measure their fellow-creatures by an imagined standard, and undervalue them in proportion as they fall short of it (*in* Streak, 1974:41).

As far as the public perception of the Afrikaner in Britain itself was concerned, reviews of contemporary publications of the early nineteenth century, for example Moodie's *Ten Years in South Africa*, provide a clear indication that the British public regarded the Afrikaner with the same disdain as Barrow first articulated (cf. Streak, 1974:128, 130). Moodie, who was considered a most reputable source, himself expressed admiration for Barrow's portrayal of the Afrikaner (cf. Streak, 1974:128),

and proceeded in similar fashion when writing his own accounts of the Afrikaner, as illustrated by the following excerpt:

> Of all the people I have ever seen … the Cape-Dutch are the coarsest and least polished in their manners. The conversation of both sexes is marked by an almost total absence of common decency: the most disgusting oaths are used on all occasions by the men; and the women do not even feel ashamed to talk on the most indelicate subjects, hardly condescending to use any circumlocution. In this respect, indeed, they are even less refined than the Hottentots. Wherever they have had much intercourse with the English, however, a gradual improvement is observable. The females, though often handsome when very young, are from this coarseness of manners exceedingly distasteful to the English, and few even of the lower classes of our countrymen can bring themselves to marry into a Dutch family. The moment a Dutchwoman [sic] enters into the conjugal state, she takes her seat by a little table in the hall, from which she never stirs if she can help it; and they often laugh at the folly of the Englishwomen, in going about the house to attend to their domestic concerns, when they might have everything done by calling to their servants, without quitting their places. When the Dutch ladies marry, they become exceedingly torpid and phlegmatic in their manners and habits, dirty and slovenly in their dress; and, from their cold constitution and freedom of care, like the men, they generally at an early age grow to an unwieldy size (Moodie, 1835:169-170).

Such accounts of the Afrikaner were not isolated. A review in the *Atlas* of 1835 mooted Moodie, among others, for reiterating previous travellers' derogatory accounts of the Afrikaner as boorish, moral degenerates (cf. Streak, 1974:124-125). Another British publication of the time, *The Spectator* of 17 May 1834, referred to the Afrikaners as "semi-savage Dutch Africans" (quoted in Streak, 1974:125). According to Steyn (2001:26) British's racialisation of the Afrikaners is evident also in Kitchener's description of the Afrikaner as "uncivilised Afrikaner savages with a thin white veneer". Steyn (2001:26) further suggests that the British treated the Afrikaners much the same as they did the indigenous black peoples, showing little regard for Afrikaner dignity and scant respect for their cultural honour[41].

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[41] Evidence of this and the enduring nature of hereof is suggested in the terminology used British; what was known as the 'racial question' in South Africa in the early twentieth century, in fact referred to the relations between the British and the Afrikaners, while racial relations between whites and blacks were called the 'native question' (cf. Steyn, 2001:26).

Apart from being viewed as inferior subjects in comparison to the British settlers, the Afrikaner colonists on the frontier were powerless in the face of British rule, and thus in no position to influence frontier policies. As a consequence, a fair number of Afrikaner frontier farmers felt defenceless to the onslaughts of the many frontier wars that had been raging since 1779 (Giliomee, 2003:138, 690). Ergo during the second quarter of the nineteenth century a second stream of white emigrants started leaving the confines of the colony along with the *trekboers*. The *trekboer* expansion followed the long-established custom of individual burghers or small family units moving beyond the boundaries of the colony in order to establish themselves on new pasture land in order to better their material prospects or due to overcrowding. The other stream of emigrants, however, participated in a more orchestrated action that would become known as the Great Trek (Giliomee, 2003:144).

According to Ross (1999:39) the Great Trek (1836-1854) was a one of the pivotal events to shape South Africa as a country as well as its history. The Great Trek resulted in large numbers of people of European decent occupying vast territories of the South African hinterland, with a profound social and political impact on the region. The Great Trek had many causes, but the survival crisis on the eastern and north-eastern frontiers of the Cape Colony during the 1820s and 1830s is considered one of the primary driving forces behind the this Trek. Apart from relentless frontier wars, concerns such as a delay in the issue of title deeds, lack of land, shortage of labour (especially after the abolition of slavery) as well as security concerns exacerbated the situation (Giliomee, 2003:144-45; Ross, 1999:39).

Nonetheless, as Giliomee (2003:149) suggests, lack of land, shortage of labour and scant security alone – valid motivations as these may be –I cannot account for the wealthy and established farmers who joined in the Trek. Their decision may be attributed to the fact that since after the second decade of the nineteenth century there had been an increased sense of marginalisation and disempowerment on the part of the frontier burghers. Even along with the emergence of a collective Afrikaner identity during the course of the eighteenth century, the most important marker of

social identity in the local European community had been burgher status[42], but this too had been abolished by the British. Many considering themselves burghers expressed the notion that they no longer felt at home in their own country and started viewing British governance as a yoke imposed by an émigré authority (Giliomee, 2003:149-150). These gripes were not unfounded as British officials generally treated the burghers as underlings and as "a subject and inferior race" (Schreiner quoted in Giliomee, 2003:149). Hence, as consequence, the burghers' perception was that the British would never treat them other than white outcasts of the Empire (Giliomee, 2003:149-150).

Further contributing to the Afrikaner burghers' ire was the anglicisation of government institutions, schools and churches. Many of the disgruntled burghers rallied behind prominent patriarchal leaders from the frontier community such as Hendrik Potgieter, Piet Retief, Gert Maritz and Sarel Cilliers in their trek away from the Colony (Ross, 1999:40; Giliomee, 2003:146, 198). Thompson (1982:406) emphasises that those participating in the *trek* had a deep-rooted desire to become "...a free and independent people in a free and independent State", and that the Great Trek may therefore be seen as a rebellious act against British control. In many ways the Great Trek represented the social, ideological and above all political rejection of British hegemony, and is considered by some to herald the birth of the Afrikaner as nation (cf. Streak, 1974:149).

Between the years 1835 and 1845 around 2 308 burgher families and their slaves left the Cape Colony and joined the *trekboers* already present in the Transorange region (Giliomee, 2003:161). At the time these burghers referred to themselves as emigrants, but by the end of the nineteenth century, when the Afrikaners set out constructing a national historical myth, they became known as *Voortrekkers* (Thompson, 2006:94-95). However, instead of presenting a unified anti-imperial

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[42] According to Giliomee (2003:151) the burgher status was distinct from that of a subject. The burghers made no distinction between themselves and the status and citizenship accorded burghers in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the Cape burghers had come to embrace their own foundation myth – one in which they are pivotal in the existence and preservation of the Cape settlement (Giliomee, 2003:6).

force, the *Voortrekker* communities were divided by great distances and factional loyalties. At times of tension, however, leaders would revert to rhetorical proclamations of common blood and shared sacrifices. Over time these proclaimed common characteristics were amalgamated into a typical *Voortrekker* identity (Thompson, 1982:366, 408). The Great Trek itself served as a powerful unifying influence. Apart from levelling out class distinctions (Giliomee, 2003:163), the tribulations experienced on the Trek, coupled with a biblical – and particularly an Old Testament worldview, cemented a belief among the *Trekkers* that they were a chosen people of God on journey to a promised land (Smurthwaite, 1999:11). In time the quintessential image of a *Voortrekker* was a person of European decent, but born in the Cape, who spoke a hybrid form of Dutch close to modern-day Afrikaans. *Voortrekker* society was isolationist with a suspicious regard of outsiders (Thompson, 1982:366, 408).

The *Voortrekker* exodus amounted to the colony losing 30 per cent of its white population. The significance of the event did not go unnoticed, and as such the Trek did not occur unopposed. Those in power unanimously condemned the Trek on various grounds. According to (Giliomee, 2003:161), one of the most common concerns[43] was the possible effect the *Voortrekkers* would have on the indigenous populations, because contrary to habitually biased white colonial historiography the hinterland was not entirely depopulated by the Mfecane[44] as was claimed by the myth that the 1830 Voortrekkers encountered an 'empty land' (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:ix).

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[43] Another concern was for the welfare of the *Voortrekkers* themselves (Giliomee, 2003:161).

[44] Broadly speaking, the Mfecane refers to the radical transformations in black African societies in much of western South Africa from the middle of the eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century whereby chiefdoms would migrate, fragment or become absorbed by more powerful groups. Traditionally presented as a direct consequence of the rise of Zulu power under Shaka, historical redress has also revealed other contributing factors to the Mfecane, such as the destabilisation of African communities through European penetration from the Cape and Mozambique as well as the rise of the Griqua, with their European derived lifestyles, political structures and methods of warfare; the impact of mercantile capitalism on indigenous economies; slave trade, as well as climate change and ecological deterioration. Historians are divided regarding the extent and causes of the Mfecane (also known as the Difaqane among Sotho-Twana speakers) but are in agreement that it coincided with a period of great turmoil, upheaval and displacement for most African societies in South Africa (Manson *et al.*, 2007:124-130).

Historical redress not only implicated Europeans in the Mfecane, but also contributed to the dismissal of the empty land myth propounded by earlier authors such as W.C. Holden. According to Manson *et al.* (2007:127) Holden attempted to legitimise the European settlement of the subcontinent by suggesting that whites and black Africans had entered South Africa simultaneously[45].

By 1836, instead of encountering an empty territory, the *Voortrekker* parties meeting around the Vaal River basin came into direct conflict with the Ndebele. Having displaced the Ndebele northwards beyond the Limpopo, many *Voortrekkers* decided to remain on the Highveld while other *Voortrekker* parties decided to continue (Ross, 1999:40). A large contingent of *Voortrekkers* trekked south-east, crossing the Drakensberg into Natal. The *Voortrekkers* attempting to settle in Natal came in conflict with the resident Zulu dynasty, leading to a number of bloody battles including the execution of *Voortrekker* leader Piet Retief and the battle of Ncome River (later known as the battle of Blood River). In due course the *Voortrekkers* became the dominant power in Natal south of the Thukela (Ross, 1999:41-42). In 1839 the Natal *Voortrekkers* established a republic with Pietermaritzburg as its capital. Later in 1841 the republic came to include the Winburg and Potchefstroom districts (Giliomee, 2003:166; Thompson, 1982:366). Although both these districts were represented on the Pietermaritzburg *Volksraad*, unity remained difficult to uphold.

In spite of their self-proclaimed independence, the prospective existence of a *Voortrekker* republic remained at the mercy of the British Empire (cf. Thompson, 1982:368). In addition, the *Voortrekkers'* insistence on personal liberty only extended to their ilk. Africans were regarded as less civilised inferiors and were subjected to

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[45] In 1901 George McCall Theal reinforced and expanded Holden's premise by suggesting that the Dutch and the Xhosa met at the Fish River due to their simultaneous migration into the eastern Cape, thus refuting Africans' prior occupation of the region in an attempt to assert the whites' equal claim to the land. It was often on the grounds of this popular propagandist myth that the right to white ownership of the land was once claimed (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:ix; Mason *et al.*, 2007:127).

forced labour and punishment. The British were concerned over the *Voortrekkers'* disturbance and harassment of African communities in Natal, fearing it might lead to the destabilisation of the Cape Colony's eastern frontier (Giliomee, 2003:168). Perturbed by the *Voortrekker* presence near the British trading outpost of Port Natal (Durban), the British Colonial Secretary at the time, Lord Stanley, ordered the annexation of the entire Natal region in 1842. The annexation also served the purpose of controlling the *Voortrekkers'* access to ammunition in an effort to control outbreaks of violence. Again, the *Voortrekkers* were subjected to the same colonial control they aimed to escape in the first place. As soon as the Natal *Volksraad* swore allegiance to the British Crown, the Potchefstroom-Winburg *Raad* dissociated itself. Although some *Voortrekkers* steadfastly remained on the land they had claimed in Natal, many of those unwilling to submit to the British crown resumed the journey back across the Drakensberg towards the Transvaal Highveld - a process largely completed by 1849. (Giliomee, 2003:168, Ross, 1999:41-42; Thompson, 1982:412).

At the same time (1849-51) an estimated 5 000 new British settlers were arriving from Europe to settle in Natal. In order to accommodate the land needs of the white settlers and to control the black population, the Natal colonial government decided to settle the indigenous peoples in demarcated reserves, called *locations*. By 1864 the locations numbered 42, but constituted only around 17% of the total colonial area of Natal. The remaining 83% of land was either owned by white settlers or identified as unassigned Crown lands[46] (Thompson, 2006:95).

After the demise of the *Voortrekker* republic in Natal, Pretorius pledged to turn Transorange and Transvaal into an independent state (Giliomee, 2003:172). However, according to Ross (1999:42), the same line of reasoning that led the British to annex Natal also came into play in the area north of the Gariep. In 1848 Governor

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[46] According to Thompson (2006:96) the black populations were governed by a method of 'indirect rule', similar to that the British would later employ in tropical Africa, and akin to the Dutch model of "Javanese indirect rule" as discussed in Chapter 2. By 1870 the total white population of Natal numbered around 18 000; of these the vast majority (15 000) were British settlers and the remainder Afrikaners. The black population in contrast was estimated at around 270 000. In spite of this, the settlers saw Natal as a white settlement and regarded the African inhabitants as foreigners (Thompson, 2006:96).

Harry Smith annexed the Orange River Sovereignty, consisting of the area between the Gariep and the Vaal Rivers, as part of the British Empire. Britain established authority over the Orange River Sovereignty after the victory of Boomplaats (Giliomee, 2003:172-174). Following this, a steady stream of English settlers established themselves in the region. From the onset the differences between the newly arrived English settlers and the Afrikaners already resident in the area were evident, especially regarding matters of political status and loyalty. The English settlers demanded imperial privileges and protection, including the separation from, and the subordination of Moshweshwe's Sotho chiefdom. In addition, they demanded the annexation of the fertile Sotho territory in the Caledon River valley for white occupation. In contrast, the Afrikaners in the region were adamantly against the establishment of a state in any form – especially a British one. Moreover, many of the region's Afrikaners were dependent on trade with the Sotho, and hence they did not support the expulsion of Sothos nor a border that separated white and black territories. In fact, the Afrikaners in the Caledon River valley insisted that they preferred the rule of Moshweshwe to that of the Empire[47] (Giliomee, 2003:173-174). Hoffman, who was later to become the first president of the Orange Free State (OFS), echoed the Afrikaner sentiment towards the British proposals in the Transorange region when he proclaimed that:

> The natives will not consent to remove and will revenge such unjust treatment…If Southey[48] thinks that he can bind the Boers to the British government by giving them all the land he is mistaken and knows neither the Boers nor the natives (*in* Keegan, 1996:264).

In the end the English settlers in the Orange River Sovereignty were to be disappointed, because imperial will and control over the Transorange region remained meagre. By the late 1840s Britain's imperial policy was characterised by cutbacks. As missionary influences continued to diminish, so did the British appetite for expansionism and militarism (Giliomee, 2003:172-174). The inauguration of the

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[47] This affinitive position of the Afrikaners towards the Sotho was, however, not to last (cf. Giliomee, 2003:182; Keegan. 1986:233).

[48] Richard Southey was the Cape Colonial Secretary at the time (Cameron & Spies, 1987:168).

Cape of Good Hope Punishment Act[49] in 1836 to the annexation of the Orange River Sovereignty, were all indications signalling that British attempts to control the *Voortrekkers* were doomed to fail. The cause of this failure was mostly economic. Without financial commitment from the British government, no laws enacted at Westminster, nor the annexations promulgated by high commissioners could be translated into viable power structures. The British will to power continued to wane in the Orange River Sovereignty and in 1854 the area was disannexed (Thompson, 1982:410, 421-423).

In 1852, at the Sand River Convention, Britain granted Transvaal Afrikaners the right to govern themselves (Giliomee, 2003:174). However, due to a number of factors the Transvaal Republic would not become fully unified until 1860. The Transvaal constitution was accepted on 16 February 1858, with the Lydenburg constituency joining the Republic in 1860 (Thompson, 1982:426-27). Apart from political factionalism, social factors such as ecclesiastical differences, as well as economic factors impacted on the fragile unity of the republic. Moreover, according to Thompson (1982:427) there was also a psychological obstacle to unity, one embedded in the Afrikaners' notion of freedom:

> The freedom the republican Afrikaner believed in and was prepared to fight for was first and foremost the freedom of the family to do as it willed in its own domain; secondly, the freedom of the regional group to regulate its own communal affairs in its own way; and only thirdly and tenuously did it encompass the interests of a larger community – let alone the entire community of independent Afrikaners.

Another such obstacle was the notion of *Afrikanerskap*. In spite of the common experiences faced during the Great Trek, a shared prevailing *Weltanchuung* and a seemingly unanimous proclamation of independence, an all-embracing sense of community or national identity failed to emerge. For the most part consensus with regard to Afrikaner identity was based on the notion of altereity, i.e. not being a

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[49] According to the Cape of Good Hope Punishment Act, all British subjects south of 25° latitude were subject to British law and liable to punishment in Cape courts (Thompson, 1982:354).

British subject or not being black, and not on a common collective national identity (cf. Giliomee, 2003:179). Thus, by and large, the Transvaal Afrikaners remained a divided community consisting of pastoral farmers. In the absence of a money economy there was little distinction based on class, occupation or wealth. The resulting the absence of a bureaucratic class coupled with a chronic shortage of state funds meant that governance of the Republic was seriously impaired. With no formal education system in place, the only public services available were the appointment of a *landdrost* (magistrate) and a *predikant* (preacher or minister) in each of the districts (Thompson, 1982:426-27). In a sense the Transvaal remained a Republic of pastoralists.

This isolation impacted on the nature of Boer society. Having lived a frontier lifestyle for most of their coming into being and existence, the Afrikaner had become fiercely independent and intolerant to any form of governance (Gilomee, 2003:189). They came to be seen by outsiders as feckless individuals who had shunned modern society. One traveller described them as "deficient in honesty and veracity, ignorant, unprogressive and in most respects two centuries behind European nations" (In Giliomee, 2003:189). As stated earlier, their protracted interaction with indigenous peoples on the edges of the colony and a once foreign forbidding landscape saw them adopt many local customs and a decidedly non-European lifestyle. By the late nineteenth century, Boer society on the Transvaal frontier for example often consisted of several families living together on a single farm, thus forming extended family groups (Giliomee, 2003:190), mirroring the indigenous social structures (cf. Mountain, 2003:7,22-24) rather than the European custom of the time. At the same time, however, this gave rise to insularity. Family groups were sometimes distrusting and hostile to those on neighbouring farms and towards outsiders. Rampant and stubborn individualism also undermined the interests of the collective and led to a total disregard of state welfare (Giliomee, 2003:190). These qualities created rather negative impressions among foreigners – even sympathetic ones – regarding the Afrikaner. For example, a young Dutch lawyer by the name of W.J. Leyds who had settled in the Transvaal in 1885 described the Afrikaners' national character as: "The national characteristic appears to be cunning dishonesty and dishonest cunning. In

my stay here I have been warned, not least by the farmers: 'trust no one – lies, duplicity and egotism are practiced by everyone'" (quoted in Giliomee, 2003:190).

And so, with regard to British perceptions of the Afrikaners, not much has changed since the days of Barrow - almost a century prior. According to Giliomee (2003:196) English journalists of the time tended to describe the Afrikaner as backward and small-minded conservatives, but even this view was more amiable than that of the British officials. British civil servants as well as traders commonly viewed Afrikaners – even wealthy ones – as lesser subjects than themselves. More so, even Cape Afrikaners, who had become anglicised and willingly and actively accepted British institutions and rule, were continually reminded of their *otherness* by the British authorities (cf. Giliomee, 2003:199). The view of rural Afrikaners was more derogatory, as Giliomee (2003:202) explains: "In the judgement of English-speaking Victorians, the rural Afrikaners, apart from being white, were almost everything they themselves were not: ignorant, superstitious and conservative and not interested in 'progress'". The British, therefore, did not consider the Afrikaners, especially those in rural areas, as being of the "same order of civilisation" (Steyn, 2001:26). This attitude is succinctly illustrated through a first-hand account by the celebrated English author Olive Schreiner, who - apart from recalling the unthinkable act of eating sugar touched by a Boer child - also, when younger, could not comprehend "to sleep between sheets a Dutchman had slept between" (*in* Gilomee, 2003:202). Giliomee (2003:202) perhaps justly suggests that the Afrikaners suffered the very same indignity and subjugation at the hands of the British, as they themselves had meted out to non-Europeans.

Even though isolation created an insular Afrikaner society derided by more educated and economically adept Europeans, it was this isolation, coupled with small population and the divided nature of Afrikaner society in the Transvaal, which initially served to preserve the cohesion of the African chiefdoms in the region (Thompson, 1982:424). The Pedi in the north, several Tswana chiefdoms in the west and the Venda in the north-east all held their ground against Afrikaner settlement. However, the Afrikaners did have a significant power advantage over the Africans. According to

the arms clauses of the Conventions, Britain only supplied ammunition to white settlers in the independent territories. Thus over time the growth of the Afrikaner settlements did impact on the surrounding chiefdoms. Some Africans were incorporated into Afrikaner society as subordinate labour-tenants, but the majority joined local chieftains in their struggle to re-establish autonomy (Thompson, 1982:434-435).

The Transvaal constitution granted Africans neither political nor social equality (Giliomee, 2003:176). Laws governing African subjects were based on those of the old Natal Republic and further worsened the lot of Africans within the borders of the Republic. According to Transvaal laws no Africans were allowed to possess firearms or ammunition. Africans who were labour-tenants were not allowed to move around freely and those who were not labour-tenants were confined to locations presided over by Government-approved chieftains. The placement of locations was engineered in a way that afforded all farming communities easy access to an African labour force. Apart from having to supply manpower on demand, each location chief was also required to pay taxes to the Transvaal.

Hardly any laws were in place to protect the rights of Africans, and the ones that were, were mostly as a result of British prerequisites for the Conventions of independence. Most notably of these were the laws prohibiting slavery and the laws sanctioning apprenticeships. The institution of apprenticeship was derived from the system applied to San and Khoikhoi children in the Cape Colony between 1812 and 1828, as well as later systems adopted in the Natal Republic and the later Colony of Natal. According to apprenticeship laws, African children captured during warfare as well as those voluntarily handed over by their parents were allowed to be apprenticed to farmers until the age of twenty five, in the case of males, and twenty one in the case of women. Furthermore, these laws prohibited the sale or trade of apprentices (Thompson, 1982:435-437). As noted, however, the Transvaal lacked the economic capacity for effective governance, meaning that the enforcement of laws were lax, often leading to gross misconduct and a disregard of the laws - also those regulating labour conduct involving Africans. In the Soutpansberg area, for example,

contravention of laws was rife and the trade in 'black ivory'[50], i.e. the sale of abducted African children and women, was commonplace (cf. Giliomee, 2003:184). Despite regular reports of the maltreatment and abuse of Africans in the Transvaal reaching the Cape Colony and London, it would not be until the discovery of mineral riches north of the Gariep and Vaal rivers in 1867, that Britain decided to directly intervene in the sovereignty of the two Afrikaner Republics (Ross, 1999:54; Thompson, 1982:437, 446).

Prior to the discovery of mineral wealth in the north-eastern hinterland of South Africa in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the area was populated by a number of rural agricultural societies. These various agrarian societies were all subjected to the same dynamic colonial agencies: on the one hand there was settler expansionism and on the other British merchant capitalism (Thompson, 2006:105). The discovery of diamonds near the confluence of the Vaal and Gariep rivers amplified these forces, and had a profound impact on the course of history in South Africa. From this point onwards the South African political, social and economic spheres would by and large be dominated by concerns of the mining and mineral wealth (Ross, 1999:54). The diamond territory was initially laid claim to by the Orange Free State, the Griqua, the southernmost Tswana chiefdom as well as the Transvaal. In spite of the fact that the area included farms that were recognised by both the OFS government as well as the British officials who ruled the area between 1848 and 1854, the British annexed the area in 1871 under the guise of protecting Griqua interests and eventually fully incorporated it into the Cape Colony in 1880 (Thompson, 2006:114).

After the diamond discoveries, British occupation in the Transorange region increased. Following a short-lived gold rush in Pilgrim's Rest and the outbreak of war between the Transvaal and the Pedi in 1876, Britain annexed the Transvaal in 1877 (Ross, 1999:55,60). Their rule was brief, as the retaliating revolt, later known as the First Boer War, quashed the colonial forces. With the last clash of the conflict, Majuba in 1881, the British force was defeated. With Britain at the time not prepared

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[50] The illegal trafficking of African women and children was called the trade in 'black ivory', since this practice followed the decline of the trade in white ivory, which was due to the near decimation of elephant herds (Giliomee, 2003:184).

to engage in full-scale war with the Republic, a compromise peace was initiated at the Pretoria Convention. Under this agreement, the Transvaal was granted self-government with regards to its internal affairs, but would remain a British colony with Britain governing its foreign relations (Smurthwaite, 1999:16-19).

Two years after the Pretoria Convention, Paul Kruger became president of the Transvaal. Kruger envisaged a fully independent Republic and in 1883 travelled to London to plead the modification of the terms of the Pretoria Convention. Kruger was partially successful; the Convention of London determined the cessation of the imposition of British sovereignty allowing the Transvaal Republic the adoption of its original name: *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR)*. However, the discovery of the Witwatersrand gold fields in 1886 would eventually lead to intensified British interest in the *ZAR*. Under the London Convention Britain had retained its control over the *ZAR's* treaties, except those with the OFS (Smurthwaite, 1999:18-19). According to Ross (1999:69), the rapid economic development of the *ZAR* was perceived to imperil to British hegemony in the region. Furthermore, British Imperialist desire for African expansion had reached its zenith (cf. Jacobs, 2003:14; Thompson, 2006:108). Under the guise of wanting to procure fair political participation for *Uitlanders* (foreigners) in the *ZAR*, Britain had made an unrelenting number of demands on an unyielding Kruger. In anticipation of British aggression, Kruger set about arming the republic[51] and expanding his existing army (Giliomee, 2003:236, 243), and from 1897 onwards started buying armament bankrolled by the Witwatersrand's gold profits (Smurthwaite, 1999:31).

Literally meaning foreigners, the *Uitlanders* represented a great threat to *ZAR* Boer social and political status quo (Smurthwaite, 1999:22). The *Uitlanderkwessie* was symptomatic and a striking example of the racial and ethnic divides that characterised broader South African society at the time. Apart from the polarity between the European colonisers and African colonised, there were increasing secondary divisions inside the respective racial groupings. In the white population the

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[51] At that point in time 41% of Transvaal burghers were unarmed, the rest being in possession of mostly antiquated weapons (Jacobs, 2003:15).

majority of descendents of seventeenth and eighteenth century settlers identified themselves as Afrikaners. These Afrikaners' language, social matrices, religious persuasion and historical consensus were distinct from later nineteenth century settlers who were almost all British. The British settlers, who were generally townsfolk, distanced themselves from the mostly rural Afrikaners, disregarded Afrikaner accomplishments and had a great disdain for their language and culture (Thompson, 2006:109-110). To the Boers the *Uitlanders* represented alien cultures with accordingly unwelcome political traditions and views. To resolve the *Uitlanderkwessie* Kruger embarked on legislative programme aimed at protecting Boer political control in the *ZAR* and preserving their cultural principles. This included restrictive policies regarding language, education, immigration, citizenship and franchise. This legislation was often at the expense of *Uitlanders'* civil rights, and together with stringent taxation caused much friction between *Uitlanders* and *ZAR* Boers (Smurthwaite, 1999:22).

In 1899, as the inevitability of war with the *ZAR* was looming, Britain tried to browbeat the OFS into taking a neutral stance in the conflict (Giliomee, 2003:248). However, after Rhodes's failed coup attempt of the *ZAR* in 1895, known as the Jameson Raid, the sentiment of Cape Dutch and Afrikaners throughout Southern Africa was swayed in favour of Kruger. Prior to this the Cape Dutch were mostly loyal towards Rhodes – then Prime Minister of the Cape (Smurthwaite, 1999:22,24). Furthermore Cape Afrikaners, as well as *trekboers* - although beyond the Colonial border - generally still regarded themselves as British subjects (Giliomee, 2003:256; Thompson, 1982:406). The Jameson Raid, however, resulted in an irreversible change in public sentiment and the political status quo between Britain and the Boer Republics (cf. Smurthwaite, 1999:24). According to Steyn (2001:26), many Afrikaners came to regard the British as imperialists, having been conquered by them more than once. In light of this sentiment, coupled with the stipulations of the Potchefstroom Treaty of 1889 (Jacobs, 2003:16), it was not surprising that OFS pledged support to the *ZAR* in the war against colonial Britain (Giliomee, 2003:248-249; Ross, 1999:71-72), In doing so, the Afrikaners became the first anti-colonial freedom fighters of the twentieth century (Giliomee, 2003:xiii).

The first shots of what was to become Britain's most exhaustive military conflict in its colonial conquest of Southern Africa were fired on 12 October 1899 (Giliomee, 2003:250; Ross, 1999:72). Today known as the South African War[52] (1899-1902), the Anglo-Boer War was viewed by Nationalist Afrikaners as their Second War of Liberation (Thompson, 2006:138). The First War of Liberation was fought in 1881 and only lasted close to three months (Smurthwaite, 1999:9). Thus, neither side foresaw the protracted conflict that was to ensue. The first phase of the South African War saw the Republican commandos crossing their borders into British territories in order to keep the invading British forces at bay, besieging Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberley in the process. In spite of these early Boer triumphs, the British continued their march on the two Boer Republics (Jacobs, 2003:16). By March 1900 a total of 200 000 British troops were drafted in the war against The OFS and the *ZAR* – a number that would eventually escalate to 450 000 (Smurthwaite, 1999:9). Three months later in June, British troops captured Pretoria. By this time a tenth, around 30 000, of the white population of the two Boer republics had perished (Ross, 1999:72).

However, the capture of Pretoria did not herald the end of the conflict, as was the European custom (Jacobs, 2003:16). After a number of unsuccessful peace meetings, the British signalled that the War was no longer concerned with *Uitlander* franchise, but had indeed become an effort to deprive the Boer Republics of their independence and to incorporate them into the British Empire (Smurthwaite, 1999:169). Contemporary scholarship suggests that growing European economic and military rivalry convinced Britain's ruling class of the necessity of war in order to secure its hegemony in the resource-rich region (Thompson, 2006:138). In light of this the Boers did not entertain the notion of absolute surrender, as was one of the British conditions for declaring the War over. Thus, for a further two years Boer commandos mounted guerrilla attacks on the Cape Colony, targeting British infrastructure and communication lines. British counter-defences included the burning

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[52] It is recognised today that this war, also known as the Anglo-Boer War, involved the entire South Africa population and was not merely a war between the British and the Boers. Many coloured, Indian and black Africans fought on both sides of the divide, with many more black civilians perishing in British concentration camps (Alberts, 2003:11; Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:x; Nasson, 2007a:218-223; Nasson, 2007**b**:217). The War is further known as the Second Boer War, the Great Boer War, the Boer War and the Three-year's war (Jacobs, 2003:16).

and looting of farms, the confinement of women and children in concentration camps and the exile of male prisoners of war[53] – tactics Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman referred to as "methods of barbarism" (Smurthwaite, 1999:11).

The British tactic of burning and looting farms was initiated under the command of Kitchener in response to the Boers' guerrilla campaign against British forces post-1900 and is generally referred to as the scorched earth policy. The scorched earth policy was intended to curb the roving Boer commandos' access to food and ammunition supplies (Smurthwaite, 1999:141, 144). It was also under Kitchener that the British earned themselves an infamous place in history for the invention of concentration camps as a means of population control (Leach, 1989:28). Kitchener's motivation for the concentration camps was not entirely humanitarian. Apart from addressing the refugee situation, these camps also served to remove Boer women from Boer society, as they were seen as a militant factor in the resistance against the British. Moreover, with Boer women removed from their homesteads, the Boer commandos' access to supplies and information was further limited. Due to overcrowding and inadequate infrastructure, the death toll in the concentration camps was substantial, with a final tally of 27 927 of which more than 22 000 were children under the age of sixteen. Deaths in the concentration camps represented 10% of the total white population of the two Boer Republics (Smurthwaite, 1999:149-151). In the end, with half of the Republics' remaining white population either being imprisoned in concentration camps or exiled overseas, the Republics had no choice but to relent. Both the OFS and the Transvaal were eventually annexed and placed under the control of the High Commissioner. With the signing of the Peace of Vereeniging in 1902, British hegemony in Southern Africa was restored (Ross, 1999:72-74).

The South African War was Britain's largest and most expensive war of the nineteenth century, with the total cost of war estimated in excess of £220 000 000. The cost in lives was also significant with more than 33 000 casualties on the British side and an estimated 3 700 Boers killed in combat (Smurthwaite, 1999:172, 174). In

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[53] An approximated 33 000 Boers were taken prisoner during the course of the war (Smurthwaite, 1999:161).

spite of claims by Britain and the Boer Republics that it was a whites-only war, both sides made extensive use of black labour. Furthermore blacks also suffered from the British scorched earth tactic employed against the Boers (Thompson, 2006:140). According to Warwick (quoted in Thompson, 2006:140) between 10 000 – 30 000 blacks fought with the British army and around 16 000 blacks were incarcerated in concentration camps. Smurthwaite, (1999:9,172) states that no accurate figures for civilian casualties or for the number of black Africans who participated in the war exist, but it is gauged that the number of African casualties reached in excess of 20 000.

Although the Peace of Vereeniging signalled the end of the War, the political and social tensions between different factions of South African society, in many ways continued to exist (Smurthwaite, 1999:170). However, in spite of the chasms between the various factions within the greater white population, they did share common assumption of racial superiority. According to Thompson (2006:120), virtually all whites in the region subscribed to the notion - in accordance with their white contemporaries in Europe and the Americas - of belonging to a superior, civilised Christian race. Consistent with this attitude was a sense of entitlement that justified the subjugation of local African populations through the appropriation of indigenous land, the exploitation of native labour and the subordination of indigenous power structures. Furthermore, when under threat from native Africans, the differences between the discordant white factions were often put aside to unite against their common black adversaries (Thompson, 2006:120). Hence the fate of the region's black population remained unchanged in spite of British victory in the South African War. Although blacks had been increasingly incorporated into the white-controlled capitalist economy, they were denied participation in political and representative institutions. By the end of the nineteenth century all the indigenous populations in South Africa had been subjected to the authority of a white state; concluding the process of conquest initiated with the arrival of the Dutch in 1652. It was an uneven contest all along, in spite of the significantly greater number of blacks, the whites' access to superior technology especially with regards to transport, weaponry and communication, coupled with the relentless advance of capitalism,

more than counterbalanced blacks' efforts to resist (Thompson, 2006:108, 112, 120, 121).

Ironically, the South African War also led to divisions within Boer ranks. Earlier tensions arose in 1900 between those Boers who wished to make peace with Britain after the capture of Pretoria, and the *bittereinders* who intended to continue fighting against British Imperialism. By the end of the War further discord and acrimony existed among members of the Boer commandos and those Boers who fought on the British side, known as National Scouts. By the end of the War Boers fighting in the National Scouts, also called 'joiners' or *hendsoppers* made up one in five of all Boers still engaged in combat (Giliomee, 2003:268; Smurthwaite, 1999:15). At the beginning of the twentieth century the Afrikaner did not represent a unified socio-cultural unit (Leach, 1989:28); it was these schisms that the Boer Nationalists set out to mend (Giliomee, 2003:268). What was perceived to be the Afrikaner was in dire straits. For more than a century - the century of the Great Trek - the Afrikaner spent more time identifying its enemies rather than identifying itself. Substantiated by circumstances such as the Jameson Raid, war atrocities, anti-imperialism and a strong conviction that theirs had been a just cause, and a common opposition to Milner; this process would eventually lead to the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism (cf. Smurthwaite, 1999:179, 184; Thompson, 2006:142, 145), and subsequently profoundly influence the course of South African history.

The South African War dominated South Africa's historical narrative at the dawn of twentieth century. In addition, it also marked the end of the Victorian age, which is the primary epoch that this study is concerned with. The history of South Africa in the twentieth century was to be characterised by opposition against the oppression of varying incarnations of imperialism and colonialism. According to Thompson (2006:108) the peak of British Imperialism coincided with the rich deposits of diamonds and gold in the hinterland of South Africa at the end of the nineteenth century. Whereas South Africa did not contribute significantly to the metropolitan economy of Europe during the eighteenth and first three quarters of the nineteenth centuries, it suddenly made a significant contribution to the world economy

(Thompson, 2006:50, 108). The remainder of South African history in the twentieth century is well-known and documented - from the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism, Independence, Apartheid to post-1994 democracy, but falls outside the scope of this study.

3.4 Conclusion

By considering Afrikaner history within the context of South Africa's colonial history it has become clear that the establishment of South Africa as a European colony followed many of the conditions for settlement and reasons for occupation as well as phases of imperial administration common to most European colonies, as discussed in Chapter 2. It also both locates and implicates the Afrikaner in these processes. It further serves to highlight the inter-relationships between the Afrikaner ancestors, the British Imperialists and the local indigenous peoples and addresses the notions of cross-cultural interaction, deculturation and acculturation.

As discussed in Chapter 2, European expansion can be divided into three phases, of which the first phase spanning the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is seen as the age of discovery, mercantilism and imperialism. The phase of discovery corresponds with the first contact between indigenous South Africans and Europeans. The establishment of a Dutch refreshment station at the Cape followed later in this phase. The primary factor that led to the establishment of a European settlement at the Cape and the eventual emergence of the Afrikaner as a distinctive group, was thus spurred by the European pursuit of wealth. During this period the population of the colony was bolstered by French settlers fleeing religious persecution, one of the primary reasons for European occupation and settlement of foreign lands as set out in Chapter 2. Therefore, as suggested, the effects of the period of discovery and conquest can be construed as the most devastating period in the colonisation process as it brought about, among others, land seizures, slavery, forced labour and the introduction and spread of diseases (Fieldhouse, 1991:377-378), all of which are evident in South African history corresponding to this time and discussed in the current chapter. The age of mercantilism coincided with the second British

occupation of the Cape from 1806 onwards, and also saw the expansion of colonial territory due to white settlers' eagerness for living space, and it would remain under imperial control to facilitate the extraction of wealth. As discussed in Chapter 2, the mercantile epoch of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is characterised the by notion of *trusteeship*, and was almost always accompanied by a paternalistic approach to colonial subjects, as is evident in the discussion of British attitudes towards both the indigenous black peoples and the sociologically indigenous Afrikaners. This was followed by the imperial phase, which in South African history witnessed the first ant-imperialist war of the twentieth century between the British and the Boer Republics. This is evidence of what Steyn (2001:26) describes as "an internal colonisation within the white group".

As suggested in Chapter 2, South Africa occupies positions somewhere between the two well-marked types of European colonies: colonies of occupation, and settler/invader colonies - and is therefore "doubly positioned". This denotes that as a colony South Africa had at a point freed itself from the colonial rule of a metropolitan centre, but that the white settlers had on their part acted as aggressors and oppressors of the indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the settlers in countries such as South Africa, in historical terms, opened up the boundaries between the categories coloniser and colonised, as is evident in Giliomee's (2003:xiv) statement that, "the Afrikaners were both a colonised people and colonisers themselves, both victims and proponents of European imperialism", and Steyn's (2001:xxiv) suggestion that the Afrikaner had become sociologically indigenous.

In the next chapter, the influence of C.D. Bell's biographical background from 1830-1873 on his depiction of South African subject matter, including the Afrikaner ancestry, will be contextualised within the canon of nineteenth century European art and colonial explorer art of the Victorian epoch.

CHAPTER 4

**CHARLES DAVIDSON BELL'S (1813-1882) BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY
AND ARTISTIC OEUVRE: 1830-1873**

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the history of Afrikaner ancestry during the period 1652-1901 was considered with reference to South Africa's colonial history, highlighting inter-relationships between Afrikaner ancestors, the British imperialist project as well as the local indigenous peoples. The aim of this chapter is to determine how Charles Davidson Bell's personal history and Victorian background influenced his depiction of South African subject matter and how these are reflected in his artistic *oeuvre*. In order to facilitate this, examples of Bell's artwork will be read within the context of nineteenth-century European art and colonial explorer art of the Victorian epoch.

4.2 Biography of C. D. Bell 1813 -1882

Charles Davidson Bell, born 22 October 1813, was the son of a Scottish tenant farmer Alexander Bell and his wife Isabella Davidson. Bell grew up in the farming district of East Newhall near the rocky East Neuk of Fife coastline. To the south of Crail, not far from this town, is Edinburgh, Scotland's social, cultural, legal and scientific centre and to the north, fairly close by, is St Andrews once the ecclesiastical capital and site of Scotland's most ancient university. According to family tradition, he read physics, chemistry, mathematics and advanced Latin at St Andrews University (Brooke Simons, 1998:17). Bell first set foot in South Africa when he arrived in Cape Town in 1830, aged seventeen. From the onset at the Cape, Bell was privy to the most influential and privileged of Cape society. On arrival in Cape Town he was welcomed by his uncle, John Bell, the Colonial Secretary since 1828 and his wife,

Lady Catherine (Godby, 1998:141). Lady Catherine was the elder sister of Lady Frances Cole, chatelaine of Government House, and her father the first Earl of Malmesbury; thus Brooke Simons (1998:16) suggests that Charles Bell's first acquaintance with 19th century colonial Cape Town was mediated by these family ties and acquaintances.

It is not known how Charles Bell spent his time when he first arrived at The Cape, apart from making drawings depicting Cape Town and its people. However, records show that he completed a period of service working for his uncle, in the office of the colonial secretary (Brooke Simons, 1998:20; Lipschitz, 1992:1). In 1832, two years after arriving at the Cape, Bell set off on his first recorded journey from Table Bay to Cape Point. During this journey he recorded what he saw in the form of a visual diary that he entitled *Cape Sketches.* These drawings were executed in pen and ink and some include notes on the topographical features of the depicted landscapes (Brooke Simons, 1998:20).

Bell swiftly rose through the ranks of the Cape administration; in November 1832 he was transferred from the colonial secretary's office to that of the Master of the Supreme Court and a year later to second clerk in the Colonial Audit Office (Brooke Simons, 1998:28; Lipschitz, 1992:1). In 1834 Bell was recruited as second draughtsman to the scientific expedition of the Cape of Good Hope Association for Exploring Central Africa into the central regions of Southern Africa together with draughtsman George Ford. The expedition was a result of a paper read on 5 June 1883 at a meeting of the South African Literary and Scientific Institution, which was then under the presidency of his uncle (Brooke Simons, 1998:28,30; Lipschitz, 1992:1-2). The paper, which stirred up a great deal of interest among those present, detailed the experiences of a recent trading excursion that had penetrated the interior of southern Africa as far as the Tropic of Capricorn and presented the first reliable account of this vast region (Brooke Simons, 1998:28).

The Cape of Good Hope Association for Exploring Central Africa's scientific expedition was to be headed by Dr Andrew Smith. Smith was a graduate from Edinburgh University where he qualified in medicine, after which he joined the British Army. In 1820 Smith was transferred to the Eastern Cape to oversee the settlement of the new British settlers. In 1825 the then governor of The Cape, Lord Charles Somerset, relieved Smith of military duties and appointed him superintendent of the newly established museum in Cape Town (Brooke Simons, 1998:29-30). Part of Smith's mandate for the expedition was to obtain scientific information regarding meteorology, geology and magnetism as well as to collect botanical specimens to ascertain what prospects the productions of the country and the tribes' disposition held out to commercial enterprise (Lipschitz, 1992:2). According to Brooke Simons (1998:28) Sir Lowry Cole personally added to the mandate that the expedition should attempt to placate and convert the chiefs of the major tribes.

Apart from a botanist, surveyor and draftsman who had the ability to depict the landscape, the committee, according to Brooke Simons (1998:30), therefore also required a person who could document the appearance and customs of the indigenous peoples they might encounter, as clearly stated in the following quote:

> In regard to the inhabitants themselves it is of paramount interest to gain an exact portrait of their life as respects their condition, arts, policy, their language, their appearance, population, origin and relation to other tribes, or in general whatever tends to elucidate their disposition or resources as sharers or agents in commerce, or in their preparation to receive Christianity (Kirby *in* Lipschitz, 1992:2).

Thus it came to be that the task of recording ethnographical subjects and landscapes was assigned to Bell (Lipschitz, 1992:2). On 26 August 1834 Smith's expedition reached the Gariep River, the then northern border of the Cape Colony. According to Brooke Simons (1998:31) this marks Bell's first encounter with what fellow expedition member John Burrow termed as a real 'native'. On August 28 the party arrived in Philippolis, the then capital of the Griqua territory, where they spent two weeks, affording Bell plentiful time to document his observations in the form of sketches. On

27 November 1834 Smith's party reached Thaba 'Nchu where Bell started sketching the everyday customs and activities of the Barolong, taking special interest in their burial customs (Brooke Simons, 1998:32-34). After leaving Thaba 'Nchu the party headed southwest and crossing the Black Modder River, they made their first acquaintance with a group of San. Bell made several sketches of this group of San dancing and hunting, as well as pictorial studies of their weapons. Smith recorded his impression of the San in his journal: "A more miserable group of human beings could scarcely be conceived… [T]hey were besmeared from head to foot by what we call filth, but which they consider convenient and essential to their comfort", echoing what was probably the perception of all in his group (cf. Brooke Simons, 1998:35). The author (1998:35) states that it is also here in this remote area that the explorers encountered "…families of wandering *trekboers* in their dilapidated wagons; these, too, Bell sketched and painted, conveying with both skill and humour their austere lifestyle".

Bell's own views on the native peoples are reflected in his correspondence. In a letter to his parents in Scotland, where according to Brooke Simons (1998:35), "… a black face was seldom if ever seen", Bell wrote: 'We have found the Natives civil, hospitable and kind… and have met with more assistance from them than we could have got for nothing had we travelled as long in the Land o' Cakes[54] and yet these are the people of whose cruelty, barbarity and ferociousness travellers write and traders tell". Although it would appear as if Bell had a rather benevolent attitude towards the indigenous peoples, in another letter to his sister, however, he states: "But I had not the least ambition to become the son in law even of the Basuto king for all his cattle and herds and tribes of native savages" (Brooke Simons, 1998:35).

From 24 March to 30 March 1836, after the return of Smith's expedition to Cape Town, an exhibition displaying Bell's drawings was held (Lipschitz, 1992:7). The exhibition consisted of landscapes, portraits and depictions of costumes as well as objects of natural history, and attracted considerable attention in Cape Town (Lipschitz, 1992:7). Charles Piazzi Smyth, himself a gifted artist and friend of Bell's,

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[54] A reference to Scotland, which is famous for its oatcakes (Brooke Simons, 1998:162).

described it as follows: "...the drawings about 500 in number ranked first, from their truth and exquisite workmanship" (Smyth *in* Brooke Simons, 1998:52). Smyth also commented on Bell's landscapes and figures by writing that these, "...are well executed in their line as the others are in theirs; his pencil has a peculiar twist and he has hit off the manners and customs of the natives to a T" (Brooke Simons, 1998:52). However, at the same time Smyth conceded that Bell drew as much, or more, from memory as by sketching direct from nature (*in* Brooke Simons, 1998:52)[55].

In 1838, two years after the Cape Town exhibition, Charles Bell qualified as a land surveyor, an occupation he became familiar with as a member of Smyth's expedition. In February of same year Bell was appointed as Government Surveyor to the Surveyor General's Office (Brooke Simons, 1998:167, Lipschitz, 1992:11). In 1840 Bell was promoted to the position of Second Assistant Surveyor General (Lipschitz, 1992:11). Three years later, in 1841, Charles Bell married Martha Antoinette Ebden, daughter of John Bardwell Ebden, a wealthy Cape Town merchant (Brooke Simons, 1998:62; Lipschitz, 1992:13). After almost two years spent in Grahamstown investigating land claims on the Eastern Frontier, the couple and their firstborn returned to Cape Town in 1844 (Brooke Simons, 1998:167). While in Grahamstown he produced numerous sketches such as *Hottentots dancing – Grahamstown* (1843) (*fig.5*). On another expedition in 1845 Bell visited the site of the Battle of Swartkoppies. Although the skirmish occurred in April 1845, Bell drew on his imagination to produce a drawing of the events, in the process raising the summit of the koppie for added dramatic emphasis (Brooke Simons, 1998:68).

In 1856, the year after returning to Cape Town, Bell was promoted to the position of Assistant Surveyor General (Lipschitz, 1992:14). Later that year he produced over fifty monochrome drawings depicting the events taking place on the Eastern Frontier during the Seventh Frontier War that erupted after a colonial patrol was ambushed near Burnshill All of these sketches were included in a sketchbook entitled *Rough*

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[55] There is nothing to contest this revelation, since there is only one mention in both Smyth's diary and journal regarding Bell and Ford's duties of recording ethnographical and zoological information, but these make no reference to their methods and practices of observation and depiction (cf. Lipschitz, 1992:7).

Sketches of Scenes illustrative of late events in Southern Africa (Brooke Simons, 1998:70). According to Brooke Simons (1998:70) Bell himself was certainly never dispatched to the frontier to document these events, neither might he have witnessed any of the battles, since they took place at a time before the existence of war artists. This circumstance is reiterated by Smyth in Bell's obituary:

> In 1846, while still in Cape Town, by sheer dint of his knowledge of the eastern country and people, he produced a long series of drawings in black and white, representing events in the Kaffir war then raging under Sir Peregrine Maitland - drawings which astounded and delighted the soldiers who had been engaged in the operations... (Smyth quoted in Brooke Simons, 1998:70).

Further evidence suggests that Bell based many of these works on the drawings and amateur sketches such as those credited by Bell e.g. Jervois and the watercolourist Piers (Brooke Simons, 1998:71).

Bell expanded his artistic repertoire when his friend Piazzi Smyth introduced him to the art of lithography during Bell's visit to Britain in 1848. During this visit Bell produced a number of lithographs of which twenty-seven appear in Smyth's Edinburgh collection (Brooke Simons, 1998:72,167). In the next three years after his return to Cape Town, Bell's public and artistic stature became firmly entrenched. The 1850s was indeed an auspicious time for Bell, echoing the zenith of the British Empire during the Victorian age, as indicated by Brooke Simons (1998:90):

> In many ways Charles Bell was a true product of his age and the nation into which he was born for he, too, could do almost anything. Certainly it was during this decade of inventiveness and creativity, of exploring new avenues as well as new lands, that he was to find expression for his disparate and exceptional talents.

In 1850 Bell was appointed as a director of the Mutual Life Assurance Society and in the same year he was elected as part of a committee to oversee the organisation of

Cape Town's *First Exhibition of Fine Arts* (Lipschitz, 1992:18). The committee's mandate was to convene an exhibition showcasing the works of the colony's artists, students and amateurs, thus rewarding their efforts and encouraging future artistic output (Brooke Simons, 1998:93). But, according to Lipschitz (1992:18), members of the public also exhibited a number of pictures they had imported from overseas as part of the exhibition. The exhibition opened on 10 February 1851 and was a resounding success, displaying more than 500 pieces and attracting 2 984 visitors. Eight prizes including three gold medals were awarded to the best works on show. Bell exhibited fifteen of his own paintings as well as several life-size clay models depicting a variety of ethnic types he had encountered during his travels to the interior of the sub-continent. According to Piazzi Smyth, the purpose of these models was: "…to preserve the physiognomy, manners, customs, tastes and traditions of the native races of South Africa" (*in* Lipschitz, 1992:18). One of the gold medals for the best works on the show was awarded to Bell for *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (1850) (*fig.2*), which was deemed as the best historical painting on exhibit. This painting was one of several artworks Bell based on extracts from Jan Van Riebeeck's journal that also includes *The Strandlopers' visit to Van Riebeeck* (1850) (Brooke Simons, 1998:93; Lipschitz, 1992:18). *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* depicts Van Riebeeck and his henchmen meeting a group of Khoikhoi on the shores of the Cape with Devil's Peak in the background

Over the next 22 years Bell would involve himself in the Cape Town fledgling art scene, exhibiting works at the second Cape Town *Exhibition of Fine Arts* in 1852, the third in 1858 and the fourth in 1866 and also remained on the committee that governed these exhibitions. In 1871 the a committee comprising of Cape Town's most eminent citizens, including Bell, was formed to establish the *South African Fine Arts Association.* On the occasion of the Association's second exhibition in 1872, at which Bell delivered the opening speech, two well-respected Cape academics Sir Langham Dale and Dr James Cameron paid public tribute to Bell's contribution towards the fostering and development of the visual arts in the Cape (Brooke Simons, 1998:130,176).

Apart from Bell's involvement and eminence in the Cape Town art world, he also gained more stature as a public servant, serving on many public bodies and government commissions of enquiry (Brooke Simons, 1998:107). Already a revered Justice of Peace Bell was also appointed to the Central Board of Public Roads in 1852, and also served as Master of the Hope Lodge of Freemasons between 1852 and 1853 and again later from 1855-56 (cf. Lipschitz, 1992:19-20,24). In 1865 Bell was appointed as one of eight trustees of the South African Library. Increasingly Bell's artistic capabilities were also put to the service of the Cape authority. In 1853 the first South African stamp, designed by Bell, was issued. The Cape Triangular Stamp, as it is known today, was followed by a regular rectangular stamp in 1864 also designed by Bell. His graphic design skills were again employed for the design of bank notes for the Cape Commercial bank in 1859 (Brooke Simons, 1998:110; Lipschitz, 1992:19).

During the last three decades of his life, Bell would often travel between Cape Town and his land of birth. In April 1857 he was granted leave to visit Britain resuming his duties at the Cape in November 1858. After his return, Bell married his second wife, Helena Krynauw, in 1859. In the same year Bell was appointed to supervise the building of the railway between Cape Town and Wellington. In 1861 the suburb of Bellville was named after him in recognition of his role in establishing the railway. This year also saw the publication of a book commemorating Prince Alfred's visit to Cape Town and Bell contributed nine woodcuts to the publication entitled: *The progress of Prince Alfred through South Africa* (Lipschitz, 1992:23-24).

Bell again returned to Britain in 1866. Journeying back to Cape Town on the ship *Celt*, he produced a book entitled *The Illustrated Celtic Record.* In 1872 Bell retired as Surveyor General, leaving for Britain a few months later in 1873. In 1874 he returned to his native Scotland where, in 1878, he was elected a member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Bell was to return to Cape Town on a vacation the following year. During this visit in 1879 he served on the committee of the fifth *South African Association of Fine Arts'* exhibition, returning to Britain for the last time later

that month. Tree years later on 7 April 1882, aged 68, he passed away at his home in Edinburgh, Scotland (Lipschitz, 1992:25-27).

Having considered the biographical details of Bell's life, his privileged position within colonial Cape society, his development as an artist and contributions to the Cape art scene were brought to light. The next section focuses on the artist's *oeuvre* within context of nineteenth century European art and colonial explorer art of the Victorian epoch, with specific focus on landscape painting and his depiction of history, the exotic and the *other* with cognisance of an European audience's colonial gaze.

4.3 European landscape painting in the early nineteenth century

The predominant European artistic movements during the first half of the nineteenth century were Neo-classicism and Romanticism, of which, for the purpose of this study I shall pay brief attention to the latter (cf. Brown, 2001:4). Although these movements were once considered at odds, contemporary scholars now regard both Neo-classicism and Romantic art as constituents of a broader revivalism at the time[56]. The same revivalist notion would lead to a sweeping eclecticism in European art during the latter part of the nineteenth century, allowing artists to appropriate earlier artistic styles to serve their purposes (Marien & Fleming, 2005:512).

Romanticism itself was rather eclectic and remains difficult to define (cf. Rosenblum & Janson, 2005:56). As a portmanteau term it accommodates a wide spectrum of sometimes divergent, attitudes, directions, aesthetic systems and stylistic proclivities, as well as social currents[57] (Marien & Fleming, 2005:482, 511). A number of

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[56] Mayer and Sheehan (1991:358) also point out that a number of artists may show evidence of both the classical and the romantic in their work, such as Géricault and Délacroix.

[57] Like Neo-classicism, Romanticism was an international movement with national or regional distinctions. In England for example, the reach of Romanticism was restricted to the élite grouping of artists, writers and intellectuals, whereas in France it would eventually yield a much broader appeal (Fleming, 1995:511, 513).

concepts are however endemic to Romanticism, such as its embrace of notions such as grandeur, virtuousness, magnanimity, mystery and superiority; its championing of emotion over reason, subjectivity over empiricism, personal freedom and passion over prudence; and – like Neo-Classisim – its preoccupation with the ideal rather than the real (Chilvers, 2003:510; Marien & Fleming, 2005:481). In terms of subject matter, Romantic artists tended to favour topics that relate to literature, history or the exotic (Mayer *et al.*, 1991:358). This multifarious nature of Romanticism allowed artists a significant measure of freedom of expression and thought, enabling them to appeal more directly to their audience's emotions, often employing notions of the heroic and nostalgic, and devices such as caricature (Brown, 2001:5,14). In so doing, Brown (2001:19) suggests that: "the Romantics were inveterate makers and consumers of myths and histories that dramatised themselves and their art".

At first glance, the above delineation of Romanticism may seem at odds with several aspects of the work of John Constable (1776-1837), whom many critics regard as one of the principal Romantic landscape painters) and among the most esteemed of British landscape painters (cf. Barrell, 1992:132,140; Honour & Fleming, 1999:659; Rosenblum & Janson, 2005:156). Ostensibly, Constable shies away from the obviously mysterious or the overtly theatrical. According to Chu (2003:190) Constable shunned notions of ideal beauty, the picturesque and the sublime in his depictions of pastoral landscapes, in favour of a naturalistic approach in order to paint 'believable' and faithful depictions of the landscape, in a style Rosenblum and Janson (2005:156) call Romantic Naturalism. It has since been claimed, however, that in spite of Constable's intention to render the landscape as naturalistically as possible, his work did not represent true reality, but rather reflects his own "nostalgic reconstruction of an idyllic past" (Chu, 2003:189-190). Barrell (1992:133) further suggests that Constable was concerned with expressing a social vision through his landscapes – one in which a well-ordered and controlled, fecund landscape equalled a well-organised society. This confirms Brown's (2001:416) suggestion that the potential of landscape as a conveyer of meaning was first explored by the Romantics who tended to seek out unblemished natural environments as subject for their

paintings (Marien & Fleming, 2005:281). This followed a tradition stemming from Gainsborough, of paintings representing both *genre* and landscape, such as his *Landscape with woodcutter courting a milkmaid*, c.1755 (*fig.6;* Barrell, 1992:132).

It does not follow, however, that emotion is absent from Constable's *oeuvre.* Nonetheless, according to Rosenblum and Janson (2005:158) it is also true that "…in the work of many Romantic artists eager to explore the truths of nature, science and poetry, natural fact and private emotion are one"; this also points to Constable's use of Romantic passion and landscape as emotional metaphor in *The Hay Wain* (1821) (*fig.7*). Further supporting Constable's affiliation with Romanticism, Marien and Fleming (2005:504-506) present Constable as an exemplar of the circle answering Rousseau's call for a return to nature, with its associative notions of the idyll and that of the noble savage.

Romantic passion and emotion were not the only artistic concerns at the time; the nineteenth century also saw much discussion around the issues of aesthetic value and the acceptable canons of taste in Europe (Guy, 2002:314), as well as at the Cape (cf. Godby, 1998:157). This debate was centred on two main themes: on the one hand, the nature of aesthetic value and on the other, the social function of art. Regarding the nature of aesthetic value, discussions basically revolved around the criteria of what defined a good novel or painting (Guy, 2002:314). For this the Scottish philosopher Hume (1711-1776) used the term 'taste'. Hume saw taste as a cultured ability to discern the merit of an artwork. He suggested that good taste was the product of education and expertise which together resulted in consensus regarding the merits of certain artworks (Freeland, 2001:6). Because such debates were confined to small a hegemonic élite of predominantly middle- or upper-middle class, but exclusively white men, there was a relative measure of consensus regarding the notion of taste[58] within the Victorian mind (Guy, 2002:314). According to Guy (2002:314) the nineteenth century emphasised the ideal that art should teach by delighting the viewer; an ideal popularised by Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586). In

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[58] That this Victorian taste was in more recent decades considered with some deprecation is highlighted by Lambourne (1999:7), who suggests that when describing painting the term 'Victorian' tended to be used pejoratively and conjured up associations with the sentimental.

this light, the primary function of art for the Victorians was to socialise individual viewers into the moral values of their culture. Guy (2002:314) further explains:

> Such an ambition clearly demanded that art should be accessible – that it should communicate its moral message clearly and unequivocally to as wide an audience as possible. It should therefore come as no surprise that in defining their criteria of aesthetic value, the Victorians tended to judge a novel or a painting primarily in terms of its representational qualities – that is, in terms of its verisimilitude or its ability to embody 'real life'.

It thus follows from such a view that narrative painting was, together with the novel, the Victorians' most popular art forms. British art, especially that of the Victorian epoch, is much indebted to the institution of the Royal Academy. Although established during the last decade of the eighteenth century by Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), this institution was one of the primary driving forces in the development of a national school of painting in Britain during the nineteenth century (cf. Lambourne, 1999:9). A formidable man, Reynolds held distinct ideas regarding art. In a manner that mimicked the practice of hierarchical classification prevalent in science at the time (cf. Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:22, 171), Reynolds conceived of what Lambourne (1999:10) describes as a "'pecking order' of types of painting". Ranking highest in Reynolds' hierarchy was history painting, especially those works which depicted monumental historical events or exalted religious subject matter and were executed in the 'Grand Manner' of Italian painting in an effort to transcend nature. Placed lower down on the scale than history painting were portraiture and domestic scenes, with landscape painting, which was only just ranked more highly than still life and fauna and flora painting, below that. Reynolds lambasted landscape painting, as he perceived it to be merely topographical replications of a particular locality (Lambourne, 1999:10, 20). From this I conclude that Reynolds did not foresee the important ideological associations landscape painting would come to represent with the escalation of imperialism during the nineteenth century (cf. Godby, 1998:144; Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:22; Rosenblum & Janson, 2005:73), or even the more immediate ideological concerns of early nineteenth-century artists such as Constable (cf. Barrell, 1992:133). In addition, Reynolds had a distinct distaste for what he considered lowly and vulgar subjects, such as depictions of peasant scenes

reflecting their habits and activities. Yet, in spite of Reynolds' hierarchy of painting and his championship of history painting in particular, the most popular forms of painting at the time remained portraiture, followed very closely by genre paintings depicting such topics as scenes from everyday life (Lambourne, 1999:10).

From the onset of the nineteenth century, the popularity of landscape painting increased and though it never achieved the prestige officially attached to history painting, it had become firmly established within academies all across Europe by mid-century (Chu, 2003:175). In Britain landscape painting was strongly influenced by the work of Claude Gellée (1604/5? – 1682), better known as Claude or Claude Lorraine, after his place of birth (Chilvers, 2004:154). As a painter of 'ideal' landscapes, Claude was much revered in Britain with his reputation enduring for much of the nineteenth century. French born, Claude spent most of career in Rome. Stemming from the northern European tradition of landscape painting, Claude blended the picturesque aspects of his training with the classical and ideal landscape painting of the Italian tradition (cf. *fig.8*; Chilvers, 2004:154-155).

Since its popular resurgence in the nineteenth century, the scope of landscape painting had become very wide. Chu (2003:183) defines landscape painting as a broad category of images that expressly depict outdoor scenery. The subject matter may include any number of natural features such as mountains, seas, fields but also cities and may further include animals or people as well. Moreover, landscapes may be real or imaginary, depict the present or reconstructions of the past and can be rendered in a realistic manner or drawn from the artist's imagination. The aim of a landscape painting may also vary. Some landscape paintings may aim purely to charm and delight the viewer, others to inspire awe, whereas others may convey specific information[59] (Chu, 2003:183).

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[59] According to Brown (2001:416) it was the Romantics who started exploring the potential of landscape as a conveyer of meaning.

The scope and diversity of landscape painting are also reflected in the categorisation thereof. According to Chu (2003:183) landscape painting may be classified either by subject or aesthetic modality. The subject category comprises pastoral or bucolic landscapes, historic landscapes, mountainous landscapes, wooded landscapes, seascapes, town or cityscapes and panoramic landscape painting. Of these panoramic landscapes, pastoral or bucolic landscapes and historic landscapes are relevant to this study. Historic landscapes reflect scenes that tend to deal with historical or mythical subjects as set in the past and are often populated by figures that are part of that particular narrative. Pastoral or bucolic landscapes depict rural landscapes, often relating to the more pleasant aspects of country life, and may include rustic cottages and peasants toiling the fields, whereas panoramic landscapes portray a wide view of a particular scene from an elevated vantage point (Chu, 2003:183).

According to Chu (2003:183), aesthetic modalities are related to the effect the artist wishes to invoke in the viewer, and in landscape painting the following categories may be discerned: topographic, naturalistic, beautiful or ideal, picturesque as well as sublime. Chu (2003:183) further suggests that certain subject categories are well served by particular aesthetic modalities. For example, the sublime is often associated with stormy seascapes or mountainous scenery, whereas bucolic and pastoral scenery are generally naturalistic, and historical landscapes are often idealised. Apart from the subject associations there is also a tendency for certain established geographic links to be associated with particular aesthetic modalities, such as the associations of the English landscape with the picturesque, and ideal landscapes with Italy (Chu, 2003:183). In the case of the latter, Reynolds' predilection for history painting executed in the *Grand Manner* of Italian painting, may be cited as example (cf. Lambourne, 1999:10).

One of the most enduring aesthetic modalities within the landscape genre is the sublime. The notion of the sublime first entered popular European thought during the eighteenth century (Clarke, 2001:234). The term refers to sensory experiences that transcend the conventional binary category of beautiful and ugly (cf. Chu, 2003:72). It

does this by eliciting overpowering emotions in the viewer by the use of awe-inspiring epic vastness (Clarke, 2001:234) and rousing the imagination through the power of suggestion (Chilvers, 2003:574). According to Chilvers (2003:574) the sublime, together with the picturesque, was instrumental in the affecting the attitudes that would eventually lead to Romanticism.

The notion of the *picturesque* was introduced to established aesthetic categories such as the 'sublime' and the *beautiful* as a result of the increased popularity and broadening of the landscape genre (Chu, 2003:176). The term derives from the Italian word *pittoresco*, which literally translates as 'from a picture' (Clarke, 2001:187). One of the first exponents of the picturesque was William Gilpin (1724 – 1804), for whom the picturesque was not as awe-inspiring as the sublime and lacked the perfect refinement of the beautiful, but instead served to charm and delight the viewer (Chu, 2003:179).

According to Clarke (2001:187), the types of Italian landscape painting as typified by Claude provided the canon whereby the picturesque was judged. Van Eeden (2004:27-28) concurs with this by stating that the picturesque was reliant on presupposed pictorial models that determined how nature was to be looked at. According to Van Eeden (2004:28), the picturesque formula utilised the Western notion of planar recession based on pictorial perspective where by the landscape is translated into foreground, middle-distance and background in order to make it understandable for the viewer. To this she adds that, "the picturesque usually is *envisioned* as a series of planned and composed static pictures, which are meant to be seen from specific viewpoints" (Van Eeden, 2004:28). In light of this, Van Eeden (2004:27) refers to Delmont and Dubow who imply that the picturesque was a thoroughly coded form of representation, which presented the foreign landscape for the colonial gaze, and that, "the picturesque hence can be understood as a method of spatial organisation that encompasses the creation of bounded colonial spaces".

As an aesthetic modality, the picturesque is characterised by visual appeal, sentimentality, nostalgia, amazement, impulsiveness, ephemeral and that which relates to the mind's eye, and like the sublime, entails the exaggeration of nature in some form or another (Van Eeden, 2004:27-28). Picturesque landscapes are characterised by variation, non-uniformity, unexpected details, intriguing textures and fascinating and anomalous scenery (Clarke, 2001:187; Mayer *et al.*, 1991:312).

Naturalism, on the other hand, denotes the artist's ability to render light and atmospheric effects in order to portray reality convincingly. Naturalism presupposes the objective empirical observation by the artist, culminating in a depiction free of stylistic or conceptual restraints (Clarke, 2001:162). However, Chilvers (2003:413) suggests that naturalism is by no means incompatible with an idealised view of nature. According to Chu (2003:181) naturalism started a new movement in British landscape painting that found its most accomplished expression in the work of Constable (cf. Chu, 2003:190).

Following below is an exposition of Bell's work within context of the European explorer art tradition relating to the genre of landscape painting as well as to the broader context of nineteenth century European art.

4.4 Bell in context of the European explorer art tradition

Chu's (2003:183) subject classification of landscape does not allow for the genre of explorer art; nevertheless, landscape depictions by explorer artists may indeed be classified under the subject categories identified, i.e. pastoral or bucolic landscapes, historic landscapes, mountainous landscapes, wooded landscapes, seascapes, town or cityscapes and panoramic landscape. Furthermore, landscape depictions by explorer artists may also be found to conform to the traditional aesthetic modalities associated with European landscape painting as outlined by Chu (2003:183). With

regard to explorer art, however, what needs to be considered is the question of the artistic intent and function of the landscape depiction in question.

The origins of explorer art date back to the fifteenth century and were on the whole very modest. The first examples were sketches made at sea with the intent to supplement nautical records. These sketches were not highly regarded or prized as artworks, but were rather seen as scientific illustrations. However, from the sixteenth century onwards, the travelling artist became a prerequisite to mostly all European scientific and diplomatic missions abroad. The eighteenth century in particular saw an increased demand for travelling artists due to, among other factors, the rise of empirical and encyclopaedic curiosity in the world. In Britain newly founded institutions such as the Society of Dilettanti and the Society of Arts sent artists and scientists to record unexplored corners of the earth (Jacobs, 1995:10).

Artistically Bell is generally classified as an explorer artist (Brown, 1978:4-6), but is also variously cast as an amateur painter and social commentator, a book illustrator, a stamp designer, graphic designer and a polymath (Godby, 1998:140; Ogilvie, 1988:53; Smith, 1954:81-87; Lipschitz, 1992:19; Brooke Simons, 1998:138).

Unlike his nineteenth-century contemporaries Thomas Bowler, Frederick l'Ons and Thomas Baines, however, Bell's artworks seldom came onto the market. According to Godby (1998:140) this is testament to Bell's amateur status as an artist – that most of his art was simply not for sale. Another reason for Bell's lack of public detection postulated by Bradlow (1998:10), however, is that the bulk of Bell's work is to be found in private collections in England. Thus, in spite of the large collection of watercolours in MuseumAfrica, which was mainly assembled by the famous Africana collector Dr John Gaspard Gubbins, as well as two fairly well-known oil paintings in the South African Library namely *The isle of the Holy Cross* (1850) *(fig.3)* and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (1850), Bell was comparatively unknown to the public at large (Bradlow, 1998:10).

The likelihood exists that Bell was introduced to the art of drawing by his uncle after his arrival at the Cape. His uncle himself was an accomplished draughtsman of caricatures and picturesque scenes. At the time, however, drawing was seen as a hobby or pastime and not as a serious enterprise and it is therefore not surprising that Bell's earliest attempts reflect the characteristics of the amateur layman with regard to style and subject matter (Godby, 1998:141). Furthermore, there was no local artistic tradition to serve as reference, as there was no established art scene at the Cape at the time or prior to British occupation. According to Hunt (2005:119) this was because the VOC's financial tightfistedness prevented the encouragement of the decorative arts at the Cape. As a result, in spite of the great Dutch landscape painting tradition at the time, none of the esteemed Dutch landscapists went to work at the Cape. The only known seventeenth-century example of Dutch painting related to the Cape is an Aernout Smit painting of ships in Table Bay (c. 1683), which was painted in the time of Simon van der Stel (Hunt, 2005:119).

In keeping with his amateur beginnings, Bell's early works can generally be placed in two main genres: landscape and caricature. An example of the latter is a picture entitled *The Boer* (s.a.) (*fig.9*) originally included in an album of drawings of the Cape scene. According to Godby (1998:141) this image is a caricature of the "obese and indolent 'Boer'", that betrays the conventional view of Dutch-speaking farmers in the Cape Colony at that time (cf. Moodie, 1835:169-170). Many of Bell's caricatures can be placed in the genre of 'native scenes'. Such depictions were inevitably stereotypical, and generally intended as illustrated souvenirs for foreign visitors (Godby, 1998:148).

As an explorer artist, Bell also painted topics including landscapes, portraits, and scenes of early African life, or "historical scenes", as referred to by Ogilvie (1988:53), and ethnographical subjects as suggested by Lipschitz (1992:2). Generally explorer artists were regarded as essentially mere draughtsmen rather than serious high artists. Sketching or painting the landscape was usually only one of their tasks on expeditions, the remainder of their time being taken up by more menial responsibilities (Jacobs, 1995:9-10). While working in the Surveyor-General's

department, Bell produced a number of paintings consistent with the explorer art genre, many reflecting events relating aspects of behaviour of the indigenous peoples – an example is *Bushmen driving cattle up a kloof – Boers in pursuit* (s.a.) (*fig.1*) (Record, 1994:64). Furthermore, Bell's art can also be placed into the categories of social documentation and social commentary (Godby, 1998:141), examples of these are described by Brooke Simons (1998:52) as, "...spirited depictions of the appearance and customs of the indigenous people of the subcontinent", which served the purpose of illustrating the curious and the exotic for a European audience.

Godby (1998:142) propounds that representations made by artist travellers were generally intended as objective records of the terrain. Most likely complicit in this way of thinking was the notion of the 'innocent eye', which Brown (2001:23) describes as, "one of the most powerful Romantic myths". This notion was particularly applied to depictions of nature and landscapes. It held that an artist's innate instinctive vision would guarantee a truthful, objective depiction regardless of his own academic artistic training or external factors such as social, cultural, political or economic contexts. In practice, however, artists' depictions were telling of their own cultural milieu and artistic imagination (Brown, 2001:24). As Boime (1990:113) suggests, the innocent eye is prejudiced, and is tainted by the artist's social position. In order to present a seemingly objective account artists relied on a linear style as to best describe the topographic features of the landscape. The scene is further typically depicted from a higher vantage point in order to allow for greater scope in the foreground plane (Godby, 1998:142). According to Godby (1998:142), Bell's drawings of this genre, although adhering to conventions, are rather more scientific in approach than those of his contemporaries such as D'Oyly and Knyvett, and in many ways articulated the same aspiration to document and observe as the scientific projects that were in vogue at the Cape at the time.

This state of affairs may be attributed to the more scientific attitude towards the representation of nature that had developed among certain artists by the mid-nineteenth century. This could partly be ascribed to the influence of the explorer and

naturalist Alexander Humboldt, but also to influential critics such as John Ruskin (Jacobs, 1995: 14 -15). However, even prior to this many artists – among them Constable – had conceived of painting as a science with which the artist could explore the laws of nature (Lambourne, 1999:94). This did not mean that artists abandoned Romanticism altogether – as Carruthers and Arnold's (2000:22) example of Baines attests – in spite of his regard for scientific accuracy and realism in visual depictions. Concurrent to the more scientific attitude, the spirit of the Romantic movement compelled other artists to become more subjective in their approach towards nature. The romantic vision led artists to impose their own emotions upon the landscapes they were depicting. Compelled by a spirit of romantic restlessness, a new type of explorer artist emerged. These artists travelled independently to distant locations, often in the face of great difficulties and grave dangers. There was an discernable measure of tension and contradiction between the scientific and artistic traditions; in particular, the spirit of empirical scientific enquiry ran counter to the idealisations of artists. The then newly established Royal Academy, which oversaw the training of British artists, extolled an idealised view of nature based on a classical Italianate prototype, whereas the Royal Society pressed travellers, virtuosi and scientists to prudently record and observe all natural phenomena (Jacobs, 1995:14-15, 80-82).

According Jacobs (1995:9), even though most explorer artists tended to travel as members of either scientific or diplomatic missions, their depictions did not always adhere to seemingly restrictive briefs. Such briefs usually entailed the objective recording of the landscapes – including vegetation and animals – and the peoples of the territories visited and explored. This concurs with the first phase of in the development of colonial arts as propounded by Lambourne (1999:413), in which he purports that the development of colonial arts may be divided into three phases, of which the first phase is relevant to this study. The first phase corresponds with explorer art in that it is aimed at recording new surroundings, and images produced at this point would focus largely on topography, fauna and flora. In spite of the documentary intent of such visual recordings, Jacobs (1995:9) cautions against the literal reading of depictions by explorer artists, and states the following about such artists and their work:

...their visions of foreign lands were invariably influenced by their western prejudices and preconceptions, by the demands of colonial propaganda, and by the need to create finished pictures that would not only entertain and inform but also be composed according to the artistic conventions of the time. The viewer of these pictures should also bear in mind that many of the more memorable finished ones were done on the artist's return to their home countries and are thus further distorted by memory.

To this Jacobs (1995:16) adds that the working methods of most of these intrepid mid-nineteenth century travelling artists are, furthermore, a reflection of the difficult circumstances under which they toiled. Apart from the more obvious dangers such as disease or bandit attacks, explorer artists also were also confronted with the danger of offending local customs or being suspected of espionage. Due to time constraints, few travelling artists had the leisure of painting outdoors in oils, as illustrated by this remark by traveller artist Edward Lear:

... even let the landscape be ever so tempting, the uncertainty of meeting with any place or response or shelter obliges the most enthusiastic artist to pass hastily through scenes equal or superior to any it may be again his lot to see (quoted in Jacobs, 1995:16).

Most artists were therefore forced by circumstances to execute quick sketches in pencil, ink or watercolour. Apart from time constraints, the practice of oil painting was further hampered by transport problems and extreme weather conditions which required a quicker method of recording. These rapidly assembled sketches were sometimes supplemented by souvenirs and curios such as clothing and even, at times, live animals, and formed the basis of academy pictures executed upon the artist's return home. Many of these sketches were turned into prints to be published in scientific works or travel journals and books. Such prints proved a valuable income for many artists, who then applied the proceeds towards funding further expeditions. Some artists, however, managed to draw sufficient material from a single journey to last them a lifetime (Jacobs, 1995:16). In spite of such circumstances and practices,

Carruthers and Arnold (2000:14) suggest that these genre paintings were generally regarded as social documents that served to illustrate written historical records. Whether or not these works could be considered authentic fact-based depictions of reality or not, they were still employed to sustain certain interpretations and to cement hegemonic accounts of reality.

In the context of South African explorer art, Bell is often grouped together with Thomas Baines (cf. Brooke Simons, 1998:93, 140). According to Jacobs (1995:149), Baines was the most widely acknowledged of nineteenth century of the few explorer artists working in Africa (cf. Jacobs, 1995:148). Baines rose to notoriety after being nominated by the Royal Geographical Society to join David Livingstone's (1813-1875) research mission to the Zambezi River. Baines was a self-taught painter in the fine art sense, and according to Jacobs (1995:149) would later be remembered as an "explorer and painter" - his reputation was based more on his bravery than his artistic prowess. Prior to his association with Livingstone, Baines worked as an ornamental painter in his native King's Lynn, England, later settling in the Cape Colony where he attempted to support himself by means of his art. During the 1850s Baines travelled through the north of Australia and achieved the reputation as a scientific geographer, an epithet that led to his recommendation by the Royal Geographical Society as Livingstone's escort. In spite of his reputation, according to Jacobs (1995:150):

> Baines [in other words] was an indifferent artist whose works were criticised by his contemporaries for 'his want of finish, and too great glare in their colouring' 'As an artist', one of his critics concluded, 'Baines' works are very numerous, executed, as too many of them were, very hastily, and almost to supply his daily and pressing wants'.

Nonetheless, at the time Baines was considered a professional artist - as opposed to Bell's amateur status – and hence his life and career are generally better represented through art historical and other publications than Bell's (cf. Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:7, 11, 14; Godby, 1998:140). A comparison between Bell and Baines provides many possible similarities in both their approach to art as well as African society. In light of the little critical appraisal awarded Bell's artistic output, such a comparison may not only serve to locate Bell's work within the nineteenth century explorer art

genre and the broader South African artistic tradition, but also facilitates a contemporary reading of the socio-political contexts of his work.

For example, in a contemporary critical appraisal of Baines' work, Carruthers and Arnold (2000:14) suggest that Baines' art is a convergence of three factors. The first is his bequeathed Victorian[60] cultural values, followed by his encounters in an unfamiliar world as well as the manner in which he interpreted his encounters into visual language. One can assume that these same factors also had a similar influence on Bell's artistic output, since these artists shared a similar Anglo-European cultural heritage. Indeed, as shall be illustrated, evidence for Bell's compliance with such a hypothesis exists in many instances. Furthermore, Carruthers and Arnold's analytical scheme supports the proposed analytical framework of this study as also put forward by Lerner (1991:335), that is: the approach of considering an artwork within the contexts of its ideological frameworks, social reality and authoring strategies.

Regarding the issue of being heir to Victorian cultural values, i.e. the associated ideological framework, it should be noted that both Bell and Baines' lifetimes coincided with the apex of Victorianism – an epoch that exalted the ideologies of imperialism, industrialism and progress. In this regard Godby (1998:140) affirms that Bell's visual output was a reflection of the values and historical conditions of his time and that his art reflects his relationship to his milieu and his own historical position. In support of such a notion, Carruthers and Arnold (2000:21) postulate that Baines' art, for example, provides ample evidence of his conviction in the superiority of the British as nation and race. Coupled with this were English middleclass values that exalted morals, decency, industriousness and liberty. Such values spread easily by means of new forms of mass communication and became hegemonic as Britons rose to greater prosperity and levels of education (Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:20). It is within

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[60] I concur with Lambourne (1999:7) who uses the term Victorian as referring to the epoch spanning the life of Queen Victoria i.e. 1819 -1901, and not the period of her reign. Chu (2003:311) also states that the term Victorian at the same time refers to the social customs, moral values, literature, art and architecture of this epoch.

this context that Brook Simons (1998:90) suggests that Bell was, "a true product of the age and nation into which he was born". Elsewhere Brook Simons (1998:103, 138) mentions that Bell shared the prevailing Victorian sense of propriety and morality, and was also at times liable to act with prejudice and intolerance.

Apart from the fact that some of Bell's works reflect his own foreignness and adherence to European aesthetic conventions, others are testimony to his cultural bias. According to Godby (1998:145-146) some of Bell's works reflect that he shared the then general European prejudice regarding Africans' inferiority as a race; this is evident in the ethnographic drawings Bell made on Smith's 1834 expedition into the interior of South Africa. Godby (1998:146) further suggests that: "many [of these] drawings reveal a patent satirical intention in their style that is directly at odds with any scientific purpose", that, indeed, through their style of caricature they serve to convey a detached sense of superiority over their subject matter by means of satire. In this regard Godby (1998:146) cites a drawing, *Medicine man blowing counter charm towards the enemy* (1834) (*fig.10*), as cogent example of Bell's manipulation of different modes of depiction used to frame aspects that will appeal to his presumed rationalist European audience's sense of the primitive and the ridiculous. In contrast, Bell's depictions of himself at the time (*fig.11 & 12*) differ markedly from his stereotypical depictions of others (Godby, 1998:147). In this regard Bell echoed the mindset of many colonists for whom others in their society represented a certain set of associations based on colonial prejudice. For example, in the Cape society of the time Khoikhoi, were considered to be quarrelsome, down-at-heel inebriated sloths, whereas the local Afrikaners were seen as obese and boorish sloths (Godby, 1998:147; Moodie, 1835:169-170). Godby (1998:147) suggests that Bell often tended to depict his subjects accordingly:

> ...Bell insisted that certain behaviour typified any given subject, he also maintained a very restricted image of its physical form. In the same way that his 'Boer' was invariably fat, so he took every opportunity to exaggerate the appearance of steatopygia in his 'Hottentot' and 'Bushman' subjects.

Bell's prejudice towards indigenous South Africans is not only prevalent in his personal correspondence – as a reference to the Basutos as a tribe of "naked savages" in a letter to his sister attests (cf. Brook Simons, 1998:36; Godby, 1998:146) – but also evident in his ethnographic drawings (Godby 1998:145-146). The most telling of these is perhaps his depiction of various South African ethnic and racial groups as particular 'types'. Bell's depiction of various racial groups as particular 'types' is consistent with the scientific racial discourse of the time, where it was conceived that physiognomical distinctions such as race could determine a person or a group's social and psychological character and traits (Aschcroft *et al*, 1998:200; cf. also Godby, 1998:150). At the same time, a number of Bell's other depictions of Africans that may at first glance appear heroic will often, at closer inspection, reveal its indebtedness to the European notion of the 'noble savage' (Godby, 1998:146). Related to Rousseau's "back to nature" rally call, the noble savage represented an individual who was redeemed on the basis that he shunned society in favour of communing with nature (Marien & Fleming, 2005:504). According to Jacobs (1995:10) this was a feature of much European art during nineteenth century, where the *other* was often conceived of as savages but depicted in the manner of ancient Greeks and Romans. Godby (cf. 1998:146, 153) attests that a number of authors and artists working in South Africa during the nineteenth century perpetuated the stereotype of the noble savage, among them Bell himself, and also his contemporaries Frederic l'Ons and Thomas Baines. This was not surprising, because as Carruthers and Arnold (2000:13) suggest, unfettered racism was part and parcel of nineteenth-century Europe. It is thus logical that these attitudes would be represented in the art of the time.

In the light of the notion of the period that biological features such as race somehow divined a person or a group's social and psychological character and traits (Loomba, 2005:56,101-102) and the concept of the natural world as a universal hierarchical system (cf. Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:22, 171), I would propose that Bell's depiction of people as types may be a telling visual representation of the nineteenth-century belief in fixed social categories. By employing the notion of the noble savage in his depictions of indigenous South Africans, it can also be argued that Bell attempted to visually transmute what he had observed to fit European categories of classification

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expressed through European modes and conventions of visual representation. As discussed in Chapter 2, Boehmer's (1995:92) suggestion that in the difficult task of grafting their own hermeneutic structures onto the colonised environment, Europeans remained faithful to their own familiar models, narratives and metaphors in order to describe and encompass their unsettling new surroundings, gives credence to this argument. However, such depictions are fraught with bias, as Godby (1998:146) suggests - Bell's early depictions of *others* were based on caricature and served to convey his assumed racial superiority. Later depictions showed less evidence of caricature, but tended to conform more to stereotypes, and as such, Godby (1998:147) suggests, merely represent visual clichés that conveyed Bell's own prejudice.

Encountering the unfamiliar was, obviously, a social reality that many colonial artists had to face ever since the age of discovery. With the age of mercantilism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, came more sustained contact with other peoples through commerce, expansionism and settlement in foreign colonies (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:123). Artists' aesthetic sensibilities and modes of representation were challenged by what Rosenblum and Janson (2005:17) describe as, "the mixture of unfamiliar facts and ideal fictions, of conventional structures and unconventional narratives." That Bell was confronted with an unfamiliar world and new social realities on his arrival and settlement at the Cape becomes evident when one compares the Cape peninsula and the southern African hinterland with his birthplace. Bell grew up in the farming district East Newhall, four miles north of the Royal Burgh of Crail, one of the most easterly fishing villages along the rocky East Neuk of Fife coastline – a place topographically and with regards to its social context, very different from the Cape (Brooke Simons, 1998:17).

Although Bell spent most of his life-time in South Africa, and almost all of his known paintings and sketches were completed in South Africa (bar a number of lithographic prints produced in Scotland in 1847) (cf. Brooke Simons, 1998:72-73), Godby (1998:141) suggests that Bell's early representations of the Cape landscape are telling of his own foreignness to this country. This concurs with Boehmer's (1995:92)

suggestion that explorer artists were reliant on their own familiar concepts, narratives and metaphors in order to describe and encompass their new surroundings. Indeed, many nineteenth-century South African landscape depictions conform to Claudian principles of pictorial arrangement. These include, among others, the separation of foreground, middle-ground and background through the use of light and tonal perspective (Lipschitz, 1992:67).

Hence even though, at the time, much was made of supposed true depictions of the South African landscape unencumbered by European aesthetic conventions, Godby (1998:144) concurs that to imagine Bell being unaffected by European conventions would be unrealistic. Lipschitz (1992:67) supports this claim, suggesting that Bell adopted picturesque stylistic and topographical conventions in his depictions of the South African landscape. The following description of Bell's work by Godby (1998:144) further illustrates and substantiates this notion:

> For example, the arcadian scene of cowherds and grazing cattle in the foreground of an extensive bush landscape in Bell's 'Scketch on the Border of the Kalahari Desert, 1835' is constructed with the typical repousoir movement into depth of a classical European landscape in the manner of Claude Lorraine: a twisted tree framing the left foreground is balanced by a topographical feature set further back on the right, which leads the eye gradually to explore the space in the far distance. Of course, it is possible that Bell did not actually invent these features, but his decision to frame this view of the Kalahari with such accents indicates that he was making use of a convention for the representation of landscape that has certain connotations. On one level, the imposition of a sense of classical balance on the landscape creates a definite idyllic quality in the scene. On the other, Bell's use of European pictorial conventions to provide the structure of measurable space ˌfrom a single controlling viewpoint has clear symbolic significance. Perspective in this sense, acts as a pictorial equivalent of the scientific measurements being taken…

With regard to the manner in which Bell interpreted his encounters in South Africa into visual language, I will now consider his work and authoring strategies in relationship to the artistic milieu and conventions of his time. According to Godby (1998:157) Bell seemed not to concern himself much with notions of high art. Yet, in

spite of borrowing its conventions, Bell's foray into academic art was short-lived and not prolific (cf. Godby, 1998:144, 156-157). Aesthetically speaking, Boehmer (1995:92) suggests that Europeans relied on notions of topography familiar to them and tended to seek out those features that conformed to their own aesthetic schemes, as epitomised by the landscapes of Claude Lorraine. It would therefore seem that explorer artists' interpretations of their encounters in foreign lands were intimately tied up with their inherited cultural values, which through established modes and conventions also supplied them their means of articulation, as Carruthers and Arnold's (2000:26) supposition of Baines illustrates: "Thus, it is not Africa that Baines describes but his own British response to it".

Not only did Bell, Baines and other explorer artists conform to hegemonic European scientific and artistic conventions of the time, in many ways they also contributed towards and entrenched these. In accordance with Carruthers and Arnold's (2000:22) argument that Baines, through his involvement in scientific expeditions, helped to advance the scientific notions of the time by means of descriptions and observations of his encounters, it may be argued that contributions by other explorer artists such as Bell may be viewed in a similar light. As suggested in Chapter 2, the reason why amateurs such as explorer artists were able to make such a contribution to science may be attributed to the facts that the demarcation of knowledge was still broad and non-exclusive and that specialisation in particular fields had not yet become entrenched (Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:22). In their critical appraisal of Banes' work, Carruthers and Arnold (cf. 2000:92-93,101,110-111,119,131) clearly illustrate this artist's complicity in the imperialist programme.

According to Van Eeden, part of the imperial process (2004:24) was the enframing of the colonial landscape. Colonial expeditions such as those Bell undertook were instrumental in this process, as intimated by Fabian (1986:24):

> Colonial expeditions were not just a form of invasion, nor was their purpose inspection. They were determined efforts at *in-scription*. By putting regions on the map and native words on a list, explorers laid the first and deepest foundations for colonial power. By giving proof of the

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scientific nature of their enterprise they exercised power in a pure and subtle form – as power to name, to describe, to classify.

Van Eeden (2004:26) propounds that surveillance and sight were as instrumental in imperial conquest as military action. Once the landscape had been thus appropriated through surveillance and documentation, it was deemed available for imperial possession. Van Eeden (2004:26) refers to this process in terms of the notion of the "possessive gaze" which relates to "the manner in which landscapes were presented for visual consumption by the traveller's eye", which is, as such, analogous to the "imperial eye". The imperial eye designates and dominates that which it identifies through sight. To abet the process of taking possession of the land, Europeans often purported to the myth of an 'empty' and 'unused' landscape (Van Eeden, 2004:25-26). In light of this, Ryan (quoted in Van Eeden, 2004:32) suggests that the colonial gaze spatially fixes the colonial landscape "as a blank text, ready to be inscribed by the impending colonial process."

It seems apt to consider Baines' imperial gaze as visually conquering spatial expanses deemed available for imperial exploration and occupation. The way in which Baines' landscapes supported the fantasy of exploration is illustrated by in the following quotation:

> ...spaces uninterrupted by mountains and rivers which, when crossed, permit further territorial exploration. The viewer (and by allusion the explorer/coloniser) is invited to enter and travel through pictorial space, and – through the gaze – to take possession of a real spatial situation. By using illusionistic devices such as linear perspective, the artist convinces the viewer that space can be traversed and conquered, imaginatively and literally (Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:22).

The above excerpt affirms that European artists tended to resort to pictorial devices such as linear perspective, elevated vantage points and other illusionistic artifices (cf. Ashcroft, 2001:15, 141) that acted as strategies that abetted these artists' persuasive imaging of the colonised landscape. 'Persuasive imaging' is a term used by Hills (1991:100) to describe how the viewer may be convinced of the reality of a particular depiction through the artist's employment of the conventions of naturalism, in spite of

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the fact that the pictorial information in question is mediated by the artist's selection and manipulation thereof. I would suggest that in light of the scientific bias that underpinned the depiction of colonised peoples, the notion of persuasive imaging is not only confined to the depiction of landscape but also to colonial depictions of *others* and *otherness*.

In support of persuasive imaging, European artists also employed a number of other pictorial devices and visual codes which served to entrench and naturalise debasing perceptions of the subjects of their depictions. For example, according to Barrell (1992:1), there were particular aesthetic protocols that determined the depiction of certain classes, and that these restraints were also indicative of social and moral protocol. On a basic technical level the use of colour, rendering of light and shadow and composition may all be employed to codify power relations. This is eloquently illustrated in Wa Thoing' o's (1993:43) description of conventional colonialist painting: "In many paintings of the colonial period, the white adventurer was always at the centre of the action with rays of light radiating outwards from him. Africans were background shadows merging with the outer darkness and the natural landscape". Wa Thoing' o's judgement is supported by Boime's (1990:2) suggestion that *chiaroscuro* transcends the mere modelling of light and shadow; that as a polarity it represents the religious dualism of Good versus Evil. Therefore, I would argue, this may also be read in terms of the Manichean allegory which itself illustrates the way in which all aspects regarding the relationship between coloniser and colonised are polarised through imperial discourse to create a binary opposition that pits good against evil and superior against inferior and, ultimately, European against *other*.. The practice of distinguishing between certain groups of people by depicting one in an area of light and the other in shadow areas is, however, not restricted to the colonised or to race, but was also employed to illustrate other forms of social difference, as illustrated by Barrell (1992:22) in his appraisal of the depiction of rural poor in 18th and 19th century English painting.

With regard to composition both Barrell (1992:123) and Boime (1990:95) mention that a triangle or pyramidical composition may be utilised to delineate exclusive social hierarchies within a picture, often employing a hierarchical descending order

from top to bottom (cf. Boime, 1990:19, 209). Similarly, the division of the picture in different planes from top to bottom and foreground to background may be used to indicate not only the physical but also the social position of a figure, with those regarded as inferior or subordinate relegated to the lowest register or point of the composition (cf. Boime, 1990:92, 183).

Other devices used to signify social standing include posture and material markers such as clothing. For example, subordinates tend to be depicted in crouching or kneeling positions and are often shabbily dressed in contrast to the upright poses and regal dress of élite (cf. Barrell, 1992:44; Boime, 1990:103, 170, 179). Race served the purpose of more extreme juxtaposining, as black people were often employed in sixteenth-century European portraits of the upper classes for the sole purpose of drawing attention to the white complexion – and by implication the superiority of the sitter (Honour & Fleming, 1999:27). The above discussion gives credence to Boime's (1990:6, 8, 11, 155) statements that art may serve to define social position as well as exposing the artist's role in codifying racism. Although not conducive to the illusion of pictorial naturalism, I suggest that the pictorial devices mentioned above supported the European notion of the natural order of things (cf. Boehmer, 1995:2-3).

Furthermore, such authoring devices also relate to the diverse strategies and also the methods of control and representation of the *other* suggested by Loomba (cf. 2005:19), and as such – with regard to the representation of the colonies – were complicit in advancing the colonial gaze. In this sense, it relates to the discussion of the gaze of the imperial *Other* or *grande-autre,* in Chapter 2, through which colonial discourse continually locates the subjectivity of the colonised in the gaze of the imperial *Other*.

Examples of persuasive imaging and the colonial gaze are also apparent in the work of Bell, for example his depiction of the Battle of Swartkoppies. In June 1845 Bell visited the site where a battle between local Boers and British troops took place. Although the skirmish occurred in April 1845, Bell drew on his imagination to produce

a drawing (later to be produced as a lithograph) of the conflict as though he was an eyewitness to the event (Brooke Simons, 1998:68). This sense of the artist having actually been at the locale as supplementary to the factual account of the landscape is evident in a number of Bell's other landscape depictions (cf. Godby, 1998:143). Bell's depiction of he scene of the Battle of Swartkoppies offers a panoramic view from an elevated vantage point (cf. Ashcroft, 2001:15, 141), affording a sweeping view of the action, with the British and their Griqua allies depicted in the foreground. As a pictorial intervention, Bell raised the summit of the koppie for added dramatic emphasis (Brooke Simons, 1998:68), with its summit obscured by misty clouds adding a sense of the sublime. The imperial machination underpinning this lithograph entitled *The skirmish at Driekoppen, Near Zwaartkopjes* (s.a.) (*fig.13*), speaks from the fact that it was presented to Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Richardson, who is depicted in the foreground (Brooke Simons, 1998:67).

Godby cites more examples of Bell's pictorial interventions in his depictions of the South African landscape. In *Sketch on the border of the Kalahari Desert* (1835), Godby (1998:142,144) claims, Bell appears to have introduced elements associated with the European landscape tradition à la Claude with specific expressive intent, such as the balanced structuring of space and arcadian depiction of indigenous people in the landscape. In another example, *Scenery of the Kashan Mountains: the poort of the Urie River*[61] (1835) (*fig.14*), a low viewing point greatly exaggerates the actual height of the mountains. A nod towards the picturesque is evident in Bell's decision to draw two vultures near the centre of the picture plane, which Godby (1998:145) suggests, also complements the sublime attributes of this depiction. With regard to Bell's use of perspective, Godby (1998:144) reiterates Carruthers and Arnold's (2000:22) account of the manner in which perspective is translated into real spatial situations, thus abetting the artist's persuasive imaging of his subject matter. Godby (1998:144) points to the symbolic significance of Bell's depictions by proclaiming that Bell's use of a "single controlling viewpoint" provides the means to measurable space that is the pictorial equivalent to the role that scientific measurements play in the surveillance of the landscape. It is thus not surprising that Godby (1998:150) confirms that, as a colonial explorer artist, Bell was an agent of

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[61] Today known as the Magaliesberg (Godby, 1998:144).

imperialism. In addition, Carruthers and Arnold (2000:119) suggest that colonial paintings, in this case Baines', "become bearers of the abstract social values of the Victorian world, part of a series of assumptions about British identity and expansionist objectives".

Hence, in spite of Godby's (1998:157) suggestion that Bell did not seem concerned with the notions of high art, his utilisation of arcadian, picturesque and sublime devices does suggest a keener knowledge of the high arts. This is not surprising, since the period between 1830 and 1901 was marked by an intense interest in the fine and applied arts in Britain, manifesting in the founding of many British national art institutions such as the National Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum (Guy, 2002:313), as well as the first indications of a fledgling arts scene at the Cape (cf. Brooke Simons, 1998:130, 176). As stated earlier, members of the public also exhibited a number of pictures they had imported from overseas as part of the organisation of Cape Town's *First Exhibition of Fine Arts* held in 1851.

The general public's interest in the art and artefacts of foreign countries and ancient cultures was further increased by Colonial expansion and new travel opportunities (Guy, 2002:313). The nature and range of these interests were wide and varied, including a renewed interest in the Italian Renaissance as well as a near obsession in the 1890s with 'Japonisme'. Guy (2002:313) suggests that these interests can be attributed to enfranchising of middle and lower middle class British taste. Bell's middle class origins, strong association with his homeland and his self-perceived role as "agent of British rule" rather than "settled colonial subject" (Godby, 1998:150) as well as his participation in colonial exploration and expansion, would suggest that Bell in all probability shared such notions regarding the arts.

4.5 Conclusion

By considering Bell's biography and locating the artist within relevant discourses of his time, it has becomes clear that he was a man of his age and operated according to Victorian social and artistic conventions. With regards to the latter, it was established that Bell conformed to and utilised the established authoring strategies of the day. His biography further reveals that Bell could be considered an agent of British imperialism, and that as an artist; he was complicit in the imperialist programme.

In the next chapter a reading of two works by Charles Davidson Bell, *Cattle boers' outspan* and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* set out to reveal contradictions and similarities in the artist's depictions of Afrikaner ancestry.

CHAPTER 5

A READING OF CHARLES DAVIDSON BELL'S *THE LANDING OF VAN RIEBEECK, 1652* AND *CATTLE BOERS' OUTSPAN*

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, Bell's oeuvre was considered within relevant discourses of his time, revealing that the artist was complicit in the imperialist programme and operated according to Victorian social and artistic conventions, utilising the established authoring strategies of the day. In this chapter I will explore the contradictions and similarities in the depictions of Afrikaner ancestry in two works by Bell, *Cattle boers' outspan* and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* by employing postcolonial theoretical concepts as framework, and by focusing specifically on the notion of the *other*. In order to facilitate this, each work will be considered by offering a conventional reading which will be expanded by including the contexts of their ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and the social realities that surrounded their production.

5.2. *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*

The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652 is one of two oil paintings Bell painted in 1850 in an effort to introduce history painting to the Cape (Godby, 1998:156), the other being *The isle of the Holy Cross* (cf. Brooke Simons, 1998:93-94). At the time history painting had long been considered to be the most noble of genres in British painting. When *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* was exhibited at Cape Town's *First Exhibition of Fine Arts* in 1851 it was, as indicated, considered the best historical painting on exhibit (Lipschitz, 1992:18-19). Historic landscapes reflect scenes that tend to deal with historical, and sometimes mythical, subjects as set in the past, and which are often populated by figures that are part of that particular narrative (cf. Chu,

2003:183). In light of this the genre and context of the first public viewing of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* suggest that its intended viewing audience was the metropolitan cultural élite of British society at the Cape.

The painting measures 75.9 x 92 cm. Compositionally, a strong diagonal line flowing from the bottom left to the top right dominates the rectangular landscape format of the painting, and intersects with another prominent diagonal line running from the centre middle ground of the picture plane towards the top left. The diagonal lines form a V-shape in the top half of the format near the centre of the picture plane. The composition is further based on a number of triangular groupings of different elements, with the larger two of these intersecting at the V-shape formed by the two dominating diagonal lines.

The use of perspective is characterised by a single controlling viewpoint, receding from the foreground to middle distance and distant background. The separation of the picture plane into foreground, middle distance and background is further achieved through the use of light and tonal perspective, resulting in the depiction of a deep space. The use of light is dramatic and imbued with *chiaroscuro*, with a patch of bright light at the centre of the format surrounded by shaded areas in both the foreground and background. Colour is naturalistic with a predominantly earthy colour scheme and splashes of bright colours at the centre of the picture.

As indicated, landscape painting may also be classified according to aesthetic modality, with historical landscapes often associated with the ideal. Apart from the subject associations there also seems to be certain established geographic links with particular aesthetic modalities with ideal landscapes tending to allude to Italy (cf. Chu, 2003:183). This is the case with history paintings executed in the Claudian tradition mimicking the *Grand Manner* of Italian painting. Bell employs a naturalistic stylistic approach in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* akin to what Rosenblum and Janson (2005:156) call Romantic Naturalism. As suggested earlier, this approach creates the impression of a faithful and believable depiction of the subject matter that

presupposes objective empirical observation by the artist. The use of a naturalistic stylistic approach satisfied the Victorian criteria of judging painting in terms of its representational qualities, suggesting a depiction of 'real life' (cf. Guy, 2002:314). As with his later depiction of the Battle of Swartkoppies Bell drew on his imagination to depict this event, but the real setting alludes to an eyewitness account of the event. However, as pointed out, naturalism is by no means incompatible with an idealised or scientific view of nature. As stated, Bell adopted picturesque stylistic and topographical conventions in his depictions of the South African landscape. Regarding these, *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* conforms to many other nineteenth-century South African landscape paintings that employ Claudian principles of pictorial arrangement. This is especially evident in Bell's separation of foreground, middle-ground and background through the use of light and tonal perspective that recreates the spatial depth typical of classical European depictions (cf. Godby's, 1998:144). Bell used a naturalistic approach to colour with the foreground of the landscape depicted in warm brownish earthy hues, contrasted with the cool greens of the mountain. The sky ranges from crisp blue to greyish blue tones with sunlit clouds in warm cream to white tones. The more neutral earthy colours of the landscape are complemented by vivid hues of orange, blue and white in the clothing and regalia of the central group of figures.

The stylistic approach and subject matter of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* situate the painting within the genre of history painting. As suggested earlier, Bell produced his works in this genre according to the example of painters at the Royal Academy. In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* Bell depicts a historical event that marks the beginning of European colonial presence in Southern Africa – the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck, agent of the VOC, at the Cape of Good Hope, the depiction of which Bell based on literary sources (cf. Godby, 1998:155). The moment depicted is the first meeting between Van Riebeeck's group and a group of indigenous Khoikhoi people. The meeting takes place in a landscape, with a large number of figures occupying the middle ground of the picture plane. In the left middle ground a group of figures, identifiable as Europeans by their racial features and dress, are depicted coming ashore in a rowboat, whilst others already ashore are carrying crates towards the central group of figures. Together these two groups form a triangular scheme

within the larger composition, with the top of a flagpost at the top of the triangle and the highest point of the composition.

This central group comprises six European figures standing on a low sand dune. While one of these figures faces the men coming ashore, the other five, including a priest, a soldier and Van Riebeeck himself, are facing a group of five Khoikhoi (four adults and a baby), also gathered on a slight elevation depicted in the right middle ground. The Europeans are dressed in period style, brandishing various regalia and weaponry. The Khoikhoi are depicted in traditional dress, although a figure sitting closest to the European group appears naked. The two groups are separated by a shallow gully. In the back middle ground, linking the central group and the Khoikhoi is another group of Europeans actively busying themselves with chores.

The setting chosen by Bell for *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* is the beach near Table Mountain with Devil's Peak in the background. Cast in shadow, rocks and foliage in the right foreground frame a patch of light in the central middle ground, echoing Claudian principles of tonal perspective and division of the picture plane. The middle ground landscape gently inclines from the shore on the left towards low sand dunes in the centre and right of the picture plane, which are separated by a shallow gully. Perched on the central sand dune and bathed in strong directional light are Van Riebeeck and his party, on the other, depicted just outside the spotlight and separated from the Europeans by the shallow gully, the Khoikhoi group. In the background Devil's Peak towers under a dramatic semi-clouded sky, conjuring a sense of the sublime.

Having now considered *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* in terms of its subject matter and formal qualities, I will proceed to explore the work within its ideological context by means of postcolonial theoretical concepts in order to elucidate the reading.

5.2.1 The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652 *within an ideological context*

In order to analyse the work within the ideological framework of its time one needs to consider how *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* reflects Bell's bequeathed Victorian cultural values. As pointed out, colonial paintings reflect the intangible social values and cultural assumptions of the time (cf. Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:119). It was also established earlier that explorer artists' interpretations of their encounters in foreign lands were intimately tied to their inherited cultural values, which through established modes and conventions also supplied them their means of articulation (cf. 4.3.2).

This may also be true of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*, as it had previously been determined that Bell could be regarded a product of his time and cultural milieu and shared the ideologies of imperialism, industrialism and progress. Furthermore, Bell also shared Victorian cultural attributes, assumptions and prejudices such as the perceived superiority of the British as nation and race, as well as British middle class values that exalted morals, decency and industriousness, among other virtues (cf. Brook Simons, 1998:90, 103, 138; Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:21; Godby, 1998:140).

Much of the cultural ideologies, assumptions and prejudices highlighted above may be seen reflected in the formal qualities and subject matter of the painting under discussion. As established earlier, within the context of nineteenth-century British art, history painting – especially that which depicted monumental historical events executed in the Italian 'Grand Manner' – was the most highly regarded of genres. The subject matter of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* is reflected in the title which, together with the formal qualities indicate that – apart from falling in the genre of history painting – this artwork can also be considered as a narrative painting. The story told here is a European one, and as we shall see – from a European perspective – with no references to the existence of a pre-colonial history. In this sense the artwork negates the existence of pre-colonial history, a practice that results in the citation of colonialism as the only history (cf. 3.2). As indicated in Chapter 2, the main motivating drives behind modern European imperialism were to colonise and expand their territory. *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* depicts and commemorates the beginning of this process at the Cape. The historical reference

point, 1652, is determined according to the Western calendar and the event depicted is part of European colonial history. Painted nearly two centuries after the event, this artwork represents an epic scene of "inflated heroism" depicted in the Romantic style (Record, 1994:64). Significantly, the only individual named is Jan Van Riebeeck.

In light of the above this artwork can also be read as a memorial painting, since it depicts an important historical event. However, at the time the work was painted, the Cape was a British colony and no longer in the control of the Dutch. As indicated in Chapter 2, Britain – together with France – is considered as the foremost imperial power of the nineteenth century, and therefore epitomised European power (cf. Young, 2001:31). Thus, painted from a British perspective, the work is not a memorial to Dutch power and grandeur but rather to the rise of European expansionism and imperialism of which Britain was the prime example.

Another motivating factor behind modern European imperialism mentioned in Chapter 2 is the dissemination of Eurocentric culture coupled with the perceived need to civilise non-Europeans. In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* this is evidenced in the presence of a priest in Van Riebeeck's party, representing the Christian faith in opposition to what was considered a godless heathen culture of the indigenous peoples. The Khoikhoi's position in front of Devil's Peak further alludes to this notion, with the shallow gulley separating them from the Europeans which further strengthens the implied divide between the civilised Christian and heathen savage. The inclusion of the religious minister is significant because - as discussed in Chapter 2 - Christianity was a central tenet of the Western account and codification of history (cf. Ferro, 1998:20). As posited by Loomba (2005:99), missionary zeal and efforts to convert natives went hand in hand with most colonial enterprises. In many instances the bestowal of Christianity was used as justification for the economic pillage of colonies.

European commodities brought ashore for barter purposes represent the other great European meta-narrative – mercantile capitalism. Van Riebeeck and his party of

wealthy merchants, religious minister and gentry occupy the central position of importance to the middle of the picture plane, with the indigenous people relegated to the far right corner of the picture. As suggested in Chapter 2, the notions of European national vanity as well as Europeans' own perceived position as custodians of the balance of world power were also intrinsic to the European imperial programme. As propounded by Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:126) European desire for, and belief in its own cultural superiority was of far greater consequence than the conquest of profit. Hence in this artwork, depicted in a glow of light, we find Van Riebeeck's party of men with their opulent costumes and weaponry as markers of wealth, status and military superiority as well as national identity (the latter also symbolised by the Dutch flag), signifying the prosperity of civilisation which they have come to bestow on a 'primitive', exotic corner of an 'uncivilised' Africa. The display of national status symbols and pageantry, as suggested in Chapter 2, can be seen as an expression of colonial authority and dominance of the coloniser. The flag is of exceptional scale compared to the figures and towers over Van Riebeeck's party. The flagpost pierces the African sky and points away from Devil's Peak towards Europe. Hence, similar to Delacroix's (1798-1863) *The 28th of July: Liberty leading the people* (1830), Bell's use of the flag in this artwork can be seen to combine allegory with actuality with the flag here symbolising not only colonial conquest, but also the liberation of the indigenous population from what the Dutch perceived to be a backward, godless and uncivilised existence (cf. Honour & Fleming, 1999:655). The Khoikhoi's position in front of Devil's Peak may further attest to this, since Christians often equated skin colour with religious persuasion and cultural status (cf. Giliomee, 2003:14).

Furthermore, even though Bell's depiction of this event relates to the colonial stage of mercantile capitalism, it was executed in his own time: the age of classical imperialism. As suggested earlier, colonialism had developed into a scheme of ahistorical categorisation during this latter period (cf. Chapter 2). According to this hierarchy European society and culture were viewed as intrinsically superior and was coupled with the moral justification that modernisation was to the benefit of the subjugated (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:48; Louis, 1998:91-92; Young, 2001:5). In light of this, the imbalance of power and demarcation between European *Self* and African

other are significantly evident and can be argued to reflect colonialist attitudes and racial and cultural stereotypes.

Not only did the indigenous peoples appear somatically different from Europeans, but to European observers these peoples seemed to have no economy, religious or political structures or propriety, and neither literacy nor what Europeans considered an intelligible language. As suggested in Chapter 2, these notions were supported by nineteenth-century scientific theories as at the time. According to these theories race was regarded as a result of an immutable biological hierarchy with Europeans occupying the highest rung.

One example was the pseudo-science of physiognomy, which purported that aspects such as facial or bodily features were representative of an individual's mental and moral properties. This hypothesis lead to the advancement of the notion that biological features such as race somehow divined a person or a group's social and psychological character and traits and was therefore also responsible for historical development and cultural formation (cf. Lambourne, 1999:259). In light of this isea, indigenous peoples were generally viewed as primitives who lacked culture. Their depiction on the periphery of the composition is thus not surprising.

Earlier it was established that many of Bell's artworks reflect his allegiance to the then general European prejudice regarding Africans' inferiority as a race and on occasion conceived of them as savages (cf. Godby, 1998:145-146; Brooke Simons, 1998:35). In spite of the perceived inferiority of indigenous peoples, Europeans often resorted to portraying these peoples in the manner of ancient Greeks and Romans, giving rise to the notion of the noble savage. This practice was evident in the works of a number of authors and artists working in South Africa during the nineteenth century who perpetuated the noble savage stereotype, including Bell (cf. Godby, 1998:146,153). In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* Bell's depiction of the Khoikhoi attests to this. At least two of the Khokhoi, the standing figure and the seated figure on the far right, are depicted in poses recalling classical sculpture. As discussed

earlier, the noble savage represented an individual who was somehow redeemed on the basis that he shunned society in favour of communing with nature, existing as a naïve primitive on the periphery of civilisation and possessing no culture.

Furthermore, the Khoikhoi's facial features in this artwork are depicted coarsely and are far more generalised than those of the Dutch colonisers, rendering the Khoikhoi unrecognisable as individuals and in this way identifying them as a 'type' different from Europeans. Barrell (1992:134) suggests that figures painted indistinctly in this manner constitute an attempt to evade the question of their actuality. Moreover, it was argued earlier that Bell's depiction of people as types may be a telling visual representation of the nineteenth-century belief in fixed social categories – especially in light of the notion that biological features such as race were believed to divine a person or a group's social and psychological character (Loomba, 2005:56, 101-102). In turn, this belief helped to sustain the notion of the natural world as a universal hierarchical system (cf. Carruthers & Arnold, 2000:22,171). The Khoikhoi's supposed primitive savagery is further indicated through their rudimentary attire and various degrees of nudity, which is in stark contrast to the richly dressed and adorned Europeans.

Considering the above discussion it becomes evident that *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* is both a reflection and evidence of the ideological context in which it was produced. The reading of ths work also sought to bring to light the ideological frameworks that determined the hierarchical relationships between the binaries of colonial *self* and *other*, pitting the representation of coloniser against colonised, the civilised against the uncivilised, the culturally advanced versus the culturally different as well as the hierarchy of racial superiority.

I will now proceed to consider the social realities surrounding the work under discussion.

5.2.2 The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652 *within the context of social realities*

Cross-cultural interaction is one of the four major tenants or concerns prevalent in postcolonial criticism identified by Barry (2002:196), as indicated in Chapter 2 where it was also shown that the social reality of colonised spaces was determined by the interface between the coloniser and colonised. As suggested, the age of mercantilism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw more sustained contact between coloniser and colonised through the enterprise of commerce, expansionism and settlement in foreign colonies (cf. Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:123). The account of the interaction between the European visitors and settlers and indigenous South Africans in Chapter 3 affirms the disparity between the social realities of these divergent groups. The indigenous peoples that Europeans encountered at the Cape were somatically and culturally very different from themselves, but also different from other indigenous populations encountered by Europeans up to that point. At the heart of the issue, then, is that the Khoikhoi and the San, presented an *otherness* foreign not only to European social realities, but also the Europeans' previous encounters with foreign peoples in the East (cf. Katzen, 1982:198, 202).

With regard to the somatic aspects, it was established in Chapter 2 that the beginning of the imperial period was innately tied to the developing European cultural ideology regarding race, which resulted in a paternalistic approach towards colonial subjects (cf. Young, 2001:32). As suggested, race was seen as the outward marker for a people's "civilisational and cultural attributes" (Loomba, 2005:101). This translated into the binary notion of the civilised versus the savage, which in turn was supported by scientific notions of the time (cf. Aschcroft *et al.,* 1998:209). Binaries such as these, inescapable as they were, locked the colonised in an inferior position, with the European as the superior civilised self, and the colonised as inferior savage *other* (cf. Loomba, 2005:109-113). It was further established that the power balance in such binary constructions – which favour the self – leads to the subjugation of the *other* (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2006:266). Once constructed as inferior, such constructions of the *other* tended to crystallise into a cultural projection of negative concepts. Moreover, in time such negative constructions assisted in naturalising

attitudes and conduct, ultimately translating into social reality (cf. Childs & Fowler, 2006:165; Edgar & Sedgwick, 2006:266).

Loomba (2005:58-59) reiterates that racial biases were presented as objective truth, but further suggests that such claims were often supported by gender bias, seeing that theories regarding these two classifications were often used for mutual justification. In light of this fact, it was suggested that during the nineteenth century, those regarded by Europeans as lower races were often assigned perceived feminine characteristics. Consequently, both racial and gender biases are discernable in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* Bell's use of a naturalistic style enables him to distinguish the Khoikhoi racially from the Dutch colonisers. In spite of the naturalistic style, his depiction of the Khoikhoi in this painting is gender-vague due to – as indicated above – his generalised way of depicting their features, in contrast with the carefully detailed depiction of the Dutch. Apart from the figure with a baby tied to her back – denoting a mother and child – the other three Khoikhoi figures are depicted as physically similar. Whereas adornments may indicate a distinction and rank and gender within the group, facial features and clothing appear alike in all the Khoikhoi, except for the figure seated left who appears nude, and as a result (ironically) especially genderless. In this depiction, the traditional attire of the Khoikhoi group further serves to highlight their *otherness* from the European norm. In addition, the Khoikhoi were both somatically and culturally different from the European colonisers. One of the primary cultural differences was the way in which indigenous societies were structured socially, politically and economically. For one, the Koikhoi and San were technologically and culturally far less developed than the indigenous peoples in the East with whom the Dutch and the British had already had more sustained contact (cf. Giliomee, 2003:3). The Khoikhoi were former hunter-gatherers who adopted domesticated livestock via West and Central African Iron age peoples (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:viii). As set out, Khoikhoi society was plutocratic where in such societies an individual's wealth determined one's political standing. In the case of Khoikhoi society, this wealth was primarily measured in terms of livestock. However, the Khoikhoi's notion of private ownership related only to livestock and did not extend to the land, which they considered as inalienable (cf. Smith & Pheiffer, 1993:17). In contrast, Europeans regarded land as a commodity and bartered with the intention of obtaining realty rights. The different views

regarding land occupation and usage led to the European myth of an 'empty' and 'unused' landscape which was for the taking (cf. Van Eeden, 2004:25-26). This notion is also present in the tradition of British landscape painting, as typified by Constable, where a well-ordered and controlled fecund landscape equalled a well-organised society (cf. Barrell, 1992:133). In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* the landscape depicted by Bell is unproductive and uncultivated, and thus unused and thus up for grabs.

In this regard Bell's depiction of the South African landscape relates to the scope of the imperial eye. As indicated, the imperial eye designates and dominates that which it identifies through the colonial gaze. Thus, Bell's colonial gaze visually conquered the spatial expanse deemed available for imperial exploration and occupation and spatially fixed the colonial landscape as a blank canvas on which his version of history may be painted. From this perspective, this artwork may be seen as a reflection of racial attitudes of the time in which it was painted, rather than a record of Dutch attitudes towards the Khoikhoi at the time of Jan van Riebeeck's settlement.

Furthermore, a significant disparity between European coloniser and Khoikhoi with regard to their economies was also apparent. The stark contrast between the economies of the Khoikhoi and the Europeans is illustrated in the latter's depicted lack of material goods and commodities. In contrast the wealthy Dutch are depicted presenting and carrying ashore many wares and goods. In fact, both the subject matter and the narrative of the painting – the establishment of a victualling station on the profitable Cape trade route – are a commemoration of the expansion of the Dutch merchant empire. As was suggested, the interaction and trade with Europeans (with their peculiar notions regarding wealth and ownership), eventually led to the disintegration of traditional Khoikhoi society – a *fait accompli* by the time *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* was painted.

The above discussion indicated how these social realities between European coloniser and indigenous Khoikhoi both in terms of subject matter and the time of the work's execution are reflected in Bell's depiction of the event portrayed. What is,

however, not apparent in Bell's depiction, is the British attitude towards the Dutch. Neither apparent, is the British attitude towards the Dutch descendents who were subjects of the British Empire when Bell executed this painting. This aspect gains significance when considering that both the artist and the intended viewing audience of the artwork were British.

By the time the artwork was completed, South Africa's colonial history had already spanned nearly two centuries; the majority of that time, however, under Dutch occupation and rule. The British formally occupied the Cape only four decades prior to the artwork's first public viewing in 1851. In the context of the mercantile capitalist world of the eighteenth century, the Dutch and British were colonial and commercial competitors. But it was during the nineteenth century especially, that European imperialism developed into an international system of rivalry between colonial powers for the control of territories as well as access to resources – a process that was driven by national vanity, among other factors (cf. Chapter 2). Hence, at the same time colonisation also came to symbolise a nation's power to reproduce itself in different places (cf. Ferro, 1997:11). By the time the British occupied the Cape in 1806 their imperial power outranked that of the Dutch and was only rivalled by the French (cf. Young, 2001:31).

As indicated, by the time the Cape Dutch became British subjects, their society had already become African-based, or sociologically indigenous, and had lost most of its cultural associations with the Netherlands. To the British, the Dutch settlers were culturally different; they spoke a foreign language and adhered to a different religious persuasion. It was furthermore revealed in Chapter 2 that early British accounts of Cape Dutch Afrikaners tended to be very negative and disparaging and that a similar view persisted throughout the nineteenth century. English civil society at the Cape disregarded and disdained all that could be considered Cape Dutch. The common English perception of the Cape Afrikaners included attributes such as indolence, ignorance, indifference, treachery, cruelty, boorishness, troublesomeness, dis-affectedness, moral degenerateness, coarseness and a lack of polish in manner, and suggested that the Afrikaners were dirty and slovenly in appearance. *The Spectator*

of 17 May 1834 (cf. Streak, 1974:125), went as far as to refer to the Afrikaners as "semi-savage Dutch Africans" with Kitchener's description of the Afrikaner as "uncivilised Afrikaner savages with a thin white veneer" corroborating that stance (cf. Steyn, 2001:26). Apart from considering themselves morally superior to the Afrikaners, the English found the Afrikaners' non-observance regarding class, rank and title particularly irksome. According to Streak (1974:41) the British sense of superiority was a recurring issue in English/Cape Afrikaner relations during the first number of years of the former's occupation of the Cape Colony.

At the time *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* was painted one of the pivotal events to shape South Africa as a country as well as its history, the Great Trek (1836-1854) was drawing to a close. As proposed, the Great Trek may be seen as a rebellious act against British control. In many ways the Great Trek represented the social, ideological and above all political rejection of British hegemony, and is considered by some to herald the birth of the Afrikaner as nation (cf. De Klerk, 2008:342-343). This is supported by Ross' claim that British nationalism was the "prime nationalism to which both Afrikaner and African nationalism reacted" (cf. Giliomee, 2003:194). In light of this, Bell's choice to depict of an event which heralds the beginning of the history of the Afrikaner seems at odds with social, cultural and political *status quo* that existed between the British and the Cape Afrikaners at the time. This notion gives credence to Record's (1994:65) suggestion that this painting bears little relation to the actual event, and is rather concerned with the perceptions and values of nineteenth century British colonial power – and to all intents and purposes represents a "jingoist appropriation" of Dutch history for British imperialist purposes. In this regard this particular artwork resembles Verdi's opera of Israel – a thinly veiled tale of Italy under foreign control which employs Romanticism and nationalism in the service of patriotism (cf. Honour & Fleming, 1999:499).

Having considered *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* in terms of its ideological context, I will proceed by considering the authoring strategies that abetted the creation of this artwork.

5.2.3 The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652 *within context of authoring strategies*

The European desire for, and belief in their own cultural superiority was of far greater consequence to the *status quo* between coloniser and colonised than the conquest of wealth and profit (cf. Chapter 2). The Europeans' Prospero complex' was advanced by the continual imperial rhetoric and imperial representation to which non-Europeans and those colonised by Europe had been subjected unabatedly since the fifteenth century (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:126). Boehmer (1995:79) further maintains that representation of the colonised *other* remains one of the most significant facets of European self-projection.

As was proposed, the diverse strategies and methods of control relating to European discourses regarding the *other* were due to the multifarious nature of the colonial programme. The geographic reach of colonialism led to similarly diverse representations being made in varied and vastly different locations and circumstances (Loomba, 2005:19). It was further suggested that the various diverse strategies and methods of representation applied in a multitude of circumstances and locations relate to Spivak's notion of *othering*, which describes the various ways in which colonial discourse produces its subjects by means of such processes as labelling and characterisation (cf. Boehmer, 1995:83).

As indicated, stereotyping served the purpose of providing familiar labels – which simultaneously assigned and masked the disconcerting *otherness* represented by colonised peoples (cf. Boehmer, 1995:79). It was also established that colonial representations of the *other* were marked by a pervasive degree of such stereotyping (cf. Boehmer, 1995:79). Stereotypical representations served to reinforce perceptions regarding the dominance of Empire by making imperialism seem part of the natural order of things (Boehmer, 1995:2-3). Alatas (1977: 120, 125) supports this argument by suggesting that negative stereotypes of the colonised *other* served as justification for colonial domination and territorial conquest.

As a means of conveying their observations of both the colonised *other* and colonised landscape, European artists used various authoring strategies, which generally tended to uphold stereotypical representations. As indicated, European artists tended to resort to their own familiar concepts, narratives and metaphors in order to describe and encompass their unsettling new surroundings (cf. Boehmer, 1995:92). In this regard one of these strategies highlighted is the depiction of the colonised as sub-human. In contrast with the superiority afforded the representations of an expanding Europe in such images, the colonised were either represented in generic terms such as faceless masses or as lesser terms such as being uncivilised, subhuman, child or animal-like (cf. Boehmer, 1995:79). This, according to Smith and Pheiffer (1993:20), served to justify and rationalise European colonialism.

As previously exposed in the appraisal of Bell's work – and the reading of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* in particular – the artist was a firm believer in the superiority of the British as race and colonial power. Bell, on occasion, regarded indigenous peoples as savages (cf. Brooke Simons, 1998:35). The reading of this particular artwork in terms of its ideological context revealed the disregard for the pre-colonial history of the region and its indigenous inhabitants – an attitude that rendered these "opaque centuries" literally invisible. The superiority afforded the representation of Europeans in this work was revealed by drawing attention to the central position in the composition assigned to Van Riebeeck and his party. It was also determined through the difference in Bell's depiction of the features of the different parties, thus alluding to the Khoikhoi embodying a faceless group. This is supported by Barry's (2002:193-194) suggestion that the *other* is often viewed as a homogeneous anonymous whole, rather than individuals, and that their actions were supposedly determined by racial considerations rather than individual will and circumstance.

The anonymity of the Khoihhoi group is further highlighted by the attention and detail afforded to the Europeans with regard to rank and occupation as reflected in their dress. The central European group, which includes Van Riebeeck, is richly dressed in attire reflecting the prosperity of the Dutch merchant nation. Their dress display

variation in both style and colour, with vivid hues of orange, blue and white, reflecting the colours of the Dutch flag, as well as gold, thus dominating the composition in terms of palette. In contrast, the traditional dress of the Khoikhoi is treated in a generic manner and they are shown wearing simple earth-coloured clothing and placed against a backdrop of shadows cast by Table Mountain. Their presence is consumed by the pigmented skin of paint describing the landscape as in Wa Thiong' o's discussion of colonialist paintings (cf. Wa Thiong' o, 1993:43).

The practice of distinguishing between certain groups of people by depicting one in an area of light and the other in shadow areas is, however, not restricted to race, but was also employed to illustrate other forms of social difference as illustrated by Barrell (1992:22) in his appraisal of the depiction of rural poor in 18th and 19th century English painting. Other devices such as posture may also be used to signify social standing (cf. Chapter 4). In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* Bell's depiction of the Khoikhoi follows the examples of these strategies cited above: all the Khoikoi, bar one, are depicted in crouching or seated positions in contrast to the upright poses of Van Riebeeck's party, indicating the subordinate position of the Khoikhoi in relation to the Dutch (cf. Barrell, 1992:44; Boime, 1990:103, 170, 179).

By using authoring strategies that depict the Khoikhoi as sub-human and inferior to Europeans, Bell contributes to their *othering.* A distinction between the *other/Other* was established. As suggested, this comparison functions on two levels: on the one hand the *Other*, in this case Jan van Riebeeck and his entourage, represents the vehicle by which the colonised subject's perception of the world is mediated. By the same token the *Other* sets the standards by which the colonised subject (the Khoikoi) is defined as different or *other*. However, the process whereby the colonial *others* come into being at the very same time abides the construction of the grand imperial *Other* itself (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:171) – in the case of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*, as foreign intruder, a position which would ordinarily be considered as *other*. It was further indicated that the concept of the *Other/other* addresses, among other things, the representations of the non-European as exotic or immoral *other,* a notion that seems to be affirmed by Bell's depiction of the Khoikhoi in this painting.

As indicated, depictions of indigenous peoples by European colonial and travelling artists were regarded as exemplifying the truth by representing a particular account of reality for a specific audience, even though such depictions were often comprised of a heady mixture of fact and fiction. What further rendered Bell's depiction of the Koikoi in this painting "real" for the artwork's intended audience is the Romantic Naturalist style in which it was painted. As established earlier, Romantic Naturalism presupposes the 'believable' and faithful depiction of the subject matter (cf. Rosenblum & Janson, 2005:156). Yet, as indicated, Bell did not treat all aspects of his representation equally in terms of detail and faithful rendering, and in this sense conformed to a number of conventions and stereotypes in his depictions. These re-presentational concerns are echoed in the contemporary redress of the work of Constable, which suggests that in spite of Constable's intention to render the landscape as naturalistic as possible, his work did not represent true reality. Instead, Constable's paintings reflect his own "nostalgic reconstruction of an idyllic past" (cf. Chu, 2003:189-190). In a similar fashion, Bell's painting represents a jingoist appropriation of Dutch history for British imperialist purposes, celebrating a heroic moment from the golden age of mercantilism, that bears little relation to the actual event. Furthermore, Bell's deviation from the faithful depictions of the Romantic Naturalist style confirms previous findings that he included aspects of the picturesque as well as the sublime in his oeuvre, adding a heroic flair to his painting style which is evidenced in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (cf. Godby, 1998:145,156; Brooke Simons, 1998:67).

As suggested by Chu (2003:183), as an aesthetic modality, the sublime is often associated with seascapes or mountainous scenery; aspects of both these are present in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* Furthermore, as established before, an artist's use of the sublime tends to aim at eliciting overpowering emotions in the viewer. This is achieved through the use of awe-inspiring epic vastness as well as rousing the imagination through the power of suggestion (Clarke, 2001:234; Chilvers, 2003:574). The geographic character of Table Bay with its towering mountains, the unusual shape of Table Mountain and its reputed stormy seas naturally lend themselves to the notion of awe-inspiring epic

vastness. Although Table Mountain itself is not depicted, the artwork's primary intended audience, being resident at the Cape, could however, hardly be unaware of its towering omnipresence. Its omission, therefore, does not negate its implied presence in the imagination of the viewer. In addition, Bell's decision to depict the enigmatically named Devil's Peak – under a stormy sky – serves to satisfy the notion of rousing the imagination through the power of suggestion. Bell's use of the sublime as authoring strategy thus highlights his complicity in colonial processes of representation since the sublime mode of colonial painting functions as an allegory of imperial control (cf. Ashcroft, 2001:141).

Apart from aesthetic modalities such as the sublime, many more authoring strategies were available to European artists, among these the use of composition and perspective. With regard to composition it was established earlier that a triangle or pyramidical composition may be used to delineate exclusive social hierarchies within a picture, often by means of a hierarchical descending order from top to bottom (cf. Barrell, 1992:123; Boime, 1990:19, 95, 209). Similarly, the division of the picture in different planes from top to bottom and foreground to background may be used to indicate not only the physical but also the social position of a figure, with those regarded as inferior, subordinate or *other* relegated to the lowest register or point of the composition (cf. Boime, 1990:92, 183). Bell also used this device in the work under discussion – with their imposing flagpost piercing the overcast sky, the Europeans stake the highest register, even towering above the imposing Devil's Peak – in this sense also alluding to the triumph of European Christian civilisation over heathen Africa. The divide between these two binaries is further emphasised by the shallow gulley that separates the Europeans from the Khoikhoi.

In light of the above it is significant that even though the event depicted takes place on the African continent – and in cognisance of historical records estimating Van Riebeeck's party numbering only around ninety individuals – Europeans occupy almost three quarters of the painting's format and also constitute the focal point of the composition. They are pictured coming ashore – a sign of agency – and are represented as industrious and self-possessed in their new surroundings. The

Europeans' advancement into the landscape is visually supported by the diagonal line flowing from the bottom left to the top right and which dominates the rectangular landscape format of the painting. In the same way that Van Riebeeck leads the Dutch advance into foreign territory, the strong diagonal line guides the eye of viewer across the picture plane; visually conquering the expanse of the landscape it depicts. In contrast, a small group of Khoikhoi represents the entire indigenous population of the peninsula, and occupies only a quarter of the composition. The Khoikhoi's position is framed by Devil's Peak depicted behind them, further alluding to their supposed heathen (read: uncivilised) ways. The Khoikoi are depicted passively awaiting an audience with Van Riebeeck's party. Thus, read from left to right, the picture purports the heroic arrival of European colonisers, easily able to stake their claims in the face of a small and docile indigenous population. This is a very unlikely scenario considering prior exchanges between the Khoikhoi and Europeans as discussed in Chapter 3; a sentiment supported by Godby's (1998:156) claim that Bell's depiction of the first exchange between the Dutch arrivals and the indigenous Khoikhoi is an idealised construction.

Apart from composition, the use of perspective as authoring strategy also comes into play in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*. Perspective in this work is characterised by a single controlling viewpoint receding from the foreground into the middle-distance and distant background, thus rendering it assessable for the viewer (cf. 4.3.1). As discussed earlier, the use of perspective in colonial paintings may be translated into real spatial situations through the persuasive imaging of the artist, whereby Europeans transfigured their control of space into military and cultural control and, ultimately, possession. This process highlights the complicit role of artists in the colonial programme (cf. Chapter 3 & 4.3.2). The symbolic significance assumed by Bell's depictions through his use of a single controlling viewpoint, as pointed out by Godby (1998:144,150) is testament to this so that Bell's use of perspective is exposed as an instrument of the possessive gaze of his imperial eye.

Apart from the use of a single controlling viewpoint, the separation of the picture plane into foreground, middle-distance and background in this work is further

achieved through the use of *chiaroscuro* light effects and tonal perspective, resulting in the depiction of a deep space (cf. 5.2). Furthermore, as suggested by Boime (1990:2), *chiaroscuro* is concerned with more than the mere modelling of light and shadow. As a polarity it represents the religious dualism of Good versus Evil. Therefore I would argue that *chiaroscuro* may also be read in terms of the Manichean allegory, and in this regard is eloquently illustrated in Wa Thoing' o's (1993:43) description of conventional colonialist painting[62].

I would further suggest that the use of planar recession and *chiaroscuro* in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* evokes the landscape paintings of the seventeenth-century artist Claude whose types of Italian landscape painting set the canon for the picturesque. As was established, Bell adopted picturesque stylistic and topographical conventions in his depictions of the South African landscape. *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* provides a striking example of Bell's use of Claudian principles of pictorial arrangement, especially in terms of his separation of foreground, middle ground and background through the use of light and tonal perspective in order to recreate the spatial depth typical of classical Claudean depictions (cf. Godby, 1998:144). As an aesthetic modality, the picturesque was reliant on presupposed pictorial models that determined how nature was to be looked at. In light of this it was established that the picturesque could be viewed as an all-embracing coded form of representation that presented the foreign landscape for the colonial gaze. In addition, Delmont and Dubow (In Van Eeden, 2004:27) suggest that, "the picturesque hence can be understood as a method of spatial organisation that encompasses the creation of bounded colonial spaces".

In the above reading it emerged that Bell tended to rely on, and conform to familiar concepts and features, established authoring strategies and aesthetic modalities that typified the art of his time. As argued, the use of such established conventions and

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[62] "In many paintings of the colonial period, the white adventurer was always at the centre of the action with rays of light radiating outwards from him. Africans were background shadows merging with the outer darkness and the natural landscape" (Wa Thoing' o, 1993:43).

aesthetic modalities abetted colonial artists' persuasive imaging of the colonised landscape as well colonial *others* and *otherness*.

Through his use of persuasive imaging Bell attempted to convince his intended audience of the reality of his particular depiction of colonial history in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (cf. Hills, 1991:100) By appropriating Dutch colonial history, Bell lays claim to almost two centuries of European occupation of the Cape, thus naturalising European presence on the sub-continent. Nonetheless, at the same time negative aspects of the imperial legacy inherited by the British in 1806 are blamed squarely on the colony's Dutch heritage, thus echoing the sentiments of the British administration at the Cape (cf. Chapter 3).

By considering the authoring strategies that governed the creation of this work the hierarchical relationships between binaries of colonial *self* and *other/* coloniser and colonised were laid bare by scrutinising the artist's use of stereotypes and of pictorial devices such as composition, perspective, gesture and pose, use of colour and tonal value, light and shadow, aesthetic modalities as well as style.

Having thus scrutinised *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* by means of a an extended conventional reading that included the ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and the social realities that surrounded its production, the same *modus operandi* will be followed in reading *Cattle boer's outspan,* leading with a conventional reading.

5.3 *Cattle boers' outspan*

In his watercolour *Cattle boer's outspan* Bell depicts a scene that is presented as forming part of the everyday lifestyle of a *trekboer* community. Placed within a landscape are six figures and an ox-wagon as well as groupings of livestock and everyday paraphernalia such as furniture and domestic utensils. In terms of subject

category, this seems to fit the tradition of reprinting pastoral or bucolic landscapes. The six figures and their actions dominate the composition of Bell's watercolour as they occupy themselves with activities of their *trekboer* existence. The centre of the picture plane is occupied by a female figure of European descent sitting next to a table in front of the ox-wagon, her feet resting on a footstool. She appears to be cradling a baby in her arms. She is surrounded by various domestic objects such as a kettle and cups on the table to her left and a wooden vat to her right. A dog sitting at the foot of the table stares up at her. Together with the figure of a European male standing to the left of the ox-wagon, presumably her husband – the patriarch – and the ox-wagon, they form an enclosed pyramidal unit that dominates the composition, simultaneously excluding all the other figures in the composition. The patriarch is leisurely smoking a pipe whilst resting the barrel of a rifle on his left shoulder. He is facing away from the seated female figure towards the figure of a man of colour busy fixing knee-halters to two horses who appear at the bottom left corner of the picture plane. Depicted in the bottom right corner of the picture are three male figures of colour[63] seated around a campfire, busy preparing food. The landscape appears to function only as a backdrop for the human activity. Apart from the presence of the six human figures and the herd of cattle in the mid-distance, the landscape – which resembles the Karoo – appears barren and uninhabited, extending towards a mountain range on the horizon, with an outcropping of boulders in the left foreground and a clump of bushes behind the ox-wagon providing scant geographical characteristics.

On a formal level, the use of perspective in *Cattle boer's outspan* is characterised by a single controlling viewpoint, receding from the foreground to middle-distance and distant background. Apart from a diagonal at low gradient leading from bottom left to centre right of the picture plane, the composition of *Cattle boer's outspan* is static and dominated by strong horizontal planes. As in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* Bell uses Claudian principles of pictorial arrangement by separating the picture plane into foreground, middle-distance and background. This is further achieved through the

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[63] The ethnic identification of these figures are not supported by historical records. Since it was *trekboer* practice to engage or subject the indigenous pastoralists and hunter-gatherers to various degrees of clientage or tenancy (Thompson, 2006:48). Therefore, they were most likely of Khokhoi or San extraction.

use of light and tonal perspective, resulting in the suggestion of a deep spatial effect. In Claudian fashion, the outcropping of boulders in the left foreground and a clump of bushes behind the ox-wagon serve to frame the focal point of the picture.

The use of light in *Cattle boer's outspan* is as dramatic as in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* Here too *chiaroscuro* is used as device, with a patch of bright light at the centre of the format surrounded by shadow areas in both the foreground and background. The use of colour is naturalistic with a predominantly earthy colour scheme. Stylistically Bell employs a similar naturalistic approach in *this work* as in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* which – as indicated – presupposes the impression of a faithful and believable depiction of the subject matter, in turn presupposing objective empirical observation by the artist. As stated, Bell adopted certain European picturesque stylistic and topographical conventions in his depictions of the South African landscape. In both paintings under discussion Bell conforms to many other nineteenth century South African landscape depictions that employ Claudian principles of pictorial arrangement.

Thematically *Cattle boer's outspan* relates to Bell's watercolours that also reflect events related to aspects of the behaviour of the indigenous peoples, such as *Bushman driving cattle up a kloof – Boers in pursuit*, which was executed while Bell was employed in Surveyor-General's department. As an explorer-artist Bell painted in many genres including portraits, landscapes and scenes of early African life. Thus, considering its subject matter, *Cattle boer's outspan* can reasonably be placed within the genre of European explorer art. As a genre, explorer art – which incorporated such diverse subject matter as fauna, flora and landscape – was on the opposite end of the hierarchical scale from history painting, which, as indicated, was considered by Reynolds to be the loftiest of painterly pursuits (cf. 4.3.1). Furthermore, explorer art was in essence regarded as the product of mere draughtsmen rather than serious high artists, especially since most of their output consisted of quick sketches in pencil, ink or watercolours. In light of this, the primary purpose of explorer art was to provide objective records of the terrain, and also to satisfy the growing European empirical and encyclopaedic curiosity in the world (cf. 4.3.1). As suggested in section

4.3.2, explorer art is a form of documentation intended for an educated, middle-class and post-industrial revolution European audience, often depicting events related to aspects of behaviour of indigenous peoples (cf. Record, 1994:64). Bell's work in this genre general falls distinctly within the category of social documentation, which served the purpose of illustrating the curious and exotic for a European audience.

I will now proceed to explore the work within its ideological context by means of postcolonial theoretical concepts to further elucidate the reading.

5.3.1 Cattle boer's outspan *within an ideological context*

Reading *Cattle boer's outspan* within the ideological framework of its time one needs to consider how this watercolour reflects Bell's bequeathed Victorian cultural values. It was previously determined that Bell could be considered a product of his time and cultural milieu, sharing the ideologies of imperialism, industrialism and progress, as well as Victorian cultural attributes, assumptions and prejudices. Furthermore, in the reading of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* it was established that Bell's inherited cultural values and ideological paradigm indeed informed his artistic expression. This confirmed previous suggestions that colonial paintings reflect the intangible social values and cultural assumptions of their time, and that explorer artists' inherited cultural values also informed their interpretations of their encounters in foreign lands. In this regard, it may be suggested Bell's bequeathed Victorian cultural values, cultural attributes, assumptions and prejudices are mosly likely also evident in his depiction of the *trekboers* in *Cattle boer's outspan.*

As discussed in section 5.3 above, the intended audience of *Cattle boer's outspan,* consistent with that of explorer art, was educated, middle-class and post-industrial revolution Europeans. This audience existed in stark contrast with the uneducated, nomadic white subsistence herders and indigenous Africans that Bell depicts in this watercolour sketch. The artist himself was *Other* than the subjects he depicted. Given his European education and upbringing, as well as his *privileged position* in

Cape society (cf. 4.2), Bell was akin to his audience, who steadfastly believed in their own cultural superiority (cf. Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:126).

In Chapter 3 it was suggested that the British sense of superiority was a recurring issue in British/Cape Afrikaner relations. The British sense of cultural superiority stemmed from a "system of ahistorical categorisation" (Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:48), in which the European vis-à-vis the British topped the hierarchy in relation to all others. The British's encounters with local people, whom they regarded as foreign and exotic, reinforced their own sense of superiority. Thus, in spite of racial kinship, it seems plausible that nineteenth-century British explorers would respond in a similar fashion on encountering *trekboers,* whom for all intents and purposes represented an exotic deculturated nomadic white tribe whom were themselves foreign to the post-Enlightenment European worldview (cf. Leach, 1989:20).

One aspect that threatened the European sense of cultural superiority and authenticity in the colonies was the notion of *going native.* This fear barred Europeans from participating in local native ceremonies and adopting native customs and lifestyles. Since the *trekboers* adopted aspects of Khoikhoi culture such as a nomadic pastoral lifestyle, living in semi-permanent shelters and developing an topophilic relationship with the African continent, their ways greatly disturbed Cape Town residents at the time and enhanced the latter's fear of contamination. The *trekboers* were indeed losing their European identity and at the same time substituting it with a developing national identity that was native and bound to the African continent (cf. Chapter 2). Having become sociologically indigenous, the *trekboers* could never rejoin a European motherland (cf. Steyn, 2001:xxiv; Sparks, 1990:48) This developing national identity led towards what historian De Kiewiet refers to as the formation of the Boer race (cf. Giliomee, 2003:34-35). It is against this backdrop that Bell's depiction of *trekboer* lifestyle in *Cattle boer's outspan* was staged. Given the English-speaking settlers' perception of themselves and their disregard of the Afrikaners, as discussed in Chapter 3, it can be assumed that Bell approached his subject in *Cattle boer's outspan* with a degree of moral ambivalence further complicated by his Eurocentric perception with its pre-vision of altereity and concept of the exotic *other.*

Concerning the question of the *other, Cattle boer's outspan* presents an interesting dialogue regarding race, class and culture. If, in colonialist terms, the *other* represents the negative aspects of the self, then the English-speaking settlers' view of the Afrikaners as culturally and socially backwards, together with the Afrikaners' deculturation and their identification with the African continent and adoption of African lifestyle, would cast them in the role of the cultural *other* to the nineteenth-century European (cf. Spivak, 1997:24). In addition, people of colour occupied the position of both cultural and racial *other* to both the *trekboers* and the nineteenth-century European colonist, who in turn was *Other* to both the indigenous peoples and the *trekboers*. Clearly a hierarchical power structure emerges with the ruling British colonist at the top and the indigenous peoples at the lower end. The Afrikaner *trekboers* occupied the somewhat non-descript position in the middle, being both coloniser and colonised, dominated and dominator (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1989:12). Afrikaners, although racially akin to the British colonisers, were regarded as being backwards, uneducated, illiterate eccentrics (cf. Sparks, 1990:60). This together with their nomadic lifestyle and subsistence economy necessarily relegated them to a lower social and economic class than their fellow British settlers. As suggested earlier it would seem plausible the British found the *trekboers* as exotic and foreign as they did the indigenous peoples, due to the fast socio-econmic and cultural differences between themselves and the *trekboers*, who due to decultration had become sociologically indigenous. Hence the *trekboer* as represented in this artwork, in spite of their somatic difference casting them as *Other* in relation to the native peoples depicted alongside them, also represents the *other*. i.e. those who are marginalised due to their difference from the European self. Hence, Bell's depiction of the scene in this work not only reflects the interaction between the *self* and the *other*, it also implies the *Other's* framing of his cultural and somatic *others*.

Apart from being informed by a rigid system categorisation, the British sense of cultural superiority was further informed by the developing cultural ideology regarding race. The European notion of race extended beyond the somatic; the word 'race' often denoting various forms of consanguinity such as 'linage', 'kinsfolk', 'family' and 'home', and in other instances it became synonymous with 'caste' - thus relating to

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Benedict Anderson's concept of 'race' as marker for an 'imagined community' (cf. Loomba, 2005:102). Loomba (2005:109-113) suggests that the European discourse of race, propped up by an ideology of racial superiority, easily translated in to class terms, as the latter was shaped by racial ideologies and representations. Leatt (1986:77) further propounds that race is not only a biological concept, but also a social psychological term that engenders a "genetically derived group consciousness". The English attempts to portray the Irish as Africanoid, described in Chapter 2, are testament to this.

As indicated the British similarly regarded the Afrikaner as distinct from their own race, considering them on a lower order of civilisation, and thus treating them much the same as they did the indigenous black peoples (cf. Giliomee, 2003:149; Steyn, 2001:26). Consequently Bell himself depicted the Cape Boers in a disparaging manner, as is evident in his caricature *The Boer*, which according to Godby (1998:141) is a depiction of the "obese and indolent 'Boer'"[64], that underscores the conventional view of Dutch-speaking farmers in the Cape Colony at that time. On a later occasion while on the Smith expedition, Bell's depictions of *trekboers* mocked their austere lifestyle – the same people and lifestyle as depicted in *Cattle boer's outspan* (cf. 4.2).

By depicting the Boer as indolent, Bell strikes a chord with his audience, as industriousness was regarded one of the most important Victorian virtues, along with among others, good morals and decency. The accusation of indolence is a serious one, considering that the British regarded labour as a civilising force and indolence as a threat to economic progress (Barrell, 1992: 32,38,80,87). The *trekboers* in this painting are depicted as shiftless individuals at the centre of the scene. The only labour-related activities depicted are performed by their black servants. The inactivity of the *trekboer* couple becomes even more pronounced when comparing their static postures with the group of servants idling around the cooking fire in the right fore-ground. Bell's *Cattle boer's outspan* can, indeed, be read as a monument to *trekboer* idleness, with the *trekboer* lifestyle and pre-industrial economy depicted as evidence

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[64] Here the term Boers refers to the ethnic group and not to gender.

of the consequences of having gone native, thus echoing Menzel's denunciation of *trekboer* way of life, which reads

> "Some of the Boors [sic] have accustomed themselves to such an extent with the carefree life, the indifference, the lazy days and the association with slaves and Hottentots that not much difference may be discerned between the former and the latter" (*in* Giliomee, 2003:33).

Menzel's indictment of *trekboer* indolence racialises Victorian cultural values. This is further evidenced in the similarities between British opinion of both Cape Afrikaners and the Malay which, apart from indolence, included attributes such as, ignorance, indifference, treachery, cruelty, boorishness, unruliness, disaffectedness, .moral degeneration, coarseness and unpolishedness in manner as well as dirty and slovenly in appearance (cf. Chapters 2 and 3). As indicated, such characterisations served as justification for colonial domination and conquest. Thus, explorer artists did not only conform to hegemonic European scientific and artistic conventions of the time, but in many ways they also contributed and entrenched these through their de-pictions of others (cf. 4.3.2).

Thus, explorer artists – by the very nature of their endeavour – and by taking part in colonial expeditions such as those Bell were partisan to, were instrumental in the process of enframing the colonial landscape and the peoples who inhabited it (cf. Fabian, 1986:24). As suggested earlier this process is analogous to the "possessive gaze" of the imperial eye, which appropriates all it gazes upon through surveillance and documentation, thus deeming it available for imperial control of the supposed empty unused land (cf. Van Eeden, 2004;25-26). Hence, Bell's depiction of *trekboers* in *Cattle boer's outspan* based as it were on already prejudice premises and perceptions, not only serves to cast them as both culturally and racially inferior *others*, but coupled with the *trekboers'* non-fecund economic practices in a desolate region beyond the borders of the colony, also serves as moral justification for both colonial domination and territorial conquest by the British.

Furthermore, the coloniser had a paternalistic approach towards colonised *others*; a practice that locked the colonised subjects in an inferior position within an

inescapable binary opposition which regarded the European as the superior civilised Self and the colonised as inferior savage *other* (cf. Loomba, 2005:109-113). It was further established that the power balance in such binary constructions inevitably favours the Self and leading to the subjugation of the *other* (cf. Edgar & Sedgwick, 2006:266). Thus, once constructed as inferior, such constructions of the *other* tended to crystallise into a cultural projection of negative concepts. Moreover, in time such negative constructions assisted in naturalising attitudes and conduct ultimately translating into social reality (cf. Childs & Fowler, 2006:165, Edgar & Sedgwick, 2006:266).

With regards to the negative constructions of *others* discussed above, Nacify and Gabriel (1991:iii) suggest that examining the boundaries of difference can represent an act of acknowledgement, that equates the relations of difference with the relations of power. By extension, then, the act of documenting or representing difference can be seen as an affirmation or framing of power relationships. Furthermore, these authors consider the discourse of *otherness* as anti-caniconical. Thus, the European painter as representative of the European value system and subjectivity mediates – through the canon of Western art – the objectification of the exotic and unfamiliar peoples and lifestyles on the fringes of the Empire. These depictions stand as visual testament to European cultural, social and economical superiority. With the position of racial superiority over the racial *other* established, and by placing the Afrikaner in the position of the cultural other, free reign is given to the sovereignty of British rule in Southern Africa.

The above discussion of Bell's *Cattle boer's outspan* seems to corroborate Carruthers and Arnold's (2000:119) suggestion that colonial paintings, "become bearers of the abstract social values of the Victorian world, part of a series of assumptions about British identity and expansionist objectives". Thus, it becomes evident that this artwork is both a reflection and evidence of the ideological context in which it was produced. It also served to bring to light the ideological frameworks that determined the hierarchical relationships between binaries of colonial *self* and *other*, pitting the imperial centre against its margins, the notions of civilised against

uncivilised, the culturally advanced and pure versus the culturally 'backward' and hybrid, as well as the hierarchies of class and racial superiority.

5.3.2 Cattle boer's outspan *within context of social realities*

The account of the interaction between the European visitors and settlers and indigenous South Africans in Chapter 3 affirmed the disparity between the social realities of these disparate groups. As indicated, the indigenous peoples presented an *otherness* foreign not only to European social realities, but also their previous encounters with foreign peoples. The *trekboers* depicted in Bell's *Cattle boer's outspan,* however, presented another form of *otherness*.

Bell, as a British settler, represented a distinctly different community from the local white population of Dutch decent. To the enlightened metropolitan Brit of the early nineteenth century these largely rural people's language, social matrixes, religious persuasion and historical consensus were foreign enough to warrant their disregard of Cape Dutch accomplishments and led to the British harbouring a great disdain for their language and culture (cf. Thompson, 2006:109-110). In addition, the English and Cape Dutch persisted in regarding each other as separate groups, with the latter viewing the British as foreign conquerors.

Of the Cape Dutch population, the *trekboers* were the most isolated group. By the time Bell encountered the *trekboers* their nomadic pastoral lifestyle had already became entrenched. The now transhumant *trekboers'* practices of settlement and land occupation mimicked that of the Khoikhoi who regarded land as inalienable, in contrast with imperialists who saw land as a commodity with associated realty rights. The *trekboers'* process of deculturation meant that they had become a fragment culture disengaged from their European origins and way of life. Over time these rural Afrikaners' isolation resulted in fervent independence and intolerance to any form of governance (cf. Gilomee, 2003:189). To outsiders, like Bell, they appeared as feckless individuals who had shunned modern society, with one account describing

them them as, "… ignorant, unprogressive and in most respects two centuries behind European nations" (Giliomee 2003:189).

The *trekboers'* deculturation, however, was not without its psychological trauma. Giliomee (2003:33) suggests that their gradual disengagement with the cultural and material norms of their European contemporaries, or at least the semblance of European society at the Cape was accompanied by a degree of anxiety and sense of insecurity. As further indicated in Chapter 3 they ardently attempted to cling to those cultural and racial markers that distinguished them from the indigenous black peoples. At the same time the power *status quo* between the *trekboers* and the Khoikhoi and the San remained intact. Even though Giliomee (2003:31) does not consider the *trekboers'* migration into the hinterland as systematic colonisation, the advance of the *trekboers* into the hinterland did have a profound impact on the indigenous populations in those areas; resulting in the gradual subjection of the indigenous pastoralists and hunter-gatherers to various degrees of clientage or tenancy (Thompson, 2006:48). Thus the *trekboers* subjected the indigenous pastoralists and hunter-gatherers to the same indignity and subjugation as they themselves suffered at the hands of the British imperialists.

In light of this it can be argued that the *trekboers* problematised the notion of settler identity. As suggested earlier, the Khoikhoi were both somatically and culturally different from the European colonisers, with one of the primary cultural differences being the way in which their society was structured socially, politically and economically. However, the *trekboers* had developed the same topophilic relationship with their environment, while at the same time remaining somatically akin to their imperialist overlords. The *trekboers'* position thus doubly supports Ashcroft *et al.'s* (1998:212) claim that the subject position of settlers was ambivalent and contradictory.

This is supported by Fedrickson's (2002:54) extrapolation of the Same-Other dualism as discussed in Chapter 2. Fedrickson suggests that the Same-Other binary

functions as part of the class-based social inequality prevalent in European society itself, thus leading to the argument by Ashcroft *et al.* (1998:211), that settlers repeatedly suffer discrimination as colonial subjects as they themselves are constructed within a discourse of difference and inferiority by the metropolitan centre. Thus, the *trekboers*, even more so than other settlers, found themselves occupying an ambiguous in-between space, since they were at the same time both colonised and coloniser (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:212).

Therefore, when exploring the relationship between *Self* and *Other* in Bell's *Cattle boer's outspan* it becomes apparent that the artist represents the European *Self* who was *Other* to the indigenous peoples on all accounts. However, as a temporary settler himself, Bell's relation to both the imperial centre and the *trekboers* – who existed on the margins and beyond the borders of the Empire – was more problematic. As suggested earlier, the *trekboers,* although somatically and racially similar to Bell, were culturally, socially and economically *other*. These differences were translatable into class terms, which was easily equated with *otherness* (cf. 2.3.1). It was indicated in Chapter 3 that the British attempted to racialise the Afrikaner, which is evident in Kitchener's description of the Afrikaner as uncivilised savages who only had a passing resemblance to Europeans by virtue of their skin colour (Steyn, 2001:26).

Even though Bell was marginalised from the metropolitan centre, he nonetheless remained an agent of the Empire, being both employed by the Cape administration and also contributing to the imperial discourse through his art-making. In addition, Bell's depictions of himself – and by implication his Self – differ markedly from his stereotypical depictions of *trekboer* communities (cf. *fig.4 & 9*). In light of this, then, it may be suggested that the *trekboers* represented an *other* to Bell's sense of Self. In spite of the *trekboers' otherness* in relation to the imperial *Self,* however, they remained *Other* to the indigenous peoples because of the imperial racial hierarchy and their own subjugation of local populations.

Bell's status as *grande-autre* allows him to author the *other* into being, since it is within the gaze of this grand *Other* that the subject gains identity (cf. Chapter 2). The *other* is thus represented according to the Imperial vision thereof. The representation of the *trekboers* and the indigenous peoples in this artwork was thus determined by Bell's vision of them as underpinned by his philosophical *Weltanschauung* and informed by social realities foreign to his European archetype. Reading the work within the context of those social realities surrounding its production reveals the complex hierarchical relationships between colonial binaries, which in turn served to highlight differences regarding class, race, and social, cultural and economic differences as represented in this artwork.

5.3.3 Cattle boer's outspan *within the context of authoring strategies*

Holzner (In Record, 1994:12) states that modes of reality construction are instrumental in the shaping of social structures; with images of society, its social beliefs and images of its *others* playing an important part in this process. Furthermore, it was illustrated earlier in this chapter that existing modes of representation and authoring strategies were often employed in the process of constructing such images.

In reading Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* within the context of its authoring strategies, it emerged that stereotypical representations served to reinforce perceptions regarding the dominance of Empire thus making imperialism seem part of the natural order of things. Furthermore, stereotyping also served to delineate the boundaries between *Self* and *other*, with the power balance inevitably favouring the Self, with negative constructions of the *other* tending to crystallise into a cultural projection of negative concepts.

It was further established that Bell frequently used stereotypes in his depictions of *others* as caricatures and 'types'. Depicting *others* as caricatures is consistent with

the scientific racial discourse of the time, which conceived that physiognomical distinctions such as race and ethnicity could determine a person or a group's social and psychological character and traits as well as class (Aschcroft *et al.*, 1999:200; cf. Godby, 1998:150; Lambourne, 1999:259). Therefore, according to Godby (1998:145-146) Bell's prejudice towards indigenous South Africans is evident in his ethnographic drawings, especially those depicting various South African ethnic and racial groups as particular 'types'. Similarly, the *trekboers* depicted do not represent a specific family, identified by name, for example, but rather a 'type'. As stated earlier, the painting of figures in an indistinct manner was an attempt to evade the question of their actuality (cf. Barrell, 1992:134). Furthermore, the generalised, almost caricature-like depiction of the *trekboers* in the work under discussion is not only consistent with Bell's depiction of other Cape Dutch communities – also evident in his caricature *The Boer* – but also with his depictions of *trekboers* in general as seen in his portrayals of them while on Smith's expedition (cf. 4.2). Moreover, the *trekboers*, having gone native would already have been regarded as less civilised than their imperial contemporaries, a perception that was likely fuelled by the belief that association with native cultures would inevitably lead to moral and even physical degeneracy, and would thus support the *trekboer's* depiction as caricature, with such stereotypical representations contributing to the *othering* of those depicted (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:115; Boehmer, 1995:83).

Adding to this, European settlers in the colonies were frequently subjected to the same processes of representation as non-European indigenous peoples (cf. Chapter 2). Bell's generic treatment in his depiction of the *trekboer* family as a 'type' akin to his portrayal of indigenous peoples as a faceless group is an example of this, as it denies these subjects an identity. This concurs with Barry's suggestion (2002:193-194) that the *other* is often viewed as a homogeneous anonymous whole, rather than consisting of individuals. Furthermore, the British attempted to racialise the Afrikaner, branding them as uncivilised savages (cf. 5.2.3). Bell's depiction of the subjects in *Cattle boer's outspan,* including the *trekboers*, may then be equated to his portrayal of the Khoikhoi in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* in that they represent visual clichés that convey Bell's prejudice (cf. Godby, 1998:147).

As European expansion gained currency stereotypical representations of the *other* informed and legitimised colonial processes and conduct thus positioning the colonised as marginal and inferior (cf. Boehmer, 1995:80; Ashcroft, 2001:5). By implication the *trekboers,* who were transhumant and roaming beyond the borders of the colony, were thus also beyond imperial control – but alas, not beyond imperial representation. At the same time *trekboer* practices of clientage and tenancy involving the indigenous pastoralists and hunter-gatherers meant that those indigenous peoples were already under some degree of subjugation. Thus, considering Bell's position as *grande-autre* author, his framing of these power relations between two groups of *others* in a single image, and by casting its subjects in a negative light, implies the Empire's superior position of power in this hierarchical order. Furthermore, the Romantic style in which this painting was executed, often employed devices such as caricature in order to appeal more directly to its audience's emotions, with explorer art images of this nature intended for the consumption of an educated middle-class metropolitan cultural élite, i.e. those in power (cf. 4.3.1 & 5.3.1).

However, Holmlund (1991:7) suggests that the coloniser simultaneously acknowledges and denies the *other's* difference and the threat the *other* poses to the coloniser's "white skin of privilege" by reducing the *other* to skin colour. Furthermore, in light of this Holmlund (1991:7) states that, "...racial inferiority is epidermised for Black as well as White". In a similar way the racial *other* disappears under a skin of paint, as their dark skins are relegated to the dark shadows or disappear in the pigments used to render the landscape in colonialist paintings, while at the same time white subjects are depicted in the centre of the picture plane bathed in light (cf. Wa Thiong 'o, 1993:43). This is also the case in *Cattle boer's outspan* where the *other* literally becomes the Self's shadow through Bell's use of *chiaroscuro*. As an authoring strategy, *chiaroscuro* transcends the simple modelling of light and shadow and may also be read as analogy for the Manichean allegory (cf. 5.2.3). But, it is in *Cattle boer's outspan* that Bell also encounters the Self as shadow. The artist here faces the European racial Self as hybrid *other*: the white skins he painted in the patch of light at centre of the composition, surrounded by shadows and pigmented earth represents a cultural *other* to his European reality, since under their "thin white

veneer", the *trekboers'* ethnic and cultural hybridity does not allow for them to be associated with the European Self – since the standard of purity is implicit in the mechanisms of imperial control (cf. Ashcroft *et al.*, 1997:283). To Bell and his audience, the *trekboers* depicted in the artwork under discussion embodied an epidermal contradiction – a dichotomy of *Self* as *other* at the centre of the margins.

In addition to this, Bell's use of *chiaroscuro* in *Cattle boer's Outspan* is similar to his use of this technique in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* and similarly evokes the landscape paintings of Claude Lorraine whose types of Italian landscape painting provided the canon for the picturesque. Bell is known to have adopted Claudian picturesque stylistic and topographical conventions in his depictions of the South African landscape which is also evident in the watercolour under discussion (cf. 5.2.3), As established, picturesque landscapes tends to appeal to the viewer's sense of amazement, the ephemeral and that which relates to the mind's eye and are often characterised by unexpected details and fascinating and anomalous scenery, aspects that would no doubt be conjured up by Bell's depiction of a barren, desolate outback foreign to the landscapes inhabited by his audience. Since the picturesque aesthetic modality relied on presupposed pictorial models that determined how nature was to be looked at, it was established that the picturesque could be viewed as an all-embracing coded form of representation that presented the foreign landscape for the colonial gaze. This also rings true with regards to the depiction of the colonised peoples, as Boime (1990:188) suggests that the *other* presented a, "picturesque and pathetic folk" that provided profoundly tantalising subject matter for foreign artists, thus supporting Chu's suggestion (2003:179) that the picturesque served to charm and delight the viewer. In this sense it becomes clear that both the landscape and the people depicted in *Cattle boer's Outspan* were subject to Bell's imperial eye, with the picturesque aesthetic modality supplying the visual means of encoding his colonial gaze.

Previous findings confirm that apart from including aspects of the picturesque, elements of the sublime may also be evidenced in Bell's oeuvre. The sublime as

aesthetic modality often employs awe-inspiring epic vastness and the power of suggestion in order to elicit overpowering emotions and to stir the imagination of the viewer. The desolate vastness of the landscape depicted in this painting is truly epic, especially since few among the intended audience would have seen the likes of it with their own eyes. In this regard *Cattle boer's outspan* relates to a number of characteristics of colonial representations of colonised peoples and landscapes, as described by Boehmer (1995:93):

> ... interpretation is widely reflected in imagery of the vastness and shapelessness of the other land. It is there in evocations of the terror contained in that shapelessness ... and of the distressing opacity of native peoples to European understanding, usually represented as ignorance and dullness (Boehmer, 1995:93).

Bell's use of the sublime as authoring strategy highlights his complicity in colonial processes of representation since, as indicated in Chapter 2, the sublime mode of colonial painting – like the picturesque – functions as an allegory of imperial control.

Apart from using aesthetic modalities such as the picturesque and the sublime, artists' choice of style in itself also determines the manner in which subjects are rendered and represented. Romantic Naturalism, used by Bell, surmises the faithful and believable depiction of the subject matter, but this does not preclude idealisation and nostalgia (cf. 5.2.3). In this regard it was indicated that Bell similarly did not treat all aspects of his representation equally in terms of detail and faithful rendering and in addition also conformed to a number of conventions and stereotypes in his depictions. These findings might also be evidenced in both the depictions of the *trekboer* family and the indigenous peoples.

Other formal aspects such as composition and pictorial perspective also function as authoring strategies. The use of a triangle or pyramidical composition with a hierarchical descending order from top to bottom in order to delineate exclusive social hierarchies within a picture is also evident in this painting. Here the *trekboer*

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family occupies the highest rung of the hierarchical descending order from top to bottom, thus suggesting superiority. In this artwork the use of a pyramidical structure serves to enclose the *trekboer* family, and thus excludes all the other figures in the composition, framing the *trekboers* as *Other*. The hierarchical descending order from top to bottom within the pyramidical unit further cuts along gender lines. Apart from looking away from the matriarch, the patriarch occupies a higher register, the matriach being depicted on a register closer, although elevated, to the workers. This may be viewed in light of Loomba's claim (2005:58-59) that in the colonial context both racial and gender biases were presented as objective truths, as theories regarding these two classifications were often used for mutual justification with Caucasian women – during the mid-nineteenth century, for example – deemed closer to Africans than white men. Consequently, during the same period, feminine characteristics were often assigned to so-called 'lower races', and in other instances even the colonised landscape (cf. 2.3.1). This notion supports Hall's claim *(in* Wiesner-Hanks, 2001) that hierarchies of categories such as race and gender were often reinscribed by what she terms the "rule of difference". Considering the British view of the Cape Dutch as an inferior race, it could thus be argued that Bell's placing of the already stereotypically depicted stout *trekboer* matriarch at the centre of the composition may have been an attempt to draw attention to this practice. Bell's depiction of a virgin yet barren landscape seems to further suggest similar connotations.

Bell's *trekboers* may also be related to aspects of the conventions by which the English rural poor were depicted in nineteenth-century British landscape painting, even though in terms of the conventions of bucolic landscape the topographical setting of *Cattle boer's outspan* is vastly different (cf. Barrell, 1992:71, 81). Barrell (1992:3,76) suggests that the poor were generally regarded as a feared object, but that a distinction was made between what was considered deserving poor and undeserving poor. The deserving poor were shown to possess reasonable material goods and espoused neatness and spiritual well-being, whereas the undeserving poor were generally depicted as being depraved in terms of manners, countenance and attire. Bell's depiction of *trekboers* with their meagre possessions, makeshift lodgings, shabby clothing and austere lifestyle, clearly relates to the latter. The notion

of the undeserving poor is further associated with indolence a characteristic the British often equated with the Cape Dutch (cf. Barrell, 1992:36,76).

Barrell (1992:17) also claims that the figures depicted in rural scenes play a vital part in determining the subject of a landscape, and hence the meaning and value such a landscape depiction holds for its audience. This is supported by Boime (1990:124) who suggests that in many depictions a person may lose his or her identity and become "vehicle for social criticism"; with Bell's indictment of the *trekboers,* as discussed in section 5.3.1, as proof of this. Bell's central placement of the *trekboers* in *Cattle boer's outspan* does not necessarily indicate their higher status and *Otherness* in relation to the indigenous peoples depicted elsewhere in the composition, but rather to the artist's subjectivity to the predominant mores and values, pictorial and aesthetic conventions, as well as representational codes of his time, coupled with moral restraints and attitudes regarding class and race (cf. Record, 1994:180). Thus it could be argued that Bell's nineteenth-century racial bias prevented him from depicting the *trekboers* in any position other than central in relation to their black labourers; an argument supported by Boime (1990:21) who suggests that convention determined the inferior position of non-Europeans in canonical depictions.

Another device implicit in two-dimensional spatial arrangement is pictorial perspective. The use of perspective in this work is characterised by a single controlling viewpoint, receding from the foreground to middle-distance and distant background, suggesting an intelligible and believable space for the viewer. Godby's claim (1998:142) that explorer artists typically depicted settings from a higher vantage point in order to allow for greater scope in the foreground plane also rings true in this instance, and underscores Boime's (1990:113) suggestion that the so-called innocent eye of the artist is anything but. Furthermore, the reading of Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* within the context of its authoring strategies revealed that the artist's use of a single controlling viewpoint in this manner amounted to persuasive imaging, and as such acquired a symbolic significance analogous to possessive gaze of the imperial eye. This was argued to have been the case since the use of perspective in colonial paintings may be translated into real spatial situations whereby Europeans translated their control of space into military and cultural control and ultimately possession. Bell's fixing of his subjects in by

means of a single controlling viewpoint in *Cattle boer's outspan* therefore affirms his imperial mastery not only over the landscape, but also over them.

Thus, in the above reading it became clear that Bell tended to rely on, and conform to familiar concepts and features, established authoring strategies and aesthetic modalities that typified the art of his time. As argued, the use of such established conventions and aesthetic modalities abetted colonial artists' persuasive imaging of the colonised landscape, as well colonial *others* and *otherness*.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan* were considered in a conventional reading with regard to their formal qualities as well as in the contexts of their ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and the social realities that surrounded their production. In the next chapter these findings will serve as basis for a comparison of these two artworks.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUDING REMARKS REGARDING A COMPARATIVE READING OF
LANDING OF VAN RIEBEECK, 1652 **AND** *CATTLE BOERS' OUTSPAN*

6.1 Introduction

As indicated in Chapter 1, in this research I explore the contradictions and similarities regarding the depictions of Afrikaner ancestry in two works by Charles Davidson Bell, *Cattle boers' outspan* and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* by means of postcolonial theoretical concepts as the guiding theoretical framework whilst focusing particularly on the notion of the *other*. The comparison of the two artworks was conducted by presenting a conventional reading of the artworks and by considering Bell's works within the contexts of their ideological frameworks, authoring strategies and social reality, as propounded by Lerner (1991:335). Furthermore, postcolonialism also provided the social reality of current reception of these artworks by Bell.

The problem statement of this study as outlined in Chapter 1 gave rise to a number of specific research questions. Below a number of concluding remarks with regard to the findings of these respective research questions follow. The next section presents a concise summary of these findings, before engaging in a comparative reading of the artworks *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle Boers' outspan.*

6.2 Summary of findings

In Chapter 2 postcolonialism's theoretical relation to Marxist, postmodern and post-structuralist paradigms was established. From this it emerged that postcolonialism provides the means whereby the assumptions of the Western colonial canon may be addressed and critiqued. In light of this, the notion of the postcolonial *Other/other*

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was located and discussed within the context of postcolonial discourse, thus facilitating a reading of the representation of the *other* and *otherness* in colonial texts.

Furthermore, by considering the phases of European colonial expansion and stages of colonial development it was possible to contextualise the South African colonial history and legacy, thus bringing to light its relation to European colonial history.

In Chapter 3 the history of Afrikaner ancestry during the period 1652-1901 was considered with reference to South Africa's colonial history, thus highlighting inter-relationships between Afrikaner ancestors, the British imperialist project as well as the local indigenous peoples by means of the postcolonial notions of cross-cultural interaction, deculturation and acculturation. From this it emerged that Afrikaner ancestry may both be located and implicated in the colonial processes, consequently complicating the boundaries between the categories of coloniser and colonised. It was established that Victorian British attitudes towards the sociologically indigenous Afrikaners often concurred with those held towards the indigenous peoples of colour.

In Chapter 4 the investigation into the artist's biography and his Victorian background established that Bell's artistic oeuvre could be contextualised within the genres and artistic discourses of the nineteenth century. It was further established that the artist could be considered a proponent of his time who operated according to Victorian social and artistic conventions and could therefore be considered an agent of British imperialism, something that would have a bearing on his depiction of colonial subjects.

In Chapter 5 a conventional reading of Bell's artworks *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan* revealed that these artworks belong to different art genres; the former may be regarded as an example of history painting and the latter of explorer art. An extended reading of the two artworks by means of postcolonial theoretical principles exposed the ideological frameworks that governed their

production and revealed that these artworks are both a reflection and evidence of the ideological context in which they were produced. Reading these artworks within the context of the social realities surrounding their production revealed the hierarchical relationships between binaries of colonial *self* and *other* which highlighted the class, racial, social, cultural and economic differences represented in the artworks, thus inviting a comparative reading between these two artworks.

It was further revealed that Bell's representation of colonial subjects in these two works was determined by his vision of them as underpinned by his philosophical *Weltanschauung* and informed by social realities foreign to his European archetype. Considering the authoring strategies that governed the creation of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan* revealed the Bell's adherence to a number of concepts and features familiar to him: established authoring strategies and aesthetic modalities that typified the art of his time, thus abetting his persuasive imaging of the colonised landscape and of colonial *others* and *otherness*.

Within this context, I will now set out to offer a comparative discussion of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan* according to their ideological context in order to establish the contradictions and similarities apparent in the manner these artworks reflect Bell's bequeathed Victorian cultural values. After this, the comparison of the two artworks will further be elaborated by comparing the readings of the artworks within the contexts of their authoring strategies and social reality, as concluded in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of Chapter 5.

6.3 A comparative reading of Charles Davidson Bell's *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan*

6.3.1 Comparative reading within an ideological context

In the readings of the two works under discussion, the ideological frameworks that governed the hierarchical relationships between binaries of colonial *self* and *other* were exposed, revealing oppositions in terms of the imperial centre and its margins; the notion of civilised against uncivilised; coloniser against colonised; the culturally advanced and pure versus what was considered culturally backward and hybrid, as well as the hierarchies of class and racial superiority.

However, a similar hierarchical system of categorisation also governed art genres and the canons of representation. In section 5.2.1 it was established that the oil painting *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* falls within the British tradition of history painting, which at the time was the most highly regarded of art genres. In line with the history painting genre it depicts a monumental historical event, commemorating the dawn of European colonialism on the southern African subcontinent, with the arrival of the Dutch at the Cape in 1652. As indicated in section 5.2.2 this painting bears little relation to the actual event in spite of it being based on historical accounts. Rather, it deals with the perceptions and values of nineteenth-century British colonial power and thus, to all intents and purposes, represents a partisan nationalist appropriation of Dutch history for British imperialist purposes.

The watercolour *Cattle boer's outspan,* on the other hand, belongs to the genre of explorer art, which was on the opposite end of the hierarchical scale from history painting (cf. 5.3). In context of Bell's oeuvre *Cattle boer's outspan* correlates thematically with his watercolours, reflecting events related to aspects of the behaviour of the indigenous peoples (cf. 5.3). It falls within the category of social documentation, which served the purpose of illustrating the curious and exotic for a European audience. As such it served as a document by an explorer artist and as

thus purported to portray the actuality of the present. Like history painting, explorer art was intended for an educated, middle-class and post-industrial revolution, metropolitan, culturally élite European audience. However, although the intended audience of these two genres was similar, the intent, functioning and reception thereof were vastly different, and so was the value attached in terms of artistic merit.

Thus considering these two works with regard to genre and subject matter, a clear contradiction becomes apparent. *Cattle boer's outspan* does not deal with a heroic or monumental historical event. Instead it depicts a scene that formed part of the everyday lifestyle of a *trekboer* community as encountered by Bell on his travels and expeditions in the southern African hinterland. It shows the austere lifestyle of the white descendents of the Dutch pioneers depicted in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* after more than two hundred years colonial of occupation. These descendents do not assume the same boisterous confidence in their own superiority as the masquerading Englishmen represented as their forefathers in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* Neither do they display a sense of national ethnic pride as signified by the flag and regalia of the group of pioneering European colonists. Instead, they themselves have become subject to the same processes of European imperialism that was propagated by their forefathers depicted in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.*

From the above it becomes evident that the ideological assumptions associated with each genre determines what is represented and how this is to be read. Also reflected in Bell's use of different genres is the notion of European national vanity and status. As indicated, the history painting genre avails itself of grandiose gestures and the depiction of heroic triumphs, which made it an ideal vehicle to bolster the European belief in its own cultural superiority. In light of this, the display of national status symbols and pageantry apparent in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* become a clear expression of colonial authority and power (cf. Boehmer, 1995:2). Such markers of wealth, status and military superiority are absent from *Cattle boer's outspan.* The explorer art genre is not concerned with historical colonial achievements, but rather with the documentation of that which falls outside the realm of the colonial centre. Such subjects were not revered for their cultural historical resonance, but instead evoked the fantastical, the curious and presented the exotic

to the European audience, or served as reconnaissance documents that could oil the machinations of colonial conquest. Hence, *Cattle boer's outspan* is not a celebration of European conquest, but rather an indictment to the failure to uphold the standards of the colonial centre, presenting the *trekboers* as a curious white tribe on the periphery of the Empire who had absconded the virtues of European civilisation. In this, it may be argued, the *trekboers* represented earlier European notions of the 'wild man', which represented the barbaric *Other* to the European notion of civilised *Self* (cf. Loomba, 2005:53).

European civilisation was regarded as the benchmark against which other societies were measured. The scheme of ahistorical categorisation developed by colonialism established a hierarchy whereby European society and culture was viewed as intrinsically superior to others, and was coupled with the moral justification that modernisation was to the benefit of the subjugated and that it was Europeans' moral duty to civilise others (cf. 2.3.1). As indicated in section 5.2.1, in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*, this is evidenced in the presence of a priest in Van Riebeeck's entourage, representing the Christian faith in opposition to what was considered a godless heathen culture of uncivilised indigenous peoples. In addition, missionary zeal and efforts to convert natives went hand in hand with most colonial enterprises. In many instances the bestowal of Christianity was used as justification for the economic pillage of colonies (cf. 2.3.1). Thus, in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* commodities brought ashore for barter purposes represent European mercantile capitalism. Hence, Van Riebeeck and his party of wealthy merchants are contrasted materially with the Khoikhoi who are depicted empty-handed with no material goods to offer in return to the largesse of the newly arrived colonists. This reinforces colonial European views regarding the Khoihkoi's culture and economy (cf. 3.3). Bell further employs the contrivance of the noble savage in the depiction of at least two of the Khokhoi figures, thus advancing the romantic notion of the Khoikhoi as naïve primitives possessing no culture who exist on the periphery of civilisation (cf. 5.2.1).

Europeans and indigenous people are also contrasted materially in *Cattle boer's outspan* with all material goods and livestock depicted belonging to the *trekboers*. However, the frugal domestic setting and the modest, almost shabby attire of the

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trekboers depicted in this work lack the opulence and lustre displayed in the wares and costume of the Dutch pioneers in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* The material culture of the *trekboers* was closer to that of the indigenous peoples, the *trekboers* having adopted a pre-industrial transhumant lifestyle resembling that of the local pastoralists. In contrast, the indigenous peoples depicted have become acculturated, no longer wearing the traditional attire seen in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* but rather European style clothing akin to that of the *trekboer* patriarch, implying that they resembled each other more closely materially. As result of the *trekboers* having gone native, the British perceived of them as uncivilised - albeit less so than their indigenous labourers (cf. 5.3.1). However, in spite of the *trekboers* having become sociologically indigenous (cf. 3.2 & 5.3.1) they remained racially akin to the imperialists, and thus superior to indigenous peoples.

As stated in section 2.3.1, race was regarded as a result of an immutable biological hierarchy with Europeans and their descendents at the pinnacle and with other peoples generally viewed as primitives lacking culture. At the same time, the racial *other* was viewed as a homogeneous anonymous whole, rather than individuals, their actions determined by racial considerations rather than individual will and circumstance (cf. 2.3.1). In light of this, it was argued in sections 4.3.2 and 5.2.1 that Bell's depiction of people as types upheld the notion of physiognomical distinctions and may be seen as a cogent visual representation of the nineteenth-century belief in such fixed social categories. In section 5.2.1 it was suggested that Bell's depiction of the Khoikhoi in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* is evidence of this. Here the Khoikhoi's facial features are depicted coarsely and in far more generalised terms than those of the Dutch colonisers, rendering the Khoikhoi unrecognisable as individuals, thus literally painting the Khoikhoi as a 'type' different from Europeans. It was also suggested that by painting the Khoikhoi in such an indistinct manner, Bell attempted to evade the question of their actuality (cf. Barrell, 1992:134), causing their identities to be as ill-defined as the brushstrokes that obfuscate their features. In *Cattle boer's outspan* the *trekboers* are depicted in a similarly coarse and generalised manner, also rendering them unrecognisable as individuals, and hence only recognisable as a 'type'. The features of the indigenous peoples in this artwork are for the most part even more generalised, either facing away from the viewer, or

largely obscured by shadows. In this Bell's depiction conforms to colonial representations of the *other* as a faceless mass (cf. Boehmer, 1995:79), their main identifying characteristic being skin colour. As suggested in Chapter 2, Europeans at times readily equated differences in colour with difference in culture and hence *otherness* (cf. Giliomee, 2003:14).

The colonial European notion of race, however, extended beyond the somatic and became a psychological term that described various actual and imagined group relations and associations. Through such various associations the notion of race readily translated into class terms, especially since the latter was itself shaped by racial ideologies and representations (cf. 2.3. & 2.3.1). In light of this, it was shown that the British considered the Afrikaner ancestors on a lower order of civilisation, treating them much the same as they did the indigenous black peoples (cf. 3.2). In line with this, the British ascribed a number of negative character traits to the Cape Dutch, which echoed similar imperial associations with other indigenous peoples, one of these being indolence.

In *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* the Khoikoi are depicted passively awaiting an audience with Van Riebeeck's party, while in contrast the Dutch are depicted actively coming ashore and offloading their cargo. Whilst this might only allude to the perceived unhurried nature of the Khoikhoi, it does serve to highlight the industriousness of the Europeans depicted. In comparison, the Europeans represented in *Cattle boer's outspan* are portrayed as downright feckless. Here the *trekboers* are cast as shiftless individuals, with the only work-related activities depicted being performed by some of their labourers. As suggested in section 5.3.1, the inactivity of the *trekboer* couple becomes even more pronounced when comparing their static postures with the group of servants idling around the cooking fire in the right foreground. The British regarded labour as a civilising force and indolence as a threat to economic progress (cf. Barrell, 1992: 32,38,80,87). Bell's depiction can be read as a critical indictment of the *trekboer* identity that reflects the imperial metropolitan prejudice against its subjects.

Bell did not only conform to hegemonic European scientific and artistic conventions of the time. In many ways he, like other explorer artists, also contributed and entrenched these through his depictions of others (cf. 4.3.2). Such negative and stereotypical portrayals of others by Europeans served as justification for colonial domination and territorial conquest, serving to enframe the colonial landscape and the peoples who inhabited it (cf. 5.3.1). As suggested, this process is analogous to the possessive gaze of the imperial eye, which appropriates all it gazes upon through surveillance and documentation, thus deeming it available for imperial control (cf. 5.3.1). Hence, Bell's depiction of *trekboers* in this work, like that of the Khoikhoi in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*, served to cast these peoples as both culturally and racially inferior *others*, which served as moral justification for both colonial domination and territorial conquest by the British (cf. 5.3.1).

This brings to light the primary binary relationship that governs and informs the exchange between the Empire and its subjects, the *grande-autre* versus the *other*. In the context of postcolonialism the *other* represents the colonised, whereas the *grande-autre,* or grand *Other* can be likened to both imperial discourse and the imperial centre as well as to empire itself (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998:170). With race being the main defining differentiator in the context of European colonialism (cf. 2.3) and with the complicity of explorer artists in the construction of race and racism established (cf. 2.3.1), the distinction between *grande-autre* and *other* in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* thus becomes self-evident, with the Khoikhoi occupying an inferior position within an inescapable binary opposition. In Lacanian terms, the Khoikhoi thus signifies the negative in this subject-object dialectic, since opposition between *self* and *other* is never neutral but rather hierarchical, with the *self* representing the positive to the alterity of the *other* (cf. 2.3.1).

However, in dealing with the question of the *other*, *Cattle boer's outspan* presents a more complicated set of relationships. It was established in section 5.3.1 that the *trekboers* represented a cultural *other* to the nineteenth-century British colonialist, in that they embodied the negative aspects of the *self* in spite of their racial kinship. In relation, the people of colour occupied the position of both cultural and racial *other* to

both the *trekboers* and the nineteenth-century European colonist, who in turn was *Other* to both the indigenous peoples and the *trekboers*. This reveals a hierarchical power structure with the ruling British colonist at the top and the indigenous peoples at the bottom, with the Afrikaner *trekboers,* being both coloniser and colonised, dominated and dominator, occupying a somewhat non-descript position in the middle. Thus, in spite of the *trekboers'* somatic difference casting them as *Other* in relation to the native peoples depicted alongside them, they also represent the *other*: i.e. those who are marginalised due to their difference from the European *self*. Hence, it was concluded that Bell's depiction of the scene in this work not only reflects the interaction between the *self* and the *other* as much as it reflects the *Other's* framing of his cultural and somatic *others*.

Furthermore, in light of the above distinction between *grande-autre* and *other*, Bell might be cast in the role of the *grande-autre author* since it was established that explorer artists were complicit in setting the standards by which the colonised subject is defined as different or *other* (cf. 2.3.2; 4.3.2 & 5.3.2).

Having compared the *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boers' outspan* within the context of the ideological framework of their production, the next section will investigate the similarities and difference between these two artworks as pertaining to the social realities surrounding their making.

6.3.2 Comparative reading within the context of social realities

In the readings of the works under discussion in the context of social reality, the ideological frameworks that determined the hierarchical relationships between binaries of colonial *self* and *other* were underscored. This discussion revealed hierarchical relationships between the coloniser, colonial settlers and the colonised. In turn, this served to bring to light the class, racial, social, cultural and economic differences represented in these artworks.

The social reality of colonised spaces was determined by the interface between the coloniser and the colonised, as indicated in Chapter 2. Correspondingly, Barry (2002:196) regards cross-cultural interaction as one of the four major tenants or concerns prevalent in postcolonialism (cf. 2.3). During the age of mercantilism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, more sustained contact between coloniser and colonised became the order of the day through the enterprise of commerce, expansionism and settlement in foreign colonies, resulting in more pervasive and sustained cross-cultural interactions (cf. 2. 2.1).

The account of the interaction between the European visitors and settlers and indigenous South Africans in Chapter 3 affirmed the disparity between the social realities of these disparate groups. As indicated in section 5.3.1, both indigenous peoples and *trekboers* presented an *otherness* foreign not only to European social realities, but also to Europeans' previous encounters with foreign peoples. It was also established that Bell was a representative of his time and cultural milieu and as such occupied the position of *grande-autre*, which is synonymous with colonial power (cf. 5.3.1). The readings of both artworks further brought to light that Bell's inherited cultural values, ideological paradigm and social position informed his artistic expression. In light of this, the reading of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* regarding particular somatic, cultural and economic differences between European coloniser and indigenous Khoikhoi in section 5.2.2, indicated how these social realities regarding both the subject matter and the time of the work's execution is reflected in Bell's depiction of the event portrayed in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*.

With regard to the somatic aspect, it was established that European racial bias translated into the binary notion of the civilised versus uncivilised that locked the colonised in an inferior position within an inescapable binary opposition, which cast the European as the superior civilised *self,* and the colonised as inferior savage *other*. Such constructions of the *other* tended to crystallise into a cultural projection of negative concepts that in time assisted towards naturalising attitudes and conduct,

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ultimately translating into social reality (cf. 2.3.1 & 5.2.2). One example of this as cited in section 2.3.1 is the European practice during the nineteenth century of assigning feminine characteristics to those they regarded as lower races. This was made possible by the belief that gender bias often supported claims presenting racial biases as objective truths and that these notions were often used for mutual justification.

In light of this it was suggested that both racial and gender biases are discernable in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* The naturalistic style employed by Bell enabled him to distinguish the Khoikhoi racially from the Dutch colonisers, their traditional adornments and attire further highlighting their *otherness* to the European norm. However, Bell's coarse and generalised depiction of the Khoikhoi results in an image that presents them as being of indeterminate gender, which stands in stark contrast with carefully detailed depiction of the central Dutch group with their display of macho bravado. Similar gender and racial biases may also be discerned in the authoring strategies employed by the artist in *Cattle boer's outspan* (cf. 5.3.3).

Apart from contrasts regarding race, the disparity in material wealth may also be discerned at face value. In both works Europeans and indigenous people are also contrasted materially. Van Riebeeck and his party of wealthy merchants are shown in their Sunday best, brandishing various national status symbols and commodities markedly contrasting with the Khoikhoi who are depicted empty-handed and dressed in the most meagre of attire. In *Cattle boer's outspan* all material goods and livestock depicted belong to the *trekboers*. However, the bare-bones domestic setting and the modest, almost shabby attire of the *trekboers* depicted in this work lack the opulence and lustre displayed in the wares and costume of the Dutch pioneers in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*, pointing to the fact that the material culture of the *trekboers* was closer to that of the indigenous peoples than the European model.

Apart from somatic and economic differences, the Khoikhoi were also culturally different from the European colonisers having had different languages, as well as

social, cultural, political and economic structures. On this point there were many similarities between the Khokhoi and the *trekboers*. Apart from language differences with the British, both the Khoikhoi and the *trekboers* practiced a transhumant pastoral lifestyle and were technologically far less advanced than the nineteenth century British imperialist. The plutocratic nature of Khoikhoi society influenced their notion of private ownership and regarded land as inalienable, which was in conflict with the European view of land as a commodity with realty rights. It was suggested (cf. 5.2.2) that these differing views regarding land occupation and usage lead to the purported European myth of an 'empty' and 'unused' landscape which was for the taking. This view of the colonial landscape is underscored by the colonial gaze of the imperial eye. As discussed in section 4.3.2, the imperial eye designates and dominates that which it identifies through the colonial gaze. Similarly Bell's colonial gaze visually conquers the spatial expanses he depicts. In light of this Bell's depiction of a virgin and uncultivated landscape in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* presents it as unused. Bell gazed upon the landscape depicted in *Cattle boer's outspan* in a similar way. Here too the *trekboers'* transhumance belies European notions of land occupation and fecundity.

The *trekboers* had become sociologically indigenous through a process of deculturation which saw them adopting indigenous societal structures and economy, as well as developing a similar topophilic relationship with their environment, while at the same time remaining somatically akin to the British imperialists. However, the *trekboers* ardently held on to those cultural, and racial markers that distinguished themselves from the indigenous black peoples (cf. 3.2). Hence, the power *status quo* between the *trekboers* and the Khoikhoi and the San remained intact, eventually leading to the gradual subjection of the indigenous pastoralists and hunter-gatherers to various degrees of clientage and/or tenancy. The *trekboers* thus occupied an ambiguous liminal space, since they were at the same time both colonised and coloniser (cf. Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:212).

It was argued in section 5.3.2 that the *trekboers* problematised the notion of settler identity by occupying an ambivalent and contradictory subject position that was akin

to Fedrickson's (2002:54) notion of the *Same-Other* dualism (cf. 2.3.1). The Same-Other binary functions as part of the class-based social inequality prevalent in European society itself. This leads to the argument that settlers repeatedly suffer discrimination as colonial subjects as they themselves were constructed within a discourse of difference and inferiority by the metropolitan centre. In light of this it was suggested that even though Bell was himself marginalised by the metropolitan centre, he nonetheless remained an agent of the Empire, being both employed by the Cape administration, and also contributing to the imperial discourse through his art-making (cf. 4.3.2 & 5.3.2).

Thus, even though the *trekboers* were somatically and racially similar to Bell, they were culturally, socially and economically *other*. These differences were readably translatable into class terms, which were easily equated with *otherness*, especially in light of British attempts to racialise the nineteenth-century Afrikaners (cf. 2.3.1 & 3.2). In light of this, it was suggested that the *trekboers* represented an *other* to Bell's sense of *Self*. This might be supported when considering Bell's depictions of himself (*fig.11 & 12*) - and by implication his *Self* - which differ patently from his stereotypical depictions of Cape Dutch and *trekboer* communities (cf. *fig.4 & 9*; 4.3.2). Thus, in considering the relationship between *Self* and *Other* in Bell's *Cattle boer's outspan*, it became apparent that the artist represents the European *Self* who was *Other* to the indigenous peoples in all respects. In spite of the *trekboers' otherness* in relation to the Imperial *Self,* however, they remained *Other* to the indigenous peoples because of the imperial racial hierarchy and their own subjugation of local populations.

Whereas *Cattle boer's outspan* reflects the social, cultural and political *status quo* that existed between the British and the Cape Afrikaners at the time, British attitudes towards the Dutch, who are depicted in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* as well as the attitude towards the Dutch descendents who were subjects of the British empire at the time Bell executed this painting, are not evident in the work. Bell's decision to depict an event described in Chapter 3 as the start of the history of the Afrikaner (cf. Giliomee, 2003:xiii), seems at odds with social, cultural and political *status quo* that existed between the British and the Cape Afrikaners at the time,

especially since relations between these two groups were rather acrimonious at that point (cf. 3.2 & 5.2.2). This then gives credence to Record's (1994:65) suggestion that *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* represents a "jingoist appropriation" of Dutch history for British imperialist purposes, and bears little relation to the actual event. In light of this, this work may also be seen as a reflection of racial attitudes of the time in which it was painted, rather than a record of Dutch attitudes towards the Khoikhoi at the time of Jan van Riebeeck's settlement.

In light of the above comparison between Bell's two works, the imbalance of power and demarcation between European *Self* and African *other* became significantly evident. By exposing the relationship between *Self* and *Other* it becomes apparent that both the Khoikhoi in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* as well as both the *trekboers* and indigenous peoples depicted in *Cattle boer's outspan* presented the *other* whose social realities were vastly different from the artist's own enlightened Imperial position. The representation of the *trekboers* and the indigenous peoples in both works was clearly determined by Bell's vision of them as underpinned by his philosophical *Weltanschauung* and informed by social realities foreign to his European archetype.

Having considered the differences and similarities evident in reading Bell's two works within the context of social reality, these works will next be compared with regards to the authoring strategies employed by the artist in the execution of both these works.

6.3.3 Comparative reading within the context of authoring strategies

European artists tended to resort to their own familiar concepts, narratives and metaphors in order to describe and encompass their unsettling new surroundings, using various authoring strategies that generally tended to uphold stereotypical representations (cf. 2.3.1). These established conventions and aesthetic modalities abetted colonial artists' persuasive imaging of the colonised landscape, as well as colonial *others* and *otherness* (cf. 4.3.2).

In the reading of the two works under discussion it became clear that Bell too tended to rely on, and conform to familiar concepts and features, established authoring strategies and aesthetic modalities that typified the art of his time. Hence, in considering the authoring strategies that governed the creation of the works under discussion, such as scrutinising the artist's use of stereotypes and his employment of such pictorial devices as composition, perspective, gesture and pose, use of colour and tonal value, light and shadow, aesthetic modalities as well as style, the hierarchical relationships between binaries of colonial *self* and *other*/coloniser and colonised, yet again became evident.

In the reading of the two works the stereotypical depiction of the colonised emerged as one of the authoring strategies employed by Bell, the others being the use of style and of the sublime and picturesque aesthetic modalities, as well as his use of composition and perspective. Colonial representations of the *other* were often marked by a pervasive degree of stereotyping, which served as justification for colonial domination and territorial conquest (cf. 2.3.1 & 3.2). In light of this, stereotyping serves to delineate the boundaries between *Self* and *other*, with the power balance in such binary constructions inevitably favouring the *Self* whilst positioning the colonised as marginal and inferior. At the same time negative constructions of the *other* tended to crystallise into a cultural projection of negative concepts (cf. 2.3.1).

Similarly, the *trekboers* depicted in *Cattle boer's outspan* do not represent a specific family, identified by name for example, but rather a 'type'. Bell's generic treatment in his depiction of the *trekboer* as well as his portrayal of indigenous peoples as a faceless group in *Cattle boer's outspan* (cf. 5.3.3) and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*, denies these subjects their own individual identities, thus casting them as types. This is supported by Said's (1978) suggestion that the *other* is often viewed as a homogeneous anonymous mass, rather than individuals. Furthermore, the generalised, almost caricature-like depiction of the *trekboers* in the work under discussion is not only consistent with Bell's depiction of other Cape Dutch

communities, as is evident in his caricature *The Boer,* but also his depictions of *trekboers* in general as is evidenced in his portrayals of them while on Smith expedition (cf. 4.2).

Bell's stereotypical depiction of the *trekboers* reflects the notion that European settlers in the colonies were frequently subjected to the same processes of representation as non-European indigenous peoples. However, at the same time *trekboer* practices of clientage and tenancy involving the indigenous pastoralists and hunter-gatherers meant that those indigenous peoples were already under some degree of subjugation. Thus considering Bell's position as *grande-autre author,* his framing of these power relations between two groups of *others* in a single image, and his negative stereotypical representaton of both groups, implies the Empire's superior position of power in this hierarchical order. In addition, it was also established that both the *trekboers* and the Khoikhoi represented the *other* to Bell's sense of *Self,* thus supporting the earlier indication that Bell's caricatures and stereotypical depictions of others served to convey his own assumed superiority (cf. 4.3.2 & 5.3.2). Negative stereotypes were for the most part based on superficial observations that in themselves were premised on prejudice (cf. 2.3). One such example, serving to justify and rationalise European colonialism, is the depiction of the colonised as sub-human or uncivilised (cf. Chapter 2 & 5.3).

It was earlier indicated that Bell on occasion conceived of indigenous peoples as savages (cf. Brooke Simons, 1998:35). Thus, by employing authoring strategies that cast the Khoikhoi as sub-human and inferior to Europeans Bell contributes to their *othering* and places them in an inferior position in relation to the *grande-autre* (cf. 2.3.1 & 5.2.3). This grand *Other* can be likened to both imperial discourse and the imperial centre as well as to Empire itself (cf. 2.3.1; Ashcroft *et al.,* 1998:170). In this sense, in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* this comparison functions on two levels; on the one hand the *Other,* in this instance Jan van Riebeeck and his entourage, represents the vehicle by which the colonised subject's perception of the world is mediated. By the same token the *Other* sets the standards by which the Khoikhoi as colonised subject is defined as different or *other.* However, the process

whereby the colonial *others* come into being at the very same time abides the construction of the grand imperial *Other* itself – in the case of this work, as foreign intruder, a position which would ordinarily be considered as *other*. The concept of the *Other/other* addresses, among other things, the representations of the non-European as exotic or immoral *other*, a notion that seems to be affirmed by Bell's depiction of the Khoikhoi in this work (cf. 2,3,1). Furthermore, British attempts to racialise the Afrikaner, branding them as uncivilised savages (cf. 5.2.3), would cast them in a similar position. Hence, Bell's depiction of the subjects in *Cattle boer's outspan*, including the *trekboers*, can be equated to his portrayal of the Khoikhoi in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*.

Thus the colonised *other* was either represented in generic terms such as faceless masses or as lesser beings - as uncivilised, subhuman, child or animal-like - in contrast with the superiority afforded the representations of an expanding Europe in such images. A corresponding position of superiority is afforded the Dutch in the composition of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* with the central position assigned to Van Riebeeck and his party in the middle of the composition, with the indigenous people relegated to the far right corner of the picture plane. Similarly the *trekboers* occupy the centre of the picture plane in *Cattle boer's outspan* with three seated male figures of colour in the bottom right corner of the picture and a man of colour busy fixing knee-halters to two horses appearing in the bottom left corner of the picture plane. Together the two *trekboer* figures form an enclosed pyramidal unit which dominates the composition, at the same time excluding all the other figures in the composition, thus framing the *trekboers* as *Other* in relation to the indigenous peoples who are relegated to the margins of the image. However, as indicated in section 5.3.3, the central placing of the *trekboers* does not necessarily indicate their higher status and *Otherness* in relation to the indigenous peoples depicted elsewhere in the composition (cf. 5.3.3). Rather, it was Bell's adherence to the hegemonic cultural ideologies and artistic conventions of the time, which prescribed the inferior position of non-Europeans in canonical depictions, which determined the *trekboers'* position in the composition.

It emerges in *Cattle boer's outspan* that Bell uses a triangle or pyramidical composition with a hierarchical descending order from top to bottom in order to delineate social hierarchies of exclusion within the picture. Similarly the division of the picture in different planes from top to bottom and foreground to background may be read to indicate not only the physical but also the social position of a figure, with those regarded as inferior, subordinate or *other* relegated to the lowest register or point of the composition (cf. 5.2.3). Apart from being enclosed by a pyramidical structure, the *trekboer* family also occupies the highest rung of the hierarchical descending order from top to bottom, thus suggesting a position of superiority in relation to the *others* depicted on lower registers. The hierarchy of status alluded to by this device also distinguishes along gender lines, with the patriarch occupying the higher register, a notion that supports Hall's claim (In Wiesner-Hanks, 2001) that hierarchies of categories such as race and gender were often reinscribed by what she terms the "rule of difference". As indicated, associations with the feminine were derided during the nineteenth century and seen as inferior (cf. 2.3.1), suggesting that Bell's central placing of the already stereotypically depicted stout *trekboer* matriarch was an attempt to equate the *trekboer* with such a feminine, and thus subservient position, consequently bringing the sociologically indigenous *trekboer* closer in status to the actual indigenous people depicted alongside them.

Bell employs analogous devices in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* In this work the Europeans, with their imposing flagpost piercing the overcast sky, stake the highest register whilst the Khoihoi is relegated to a lower position. Furthermore, Europeans occupy almost three quarters of the painting's format as well as the focal point of the composition. A diagonal line flowing from bottom left to top right which also dominates the rectangular landscape format of the painting visually supports the impending advancement of the Europeans into the landscape and guides the eye of viewer across the picture plane to visually conquer the expanse of the represented landscape. The Khoikhoi occupies only a quarter of the composition; and this group is depicted passively awaiting an audience with Van Riebeeck's party. Read from left to right, the picture purports the heroic arrival of a small band of European colonisers on a foreign continent, easily able to stake their claims in the face of an even smaller

and docile indigenous population, in this manner reflecting a very unlikely and idealised account of events (cf. 5.2.3).

Another device implicit in two-dimensional spatial arrangement, apart from composition, is pictorial perspective. The use of perspective in both works is characterised by a single controlling viewpoint, receding from the foreground to middle-distance and distant background, in this way rendering it assessable for the viewer (cf. 4.3.1). In *Cattle boer's outspan* Bell also depicted the setting from a higher vantage point in order to allow for greater scope in the foreground plane, as was typical of the work of explorer artists (cf. 5.3.3). The use of perspective highlights the complicit role of artists in the colonial programme, since the use thereof in colonial paintings may be translated into real spatial situations through the persuasive imaging of the artist. By means of the use of pictorial perspective Europeans translated their control of space into military and cultural control - and ultimately possession - since the artist's use of a single controlling viewpoint in this manner acquired a symbolic significance analogous to possessive gaze of the imperial eye (cf. 4.3.2). The symbolic significance acquired by Bell's depictions through his use of a single controlling viewpoint (cf. Godby, 1998:144, 150) is testament to this. The above-mentioned exposes Bell's use of perspective in both works as an instrument of the possessive gaze of his imperial eye. Bell's fixing of his subjects by means of a single controlling viewpoint affirms his imperial mastery not only over the landscape, but also over those who inhabit it.

The figures depicted in rural scenes play a vital part in determining the subject of a landscape, and also the meaning and value such a landscape depiction holds for its audience (cf. 5.3.3). In *Cattle boer's outspan* Bell's depiction of the *trekboers* could be related to certain conventions by which the English rural poor were depicted in nineteenth-century British landscape painting (cf. 5.3.3). For example, Bell's depiction of the *trekboers* with their meagre possessions, makeshift lodgings, shabby clothing and austere lifestyle relates to the notion of the often-feared and derided 'undeserving poor' in British landscape painting. The notion of the undeserving poor was frequently associated with indolence (Barrell, 1992:36,76), a characteristic the

British customarily equated with the Cape Dutch at the time. This supports Boime's suggestion (1990:124) that, in many depictions, a person may lose his or her identity and become a "vehicle for social criticism"; Bell's indictment of the *trekboers* (cf. 5.3.1) can be said to constitute proof of this.

Bell's depiction of the Khoikhoi in a subordinate position and as being devoid of an own identity in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* can also be seen as an example of Boime's indictment, even though this work belongs to the genre of history painting, and in this sense can be said to depict an imagined historical landscape as opposed to a bucolic one. The anonymity of the Khoihhoi group in this work is further highlighted by the attention and detail Bell afforded his depiction of the Europeans with regard to rank and occupation as reflected in their dress. In contrast to the regal dress of the Dutch élite, which displays variation in both style and colour in vivid hues, the traditional dress of the Khoikhoi is treated in a generic manner. Wearing simple earth-coloured clothing and placed against a backdrop of shadows cast by Table Mountain, the Khoikhoi's presence melds with the pigmented skin of paint that describes the landscape, echoing Wa Thiong' o's description of colonialist paintings (cf. Wa Thiong' o, 1993:43) in which Europeans and Africans were pictorially separated by means of *chiaroscuro*.

Chiaroscuro transcends the modelling of light and shadow and may also be read as analogy for the Manichean allegory (cf. 5.2.3). This is evidenced in both *The landing of Van Riebeeck*, 1652 and *Cattle boer's outspan,* where the other literally becomes the *Self's* shadow through Bell's use of this device. In *Cattle boer's outspan,* however, Bell encounters the *Self* as shadow, since under their "thin white veneer" the sociologically indigenous *trekboers'* ethnic and cultural hybridity did not allow them to be associated with the European *Self* (cf. Steyn, 2001:26 & 5.3.3). Here the artist faces the European racial *Self* as hybrid *Other*. The white skins he painted in the patch of light at centre of the composition represent a cultural *other* to his European reality, embodying an epidermal contradiction – a dichotomy of *Self* as *other* at the centre of the margins. This notion supports Barrell's claim (1992:22) that the practice of distinguishing between certain groups of people by depicting one in an

area of light and the other in shadow areas is not restricted to race, but was also used to illustrate other forms of social difference, as was the case with the depiction of rural poor in eighteenth and nineteenth century English painting.

Bell's use of *chiaroscuro* moreover evokes the landscape paintings of the Italian seventeenth-century artist Claude Lorraine whose landscape painting provided the canon for the picturesque. As noted, Bell is known to have adopted Claudian picturesque stylistic and topographical conventions in his depictions of the South African landscape (cf. 5.2.3) and this is also evident in the works under discussion - notably in his separation of foreground, middle ground and background through the use of light and tonal perspective in order to recreate spatial depth. Picturesque landscapes tend to appeal to the viewer's sense of amazement, the ephemeral, and that which relates to the mind's eye and are often characterised by unexpected details and fascinating and anomalous scenery (cf. 4.3.1). These associations would no doubt be conjured up by Bell's depiction of the unique topography of Table Bay in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and the barren, desolate outback of *Cattle boer's outspan,* since both these settings were foreign to the landscapes known to his European audience.

It was further established that the picturesque was reliant on presupposed pictorial models that determined how nature was to be looked at, and could thus be viewed as an all-embracing coded form of representation that presented the foreign landscape for the colonial gaze (cf. 5.2.3). In addition, as postulated in the same section, the same can be assumed regarding the depiction of the colonised peoples, especially in light of Boime's suggestion (1990:188) that the *other* presented a "picturesque and pathetic folk" that provided profoundly tantalizing subject matter for foreign artists. This notion supports Chu's suggestion (2003:179) that the picturesque served to charm and delight the viewer. It becomes clear that the landscape as well as the indigenous people depicted in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652,* and both these elements as well as the *trekboers* in *Cattle boer's outspan* were subject to Bell's imperial eye, with the

picturesque aesthetic modality supplying the visual means of encoding his colonial gaze.

Apart from the picturesque, elements of the sublime are also evidenced in Bell's oeuvre and in both works under discussion (cf. 4.3.2). The sublime is often associated with seascapes or mountainous scenery (cf. Chu, 2003:183), both of which are present in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652*. The sublime is further associated with awe-inspiring epic vastness and the power of suggestion in order to elicit overpowering emotions and the stirring of the imagination. In light of this it was postulated that elements of the sublime could be evidenced in both *Cattle boer's outspan* and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652.* In the case of the latter, the unique and unusual setting with its reputed tempestuous weather conditions satisfied the criteria of the sublime, with Bell's decision to depict the enigmatically named Devil's Peak under a stormy sky serving to drive the point home. Similarly, the desolate vastness of the landscape depicted in *Cattle boer's outspan* serves as an epic setting that amplifies the extreme fear Europeans associated with the amorphous foreign landscape (cf. 5.3.3). In addition, the vast desolation depicted in this work further serves to draw attention to the isolation of the *trekboers* and the barrenness of the landscape - thus giving further credence to the myth of an empty and unused landscape (cf. 5.3.1). Therefore, since the sublime mode of colonial painting (like the picturesque) functions as an allegory of imperial control (cf. Ashcroft, 2001:141), it was postulated that Bell's use of the sublime as authoring strategy in both works affirms his complicity in colonial processes of representation.

Apart from using aesthetic modalities such as the picturesque and the sublime, artists' choice of style in itself also determines the manner in which subjects are rendered and represented. As indicated in section 5.2.3 Romantic Naturalism - used by Bell in *Cattle boer's outspan* as well as in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* - surmises the faithful and believable depiction of subject matter, but does not, however, preclude idealisation. This idea supports the hypothesis that depictions of indigenous peoples by European colonial and travelling artists were often comprised of a giddy mixture of fact and fiction. Contemporary redress of the Romantic styles further revealed that some of their associated devices such as nostalgia might in fact

cloud the representation of true reality. Similarly, Bell's deviations from Romantic Naturalist style is amplified by his use of the picturesque and the sublime which adds a heroic flair to his painting style that is evidenced in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (cf. Godby, 1998:156).

Thus, in the above comparison of *The landing of Jan van Riebeeck, 1652* with *Cattle boer's outspan*, a number of similarities emerge. In the first instance, both works reflect an attitude of racial bias. In both the white man is placed in the central (and most important) position. The same pictorial devices further frame this central position, which sees the white players placed in the glow of a patch of light, whereas the black figures are converged in the surrounding shadows. Moreover, the white male figures are all mostly represented in a vertical or standing position on a geographical elevation, dominating over the generally crouching or kneeling positions of the indigenous peoples. It is also the white man's weaponry that signifies and affirms their position of power – they have come to conquer and tame, to subjugate and oppress.

Whereas *The landing of Jan van Riebeeck, 1652* depicts English imperialists masquerading as heroic Dutch conquerors central in bearing the light of civilisation into a dark continent, *Cattle boer's outspan* sees the decedents of these early Dutch heroes as simple folk on the edges of Empire. Considering the artist's subjectivity to the predominant mores and values as well as aesthetic conventions such as compositional devices and modes and codes of representation, coupled with moral and political restraints and attitudes regarding class and race (cf. Record, 1994:18), it can be suggested that Bell's nineteenth-century racial bias prevented him from depicting the Afrikaner in any position other than central to their racially *other* labourers. Thus, Bell's central placement of the *trekboers* in *Cattle boer's outspan* does not necessarily reflect his association with them as members of the same European ethnic-*self*, but rather as racial kin. After all, these Afrikaners do not assume the same boisterous confidence in their own superiority as the masquerading Englishmen represented as their forefathers in *The landing of Jan van Riebeeck, 1652.* Neither do they display a sense of national ethnic pride as signified

by the flag and regalia of the group of pioneering European colonists. Furthermore, *Cattle boer's outspan* does not depict a significant historical moment or event in colonial history; instead it is a documentation of a way of life of a group of renegade deculturated white settlers on the periphery of the Empire.

In the above reading within context of the authoring strategies used by the artist it has transpired that the artist tended to rely on, and conform to familiar concepts and features, established authoring strategies and aesthetic modalities that typified the art of his time. The use of established conventions and aesthetic modalities abetted colonial artists' persuasive imaging of the colonised landscape, as well colonial *others* and *otherness* (cf. 4.3.2). Thus, in *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* Bell's persuasive imaging attempts to convince his intended audience of the reality of his particular depiction of colonial history. Through his appropriation of Dutch colonial history, Bell lays claim to almost two centuries of European occupation of the Cape, thus naturalising European presence on the sub-continent. However, at the same time negative aspects of the imperial legacy inherited by the British in 1806 are blamed squarely on the colony's Dutch heritage, thus echoing the sentiments of the British administration of the Cape at the time (cf. Chapter 3). In *Cattle boer's outspan,* on the other hand, Bell's depiction of the *trekboers* provides visual validation for the British indictment of the Cape Dutch, by illustrating those negative aspects his audience already associated with them.

It has became evident in the comparative reading of *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* and *Cattle boer's outspan* that using a conventional approach focussing on formal qualities, subject matter and thematic content, and subsequently an extended reading based on postcolonial theoretical principles contextualised within the Ideological contexts, social contexts and authoring strategies, a number of differences and similarities were discerned. These related both to the artist's depiction of Afrikaner ancestry and his depiction of indigenous peoples in these two artworks.

6.4 Conclusion

The problem statement of this research was to identify the contradictions and similarities apparent in the depiction of Afrikaner ancestry in Bell's *Cattle boers' outspan* and *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* in relation to a colonial Victorian worldview*,* using postcolonial theory as theoretical framework. As this research indicated, a comparative reading revealed a number of similarities and contradictions regarding the artist's depiction of Afrikaner ancestry in these two works.

Through postcolonial theory it was possible to relate the Afrikaner ancestry's subject position to the binary of colonial Self/Other. This brought to light the complexities and contradictions of this subject position, thus aiding a comparative reading between the two artworks. Postcolonial theory further facilitated a more comprehensive and dense reading of the chosen artworks, as well as of the artist's oeuvre.

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FIGURE 1. BELL, C. D. *Bushmen driving cattle up a kloof - Boers in pursuit* (n.d.).

FIGURE 2. BELL, C.D. *The landing of Van Riebeeck, 1652* (1850).

FIGURE 3. BELL, C.D. *The isle of the Holy Cross* (1850).

FIGURE 4. BELL, C.D. *Cattle boer's outspan* (n.d.).

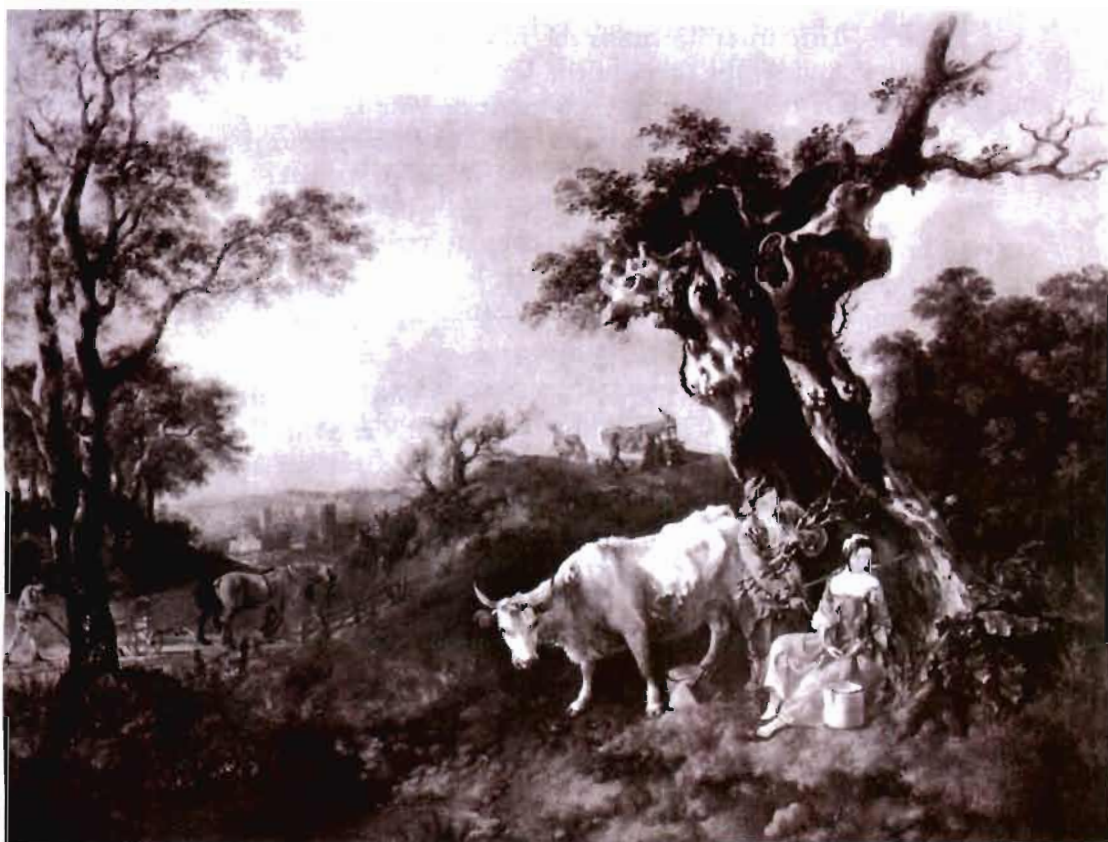**FIGURE 5.** BELL, C.D. *Hottentots dancing – Grahamstown* (1843).

FIGURE 6. GAINSBOROUGH, T. *Landscape with woodcutter courting a milkmaid* (c1755).

FIGURE 7. CONSTABLE, J. *The Hay Wain* (1821).

FIGURE 8. CLAUDE LORRAINE. *Landscape with the father of Psyche sacrificing to Apollo* (1660-70).
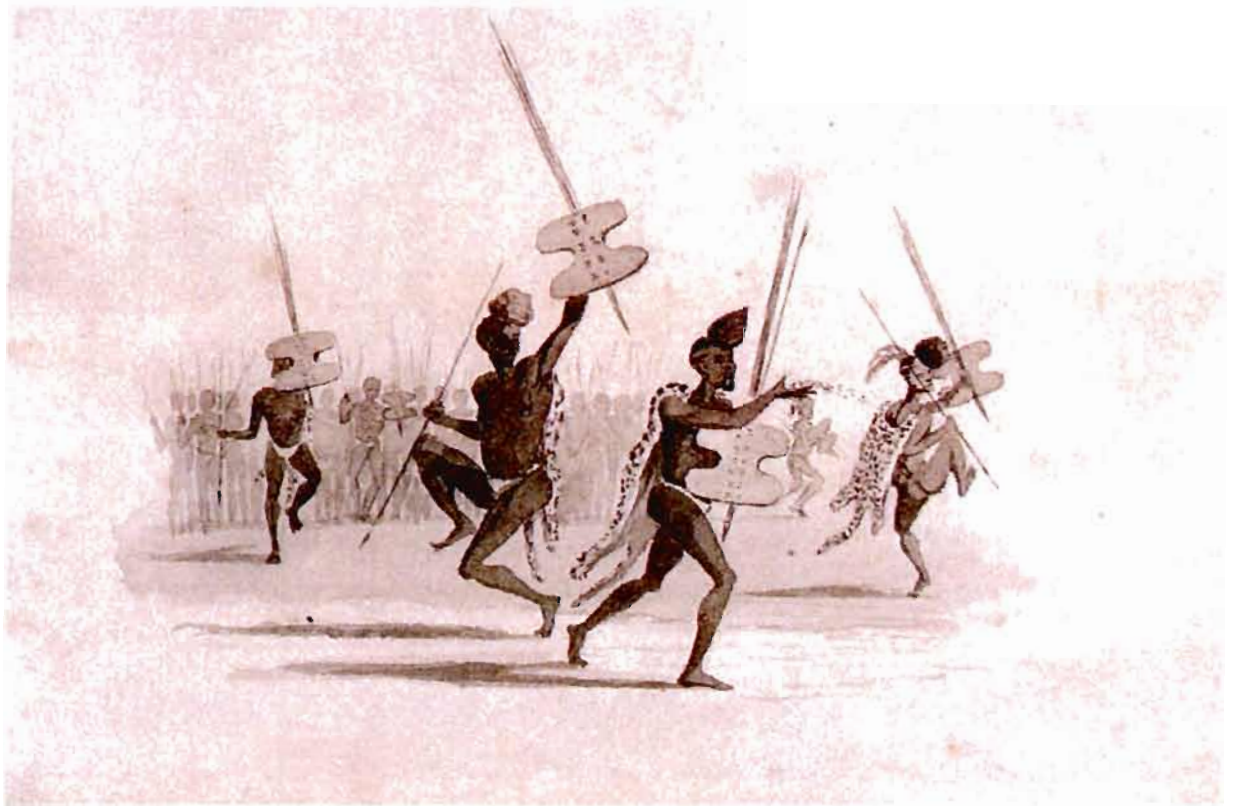
FIGURE 9. BELL, C.D. *The Boer* (n.d.).

FIGURE 10. BELL, C.D. *Medicine man blowing counter charm towards the enemy* (1834).

FIGURE 11. BELL, C.D. *Self portrait* (n.d.).

FIGURE 12. BELL, C.D. *Letter from Bell to his sister Christina, 3 November 1837.* (1837).

FIGURE 13. BELL, C.D. *The skirmish at Driekoppen, Near Zwaartkopjes (n.d.).*

FIGURE 14. BELL, C.D. *Scenery of the Kashan Mountains: the poort of the Urie River* (1835).