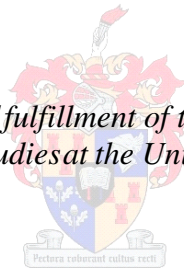


**Travelling snapshots of the Rainbow Nation:
The commodification and performance of
'authentic' cultural identities in contemporary
South African postcards.**

by
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*Thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Visual Studies at the University of Stellenbosch*



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March 2010

Declaration

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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SUMMARY

This thesis investigates the commodification of 'authentic' and 'traditional' South African cultural identities in contemporary picture postcards. Twenty-first century postcard portrayals of South Africans resemble their colonial predecessors very closely: they rely on the same evocative poses, stereotypical 'types' and tropes, and depictions of 'authentic' and ethnically pure cultural monads, seemingly untouched by modern, Western culture. Yet contemporary postcards are produced in a context that is very different from their colonial and apartheid counterparts and it is the aim of this thesis to unpack the various factors contributing to the seemingly unremitting portrayal of South Africans as 'exotic' and 'primitive' Others.

I examine contemporary postcards, and the cultural villages where they are often photographed, in the context of the touristic commodification of cultural difference and post-apartheid discourses of empowerment and nation building. The tourism and heritage industries' reliance on colonial and apartheid notions of 'tribalism' and ethnic particularity is further explored in relation to the Rainbow Nation's simultaneous emphasis and disavowal of cultural difference.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis ondersoek die kommodifisering van 'outentieke' and 'tradisionele' Suid-Afrikaanse kulturele identiteite in kontemporêre poskaarte. Een-en-twintigste eeuse poskaart uitbeeldings van Suid-Afrikaners lyk baie na hul koloniale voorgangers: die fotografiese beelde berus op dieselfde stereotipes, uitloklike poserings en uitbeeldings van 'outentieke' en gebonde etniese groepe, skeinbaar onaangeraak deur moderne Westerse kultuur. Die konteks waar in kontemporêre poskaarte produseer word verskil egter van die omstandighede wat gelei het tot die produksie van poskaarte in die koloniale en apartheids eras. Dit is die doel van hierdie tesis om die verskeie faktore te ondersoek wat bydra tot die skeinbaar onversteurde uitbeelding van sommige Suid-Afrikaners as 'eksotiese' en 'primitiewe' Ander.

Ek ondersoek kontemporêre poskaarte, asook die kulturele dorpe waar fotos vir poskaarte dikwels geneem word, in die konteks van die toeristiese kommodifisering van kulturele andersheid en post-apartheid diskoerse van bemagtiging en nasiebou. Die staatmaak van toerisme en erfenis industrië op koloniale en apartheids begrippe van stamorganisasie en etniese partikularisme word verder ondersoek in verband met die Reënboog Nasie se gelyktydige aksentuering en onkenning van kulturele verskille.

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TERMINOLOGY

In this thesis, terms such as 'race', 'primitive', 'traditional' and 'coloured' are used frequently, and may be perceived by some as derogatory and racist. Such terms, which stereotype people on the basis of their skin colour, are however unavoidable in a study aimed at challenging and interrogating such stereotypical and reductive perceptions and representations. The use of these terms does not reflect my own views, and where applicable quotation marks are used to indicate that I distance myself from their essentialising connotations.

Annemi Conradie, 2010.

1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis looks critically at the commodification of 'authentic' and 'traditional' cultural identities by and of South Africans. The contemporary picture postcard, as location of the convergence of numerous discourses, industries and histories, serves as focal point for my study.

In a century of instantaneous picture-texts, e-mail messages and personal travel blogs, the picture postcard seems an antiquated and marginal medium. Yet the inexpensive South African postcard, sold for less than R10 a piece, constitutes a rich locus for the analysis of a variety of discourses and socio-economic factors. Although many of these have their roots in colonial and apartheid eras, they continue to play out in the tourist sector where residents interact with and play host to foreign and South African guests. The postcard provides a point of entry for both the examination of historical influences on contemporary portrayals of South Africans, and the evaluation of the cultural tourist industry that relies on the commodification of 'authentic' difference for profit and employment opportunity. Bjarne Rogan (2005:3) applies T.S. Eliot's concept 'cultural emissary' to the picture postcard, recalling Elliot's remark that "even the humblest material artefact, which is the product and symbol of a particular civilisation, is an emissary of the culture out of which it comes". A century and a half after their development, postcards remain ubiquitous messengers, carrying in their photographic images and captions information of those pictured, and those doing the picturing.

According to Christraud Geary (1998:148), the first picture postcards of South Africans date from the last decade of the nineteenth century and their images and captions served to construct and reinforce knowledge about the country's indigenous inhabitants as distinctly other than the Western viewers they were intended for. As items of mass production, their commercial success and reproduction were dependent on their popularity, and they formed part of the larger image bank of popular representations of Africans, which fuelled the Western imagination and facilitated colonial subjugation, missionary projects, and the burgeoning new tourist trade. The ability to produce and market these representations relied on the immense power imbalances of the colonial period which rendered the local

inhabitants largely unable to fashion their own images and benefit from its commodification.

Twenty-first century postcards depicting South Africans are produced in a context that is very different to that of their colonial predecessors. W.M. Mellinger's notion of postcards as 'hegemonically scripted discourses' remains applicable, yet the complexity of the South African post-colony¹ demands careful consideration (cited in Thurlow, Jaworski & YlännemcEwen 2005:2). It can be argued that the institutionalised distinctions between Self and Other no longer form the foundations of either the production of postcards or the market sphere in which they are traded². It can even be posited, as I will demonstrate, that the commodification of culture is a potential site of empowerment which renders any simple dualistic interpretation of postcard representations problematic and reductive.

In the post-colony, the diverse cultural heritage of South Africans serves as unique promotional feature, as legitimating political instrument, as source of employment and national income. After the first democratic elections of 1994, and the subsequent lifting of the economic and cultural boycott, the numbers of foreign visitors to South Africa increased exponentially, nearly tripling by 2007³. Tourism further provides employment to 7% of South Africans and the government has earmarked it as one of the country's primary growth sectors. The role that tourism can potentially play in poverty alleviation and employment generation is thus of great importance to both government and the general population. "Tourism in South Africa", argue Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001:277), "is not merely a business. It is also about the packaging of images that represent the society and its past". Since the early 1990s, South Africa has had to redefine and negotiate its own images in order to assume its rightful place in an "international image order", where countries are constructed as commodities, each with its unique identity, culture and traditions (Rassool &

¹ Technically, South African has been a post-colony since 1910 when it gained independence from Great Britain, but the minority government's policies of segregation and later apartheid duplicated and perpetuated the colonial exploitation and oppression of the indigenous community. Only with the first democratic elections of 1994 did minority rule make way for a government elected by the majority. I therefore use the term 'post-colony' to refer to a post-1994 South Africa.

² According to the 2007 Annual Tourism Report, African visitors constituted as much as three quarters of all visitors to South Africa in that year (*South African Tourism: Research 2007:Online*). Visitors to cultural heritage centres and cultural villages further include groups of South African schoolchildren who are taken to such centres for to learn about their country's cultural heritage.

³ The contribution of tourism to the Gross Domestic Product of South Africa stood at 8.3% in 2006, and current Chief Executive Officer of Tourism, Moeketsi Mosola predicts that it will stand at 12% by 2010 (Appel 2007:2).

Witz 1996:337). South Africa's unique post-apartheid 'image' was scripted along the keywords of 'democracy', 'reconciliation' and 'development' and wrapped in the Archbishop Desmond Tutu's metaphor of the Rainbow Nation⁴.

However, fifteen years after the overthrow of white-minority rule and enormous constitutional and social changes, very little seems to have changed in the visual representations of 'indigenous' South Africans by the postcard industry. The majority of contemporary postcards resemble their colonial and apartheid counterparts closely: they rely on the same evocative poses and exotic props, and contain the same tried-and-trusted stereotypes, developed on the stages of empire or in the pages of adventure fiction. Like the cultural villages where they are often photographed, picture postcards depend on the putative existence of clearly defined ethnic or 'tribal' groups, each with its own set of cultural signifiers which denote its essential character. Images rely on the deployment of familiar concepts of 'authenticity', which are in turn closely associated with African 'traditionalism' as distinctly non-Western and non-modern. It can thus be argued that, like the representations of Africans that tantalised Europeans at World's Fairs, the successful marketing of images and identities today still depends on the successful commodification of difference or Otherness; yet, as I will argue, this Othering can also be an incongruous site of empowerment and agency.

This thesis investigates the ways in which cultural identities of South Africans are constructed in picture postcards, and ways in which concepts of 'authenticity' and 'tradition' are employment in the representation of so-called 'indigenous' South Africans. While this does not aim to be an exhaustive and chronological study of the history of postcards of South Africans, it is necessary to examine the origins and development of the industry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In order to determine the influence of the early pictorial conventions on contemporary postcards, I look at select examples of postcards that

⁴ The image of the 'rainbow nation', which came to epitomise Nelson Mandela's government of "national unity" was promoted by both Archbishop Tutu and the South African Broadcasting Corporation(SABC), the latter through the 'Simunye' ('we are one') campaign (Coombes 2003:3; Mattes 2001:270). The 'rainbow' was the most visible approach to building national unity and identity after apartheid, and symbolised the coming together of diverse peoples and the start of a new era. Critics such as Neville Alexander have, however, rejected this approach on the basis of its acceptance of categories such as race and ethnicity (cited in Mattes 2001:270). Critiques of the simultaneous emphasis on unity and cultural diversity will be explored in Chapter Four.

date from the colonial and apartheid eras⁵, but the focus of this study is those picture postcards currently sold at the country's major airports and Western Cape tourist destinations, such as the V&A Waterfront, Kirstenbosch, Seapoint, Table Mountain, and various Boland towns on the wine route⁶. This study is limited to those images belonging to the genre of ethnographic postcards of South African people, their indigeneity mostly suggested through captions and their geographic positioning within the recognisably South African landscape. As many of the postcard images are photographed in cultural villages, my critique will include references to these enterprises and their framing of 'traditional' culture as tourist attraction (Thurlow, Jaworski & Ylänne-McEwen 2005:3).

My thesis is positioned within a postcolonialist theoretical framework, and my work uses as point of departure that of scholars who have sought to uncover the ways in which visual texts contributed to the hierarchies that facilitated colonial subjugation. Looking back at the visual representation of colonised people during the colonial and apartheid eras, I investigate the post-apartheid tourist industry's continued representation of South Africans, seemingly paradoxically, by means of visual signs that borrow extensively from a European discursive paradigm that matured over centuries of Othering and exploitation. The continued production of people and their cultural heritage for consumption by the tourist market is regarded in the light of the global commodification⁷ of cultural identity, as well as the role of cultural heritage in local economic development and political discourse.

Central to postcolonialist theory is the much contested and debated concept of 'race', attributed from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the world's populations as categorising principle, supposedly indicative of the fundamental identity of individuals (Amoko 2006:128). 'Racialism' is defined by Kwame Anthony Appiah (1990) as:

The belief that there are heritable characteristics, possessed by members of our species, that allow us to divide them into a small set of races, in such a way that

⁵ Several of these postcards were found on collectors' websites or online auction sites.

⁶ The postcards I discuss were mostly purchased in the Western Cape, where I live, but they are distributed for sale at airports, retail outlets and curio shops countrywide.

⁷ The commodification of stereotyped and traditional cultural identities is of course not a phenomenon that is unique to South Africa. Countries worldwide produce postcard images of so-called 'traditional' peoples such as peasants, men and women in typical regional dress or individuals engaged in work and leisure activities that supposedly characterise their heritage. History and heritage thus merge with tourism the world over, often for reasons of cultural preservation, regional regeneration, economic empowerment and nationalism.

all the members of these races share certain traits and tendencies with each other that they do not share with members of any other race (cited in Amoko 2006:130).

Theorised in socio-evolutionist terms, 'race' was used as powerful legitimating device for the exploitation of people who differed from those perceived as Caucasians. The singling out mostly of black individuals and their cultural heritage for representation in contemporary postcards and cultural villages, suggests that 'race', and 'ethnicity', continues to be regarded as significant indicator of elemental identity, despite post-apartheid South Africa's commitment to non-racialism⁸.

Modernist, or analytico-referential discourse⁹, promotes the possibility of total knowledge, and throughout the history of the West's contact with Southern Africans extensive attempts were made to know and understand the Other through language. Poststructuralist semiotics challenges the modernist discursive order's certainty in the ability of signs to mirror reality truthfully and is indispensable to the historical interrogation of stereotypes of Africans. As intellectual endeavour, semiotics aim to "reveal and analyse the extent to which meanings are produced out of the structural relations that exist within any sign system, and not from the external reality they seem so naturally to depict" (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery & Fiske 1994:281). Conscious that 'meaning' is endlessly deferred, this approach focuses on the processes and structures whereby knowledge, meaning and stereotypes are produced. Furthermore, the social production of meaning and knowledge is something that is subject to power relations and struggles (O'Sullivan et al 1994:281). This is most notably explored by Foucault, who emphasises that:

⁸ 'Race' did however become a central organising and unifying principle for many colonised and oppressed peoples in their struggle for independence and equality, and in many parts of the world programmes that pursue 'diversity' and 'empowerment' rely very much on the same categories of race invented in the context of the colonial encounter (Amoko 2006: 133).

⁹ In *The Discourse of Modernism* (1982), Timothy Reiss uses the term 'analytico-referential' to describe modern Western discourse. For Reiss, this "class of discourse" was developed in the early seventeenth century and consolidated over the next half century, and "becomes the single *dominant* structure and the necessary form taken by thought, by knowledge, by cultural and social practices of all kinds" (author's own emphasis) (1982:9, 23). Jacques Derrida uses the term 'logocentrism' to describe Western philosophy's privileging of speech, or *logos*, as origin and site of truth, and regards it as a powerful form of ethnocentrism which makes Western reason the sole criterion of knowledge (*Dictionary of Critical Theory* 2000 Sv. 'logocentrism').

Power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (1984:175).

An investigation of contemporary South African postcards cannot be divorced from the fields of knowledge and power relations, both historical and contemporary, that it is immersed in. In this thesis I stress the ambiguity of European perceptions of Africans, and I treat the notion of 'cultural identity' as dynamic and unstable, determined by shifting power relations rather than its constant or inborn essence. Simon Malpas (2005:79) argues that;

[t]he gradual disruption of the idea of a self-conscious, self-sufficient subject [...] displays an increasing sense that identity is produced by the social, cultural and technological context from which it emerges. It therefore becomes a historically mutable structure that remains open to redefinition and transformation in the future.

'Identity' is also something that is often attributed, and may reveal less about those identified, and more about those ascribing and aiming to fix the identity or character of another. According to Bhikhu Parekh (2008:15), the social identities of groups are based on human characteristics, traits, practices, relationships and beliefs in South Africa, the designation of group identities has historically been motivated by political agendas. "For all kinds of reasons", he writes, "including the desire to maintain a particular structure of power, some of these features and relations become socially significant and are used to classify individuals (2008:15). The attribution of group identities to native Southern Africans, mostly on the basis of 'race' or 'ethnicity', by colonial and apartheid governments will be examined in relation to their impact on the post-apartheid marketing of cultural heritage¹⁰.

¹⁰ I have chosen to use the phrase 'cultural group' when discussing South African communities or groups with varying cultural heritages and ways of life. This is by no means done to suggest that such 'groups' exist in isolation or that they are clearly defined and inward-looking, but rather to avoid the use of terminology such as 'tribe' or 'ethnic group', commonly used in colonial and apartheid times to describe so-called 'traditional' and pre-modern social formations.

The critical study of postcards has only gained momentum in the last three decades and most scholarship has focused on postcards from the heyday of its production and collection rather than its twentieth or twenty-first century counterparts¹¹. The role that postcards, as visual documents of the subjects of colonial empire, have occupied in the entrenchment of colonial power and the construction, dissemination and perpetuation of the image of the colonised as pre-industrial, exotic and 'primitive' Other has been explored by several authors¹². Malek Alloula's *The Colonial Harem* (1986) was one of the first texts to engage with picture postcards of colonised people as instruments and products of violent colonial discourse. Although postcards are studied as historical sources on colonised peoples, they are mostly studied as records of the ways in which Westerners have represented and perceived non-Westerners, due to the extent to which they are constructions of directed performances.

Most of the scholarship on postcards from Africa and of Africans is concerned with colonial postcards dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Authors have illuminated the enormous role that images have played, and continue to play, in the subjugation and silencing of colonised peoples and have looked at postcards as items of imperial propaganda, produced to justify and legitimate the colonial effort. The conspicuous similarities between colonial postcards, denounced for their racist objectification, and contemporary postcards, have however not received much scholarly attention¹³. A study of twenty first century postcards of previously colonised people, and the ways in which they are influenced by their predecessors, is sorely lacking and it is my

¹¹ Authors have concentrated on the production techniques, distribution networks and collection of European postcards as well as the ways in which it was used as cheap, trendy and novel method of communication. As affordable and highly desirable popular art form, the iconography and composition of postcards have been studied from an art historical perspective, which has, according to Lee-Webb, enabled scholars to uncover formal and stylistic imprints that influenced photographers (1998:98).

¹² The volume *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards* (1998), by Christraud Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb has been insightful in providing a point of departure for my examination of contemporary postcards which resemble those produced in colonial times.

¹³ Studies that do include discussions of postcard representations of Africans produced in the late twentieth century include Elizabeth Edwards' essay, *Postcards: Greetings from Another World* (1996), and Thurlow, Jaworski and Ylänne-McEwen's paper 'Half-Hearted Tokens of Transparent Love?' 'Ethnic' Postcards and the Visual Mediation of Host-Tourist Communication (2005). The latter investigates the contemporary representation and exoticisation of Zulus in South Africa, the Sámi in Finland and the Welsh in the United Kingdom in picture postcards. Jeanne van Eeden's essay *Postcards of the Comic Other and Touristic Representation* (2009) is similarly concerned with contemporary visual media in her deconstruction of a comic postcard of a Himba woman from Namibia.

aim to investigate this seemingly uninterrupted continuation of a much contested visual idiom.

Although the focus of this thesis is the contemporary performance and commodification of cultural identity, the origins of those identities must be investigated in order to critique the reliance of contemporary cultural tourism on the tropes consolidated under colonialism and apartheid. Central to my first chapter is the role that images have played in the creation of the 'idea' of 'traditional' and 'authentic' South Africa. In *The Idea of Africa* (1994), Yves Valentin Mudimbe demonstrates that the trope of Africa has only partial or fictional claims to the historical or contemporary realities of the vast continent and the diversity of cultures that inhabit it. This is because the texts which have contributed to the idea of Africa "are, strictly speaking, second-level *legenda*, a mixture of facts, stories, symbols, presuppositions, and the like arranged according to a contemporary grid" (1994:4). Increasingly justified by modernist empirical science and a teleological conception of history, the African continent was connected from the eighteenth century with the "concept of primitiveness", and associated to that which is 'savage', marginal and uncultivated (Mudimbe 1994:27). Growing from the grid of historical and contemporary texts on Africa, the ambiguous trope¹⁴ of Africa indiscriminately includes all black Sub-Saharan Africans that lead lifestyles considered 'traditional'.

The grid of images further functions as a 'virtual interface' of Westerners' second-hand contact with Africans, a "paper-thin barrier composed of photographs, words, stationery, images projected on screens" (Landau 2002b:141). Imperialist travelling images, whether newspaper articles, comics, lantern shows or picture postcards, relied for their successful circulation and popular appeal on the technological progress and modern infrastructure of European nation states, which was in turn fuelled by the resources extracted from the colonies (2002b:142).

In the first chapter, I examine the contributions that representations such as travel illustrations and travelogues, exhibitions, theatre performances, illustrated news media and

¹⁴ Torgovnick states that this ambiguity resides in the notion that 'primitives' can be childlike, the violent, libidinous, passionate, mystical, free, demonic, immature or innocent. She writes; "the ensemble of these tropes – however miscellaneous and contradictory – forms the basic grammar and vocabulary of [...] primitivist discourse, a discourse fundamental to the Western sense of self and Other" (1990:8).

anthropological photography have made to the depiction of South Africans in picture postcards. This chapter further situates the picture postcard within the context of European modernity, referred to as the “common denominator” of the various factors that contributed to the development and popularity of this late nineteenth century novelty (Rogan 2005:1). Throughout the chapter, I will refer to various texts from the colonial and apartheid eras which have contributed to the stereotypes and conventions found in picture postcard portrayals.

I rely on authors such as Jan Neverdeen Pieterse, Marianna Torgovnick, Keith Dietrich and Annie Coombes, who have researched the history and functioning of racialised and gendered stereotypes of Africans and South Africans in my first chapter. In these studies, as in my own thesis, the theoretical foundations of Edward Said and Michael Foucault to the analysis of discourse as strategy of power and subjugation are central. I refer to late nineteenth and early twentieth century ethnography and anthropology in South Africa, especially as these disciplines developed from a Eurocentric socio-evolutionist paradigm and lent scientific credibility to mythical racial hierarchies that classified Africans on a scale between animals and Europeans. The ‘scientific’ perspective of ‘native’ South Africans further filtered down into the popular realm; through World Fairs, theatre performances, travel literature and photography, and contributed to the visual conventions of ethnographic picture postcards. Here the critical perspectives of Elizabeth Edwards, Joanna C. Scherer, Christopher Pinney, Johannes Fabian, Keith Dietrich, Andreas Broeckman and Andrew Bank have been insightful.

The commodification of ‘authentic’ cultural identity is central to my second chapter and my critique is informed especially by the work of authors who have critically engaged with discourses of authenticity in African art, such as Shelley Errington, Paula Ben Amos and Sydney Littlefield Kasfir; and the authenticity of cultural performances and tourist experiences, such as John Urry, Edward Brunner, John Frow and John McCannell. Deborah Root’s work further provided a useful starting point for the examination of the selective appropriation and commodification of the cultural heritages of previously colonised nations

or communities. Studies on cultural commodification by Arjun Appadurai¹⁵ and Wim van Binsbergen have been equally useful in examining the relationship between culture and the production and consumption of commodities. Critical studies on the tourist industry, such as those by John Frow, John Urry and Edward Bruner also informed my study of contemporary cultural performances in postcards, cultural villages and other promotional material.

With reference to historic visual sources and contemporary postcards, I look closely at how 'the authentic' is signified and I also explore its dependence, in the African context, on understandings of pre-colonial 'ethnic' purity and tradition. Studies by authors such as Leslie Witz, Ciraj Rassool, Gary Minkley, Beth Hayward, Gerhard Schutte and Heather Hughes, particularly their highlighting of the extent to which the tourist and heritage industry relies on familiar tropes of tribalism and primitivism, have further been valuable.

The third chapter takes the form of a contextualised case study of the construction of Zulu identity in postcards and cultural villages, where many photographs for postcards are taken. I consider the influence of colonial visual conventions and stereotypes on contemporary visual representations of Zulu men and women, and examine the ways in which an essential and 'authentic' Zuluness is performed and depicted in both postcards and cultural villages. The latter are discussed as examples of "snapshot histories", or hyper-real leisure spaces constructed for visitors to gaze upon 'Africans', and for South Africans to get to know themselves (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:279,281). My aim is further to highlight the ways in which contemporary entrepreneurs and politicians rely on notions of stable and essential cultural identity for economic and political empowerment. In this chapter the work of Carolyn Hamilton, Gary Mersham and Sabine Marschall have provided insight into the representation of Zulu culture by the tourism and heritage industries. I also investigate the construction of an exclusively masculine and militaristic Zulu heritage in KwaZulu-Natal and the picture postcards of Zululand. Here I rely on the writings on social spatialisation by Henri Lefebvre and Cara Aitchison.

¹⁵ Appadurai's *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (1986) is regarded as seminal collection and van Binsbergen and Geshiere's volume *Commodification: Things, Agency and Identities (The social life of things revisited)* (2005), contributed to the definition of 'commodification' in this thesis.

In the fourth chapter I review the emphasis on elemental 'tribal' identity and ethnic particularity in the light of critiques of the simultaneous representation of cultural unity and ethnic particularism in South African nationalist and tourist rhetoric. I further extend my critique to contemporary postcards that depict squatter camps and their inhabitants, arguing that the lives of South Africa's most disadvantaged citizens have been assimilated by an industry perpetually searching for 'virgin territory'.

Concluding my thesis, I again emphasise the complexities inherent in the commodification of cultural heritage, and the visual representations which so often go hand in hand with its marketing and promotion. I argue that images of so-called 'indigenous' South Africans do seem to replicate their colonial predecessors, yet the postcolonial and post-apartheid context and the possibilities that the global cultural tourist industry holds for South Africans, do serve to complicate readings of such images as mere extensions, or in-tact relics, of previous racist regimes. These images, and the very essences they purportedly signify, have been exploited by South Africans for their economic and political potential and I elaborate on the implications that this may hold for entrepreneurs and those who wish to create more nuanced representations of their own cultural heritage. I lastly suggest the need for further study that will ascertain the perspectives of South Africans, the subjects of both touristic images and the scholarly critique thereof, on the ways in which they are represented by the cultural heritage industry.

The appropriation of selected South African identities for commodification seems to be strongly motivated by the difference between those represented in the postcards and those presumed to be the consumers of postcards and cultural villages. The selection of South Africans that do appear on contemporary picture postcards seems to be motivated first and foremost by their skin colour: almost no contemporary postcards depict European-looking people as South African. The majority of postcards show black South Africans, specifically those black individuals or groups are engaged in 'traditional' activities or dressed in 'traditional' clothing. Homi Bhabha's discussion of 'difference' in *The Other Question* may provide insight into the basis for this tendency:

Skin, as the key signifier of cultural and racial difference in the stereotype, is the most visible of fetishes, recognised as 'common knowledge' in a range of

cultural, political and historical discourses, and plays a public part in the racial drama that is enacted every day in colonial societies (1994:112).

The fetish of colonial discourse, or the “epidermal schema” according to Frantz Fanon (cited in Bhabha 1994:104), thus continues to play a part in the spectacle enacted in contemporary representations of so-called ‘indigenous’ peoples¹⁶. Agents of the tourist industry, on the assumption that tourists are mostly Western and in search of ‘traditional’ Africa, exclude from representation those peoples that do not conform to stereotypical perceptions of ‘indigenous’ South Africans. They therefore perpetuate the reductive colonial dualisms of white spectator and black spectacle, Western tourist and African host. They further maintain the distance in time and space between the mobile, modern consumer and the static traditional commodity. According to Rassool and Witz (1996:364), “the predominant set of codes through which South Africa has been represented and imaged is through variants of a dichotomy between conditions of ‘modernity’ and ‘primitiveness’”.

Deborah Root (1996:30) points out that the contents of contemporary images of Otherness link the imaginary exotic to colonial domination and contemporary systems of economic and cultural domination. The production of such images is motivated by an “aestheticised nostalgia for a different time and place”, and the colonial context, which offered almost unlimited privilege and access to Westerners, provides the model for much of the services and sights offered to visitors to decolonised countries (Root 1996:30). As I shall emphasise in this thesis, ‘traditional’ South African people are positioned as distant in both time and space, and (modern) visitors are often literally invited to travel back in time to a mythical space of colonial adventure and romance.

Foucault’s insistence that the body is “directly involved in a political field” is of particular relevance to the context of the commodification and imaging of selected South African identities (1984:173). The different modes of photographic representation afforded

¹⁶ Bhabha (1994:106) argues for the “reading the stereotype in terms of fetishism.” He writes; “the myth of historical origination – racial purity, cultural priority – produced in relation to the colonial stereotype functions to ‘normalise’ the multiple beliefs and split subjects that constitute colonial discourse as consequence of its process of disavowal”. The ambivalence inherent in the stereotype of the colonised Other is of utmost importance to Bhabha’s argument: “The fetish of stereotype gives access to an ‘identity’ which is predicated as much on mastery and pleasure as it is on anxiety and defence, for it is a form of multiple and contradictory belief in its recognition of difference and disavowal of it” (1994:106-107).

indigenous and settler communities during the colonial occupation of South Africa, and the different modes employed by the tourist industry from the early twentieth century, show that strategies of representation and commodification of different South African cultural groups have been founded on perceived 'racial' differences. Skin colour and perceptions of 'ethnic' belonging have thus determined the treatment of bodies and culture by those empowered to promote the country as tourist destination. "Power relations", writes Foucault,

have an immediate hold on [the body]; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs. This political use of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination (1984:173).

The continued 'economic use' of the bodies and cultural identities of those considered 'different', exotic and indigenous enough for representation, despite the constitutional dismembering of the structures of power that legitimated the mastery of subjected bodies, is the focal point of this thesis.

'Difference' plays a large role in the representation and commodification of cultural identities, and in South Africa, the recognition of 'difference' has historically been facilitated by the obsessive classification and categorising of people according to identifiable entities or types. According to O'Sullivan et al (1994:300), stereotyping must be regarded as an extension of the fundamental cognitive process of categorisation, whereby humans make sense of events, objects and experiences through the imposition of organising structures. The processes of comprehension often require the simplification and organisation of diverse and complex ranges of phenomena into general, labelled categories. Focus is placed on those similar identifying characteristics or distinctive features, rather than the many differences (1994:300). This categorisation is however far from neutral, and stereotypes "are distinctive in that they carry undifferentiated judgements about their referents", generally reproducing underlying power relations, tensions and conflicts (1994:300). When considering the longevity of the specific stereotypes of colonised Southern Africans, such as the designation of 'natives' as lazy, sly, sensual or violent, stereotypes seem to successfully

fix the meanings of those they describe, manifesting repeatedly in popular media and everyday discourse¹⁷. Bhabha (1994:94) however highlights that ambivalence is central to stereotypes. “Fixity”, he writes,

as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism, is a paradoxical mode of representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder; degeneracy and daemonic repetition. Likewise the stereotype, which is its major discursive strategy, is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always ‘in place’, already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated [...].

Although colonial stereotypes function to enable colonial authority by providing ‘proof’ of the innate inferiority of colonised peoples, it paradoxically has to be reiterated in order to prove that which it purports needs no proving (Bhabha 1994:95; Huddart 2006:55). Bhabha suggests that the interrogation of stereotypes should aim to “an understanding of the *processes of subjectification* made possible (and plausible) through stereotypical discourse” (author’s own emphasis, 1994: 95). Rather than focussing only on whether stereotypes of South Africans are positive or negative, what concerns me in this thesis is rather the knowledge, identities and hierarchies produced and reproduced through the stereotyping visual discourse of the tourist industry.

In both picture postcards of South Africans and the tourists spaces where hosts perform and interact with visitors, certain activities, objects and even identities are ‘recoded’ through the process of commodification (Root 1996:85). Commodities such as postcards are particularly useful ‘windows’ on globalising processes as they transport cultural messages which convey images, ideas, information and meanings (Stone, Haugered & Little 2000:4-5). Through an examination of those identities (re)presented as ‘authentically’ South African in postcards and cultural villages, I will interrogate the motivation behind the extraction of *some*¹⁸

¹⁷ O’Sullivan et al (1994:300) write that “stereotypes encourage an intuitive belief in their own underlying assumptions and play a central role in organising commonsense discourse”.

¹⁸ Kopytoff (1989:64) asks why only some things, out of the total things available for commodification, are considered appropriate for marketing as commodities. He also marks the impact of time: one thing may be treated as a commodity at one time, but not at another. This can be applied to the relatively new commodification of some South African slum areas.

objects and activities from their context of use and their insertion into a global system of capitalist exchange¹⁹ (2000:6).

Macleod (2006:184) writes that the tourism industry and its associated media are involved in the business of constructing authenticity as part of the product presented to visitors. In this industry, 'authenticity' is a marketing strategy which indicates and attaches value to objects, people and lifestyles, and is positioned in opposition to that which is supposedly in-authentic, forged or simulated. Jamal and Hill (2002:87) emphasise that the quality and value of authenticity is attributed to objects as, "authenticity is not a quality of objects themselves, but one that is ascribed to them". The profitable endorsement of things as 'authentic', whether by small-scale entrepreneurs, multi-national tour operators or the national tourist board, is done according to specific criteria of 'authenticity'. In this thesis I will investigate what makes the cultural heritages and identities of some South Africans more interesting, attractive and 'authentic' than others.

It is necessary here to clarify the terms 'commodity' and 'commodification', and I make use of Wim van Binsbergen's definitions given in his introduction to *Commodification: Things, Agency and Identities (The Social Life of Things Revisited)* (2005)²⁰. He defines 'commodity' as "a domesticated object, i.e. a part of the physical world that has been defined, classified, and appropriated by humans" (2005:45). Domesticated objects, according to van Binsbergen, have been worked upon, processed, transformed, and produced by humans. Although not always physically appropriated and produced; natural elements, human bodies and cultural identities, can be appropriated through imaging and reproduction, and is evident in the tourist industry. Money creates objective detachment and convertibility, writes van Binsbergen, and for an object order to become a currency, it has to extend beyond the kin group's domain of generalised exchange to include indefinite markets the

¹⁹ The monetisation of economies have had enormous impact on the production and exchange of objects and services, and Stone, Haugerud and Little point out that "once general-purpose currencies are introduced [...] then every good has the potential to be commoditised" (2000:7). Taussig (cited in Stone, Haugerud & Little 2000:7) argues that "known as 'commodities', goods and services under capitalism [...] differ enormously from their counterparts in pre-capitalist systems of livelihood. Although they may in fact be the same articles, socially and conceptually they are different". The possibility of an object's profitable insertion into the capitalist exchange system thus goes hand-in-hand with its re-definition, even if the object or activity itself does not change much.

²⁰ Through an anecdote of the commodification of a Zambian reed mat, initially a gift and an object of domestic use, then bought and eventually mass produced for sale to consumers unknown to the producers, van Binsbergen stresses that objects can "move in and out of market circuits" (2005:44)

world over (2005:44). Domesticated objects become tourist commodities when they are “commoditised through ‘exchange’, i.e. through a process of detachment, in space and time, from the immediacy and multiplex nature of the total network of social relations” (2005:46). The forms of access to the object is replaced by “generalised exchangeability and convertibility”, it becomes “socially and culturally placeless, ready to be appropriated (2005:46).

In recent decades, anthropological studies have started focusing on the impact of globalisation on non-Western producers²¹ and publications such as Arjun Appadurai’s influential volume *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (1986), illuminates the dynamic processes and the roles of various contributors that are involved in the creation, exchange and circulation of commodities. Appadurai’s emphasis on the interdependence of ‘things’ and identities for their respective ‘meanings’, is applicable to the examination of the commodification of indigenous South African identities. He writes: “even though from a theoretical point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a methodological point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context” (1986:5).

Firstly, it is important to this study that ‘things’ in themselves first need to be encoded with meanings, and recoded with exchange value, in order to become valuable commodities. Secondly, in light of Daniel Miller’s argument (1987) for the centrality of consumption to contemporary lifeworlds and identities (cited in van Binsbergen 2005:15-16), Appadurai’s statement further points to the meanings that commodities give their contexts of production and consumption. Through my discussion of postcard and cultural villages, I hope to emphasise the extent to which the consumption of such popular representations attribute meanings to the identities of visitors, hosts and producers.

²¹ In *Commodities and Globalisation: Anthropological Perspectives* (2000:11), Stone, Haugerud and Little note that early anthropological studies on the impact of globalisation perpetuated a distinction between a “complex and transnational core” and a “static and recipient periphery”. Such perspectives, regarding the West as site of consumption and profit, and the non-West as producer and source of cheap and raw materials, reproduced colonial distinctions between centre and periphery. “This bias”, they write, “obscured the active resistance and reconfiguring of capitalist structures undertaken by ‘third world peasants’ [and has] diverted attention away from the producers as global actors” (2000:11).

“Photography should replace the written record, because the medium is uncontaminated by the interpretative problems inherent in language”, writes psychiatrist and amateur photographer Robert Sommer (cited in Warner Marien 2002:37). This view characterises the modernist faith in the photographic image as universal language, as well as faith in a one-to-one relationship between the signifier and the signified. Timothy Reiss (1982:31) describes this ‘discursive order’ as one “achieved on the premise that the ‘syntactic’ order of semiotic systems is coincident both with the logical ordering of ‘reason’ and the structural organisation of a world given as exterior to both these orders”. Reiss’ elaboration of this discursive order’s exemplary formal statement, ‘*cogito – ergo – sum*’ (reason – semiotic mediating system – world), is significant in the view of the impact of historical Western perceptions of Southern Africans on contemporary touristic representations. The primary metaphors of this modernist discursive order, according to Reiss, are “those of the telescope (eye – instrument – world) and the voyage of discovery (self-possessed port of departure – sea journey – country claimed as legitimate possession of the discoverer)” (1982:31). These metaphors indicate the political weight and consequence of this modernist certainty of concepts, signs and images to adequately represent external reality²². Reiss’ metaphors further illuminate the implications of both ‘vision’ and ‘voyage’ in imperialism, themes central to the concerns of this thesis.

The ability of photographs to speak ‘meaningfully’ to viewers (Landau 2002a:10), has made it a medium regarded since its inception as ideal for the faithful portrayal of distant places and peoples. The tourist commodification of cultural identities through imaging depends for its veracity on the ‘faithful’ visual reproduction of sights and sites into a format that can be purchased, possessed, packaged and transported. Several authors²³ have engaged critically during the late twentieth century with a medium whose apparent realism and objectivity initially governed its early uses²⁴. Roland Barthes (1993) and John Tagg (1988)

²² Victor Burgin notes the ideological implications of photographic representation in *Looking at Photographs* (2001: 69). “To the point-of-view, the system of representation adds the frame [...] through the agency of the frame the world is organized into a coherence which it actually lacks, into a parade of tableaux, a succession of ‘decisive moments’. The structure of representation - point-of-view and frame – is intimately implicated in the reproduction of ideology (the ‘frame of mind’ and ‘points-of-view’)”.

²³ These include Victor Burgin (*Thinking Photography*), John Tagg (*The Burden of Representation*) and Allan Sekula (*On the Invention of Photography Meaning*).

²⁴In *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-1846), William Fox Talbot promoted photography as method for creating faithful records of one’s possessions: visual evidence of ownership which could be used in court of law. John Tagg also points out that the history of photography’s uses relies on its ‘realism’, its ability to tell the truth.

emphasise that “the camera is never neutral”, but that it is always “vested with complex relations of power” (cited in Harris 1998: 20). The question that is relevant to this thesis is not whether the photograph can truthfully and objectively represent identities, but rather how power functions through imaging, and what the effects of those images are in post-apartheid South Africa.

In *The Burden of Representation*, Tagg (1998: 94) critically engages with the “realist mode” of photographic images and discusses the ways in which photography became implicated and functioned within the technologies of power and knowledge. According to Tagg (1998:99), the “realist mode” acted as most dominant form of signification in modern bourgeois society, as realism offered a certain fixity in which the signifier is treated as if it is identical to a pre-existent signified, and can therefore be employed as ‘evidence’. In this form of representation, the processes of production of a signified through a signifying chain are hidden, allowing the product to be stressed in the absence of the mode of production. For Tagg, this process whereby realism is constituted through the repression of its complex linguistic codes, echoes the capitalist market economy where production is elided (1998: 99). As consumer items, picture postcards rely on their convenient failure to disclose their own methods of production and are therefore able to function solely as a medium that expresses or communicates pre-established concepts (1998:99). Realism’s seductive mirroring of the real world causes arbitrary signs to be “naturalised by a spurious identity between reference and referents, between text and world” (1998:99). The picture postcard’s sustained popularity depends on this naturalisation of arbitrary signs; on its ability to offer tourists tangible and visual testimonies to a journey; mirror images of sights seen with their own eyes.

Therefore it was, and still is, employed in the creation of police and medical records, permits and licences, identity documents and passports. He writes that, “the photograph matures in institutions concerned with the establishment of truthful identities [...], often in the service of institutional power” (cited in Landau 2002:144). The use of photography by anthropologists and ethnographers to faithfully preserve images of ‘primitive’ peoples whose lifestyles were threatened by the spread of modern Western culture, are discussed in chapters one and two.

2. CHAPTER ONE: PICTURE POSTCARDS AND THE IMAGE-AFRICA²⁵

Introduction

In order to investigate the complexities and ambiguities of contemporary picture postcards of South Africans, it is necessary to unpack the historical, political and aesthetic factors which contributed to the development of the postcard at the end of the nineteenth century. Picture postcards of 'indigenous' South Africans, like photography, modern travel writing and anthropology, are further inseparable from their shared context of colonialist expansion and subjugation. Building on the visual descriptions of Africa and African bodies inherited from preceding centuries, they contributed to the development of the visual iconographies found in popular representation from the late nineteenth century onwards.

Rooted in modernity and an industrialising and colonising Europe, the picture postcard offers researchers a portal to the great variety of discourses and developments that intersect at the late nineteenth- and early twentieth century. Various factors contributed to the production and popularity of the postcard, most prominently the unprecedented technological and scientific innovations of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; the concurrent large-scale industrial development and the emergence of a European consumer culture and new, affluent middle class. The same decades saw the revolution in tourism by entrepreneurs such as Thomas Cook and the use of railways and steamships for leisure travel to Europe and further afield. It is also an age marked by major changes in prevalent thought systems and theoretical conceptions of human beings and societies; epistemic shifts that had had a profound impact on South African and European communities (Woody 1998:13). Described by Bjarne Rogan (2005:1) as an "entangled object", the postcard's production, collection and success intertwined with all of the above-mentioned factors, which all have modernity as their common denominator.

This chapter will provide a thick description²⁶ of various factors dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century which have shaped and continue to influence

²⁵ The notion of an 'image-Africa' is borrowed from Paul Landau's introduction to *Images and Empires* (2002a). Landau describes the image of Africa as a collage, "an 'image-Africa' paralleling Edward Said's discursive 'Orient' constructed by European travellers" (2002a:2).

contemporary postcard production and cultural tourism. The description comprises an unpacking of the discursive complexities of the historical context which gave rise to postcard images of contemporary South Africans. I will provide a synopsis of the socio-economic and political context of both the consumers and represented subjects of postcards by looking at the development of the postcard, its iconography and the stereotypes and tropes that has survived with it over the decades. This synopsis²⁷ will provide a brief overview of the following: European modernity and the age of progress; colonial expansion; the industrial revolution, the invention of the camera and development of picture postcards; the genre of travel writing; tourism and photography in South Africa; the modern disciplines of anthropology and ethnography; the popular representation of indigenous South Africans in postcards and other tourist material from the late nineteenth until the late twentieth century. The central concern of this thesis is the systematic documentation of South African and the ways in which they were absorbed and utilised as visual components in the great image archive of South Africans which still survives today. Both the socio-political context and the iconography of popular and scientific representations from colonial and apartheid eras are studied as foundation for the interrogation of twenty-first century postcard images of South Africans.

2.1. The image archive of Africa and changing perceptions of African Others

Many of the stereotypes and themes of contemporary postcards predate the nineteenth century and capture the ambivalences and shifts in Western perceptions of Africans. Following the invention of photography and technological advances in lithographic printing industries, the picture postcard inherited European representational conventions, developed over the centuries to make sense of the African Other within a Western worldview (Dietrich 1993:iii). Photographs and postcards of South Africans published and

²⁶ Clifford Geertz uses this term in *Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture* (1973), to describe a semiotic approach to cultural analyses that is rooted in a detailed exposition of the discourses and context that inform and contribute to the meanings of specific signs.

²⁷I am aware that the depth and complexity of all the factors that contributed to, and influenced, the production and iconography of postcards of South Africans is such that it cannot be given full justice in the limited space of one chapter. However, here I attempt not to give an exhaustive account, but rather make the reader aware of the incredible depth and complexity of both early and contemporary postcard representations.

distributed in the West and amongst settler communities absorbed long-standing and familiar icons and stereotypes, and continued to infuse and inscribe the bodies and images of native peoples with the prevalent discourses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: social evolutionism, functionalist anthropology, scientific racism and finally the legitimating discourses of separate development and apartheid.

The changes in European perceptions of Africans over the centuries are reflected in the changes in and incongruities of their visual representations. Neverdeen Pieterse (1992) and Keith Dietrich (1993:3) both emphasise that changes in representation were often dependant on changes in European socio-political climates rather than change on the African continent. Neverdeen Pieterse shows that “Europe’s Africa” was based on characters as diverse as the icon of deviant sexuality, Saartjie Baartman, and the medieval church’s guardian to the gates of heaven, Prester John (1992:24-25). Over the centuries, the depository of images which derived from Biblical and prelapsarian myth, were elaborated by the reports and documents of missionaries, travellers, settlers, soldiers and colonial administrators. These representations were given academic and scientific credibility by anthropologists and ethnographers, resulting in the nineteenth century “half-devil and half-child” that came to be the white man’s burden and roused his envy (Kipling in Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:24-25,78). According to Mineke Schipper (1999:2), a “multinational Otherness-industry” established itself in Europe through media such as photographs, postcards, museum exhibitions, travel writing and the world exhibitions. From the second half of the nineteenth century, such media enabled those unable to travel to Africa themselves, to experience ‘authentic’ Africa on their own doorstep or in their own parlours.

2.1.2. Ambiguous medieval perceptions

Although I cannot begin to unpack the contributing factors in any detail here, it is important to note the changes that occurred in European perceptions, however ambiguous and incoherent, of Africans following the Middle Ages. In the next two sections, I will therefore focus on the enduring impact of ambiguous medieval perceptions of Africans held by

Europeans, and the modern shift from a sacred, a-historical view of the world to a secular and teleological one.

In Dietrich's extensive genealogy of travel illustrations of aboriginal inhabitants of Southern Africa between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, he reveals that most images have their roots in Greco-Roman and Judea-Christian concepts of Africa and Africans (1993:iii,1-37). A mythical perception of Africans and Africa, rooted in Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian perceptions of Egyptians and Ethiopians, became increasingly prominent in Medieval Christian mythology and religious iconography²⁸, when Ethiopia in particular provided a Christian ally against the Moslems in the thirteenth century (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:25). The most prominent African figure in Medieval religious mythology was that of Prester John, who was alleged to be the King of an Ethiopian Christian kingdom, the guardian of the gates of paradise and a descendant from one of the Three Kings²⁹ (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:25).

Dietrich (1993:19-27) elaborates on the development of ambiguous associations of black Africans with the mythical European Wild Man during the Middle Ages, a figure rooted in Greek and Hebrew thought. Although regarded as natural and uncorrupted, the Wild Man existed outside the civilization of the *polis* and symbolised a potentially destructive and monstrous force. The tales of 'wild people' were merged with scripture, and from as early as the eighth century, blackness became associated with sin, death and Satan (1993:43). People with darker skins were further regarded by some Europeans as the offspring of Ham, which added associations with sin, degeneracy and sexual lasciviousness to perceptions of Africans (1993:28-29). The conflation of mythical and sacred views with political agendas

²⁸ In 1300 plans were made for a joint crusade with "the beloved black Christians of Nubia and the countries of Upper Egypt", and diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Catholic Europe were particularly strong in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:25, Kirkegaard 2001:33-34). The favourable view of Ethiopia was reflected in the International Gothic and early Renaissance high art, and both Neverdeen Pieterse and Annemette Kirkegaard (2001:33-34) elaborate on the depiction of black Africans in European religious iconography: the Queen of Sheba was depicted as a black woman as early as 1181; the figure of Casper the King of the Moors gained significant popularity during the fifteenth century and one of the Three Kings of the nativity was depicted as black by Rogier van Weyden in his *Adoration of the Magi* (1460), which has since become tradition in the depiction of this pivotal religious scene (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:26).

²⁹ The kingdom of Prester John also made an appearance in 1360 in the fictional travel accounts of Sir John Mandeville, who sojourned to the land of the mythical Prester and saw the walls of paradise (Dietrich 1993:38; Elsner & Rub es 1999:37-38).

contributed to European theories about African societies as 'primitive' and distinctly Other (Dietrich 1993:iii). Such seemingly contradictory and diverse stances, which included both positive and negative connotations, resulted in highly ambivalent perceptions of Africans as both noble and savage, allies and foes, majestic and barbaric, which continued to reverberate in colonial and even post-colonial visual culture.

2.1.2. Africans in modern scientific and teleological narratives

Although black Africans were perceived by medieval Christians as different to Europeans, they were nonetheless seen by prominent Christian commentators such as Origen (ca. 185 AD) and Saint Augustine (ca. 354 AD) as fellow, or potential, Christians, who formed part of the brotherhood of mankind through the redemptive power of Christ (Dietrich 1993:32-34). The redemptive and mythological narrative was however replaced in the modern age with a scientific and teleological narrative. During the Renaissance, the encounter with the New World and the recovery of Classical antiquity forced Europeans to re-examine their own ideas of culture and history and to find ways of incorporating foreign civilisations and peoples into their own conceptual framework (1993:88). The radical contrasts between foreign societies and that of the West, between past and present, and concepts of spatial and temporal distance, laid the foundations of the transformation of an immutable medieval hierarchy to a temporal, historical order (1993:88). Foreign cultures were further employed as mirror-image from which Europeans could better understand their own.

With reference to Lemaire (1976), Dietrich writes that,

The civil society that grew from the ruins of medieval feudal society began using the concept of 'culture' in the context of a scientific restructuring of human history, where a theological view of history was succeeded by a philosophy of history; the history of salvation was now secularised by the sober vision of bourgeois society which replaced it with the idea of a natural progression of the human species made possible by human labour and intelligence, in which humans developed themselves without the intervention of God from a state of

nature to one of modern bourgeois civilisation: from 'primitive' to 'civilised' (1993: 104-105).

The medieval Chain of Being, which assigned to all of God's creation its rightful place within a divine hierarchy and positioned Africans within its strata, was similarly replaced with a secular and empirical hierarchy of mankind, based on scientific observation, rather than myth or holy scripture³⁰. Johannes Fabian's (1983:2) exposition of the development of European conceptions of time and history, the shift from a sacred Judeo-Christian history of salvation to a secular, evolutionary understanding of time, parallels the changes from mythological to scientific perception of Africans charted by Lemaire.

Fabian commences his charting of the Western conflation of distance in space and time, at the progressive Judeo-Christian history of salvation, conceived as universally inclusive and expressive of the omnipresent signs of divine providence (1983:4). According to him, the history of salvation served as foundation of the "myth-history of reason" and philosophical histories that developed in the Enlightenment (1983:5). The teleological character of sacred history remained intact during the Enlightenment age, yet deliverance was now attainable through human reason and systematic doubt (1983:8). The modern secularisation of time also provided a starting point for evolutionary temporalising, the latter playing a seminal role in the anthropological perception of non-Western societies who seemed both geographically and temporally distant.

The notions that time is coexistent to the natural world and relationships between different parts of the world can be understood in temporal terms are both characteristic of what Fabian calls "secular time" (1983:12). According to him, this translated into the simplistic understanding of distant as past and nearby as present, and facilitated the "denial of coevalness" and the temporal distancing of non-Western people and societies³¹. This placement of referents of discourse in another time as the present inhabited by the

³⁰ According to Shelly Errington (1998:10), Aristotle's hierarchical classification of the world's minerals, plant, animal and human realms, was elaborated by medieval and Renaissance thinkers into a Great Chain of Being. Carl Linneaus based his *System of Nature* (1735), an ambitious project to construct a taxonomy of all the fauna and flora of the world, on the principles of the hierarchical Chain of Being.

³¹ Fabian (1983:7) writes that the equation of space with distance in time was promoted by 'ideologues' or travelling philosophers such as J.M. Dégerando and C.F. Volney. In 1800 Dégerando wrote: "The philosophical traveller, sailing to the ends of the earth, is in fact travelling in time; he is exploring the past; every step he makes is a passage of an age" (1983:7).

(Western) author of discourse is described by Fabian as an “epistemological act” (1983:27). Conflated understandings of time and space were entrenched when Charles Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* (1859) provided scientific authority to endorse naturalised and secularised conceptions of time and history. Dispersal in space was seen to directly reflect sequence in time, writes Fabian, and became “axiomatic truths in the industrialising and colonising West” (1983:12).

The contemporary description of journeys to Africa as travels in both space and time testify to the endurance of modernist conceptions of Africans as belonging to a different time and place. The site of several picture postcard images, the cultural village Stewarts Farm Kwabekithunga, is promoted as follows: “Travel back in time, return to an era of mystique and magical Africa” (*Stewarts Farm Accommodation in Eshowe KwaZulu Natal* Online). Romanticised by the leisure travel industry, African territory and peoples are positioned as ‘living ancestors’ for the gaze of time-travelling tourists. Such sensuous descriptions rely however on a social-Darwinist hierarchy that is temporalised and spatialised, positioning Africans as un-evolved inhabitants of a geographically distant past – the same hierarchy that legitimated colonialism and apartheid.

This brief account of the shifts from mythical to secular perceptions of Africans serves to highlight those residues that modern representations of Africans have retained from their classical and sacred origins. The shifts in perception and the resulting ambivalences were consequently absorbed by novel methods of representation developed during and after the Industrial Revolution, which will be dealt with in the next section.

2.2. Modernity as context for the development of picture postcards

European modernity forms the discursive paradigm against which postcard representations of native South Africans must be understood. The modernist or analytico-referential discourse (Reiss 1982:9) that rose to prominence in the seventeenth century underscores the scientific and technological progress which made the postcard’s development possible in the nineteenth century. The Enlightenment tradition, founded on the Cartesian faith in scientific knowledge as incorruptible, gave rise to European modernism’s universalist

ambitions of total knowledge, absolute truth and progress. Descartes' cogito further established the primacy of the modern subject, whose infinite capacity for self-improvement and self-mastery made him the ideal observer and analyst. This ideal modern subject conceived of itself in terms of its binary opposite and the object of its knowledge, those members of 'pre-modern' societies supposedly governed by superstition and tradition.

From the positivistic perception of many Europeans who made contact with African societies, Africa's apparent lack of organised religion and culture, mechanised industry and modern technology, motivated social evolutionist theories and legitimated the colonial occupation and exploitation of African territories³². Concomitant to the rise of European nation states and the rapid industrialisation of European economies was the growth in the percentage of the globe under European control. In 1800, Europe controlled 35% of the earth, and between 1878 and 1914, that percentage grew to more than 80% (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:76). According to Amoko (2006:132), the colonial encounter radically transformed not only colonised territories, but also imperial Europe as it consolidated the idea of Western modernity at the apex of human civilisation. Stuart Hall (2001:278-279) writes that the difference of non-Western societies and cultures from the West provided the standard against which the West's achievements were measured and the idea of 'the West' took shape. Popular and official representations of colonial expansion, whether in the form of published travel- and hunting accounts, newspaper articles and illustrations, missionary reports, World Fairs exhibitions or postcards, thus played an important role maintenance of the West's self-image and in the popularisation and legitimation of the colonial effort.

One cannot, however, reduce colonial representations of colonised people to an essential image of the colonised, as the aims and affiliations of colonial writers, artists and photographers were diverse (Landau 2002b:142)³³. Yet the power imbalances inherent in

³² Dietrich notes that a key factor in evolutionary thinking, which predates Darwin, was the level of subsistence of a given society, according to which a people's evolutionary maturity or immaturity could be measured (1993:147). The influence of evolutionist thinking will be further explored in connection with the disciplines of anthropology and ethnography.

³³ Nicholas Thomas (1994:51) emphasises that "[c]olonialism is not a unitary project but a fractured one, riddled with contradictions and exhausted as much by its own internal debates as by the resistance of the

the European imaging of colonised South Africans have without doubt resulted in the objectification and stereotyping of people and communities who did not have access to the same instruments of representation as their colonial masters. Whether motivated by the agendas of missionaries, social anthropologists or the entertainment industry, the images of colonised Southern Africans were created and selected on the basis of the visible differences between the bodies of Westerners and Africans, lighter and darker skinned people. Racial difference and essential Otherness thus underscores even the most benevolent of images and in derogatory depictions of natives as 'primitive', animalistic and sexual deviants, racial difference served to legitimate the dehumanising treatment of colonised individuals.

2.2.1. Industrial Revolution, technological progress and rise of tourism

The unprecedented technological progress associated with the Industrial Revolution had economic, social, political, technological and cultural consequences which impacted on several aspects central to this thesis: the patterns of contemporary tourism; the accessibility of tourism as recreational activity to a greater part of the population; the invention of the camera and postcard; access to various parts of the globe through efficient transport; the publication of travel literature which served to raise interest and desire in tourists to see and experience distant lands and cultures; the irrevocable impact of Industrialisation on Western territories and peoples and the consequent desire to experience un-industrialised spaces.

The Industrial Revolution was a direct outgrowth of modernity's utilitarian emphasis on progress and innovation; considered in mechanistic terms, both man and nature were harnessed for their energy and resource potential. The Revolution, which is dated from the end of the eighteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century³⁴, was marked by the

colonised". The varied texts produced by colonial powers can be said to reflect the fractured and plural character of colonial discourse.

³⁴ The start of the Industrial Revolution is dated to the two decades after 1780 in Britain, to the decades preceding 1860 in France and the United States; the third quarter of the nineteenth century in Germany; Japan in the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century and Canada and Russia is dated to the quarter-century preceding the outbreak of the First World War. The industrialization of India and China, according to Rostow, took off in different ways during the 1950s (cited in Holden 2005:23).

change from rural and agricultural to urban, industrial economies and came to be regarded as a universal model of modernisation. The development of new social structures in industrialised societies, a direct consequence of urbanisation and increased economic production, saw the emergence of the bourgeoisie, or new leisure class, able to participate in tourism, and the consumption and collection of commodity items. Their access to disposable income, desire to escape the polluted and over-crowded urban centres, and ability to express new-found wealth through the consumption of luxurious vacations, fuelled a new tourist industry.

Inglis (2000) dates the term 'tourism' to the period of the Grand Tour, as it developed into a tour circuit which took wealthy Europeans beyond national boundaries during the Renaissance (cited in Holden 2005:19,21). Due to the expansion of mercantile trade and thus increased wealth, recreational travel became more accessible and throughout the eighteenth century, the middle classes increasingly made up the majority of tourists. The Industrial Revolution further directly contributed to the wider accessibility of tourism to the entrepreneurial and middle classes (Holden 2005:23). Leisure travel and the accessibility of tourist destinations were increasingly facilitated by the unprecedented technological advancement of transport systems, and the harnessing of trade routes for tourism.

The demand for uninterrupted production radically altered pre-industrial patterns of work as clear and strict differentiation was made between periods of work and leisure, and specific spatial and time zones were marked for work and rest³⁵. The Revolution's spatial, temporal and gendered division of work and leisure is reflected in contemporary tourism, where people take specific and defined periods of time away from work and often travel to destinations away from the home, and work, environment (Holden 2005:25). The first package tours also grew out of the industrial revolution, as Thomas Cook was one of the first to put railways to the commercial use of recreation tourism. He organized tours from the provinces to the Great Exhibition at London's Crystal Palace in 1851, bringing 165,000 visitors to the event. According to Thompson (1988), Cook's aim was to bring the

³⁵ The Industrial Revolution also saw the introduction of statutory holidays or leisure time, exemplified by the United Kingdom's Bank Holidays Act of 1871 and 1875, and eventually the 1938 Holiday with Pay Act. These acts recognized the benefits of rest and leisure time to both individuals and the larger society, and it provided a welcome injection for domestic tourist and transport industries (Holden 2005:26).

‘respectable’ working class to this educational event; specifically its messages of material, cultural and moral progress (cited in Holden 2005: 27).

Officially titled the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, the Crystal Palace Exhibition was the first of many international showcases organised from the middle of the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. These provided a platform for the display of the industrial and artistic products of various countries, in the process actively promoting nationalism and imperialism³⁶. Apart from introducing new technological developments to an international audience, and stimulating nationalist pride and loyalty,³⁷ the fairs promoted and justified colonialism through their exhibition of the material culture, technology and inhabitants of colonised countries (Rydell 1998:48). At the Paris Exposition of 1878, the construction of replica colonial villages, complete with living inhabitants, started a new international exhibition genre that was copied with ever-increasing ambition at world’s fairs all over Europe and the United States (Rydell 1998:50). Staged re-enactments and performances, such as ‘Savage South Africa’, could further be seen at European and American exhibitions from the late nineteenth century, and displays of “noble Zulus” were prominent at the 1886 Colonial Indian Exhibition and British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1923 and 1924 (Coombes 1994:63; Rassool & Witz 1996:359). Although gradually disappearing at European fairs after the 1930s, the display of humans were integral to the Empire Exhibition in Johannesburg in 1936 and the 1952 Van Riebeeck Festival Fair in Cape Town (Rassool & Witz 1996:359). Annie Coombes (1994:63) argues that such spectacles were constituted as both mass entertainment and scientific exegesis³⁸, and that they contributed to the dissipation of the vague boundary between the scientific and the popular.

³⁶ Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities* (1983), dates the formation of nations to the late eighteenth century. He writes that a “large cluster of new political entities [...] sprang up in the Western hemisphere between 1776 and 1838, all of which self-consciously defined themselves as nations, and [...] as (non-dynastic) republics” (2001:315).

³⁷ Prince Albert perceived the “Crystal Palace as a vehicle for ‘impressing millions of British workers’ with the essential rightness of the nation’s political, social and economic systems”, at a time when working class demands threatened domestic political stability (cited in Rydell 1998:48).

³⁸ The convergence of popular entertainment and the relatively young discipline of anthropology at world’s fairs served the interests of both anthropologists and organising authorities. The anthropologists bestowed a measure of scientific authority to the displays of colonised peoples, and the fairs popularised their theories about racial difference and human progress (Coombes 1996:63; Rydell 1998:48-49).

The ethnic villages constructed at world's fairs, which marked non-Westerners as Other and exotic for the gaze of millions of Europeans, served to offer the general public instant proof of the superiority, technological achievement and maturity of their own societies. It further justified and glorified the industrialisation of Europe through juxtaposition with the technology, arts and lifestyles of those inhabitants of the globe considered 'not yet modern'. From 1893, writes Rydell, picture postcards of scenes from the World's Fairs "propelled images of race and empire to an audience far beyond the fairgrounds" (1998:47). By reproducing the images of performing or confined non-Europeans at the fairs, "postcard publishers contributed to the 'commodification of the exotic', a process by which non-Western people were displayed and 'imagined and evaluated in terms of the market and its functions'" (Hinsley cited in Rydell 1998:55). In both the displays and the postcards, non-Westerners and their respective cultures were frozen in time, as objects of the gaze and as static, a-historical societies who had fallen behind the West in the evolutionary race. According to Coombes (1994:63), such public exhibitions further "produced a set of obsessively repeated characters which were made to stand in for the multiplicity of cultures comprising the African continent". Through their manufacture and dissemination, picture postcards of the displays of colonised Africans contributed to perceptions of Africa as both particular and homogenous fictional entity (1994:69).

2.2.2. Photographic representation, colonialism and Southern Africans

John Tagg (1998:37) writes that the history of photography is,

the history of an industry catering to a demand, of needs manufactured and satisfied by an unlimited flow of commodities and a model of capitalist growth in the nineteenth century, paralleled with the rise of the middle- and lower classes towards greater social, economic and political importance.

Photography's development and uses are inextricably bound up with European modernity, and as discursive instrument it is both a product of and a medium of production, which flourished during the height of Western colonialist expansion. In the following section I will

elaborate on the photographic construction of indigenous Southern African identities in late nineteenth century.

Joanna C. Scherer (1992:33) sees photography as a “mechanical by-product of the European technological revolution, the period during which scientific facts, invention, mass production, ownership of products, and conspicuous consumption began to rule in Western society”. The fact that photographic prints could be mass produced, contributed significantly to the informative and factual value of photographic images (1992:33). Both the mass-production of photographic prints, and their illusion of ‘truth’ (1992:33) contributed to the success and popularity of picture postcards depicting foreign peoples and places from the late nineteenth century.

The camera was used extensively in the exploration and documentation of new colonies³⁹, and photographers often accompanied explorer-travellers, such as David Livingstone, whose brother Charles took photographs of his expedition to the Victoria Falls between 1858 and 1863. Others, like Charles Chapman, who crossed the breadth of continent in order to establish trading posts and communication between the opposite coasts, used the camera to document the people and places encountered on his travels (Bensusan 1966: 24-25). In an extensive account of the parallel development of the technologies of the camera and the gun, and the deployment of both in Africa, Landau (2002b:146) argues that “photography became a tool of empire by following the gun into Africa”. After George Eastman and William Walker developed the Kodak Camera in 1888 and flexible photographic media with paper negatives which permitted up to 100 exposures, photography’s public and private use boomed (2002b:148-149). Following this development, newspaper reporters, colonial administrators, anthropologists, missionaries, military personnel, sponsors for European postcards as well as local photographic enthusiasts and travellers, could produce and process their own images.

³⁹ Bensusan writes that through the chartered European companies, “the art and science of photography was brought from Western Europe to the heart of the Africa continent” (1966:29). Photography’s relationship to colonialism, the surveying and objectification of colonised peoples will be discussed shortly, yet Bensusan’s celebratory view of the “light [...] shed on this dark continent through the medium of photography” (1966:8) exemplifies the endurance of deeply Eurocentric modernist discourse in South African history writing.

Scholarship on colonial photography⁴⁰ has in recent decades highlighted the relationship between photographic representation and colonialism, and while not suggesting a unifying argument that all colonial photographs, and photographers, acted according to a specific programme aimed to stereotype and denigrate colonial subjects as inferior, authors have interrogated the emphasis on the visual and cultural difference between Westerners and colonised peoples in photographs taken between the 1840s and 1940s⁴¹. In their introduction to the volume *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place* (2002:1-2), Eleanor M. Hine and Gary D. Sampson write:

[T]he overwhelming evidence of the photographs seen within the contexts of specific episodes in colonial history indicates that the images produced a dynamic rhetoric of racial and ethnographic difference between white Europeans and Americans and non-European “races” and “places”. [...] The photographers’ perceptions of their subjects were influenced and reinforced by a diverse array of familiar administrative practices, commercial enterprises, artistic and literary traditions, as well as the ongoing scientific investigation and classification of racial types.

Central to my thesis is the production of this “rhetoric of [...] difference” (Hine & Sampson 2002:1), and I shall briefly discuss the significant contribution that colonial photography made to this visual idiom, in order to examine the continuation of the visual differentiating which occurs in contemporary postcard imaging of South Africans. The history of photography in South Africa reveals since its inception, that photography of indigenous South Africans was employed for reasons very different to that of the settler community (Schoeman 1996:17). Portrait studios were thriving in Cape Town, Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth by the late 1840s, catering largely to the needs of the settler communities who

⁴⁰ Malek Alloula’s study of colonial postcards of Algerian women in the *Colonial Harem* (1981) was groundbreaking in this field and, although not explicitly focused on the colonial photograph, John Tagg’s seminal book, *The Burden of Representation* (1988), lead the way in the investigation between the hierarchical relationship between photographer and subject, or intended audience. Volumes such as Elizabeth Edwards’ *Anthropology and Photography, 1860 – 1920* (1992) and Melissa Banta and Curtis Hinsley’s *From Site to Sight: Anthropology, Photography and the Power of Imagery* (1986) have more directly looked at the relationship between power and knowledge in colonial photography and the nineteenth century academic disciplines of anthropology and ethnography.

⁴¹ Hight and Sampson are concerned with this specific period, which they describe as representative of “photography’s first experimental ‘documentary’ uses to World War II, after which time many regions under colonial authority of European nations and the United States struggled for independence” (2002:1).

desired portraits of themselves and families⁴². From the time of medium's arrival in the country, its use by and availability to inhabitants was influenced by the racial divisions that permeated South African societies (Schoeman 1996:11).

Recent scholarship has exposed nineteenth and early twentieth century theories of race as cultural, social and political fabrications, and focused on the ways in which photographers contributed to such fabrications by creating visible markers of racial distinction in their photographs, which then assisted in establishing a consensus of both professional and popular belief about those various peoples who fell under Western control (Hight & Sampson 2002:3).

Photography further played a powerful role in making the modernising and civilising efforts of the West in the colonies real to audiences at home – in garnering support and giving testimony to the benefits of colonisation, modernisation and Christianisation of non-Westerners. The 'before' and 'after' photographs or postcards of colonial or missionary intervention in the colonies captured both the technological, medical and spiritual 'necessity' of colonisation and the successes and achievements thereof.

Views of unindustrialised societies and landscapes, although positioned as uncivilised and primitive, served the double purpose of evoking nostalgic longing for a pre-industrial past and celebration of the peaceful lives of 'savages', on the brink of disruption by Western civilisation⁴³. The publication of images of non-Western territories and peoples in the West

⁴² Albeit in much smaller numbers than the settlers, many indigenous people had portraits of themselves and their families taken at such professional studios and these provide rich examples of identities as constructed by indigenous people themselves. Portraits, such as those of the 'coloured' petit bourgeoisie of Cape Town which are reproduced in Schoeman's *The Face of the Country* (1996) often contrast radically to those produced by white anthropologists and commercial photographers, who focussed on notions of African traditionalism. The comparison of these images can unfortunately not be accommodated in this thesis.

⁴³ Aboriginal peoples were frequently positioned in their 'native environments' in colonial photographs and postcards, and Hight and Sampson argue that this served to further differentiate them from American and European viewers. They also note that "the visualisation of place was [...] important for the development of colonialist ideology. The seeds of empire grew in part out of colonialist efforts to control the earth's natural resources, and to do so the native inhabitants of a region rich in resources had to be dominated: both the geographic location and the people who lived there had to eventually be overcome..." (2002:4). Depicting native people as land-based or nomadic proved that they were not using the land to its full industrial potential, and in the case of nomadic peoples, that they have not claimed the land through settlement and the creation of borders. The lack of modern industry also furthered social evolutionist theory, and societies based on agricultural or hunting economies were regarded as less evolved than those of modern, industrialised societies. The physical environment of indigenous peoples could thus be used to strengthen the argument for

also, according to Hight and Sampson (2002:2), “helped Westerners negotiate the personally threatening experience of the unknown by selectively transforming uneasy or awkward, even hostile, cultural confrontations into a more palatable form⁴⁴”.

In terms of the marketing and social impact of photographic views of non-Western places during the nineteenth century, Timothy Mitchell (1998:469) argues that it was important to create a “distance between oneself and the world”, which could also “constitute it as something picturelike – as an object on exhibit”. The simultaneous wish to control and to distance the people and territories outside the West, speak of the colonisers’ ambiguous desire and fear. The camera, picture postcard and tourist industry all provide the means to gain both control and intimate knowledge, while keeping the Other at a safe distance. Photographs, as forms of representation, form part of an imperialist rhetoric that essentialise people and places (Hight and Sampson 2002:1), and the medium’s seeming realism and objectivity have made it one of the most powerful and enduring contributors to an image-archive of South Africans.

the need of ‘assistance’ in modernising through colonisation, and also acted as prop and backdrop for the establishment of indigenous peoples as different to urbanised Europeans and Americans.

⁴⁴ Hight and Sampson note that “the aesthetic concept of the picturesque had an important impact on the imaginative reconfiguration of colonial space for the benefit of the Western public” (2002:5). Postcards of colonised spaces and peoples, like travel guidebooks, were designed to entice investors, travellers, colonists and immigrants. These pictorial representations “reconfigured and ordered the unfamiliar and often raw terrain according to the pictorial conventions of the picturesque view. This restructuring enabled the Western observer and potential traveller to enter a space safely and to be charmed by its novelty and awe-inspiring grandeur” (Hight and Sampson 2002:5). Looking at colonial postcards of South Africans, the reliance on classical compositions and poses is striking, especially in the representation of nudes and warriors, the former especially harking back to the depiction of classical goddesses and later Orientalist Odalisques. Ironically then, the depiction of the ‘exotic’ and ‘foreign’ is done in a classicising visual vocabulary that is familiar, this helps the viewers in the reading of the images and accessing intended messages.

2.2.3. Photographic representation and 'difference'

While more and more white inhabitants of the larger South African towns were deciding to have themselves photographed during the 1860s, the indigenous peoples found themselves being subjected to the process without their own wishes being considered (Schoeman 1996:17).

Schoeman summarises the difference in photographic representation as one of agency: white inhabitants *decided* to be photographed and indigenous people were mostly *subjected* to the process. The purposes of the photographs taken were also different: those of the settler families and individuals were often for private use, or in the cases of politicians or visiting dignitaries, for publication purposes. Photographs of indigenous peoples, while in some rare instances commissioned for private functions, were taken for diverse reasons and there are important differences between the images produced by anthropologists, missionaries, commercial photographers or colonial administrators (Landau 2002b:157). The prevalent perception of indigenous people as intrinsically different to settlers did however directly influence the visual conventions of photographic representation. Landau (2002b:157) notes that Africans were often de-individualised and nameless in pictures, homogenised according to photography's "repressive function" rather than its "honorific function" (see also Bank 2008:134).

Since their democratisation from the industrial era onwards, portraits have acted as commodities and signs describing individuals and inscribing social identity (Tagg 1998:37). Painted portraits conferred status on both its sitter and owner, and the prestige and signifying conventions of painted portraits were conveyed to the earliest studio portraits taken from the 1840s onwards. As photography was also increasingly employed as 'scientific' representation of human types, whether criminal or 'ethnic', different visual conventions were developed to portray different classes, races and types. In *The Body and the Archive*, Sekula (1992:345) suggests that there exists a tension between two functions of portrait photography:

We are confronted, then, by a double system of representation capable of functioning both *honorifically* and *repressively*... On the one hand, the

photographic portrait extends, accelerates, popularises, and...provid[es] for the ceremonial presentation of the bourgeois *self* [...]. At the same time photographic portraiture began to perform a role no painted portrait could have performed in the same thorough and rigorous fashion. This role derived, not from any honorific portrait tradition, but from the imperatives of medical and anatomical illustrations. Thus photography came to establish and delimit the terrain of the other, to define both the *generalised* look – the typology and the *contingent instance* of deviance and social pathology (author's own emphasis).

Writing on the full-frontal pose or 'mug shot' employed in police records, John Tagg (1988:36) notes that this "rigid frontality signifies the bluntness and 'naturalness' of a culturally unsophisticated class", which contrasted with the "cultivated asymmetry" of the aristocratic posture. These conventions predated photography and, over the course of the nineteenth century, this "burden of frontality" was passed down the social hierarchy and employed in the photographing of criminals and subjects of scientific study, including colonised peoples (Tagg 1988:36).

Much like the difference between portraits of upper- and lower-class citizens, or free men and prisoners, anthropological portrait photographs of non-Europeans differed greatly with those taken of contemporary Europeans: the latter was taken to capture the characteristic features of an individual, while the former were represented as scientific specimens or representatives of racial and ethnic 'types'. The perceived differences between people or so-called races were thus transferred to techniques of photographic representation, and, according to Pinney, the "detective" or "identificatory" function of anthropological photography pursued "markers of difference ... with scientific rigour" (cited in Hight and Sampson 2002:11).

2.2.4. Anthropological photography and conventions of representation

By the late nineteenth century, physical anthropology was established as an academic discipline distinct from cultural anthropology, or ethnography. At its inception, the discipline was predicated on fervent social Darwinism which bolstered the colonial project with 'scientific' proof of the evolutionary inequality of the various races. Through photography's relationship with biological or physical anthropology, it is possible to consider the role it played in the development of racial theories and prejudice (Hight and Sampson 2002:3). In the examination of the ways in which photographic images constructed indigenous Southern Africans as inherently 'different,' it is essential to consider the significant contributions of anthropological images and theories.

Photography provided an instrument with which to create records of 'types' or 'specimens' of non-Europeans under colonial rule, and its seeming objectivity contributed to the notion of photographs as visual and scientific evidence of theories of race, dominated by a social evolutionist paradigm. Photography further served the important ethnographic function of recording those cultures and traditions which were threatened by the advance of Western modernisation and industrialisation. Christopher Pinney's (1997) concept of the "salvage paradigm", derived from salvage anthropology, which regarded recovery and preservation as central to the organising, imaging, classification, and display of non-Western peoples (cited in Hight and Sampson 2002:11). Jacob W. Gruber (1956) argues that the wish to salvage disappearing cultures was central to the shaping of anthropology. He writes: "[d]uring the nineteenth century people began to sense the urgency of collection for the sake of preserving data whose extinction was feared. In this awareness the tradition of salvage begins and from this derives its force" (1956: 380). The salvage paradigm thus rests on a social evolutionary conception of human development which presupposes the inevitable extinction or modernisation of societies perceived as less developed⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ According to Gruber, the idea of the destruction of some "human races" was a continuing theme in Western culture, and such "alterations were the necessary price of an indefinite progress was a particular product of nineteenth-century optimism" (Gruber 1959:383). Speaking before the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1839, James Cowles Prichard argued: "if Christian nations think it not their duty to interpose and save the numerous tribes of their own species from utter extermination, it is of the greatest importance, in a philosophical point of view, to obtain much more extensive information than we now possess of their physical and moral characters. A great number of curious problems in physiology, illustrative of the

According to Elizabeth Edwards (1992:3), anthropological still-photography from about 1860 to 1920 provides perhaps the primary example of the straightforward use of the medium to define and classify racial types, an exercise integral to the successful administration of colonised peoples (Hight & Sampson 2002:2). Following Foucault's genealogies of knowledge and power, John Tagg (1998:5) argues that the deployment of photography as evidence is bound up with late nineteenth century institutions and practices of observation and record-keeping, central to the restructuring of the local and national state in industrialised societies in the second half of the nineteenth century. These new "techniques of representation and regulation" became integral to the development and management of prisons, asylums and colonies (1998:5). Tagg stresses that the "regime" in which this notion of photography emerged was a "complex administrative and discursive restructuring", which officiated a social division between those with the power and privilege to produce and possess knowledge and meaning, and those who were scrutinised and tapped for meaning (1998:6).

Anthropological photographic images and, according to Harris (1998:21), colonial discourse itself, focused on the body of the colonised subject as the essential defining characteristic of the 'primitive' Other. Harris writes that the colonised bodies, often represented as inextricably bound to natural space, were depicted as the binary opposites of Western culture and civilization (1998:21). Through 'scientific' depictions, and their impact on popular representations, the black body's association with nature and pre-modernity was entrenched, which in turn reinforced social Darwinist theories of human evolutionary development.

In order to produce anthropological photographs which could be employed in the evaluative comparison and categorization of racial types, specific photographic conventions were employed to capture anthropometrically useful photographs. Standardised photographic methods were developed in ethnographic studies in St Petersburg and Paris from the mid-1860s, and in 1869 Thomas Huxley and John Lamprey respectively designed systems that would introduce some form of order into the mass of material gathered (Godby 2008: 130; Pinney 1992:76-77). One of the first anthropologists to photograph native Southern

history of the species, and the laws of their propagation, remain as yet imperfectly solved" (cited in Gruber 1956:384).

Africans, Gustav Fritsch⁴⁶, also applied himself to the standardisation of anthropometric photography with the aim of creating a visual and statistical database for the comparison of human 'types' (Broeckmann 2008: 49). Andreas Broeckmann (2008: 149) argues that the subjects of such anthropometric photographs were reduced to shapes, or ensembles of parts that had to be arranged and translated into measurements that could be employed in statistical calculations⁴⁷. Individuals were further selected and their images taken to act as representatives of specific types, to stand as icons for specific 'tribes' that could be identified according to their specific code of visual attributes.

The anthropological creation of clearly delineated racial types, each with characteristic features and culture, did however require the selective representation of members of 'tribes' who conform to the physiognomic characteristics outlined by European scientists (Broeckmann 2008:148). During the Zambezi expedition of 1858, David Livingstone asked his brother Charles "to 'secure characteristic specimens of the various tribes' using the camera 'for the purposes of ethnology'" (Landau 2002b:144). The discerning representation of indigenous peoples is also seen in Gustav Fritsch's atlas of South African 'racial' types, where Fritsch chose to omit images of 'Westernised' natives (Broeckmann 2008:148). Duggan Cronin chose to remedy the absences of characteristic examples by persuading his sitters to "search out their old dresses and equipment" for his photographs of 'traditional' indigenous culture (Bensusan 1966:104). Similarly, in the selective representation of indigenous South Africans by the early postcard industry, the images of individuals or communities which did not conform to the popular conception of 'natives' were mostly not appropriated for commodification. The postcard industry's general exclusion of native South Africans who had adopted some Western customs, whether dress, religion, technology or cultural aspects, echoes the anthropological concern for cultural purity, and the motivation behind these omissions were driven by an industry dependant on sights considered exotic and novel by its clientele.

⁴⁶According to Broeckmann (2008), Gustav Fritsch was one of the first to use photography in the anthropological documentation of different 'racial types', at a time when there was growing academic interest in human variety and the evolution of the human races. Fritsch regarded photography as complementary, and even superior, to older methods such as drawings, statistical tables and descriptive texts.

⁴⁷ To produce full-length profile, frontal and posterior views, Non-Europeans were posed partially or completely naked against a calibrated backdrop (Hight and Sampson 2002:3). Portraits preferably had to be taken full-face and frontal, or in profile and Gustav Fritsch provided detailed instructions about the taking of portrait photographs: straight projection, *en face* and profile views against a light background, size of lens, constant focus and distance, head and breast uncovered (Broeckmann 2008:149).

Roslyn Poignant (1992:66) writes that a genre of popular anthropology was often produced within the vernacular framework of settler societies of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and that these findings were often published in books and newspapers and widely disseminated as postcards. Through such popular and profitable publications, as with the World's Fair Exhibitions, the 'scientific' and the popular overlap and converge, creating fertile ground for the absorption of scientific speculation by the broader population. Like the spectacles produced at the empire exhibitions, such pseudo-scientific representations ensured "the longevity of a residual scientific racism long after this had been discredited in academic scientific circles" (Coombes 1994:63). Anthropological classifications of racial groups further provided a named array of indigenous 'types' to furnish popular representation of colonised territories. Anthropology's representation of, and access to, the bodies, lifestyles and cultures of colonised peoples, both through ethnographic and photographic descriptions, can be said to have opened up an entire world of new and 'different' subjects for the postcard and tourism industry to capitalise on.

The quasi-ethnographic captions of several late nineteenth and early twentieth century postcards of South Africans testify to this popular genre's dependence on the knowledge generated by the social sciences. Several postcards published in the early twentieth century by South African postcard companies echo the typifying rhetoric of Functionalist anthropology. Titles such as "Good Specimens of Strong Zulu"(Figure 1), published by Braune and Levy, and, "A Typical Zulu", by Sallo Epstein, suggest the industry's reliance on the certainty with which modern social sciences have fixed essential ethnic and racial identity. The informative and abrupt captions of many postcards, echo the ethnographer's 'scientific' brevity: examples include "Native Method of Catching Fish", "Native Ploughing", "Interior of a Native Hut", "Native Beadwork" and "Native Mode of Tanning Skins", all published by Sallo Epstein (Nicholson Online). According to Edwards (1992:11), captions are used to position the images and control the processes of interpretation. She further writes that images that appear documentary in quality, "often captioned with 'ethnographic information,' [may] suggest another level of the real, that of objective observed science, a verifiable, indeed, quantifiable authenticity" (1996:198). These postcards by Sallo Epstein purport to provide consumers with an edifying look at the culture, habits and technologies of the South African 'natives', yet the exclusive focus on activities and technologies that

differ from that of modern, Western ones suggests that the selection of scenes is motivated by comparison to the Western, modern 'norm'. Through careful selection-processes governed by the level of dissimilarity to 'modern' Western cultures and bodies, both anthropologists and postcard producers created visual records of indigenous peoples that were often more 'traditional' and 'authentic' than those encountered in real life, yet satisfied popular and scientific desires for 'traditional Africans'.

2.2.5. The development of the picture postcard

As mentioned at the start of this chapter, the development and refinement of the picture postcard went hand in hand with various technological advances during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In October 1869, Austria offered for the first time a *Correspondenz Carte*, or correspondence card, and the first mass produced pictures on postcards, mostly line drawings and block prints, appeared in the 1870s and 1880s. Developments in European lithographic and polychromatic printing techniques made the mass production of photographic images possible, and German *Gruss Aus*, or 'Greetings From' cards of European holiday resorts and towns became very popular (Woody 1998:15). German firms, such as Knackstedt and Näther and Stengel and Company, accepted small contracts from local clients, also called sponsors, who documented their communities and environments with new hand-cameras and had the photographs turned into postcards by the large firms (Woody 1998:15). The translation of distant places and peoples became increasingly possible as the technological development of photography and lithographic printing accelerated towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Postcard companies further trained salespersons to use field cameras so that they could take new pictures when and where they obtained new orders. Original photographs could then be reproduced and postcard-size negatives and prints submitted to the company in the metropolis along with orders for reproduction (Woody 1998:16). Amateur photographers were enabled to take their own photographic postcards using inexpensive cameras and several commercial photographers, such as George Washington Wilson and J. Wallace Bradley, also made use of the new outlet for their work (Woody 1998:16). The postcards "A Group of Girls – All Sisters" (Figure 2) , taken by Bradley, and "Zulu Intombies at Mealie

Pap”(Figure 3), by Washington, were both published as postcards about a decade after they were taken and published in catalogue form (Webb 1992:56-57; Geary 1998:157, 158). The technological advances of the printing industries thus furnished entrepreneurs with novel and profitable means of selling their photographs and spreading it to a larger audience. In this manner, Woody states, postcard producers “created a historical record that encompassed the world” (1998:15).

By the beginning of the twentieth century Germany dominated the international postcard market with hundreds of companies producing millions of postcards annually. Dresden based Stengel and Company established itself as the primary European printer of export view-cards and acquired extensive coverage of the British Empire, thus obtaining exciting and novel images for cards from the various colonies (Woody 1998:32,34). Stengel and Company exported their postcards to every region of the globe, often sending a postcard back to be sold at the location it was taken, thus creating a circular movement of images and capital (Woody 1998:31; Geary & Webb 1998:2). The postcard “South African Rickshaw Boys” (Figure 4) provides such an example: it was sponsored by A. Rittenberg in Durban and printed by Stengel and Company in Dresden around 1904 (Woody 1998:34-35).

It is thus clear that the expansion of European nation states, their dominance of trade routes and transport of raw materials to the metropolis of Empire assisted the postcard trade as well as the systematic photographic and financially viable documentation of the world’s places and peoples through the creation of the profitable medium of the postcard. The golden age of the picture postcard lasted from 1895 to 1900 and started to fade towards 1920 (Rogan 2005:1). The fervent production, sale and collection⁴⁸ of postcards followed the Berlin Conference with a decade and it coincides with the scramble for Africa between 1880 and 1910. The Berlin Conference of 1884-5 enabled the major European industrial nations to survey the continent and systematically exploit its raw materials and subjugate its peoples as sources of cheap labour (Geary 1998:147). Postcards are thus both

⁴⁸ Rogan (2005:1,3) writes that the craze for the postcard arose with several other such fads, such as the buying and collection of dolls, bicycles and stamps, and that these developed in response to a new desire for products of modern industry. The desire of the broader population, stimulated by a plethora of affordable commodities, could for the first time be satisfied as more and more urban families had access to disposable income. The inexpensive and ubiquitous postcard satisfied the leisure habits of upwardly mobile female, and later male, collectors (2005:5).

symptomatic and emblematic of an age of innovation and progress, of unrestricted access to the places and peoples of the world, of the power to capture, frame, sell and collect.

The popularity of the postcard has been ascribed to a variety of factors, most notably the rise of a new European consumer culture, a more affluent society and a new middle class. Its aesthetic character is of greatest importance as it provided a cheap pictorial item to collectors at a time when other coloured pictures were rare and expensive. It gave visual information about far-away places and peoples; about celebrities, local attractions and national symbols. As souvenirs, postcards maintained memories of places, people and events; as collectibles they signified the modernity, experience, social standing and power of consumption of their collector. The development of mass tourism within Europe in the late nineteenth century, was another consequence and pursuit of the growing middle-class and the postcard provided a suitable communication and signifying medium⁴⁹ to both travellers and those they left at home (Rogan 2005:3-5).

2.2.6. Postcards of Africans and South Africans

By 1910 the postcard craze had spread across the globe, yet the majority of postcards produced in and of Africa, New Zealand, Australia and Japan were produced for Western consumption (Geary & Webb 1998:1)⁵⁰. Such postcards would have been produced both for expatriate communities in the colonies and tourists visiting from Europe and North America. From the mid-1890s the mass produced picture postcard popularized the colonial endeavour in Africa by illustrating and documenting the peoples, landscapes, settlements and geographic features of the colonies (Webb 1998:147). It also provided and efficiently

⁴⁹ Scholars of postcards have found the conciseness of written messages on sent postcards quite startling, seeing that they were initially produced as medium of communication. Most postcards sent from travel destinations functioned as signifiers of life, with a few short words or simply a signature confirming the wellbeing and experiences of the traveller and authenticating the journey (Rogan 2005:14-15). Many postcards collected were simply postmarked at the destination and never sent, thus suggesting that their value as methods of communication are outstripped by their value as signifiers of social standing, sophistication and experience (2005:11).

⁵⁰ Geary and Webb (1998:1) draw this conclusion due to the fact that most postcards of non-Western territories and peoples are today found in collections, archives and museums in North America and Europe. Only small collections are found in national archives in Dakar, Cote D'Ivoire and Harare.

disseminated visual testimony to the modernising and civilising efforts and achievements of the colonisers.

The speed and efficiency with which non-Western societies were documented, processed and marketed to a Western audience was further made possible by the colonial endeavour. The in-roads made by explorers, settlers, missionaries, administrative and military bodies became the exit roads of not only raw materials and riches, but also of images of Africans, hitherto imagined or described in words and etchings. These images not only functioned as visual proof of the necessity to modernise and Christianize, but constituted new and lucrative business opportunities for entrepreneurs who capitalized on the European fascination with unknown people and places. Although numbering at far less than those produced of Europe, the postcards produced of colonial Africa between 1900 and 1960 number between 75,000 and 100,000 different issues (Geary 1998:148). From the late nineteenth century, the sale of images of African people relied on the visible difference and exoticism of those pictured; and on the buyer's fascination with, and the belief in, the authenticity of the Otherness of those pictured.

The images and captions of early postcards, argues Geary (1998:149), constructed and reinforced 'knowledge' about Africa for Western viewers and helped to perpetuate and encode images of Africa which appealed to Western imaginations. Postcards of South Africa juxtaposed the modern and industrialised spaces of the colony with the naked bodies and agrarian lifestyles of indigenous people, making them appear simultaneously serene and barbaric, uncorrupted and primitive, enchanting and dangerous.

The postcard was furthermore a useful, and profitable, medium with which to distribute images of the colonies which suited the ever-changing social and political climate both in Europe and in Africa: criticism of the mistreatment of natives were met at various periods with images of Africans smiling, enjoying the results of European modernisation or participating in 'traditional' cultural activities, undisturbed by the colonial endeavour (Geary 1998:147) (Figure 5). Postcard images of Christianised Africans in European dress convinced audiences at home that the colonial effort gave Africans the biggest gift of all – the one true religion and passage to the afterlife (Figures 6 and 7). Images of children, dressed, fed and

educated, similarly appeased and pacified criticism of European administration of the colonies.

The subject matter of postcards of the colonies focussed on landscape, geographical features, and the indigenous peoples, often depicting a stable repertoire of the 'types' associated with each territory: Geishas in Japan, tattooed Maoris in New Zealand and reclining beauties in French North Africa. A list of titles published by Sallo Epstein provides an overview of the South African range of 'types' pictured in postcards at the beginning of the twentieth century. Titles of postcards of indigenous people include the following: 'Ricksha Boys', 'Young Zulu Girls', 'Chinese Mining Boys', 'Zulus Eating', 'Zulu Warriors', 'Zulu Girls', 'Zulu Maidens', 'Young Zulu Women and Girls', 'A Native Witch Doctor', 'A Zulu Induna', 'A Zulu Chief at Home' and, 'A Zulu Chief and his Wives' (in Nicholson Online). The focus of Sallo Epstein was thus centred on Zulu culture, and the preference for depictions of Zulu women and especially warriors may be due to the high profile of Zulus in Europe following the much publicised Anglo Zulu wars, the troupes of Zulu performers travelling Europe in the late nineteenth century, such as the touring Boer War Exhibition that caused a great sensation at the 1904 World's Fair in St Louis (Lindfors 2001:66-71).

Despite the emphasis on the variety of different 'types' of peoples found in South Africa and the greater continent, Prochaska notes that photos of most African 'types' are often analogous to those taken in other colonised states (1991:47). According to Webb, postcards of indigenous South Africans, produced from photographs taken by white South Africans and foreigners, resemble the thematic content of photographs of Africans from other colonies closely (1998:148). This may be due to the application of European pictorial conventions to the depiction of all Africans, with cultural or regional differences simply indicated through the addition of props or costume (Prochaska 1991:47). Symptomatic of a "totalising urge" to create encyclopaedic coverage, the camera was used to create realistic and truthful representations of colonised peoples (1991:47). According to Prochaska, the totalising impulse fails at comprehensiveness due to the selective portrayal by Europeans and the employment of European conventions for the depiction of colonised peoples (1991:47). In the process, specificity is removed and all Africans are portrayed as homogeneously Other; traditional and non-European.

Numerous colonial postcards focus on white South Africans, yet unlike postcards of indigenous South Africans, the settlers themselves are not shown, but rather that which they have constructed, engineered and erected on the soil that they occupy. Such postcards, featuring buildings, dams, national monuments, mines and commercial farms, testify to the success of their modernising and civilising effort. Instead of depicting Europeans, and later the ruling white minority of Afrikaans and English South Africans, the results of their management, direction and initiative is suggested by modern factories and tidy vineyards. Such images showcased the successful modernisation of the colony, and after 1910, the Union of South Africa, and were further juxtaposed to the apparent lack of similar modernisation amongst black inhabitants.

Early postcards of indigenous South Africans thus echoed the specific representational conventions employed by commercial and anthropological photographers; unlike settler communities, the bodies and lifestyles of indigenous people were subjected to the lens as subjects of scientific study or curiosity. The perceived difference between natives and settlers and black and white were thus translated into representational strategies and functions. Accelerated by the formulation of Afrikaner Nationalism after South Africa gained independence from Britain in 1910, the dichotomy of modern and primitive increasingly dominated popular representations and touristic promotions of South Africa as leisure destination. In the next section, I will consider how discourses of tourism contributed to postcard representations of South Africans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

2.3. Travel narratives and the representation of indigenous Southern Africans

We often miss the fact that the British and other empires were not only empires of war, of economic exploitation, of settlement and of cultural diffusion. They were also increasingly empires of travel (MacKenzie 2005:19).

For MacKenzie (2005:19), the 'empires of travel' created playgrounds for the privileged and locations for the spread of Christianity. They facilitated the collection of data and they offered, perhaps above all, "evidence of progress, the defining bourgeois philosophy of the

age” (2005:19). Through tourism, and the writings and images it generated, the spread of European modernity, particularly the spread of Western technology, science, medicine and cultural expressions such as architecture and dress, was captured and publicised. Travel writing and journalism, guidebooks, maps⁵¹, photographs and postcards contributed to the “imperial archive”, and offered profitable and popular means of compressing and publicising information about empire (MacKenzie 2005:20). The incorporation of Southern Africans into a Western archive of knowledge and images by travellers and explorers predate the imperial age by centuries, and it is unfortunately impossible to review the enormous corpus of travellers’ writings and perceptions on Southern Africa here. I shall therefore only briefly touch on some aspects relating to those touristic representations of South Africa and native South Africans which have come to impact on postcard depictions.

The most famous traveller of Western classical literature is Odysseus and according to Elsner and Rubies (1999:9), he became the “ideal of a traveller whose journey brought inner as well as outer fulfilment, return to a spiritual plenitude lost in the travails of life, as well as success in the sense of worldly achievement”. Odysseus’s voyage, which is both a physical journey in space and a spiritual journey, one that enlightens and rewards, have influenced centuries of consequent travel writers and travelling explorers, missionaries and anthropologists who have exploited the African continent as background for their own self-discovery, adventure and achievement. According to Torgovnick (1990:23-24), the self-righteous Odysseus’ interaction with foreign peoples encountered on his travels also foreshadows the West’s perception and approach to the non-Westerners encountered in foreign places⁵².

⁵¹ Attention must also be paid to the importance of the mapping of empire, and MacKenzie (2005:20) describes it as vital part of the “embracing and exposing of the globe” played in the imperial project, which he argues, can be regarded as an immense and ambitious cartographic project. In the eighteenth century the East Indian Company began its surveys of India, and major cartographic projects were undertaken in South and North America, Australasia and in Africa, towards the end of the century. The eighteenth century oceanographic explorations were followed by official surveys of the coastlines and oceans of the world, and the British Admiralty commissioned major surveys of the coasts of Australia and of East Africa, the latter done by William Owen. Maps were needed by settler farmers, administrators, missionaries, merchants and soldiers in the colonies, and through careful analysis and documentation, colonised territories were made accessible through “reduc(ing) and compres(ing) it within the covers of a few books and atlases” (McKenzie 2005:20).

⁵² Torgovnick (1990:26) writes that; “two thousand years later, in *How I found Livingstone* (1874), Henry M. Stanley sees in primitive societies some of the same things that Odysseus saw”. She goes on to compare Stanley’s geographic and ethnographic interests, and his feelings of superiority to the native Southern Africans, to that of Homer’s Odysseus.

Dietrich's extensive critique of European travel illustrations reveals the strategies by which those natives encountered in Southern Africa were brought into a "European visual and conceptual frame of reference" and, "through [a] rational mode of representation, the 'savage' could be visually captured and classified, and incorporated into a view of history whose mission was to change and civilise"(1993:iii). Part of this strategy of incorporation was the redefinition of the Southern African landscape as aesthetically pleasing site and sight, its native inhabitants as part of that sight and conducive to its full enjoyment. As tourism became increasingly available to the middle class as a result of the Industrial Revolution, colonies were not only regarded as sources of labour and raw materials, but also as spaces of leisure, escape and a return to nature.

2.3.1. Romantic and scientific views of the Southern African landscape and people

The aesthetic redefinition of nature dating from the mid-eighteenth century is associated with the Romantic literary, artistic and musical movement and is seen as direct consequence of the impact of industrialisation and mass urbanisation in Western Europe and Britain. Raymond Williams describes the transformed scenes and landscapes as "places waiting at a distance for visual consumption by those visiting from towns and cities of 'dark satanic mills'" (cited in Urry 2005:20). The visual consumption central to the concept of landscape ties in with John Urry's notion of the 'tourist gaze', which he describes as emerging in 1840 - a year after the announcement of the daguerreotype by Louis Daguerre; the same year as Thomas Cook's first packaged tour; the opening of the first railway hotel; the first national railway timetables and the first ever steamship service (2005:21). The "endlessly devouring tourist gaze" involves for Urry the combining of the means of collective travel, the desire and economic ability to travel, the techniques of photographic reproduction and the relatively new notion of landscape (2005:21).

In *The 'Consuming' of Place*, Urry (2005: 20) emphasises that one should distinguish in this regard between 'land' and 'landscape'. 'Land', on the one hand, involves a conception of stretches of earth as physical resources, which can be worked and rendered productive and profitable (2005:20). On the other hand, 'landscape', according to Milton (1993) entails "an intangible resource whose definitive feature is appearance or look"; it is a notion that

emphasises leisure, relaxation and visual consumption (cited in Urry 2005:20). The “special visual sense” which developed from the 18th century is, according to Ousby (1998) based on modern paraphernalia such as the camera obscura, the claude glass, photography, the balcony, increasing knowledge of routes and the art of outdoor sketching (cited in Urry 2005:20). Previously regarded as inhospitable, barren or threatening wilderness⁵³ and often conceived in utilitarian terms, the ‘wildscapes’ of Europe was now regarded and appreciated as ‘landscape’⁵⁴ (Holden 2005:22).

Romanticism as movement counteracted Enlightenment utilitarian and scientific perceptions of nature as object for man to organise and make useful, yet it draws its spiritual values directly from the Enlightenment notion of nature as feminine, impulsive and irrational. A romantic perception of Africa - as unspoilt continent of magnificent kingdoms and natural splendour - was promoted in the fine arts, poetry and popular representations. According to Grove (1997) the Scottish Reverend John Croumbie Brown is described as “the single most influential voice” in creating a colonial discourse on landscape, translating his Romantic perspective of landscape and highly patriotic love of Scotland to Africa (cited in Wells 2002:56). Southern Africa was further generously featured in *The Penny Magazine*⁵⁵, especially through the poetry of Thomas Pringle, who wrote numerous articles about Southern Africa, comparing it to the Scottish landscape. The establishment of the African landscape as a lost Eden, is described by Anderson and Grove (1987) as follows:

Much of the emotional as distinct from the economic investment which Europe made in Africa has manifested itself in a wish to protect the natural environment as a special kind of ‘Eden’, for the purposes of the European psyche rather than as a complex and changing environment in which people actually had to

⁵³ Urry describes the change in perception of nature during the Romantic period as follows: “it is only in the last century that a traveller passing through the Alps would have the carriage blinds lowered to make sure they were not unduly offended by the sight” (2005:22).

⁵⁴ The English poet Wordsworth noted in 1844 that the idea of landscape was only a recent invention, this is reflected in the changes in the architecture of European houses from the nineteenth, which were increasingly built “with regard to their ‘prospects’ as though they were some kind of ‘camera’” (Abercrombie and Longhurst cited in Urry 2005:20). E.M. Forster’s *Room with a View* (1961:8), captures the value of views to travellers when Miss Bartlett exclaims: “A view? Oh, a view! How delightful a view is!”

⁵⁵ *The Penny Magazine* was published every Saturday from 1832 to 1845 by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, a Whiggish London organisation, and made out part of their reform program amongst the working class. It contained information of a wide range of subjects, from articles on British fauna and flora, poetry and problems faced by immigrants.

live...(thus) Africa has been portrayed as offering the opportunity to experience a wild and natural environment which was no longer available in the domesticated landscapes of Europe (cited in Wells 2002:56).

Based on Rousseau's perception of the state of nature as one of relative happiness and simplicity (Dietrich 1993:150), Africa is perceived as an empty and unspoilt slate upon which the European can re-connect with himself and nature, and thus authenticate himself through this process of self-discovery and re-union with a prelapsarian phase of humanity. This view, as stated by Anderson and Grove, hardly considered the indigenous population, yet at the same time, natives only gained shape, personality and meaning against the backdrop of the physical landscape (Wells 2002:57). White hunters and explorers too acquire meaning in relation to the African landscape, yet it is their mastery of the landscape, described in terms of hostile climates and threatening wildlife, upon which their masculinity and subjectivity depends. The landscape thus acts as 'authenticating device' for both natives and foreigners, yet the foreign man's authenticity as explorer and traveller requires the dispossession of the land(scape) from the natives in order to make it a stage for the playing out of his personal odyssey.

In his study of travellers' guide books, MacKenzie remarks that issues of the *Union-Castle Guides to South Africa*, published from 1883 to 1960, are marked by the relative absence of the indigenous populations (2005:32). Native people are briefly mentioned: their customs are described as "most interesting"; the communal system of agriculture is described in positive light and their unwillingness to work for Europeans is attributed to the favourable climate, plentiful game and fertile land (2005:32). In such guide books, Europe reigned supreme as "a hyper-real global entity" and non-Europeans scarcely intrude into this, they are not permitted a "coeval sharing" and "implicit throughout the handbooks is the suggestion that they would be used by the dominant and not the subordinate, peoples" (MacKenzie 2005:35).

Elsner and Rub  s (1999:51) note that the end of the Grand Tour coincided with a more ambitious phase in European expansion. The scientific ideal of precision that marked the modern period, as opposed to the aristocratic natural histories of the Enlightenment, is exemplified in the ambitious and systematic geography of men such as James Rennell, Ali

Bey and Richard Burton. A new emphasis was placed on quantitative precision, leading to the ideal of comprehensive mapping and scholarly travellers' observations were increasingly subjected to very strict requirements in order to produce objective reports (1999:51). From as early as 1840, when the first corpus of daguerreotypists were sent to document the Middle-East and Egypt, photography was employed in the creation of a comprehensive visual map of foreign territories and peoples.

According to Broeckmann (2008:144), the modern ethnographer or travelling data collector acted as "an exchangeable collection and observing apparatus: very much like a camera, he merely records for future development and analysis in the quiet darkroom of the study". Such 'scientific' travellers thus added another dimension to travel literature as discursive paradigm, conceiving of native Southern Africans as specimen or 'types' understood in calculable terms. From the late nineteenth century, which saw the development of early mass tourism industry, the picture postcard became an integral part of the travel experience (Rogan 2005:8-9). As cheap communication medium and souvenir, the postcard accompanied other tourist paraphernalia in the description of travel destinations and their inhabitants, absorbing older and well-known conventions of representation.

MacKenzie (2005:21) notes that the form, existence and repeated editions of traveller's handbooks reflect the growth in 'print capitalism' which takes central stage in Benedict Anderson's notion of the nation as imagined community. Along with guidebooks, photographs and travel narratives, postcards were also directed at a "white imperial imagined community" (2005:21). "Indeed", he argues, "the central myth of these guides is that here was an Anglophone supra-nationality which embraced the world through travel and the traveller's gazetteer" (MacKenzie 2005:21). Postcards of colonised territories and peoples presume a Western readership; and the framing of subject matter as exotic and different, often with explicating captions, assumes that consumers are not native. The depictions of native culture and bodies further reinforce the superiority of Western culture and lifestyles, and never challenge prevailing Western perceptions of colonised people as sensual, 'primitive', violent or uncultivated. MacKenzie has further found that the genre of the late nineteenth century guidebook remains intact until the 1950s and 60s, some publications remaining almost identical in their entries and format beyond the 1960s. "It is

hard to escape the implication”, he writes, “that the imperial worldview, at least to a certain extent, survived decolonisation” (2005:36)⁵⁶.

2.3.2. Twentieth century tourism and tourist representations

The twentieth century saw the rise in the number of people participating in tourism and the progressive extension of the peripheries of tourism, yet Prosser (1999) indicates that foreign travel to Africa only increased from the 1950s to 1970s (cited in Holden 2005:36). The technological development of the jet-engine in the 1950s was the true catalyst behind the expansion of the peripheries of European travellers and the entrepreneurial investment, most notably by Vladimir Reitz⁵⁷ in the development of air transport for the purpose of leisure travel, made air travel an affordable and attractive option.

South Africa’s own tourist history during the twentieth century has to be considered in relation to the dramatic socio-political changes: independence gained from Britain in 1910; the coming into power of the Nationalist Party in 1948 and consequent legal implementation of racial segregation or apartheid; the domestic unrest and boycotts by the international community; and in the early 1990s, the disassembly of apartheid and the first democratic elections. All of these impacted on the ways in which South African authorities conceived of themselves and thus marketed the country, and its ‘native’ inhabitants, to tourists.

Until the late 1950s most foreign tourists were white visitors from neighbouring Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Mozambique and only 17 percent was made up of overseas visitors (Grundlingh 2006:103). The low number of European visitors can largely be attributed to the long sea journey to South Africa in the decades before jet-travel. South Africa, as tourist destination with favourable climate, benefitted from the revolution in the international

⁵⁶ MacKenzie extends his critique to more recent guides, such as Lonely Planet and the Rough Guides, which also “continue to exhibit the cultural imperialism of the rich and advanced world”. They do omit details concerning business opportunities, place greater emphasis on pleasure seeking and start to cater for minority groups, such as gay or lesbian travellers (2005:36).

⁵⁷ A Russian emigrant to Britain, Reitz founded the Horizon Travel Company and was one of the first to put together air ‘travel packages’. The first of these was from London to Corsica in 1950 and included air travel, on a scheduled and chartered flight, and accommodation. The chartering of the aircraft and bulk buying of seats, hotel rooms and so forth produced an attractive and affordable package (Holden 2005:35).

tourism industry brought about by the introduction of wide bodied Jets (Boeing 747) and overseas visitors increased from 18 000 in 1961 to 60 000 in 1967 (2006:106). Although there was an increase in tourist arrivals in this period they were still quite small and Grundlingh attributes this to the government's direct and exclusive targeting of high-income tourists, in a direct attempt to avoid the inundation of the country's tourist attractions by masses with limited spending power⁵⁸ (2006:107).

Scholars of promotional material dating from the apartheid era have noted the relative absence of native populations from such material (MacKenzie 2005; Grundlingh 2006); and publicity material by the South African Tourist Corporation (Satour)⁵⁹, focused on wildlife, the sunshine and beaches and to a lesser extent, sports such as golf and rugby. As tourist destination, South Africa was marketed most extensively through tourist film⁶⁰. Whereas most films focused on wildlife, game parks and sporting matters, the 1959 film *South Africa: A Preview for the Visitor*, provides an example of the stereotypical representation of non-white South Africans, a strategy that was no doubt meant to appease visitors who may have questioned racial segregation. The film depicts the "native races" in their "rural habitat", unspoilt by modernisation and urbanisation (Grundlingh 2006:110). It also entrenches the 'empty land' myth, describing blacks as trekking from Central to South Africa, thus being immigrants to the interior of the country as much as the white colonists (2006:110).

The juxtaposition of the familiar 'modern' to the unfamiliar and romantic 'primitive' was embedded in the marketing of South Africa (Rassool & Witz 196:364). This perspective is summarised in the words of the Secretary of Tourism at the first annual congress of the tourist board in 1963:

Here is an exhilarating land lying under a warm beneficial sun. Cities, alive with prosperity and confidence, form a contrast to picturesque Bantu Villages where

⁵⁸ Such tourists were moreover associated with the loose moral codes that the puritanical Afrikaner government was attempting to quash in its own citizens, which radically contradicts the marketing of casinos and night clubs, conveniently situated in black homelands, to white South Africans. The Nationalist government's double standards regarding tourism and morality will be discussed shortly.

⁵⁹ The South African Tourist Corporation (Satour) was formed in 1947 as a separate entity from the South African Railways and Harbours, which had previously dealt with tourism (Grundlingh 2006:105).

⁶⁰ Film was regarded by the Tourist Corporation as "the most effective means of stimulating a desire to visit South Africa". In 1970 an entire 53 828 film screenings were held abroad. According to the Annual Report of the South African Tourist Corporation (1970), these reached a total of 4 228 534 people (Grundlingh 2005:110).

ancient tribal rites and traditions are still to be seen (cited in Grundlingh 2006:111).

In this quote the modernised, metropolitan domain of white South Africans is proudly contrasted to the rural and 'primitive' spaces inhabited by black South Africans. The international tourist could thus enjoy every modern comfort on African shores without missing out on 'traditional' culture, albeit under controlled and sanitised conditions. Postcards such as 'Zululand' (Figure 8), produced by Art Publishers, provide visual testimony to the continuations of "ancient tribal rites and traditions" in the "picturesque Bantu Villages". Photographed in one of the homelands created by the apartheid government, this depoliticised image effectively directs the tourist gaze away from the socio-political realities of black South Africans, and emphasises those aspects of 'African life' that confirm official statements, such as that expressed by the Secretary of Tourism in 1963.

The possibility of directing not only the tourist gaze, but also that of the international community, was drastically altered after 1976, with the extensive coverage of the Soweto uprisings in the international press. The revolt's impact can be seen in a drop of 27% in tourist numbers between 1975, with 402 988 arrivals, and 1977, with 293 999⁶¹.

Domestic tourism, aimed almost exclusively at white South Africans, is another sector targeted by the tourist industry and attractions such wildlife, sports, seaside resorts and nature formed a large part of the destinations marketed to white domestic tourists. The 'homelands' were also increasingly marketed as tourist destinations, especially after the independence of Transkei in 1976. According to Grundlingh (2006:118), "domestic tourism became inextricably bound up in the politics of grand apartheid", as casino hotel resorts in the homelands made available all those pleasures forbidden on South African territory: gambling, prostitution and pornographic films. South African authorities argued that the jurisdiction over these matters rested with the independent homeland authorities, yet while such activities were condemned as illegal in South Africa, these attractions were marketed

⁶¹ The government very soon launched a 'reassurance campaign', announced by Minister of Tourism Marais Steyn in 1978, with special seminars and the invitation of international travel agents and journalists to South Africa. Tourism did increase with about 12,9% and despite surges of apartheid resistance and socio-political instability, intermittent economic recession and international boycotts, tourist arrivals in South Africa during the bloodiest years of apartheid were still the highest of all the African states (Grundlingh 2006:115).

quite explicitly to South African citizens. Separate development policies thus directly contributed to the availability of prostitution and gambling to the white minority, yet in the 'non-space' of the homeland, where such illegitimate and shameful activities could take place, and where the Party's moral codes were conveniently suspended. Reconstructed as locations of consumption and play, termed "places to play" by Fainstein and Judd (1999), the hotel resorts of the 'homelands' offered services and lifestyles (however brief) and one can argue that these services and pleasures became metonymic of the very place where they are consumed, "standing for the whole" (cited in Urry 2005: 22).

The homeland as tourist destination seems to have made a seemingly unproblematic passage into the post-apartheid era, despite its dark origins⁶² as depositories for South Africa's black population. Cultural villages have been established as tourist destinations, some of them set up in former homelands, and they may be regarded as continuations of the tourism facilities and features offered in homelands during the apartheid years. In many of these villages, as in the hotel resorts established in homelands during the apartheid years, liminal spaces, suspended from contemporary time and geographic realities, are constructed through authenticating architectural features, dress and careful styling. Paradoxically the very 'reserves' designed to divide South Africans have consequently become home to the cultural villages which proudly showcase post-apartheid South African heritage and national unity. These villages, where many contemporary postcards are photographed, will be discussed in more detail in the third chapter of this thesis.

Scholars of tourism have noted an increase, from the later 1980s, in tourist demand for a diversity of destinations, new experiences and adventures, as tourists wish to assert their individuality by scorning the package holiday and group tour (Poon cited in Holden 2005:36). The development of low-cost air travel; the increase and diversification of destinations; the ability to tailor one's own holiday through travel agents or the internet have all increased the ability of independent travel, both for school-leavers and mature travellers. Destinations that offer adventure-sport, cultural attractions, natural phenomena, unique

⁶² Although the development of the homelands during the apartheid years did provide employment and income for a small number of local residents, the negative social and moral implications of these enterprises overshadow their slight positive impact. The establishment of casinos, night-clubs and brothels in impoverished homelands contributed to the flourishing of prostitution and gambling amongst returning migrant labourers.

and spiritual experiences became increasingly popular towards the end of the millennium. Poon (1993) attributes the 'maturing' of the tourist market to the rise of a new generation of tourists who are more confident and familiar with travel, yet social and economic changes in the home societies of tourists should not be ignored (cited in Holden 2005:37). Holden (2005:37) notes:

Just as the popularisation of wildscape as part of the Grand Tour was attributable to Romanticism and urbanisation, similarly it is difficult to disassociate the emergence of ecotourism and cultural tourism, which emphasise the 'natural' and 'authentic', as being independent of a perceived disassociation from nature and pre-industrial culture by post-industrialists.

The late twentieth century popularity of destinations that offer the traveller a (re-)unification with nature or the self, a spiritual experience or radical difference from the (presumably) rushed, urban lifestyle, has had profound impact on what the tourist sector has to offer. The search for spiritual rejuvenation and longing to gaze upon land-based or 'traditional' peoples may also derive from the modern dilemma expressed by Buzard in *The Beaten Track*, where he notes that Wordsworth's *The Brother* "signifies the beginning of modernity... a time when one stops belonging to a culture and can only tour it" (cited in Prichard & Jaworski 2005:26).

According to Rassool and Witz (1996:365), the South African tourist industry aims to harness this market by "reinforcing preconceived stereotypes of tribalism, primitivism, beauty, wildlife and nature". Postcolonial tourist ventures thus draw on familiar fantasies of indigenous 'traditionalism' and 'authenticity' in order to provide tourists with the opportunity of corroborating fixed ideas about Africans, while acting out fantasies rooted in colonial adventure (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:291; Rassool & Witz 1996:358). Elsner and Rubies' (1999:13) notion of the 'pilgrimage model', rooted in late Antiquity, can thus be applied to contemporary travel where journeys, especially to so-called Third World countries, are undertaken for spiritual fulfilment, in search of adventure, or as rite of passage⁶³. The 'authentic' lives of indigenous, non-Western peoples play an essential part

⁶³ I do not suggest here that this model applies to all tourists who travel to, and in, South Africa, as many people travel for reasons such as business, shopping, health, family visits and so forth. In his discussion of

in the total experience of privileged visitors. 'Traditional' South Africans serve to authenticate both the country, as unique and 'African', and the experiences of paying tourists.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to give a brief account of the factors contributing to the emergence and development of the picture postcard, and its portrayal of indigenous South Africans, in the late nineteenth century. Firmly rooted in modernity and modernist discourse, picture postcards of indigenous Southern Africans originated from a period of unprecedented technological advances that coincided with the aggressive territorial expansion of West European nations. I investigated the origins of Western perceptions of Africans in Greco-Roman thought and medieval myth which continued to manifest in late nineteenth and early twentieth century postcard depictions. I have discussed the change in European perceptions of Africans which occurred after the Middle Ages, the contributions of travel writing and illustration, and the modern disciplines of anthropology and ethnography to popular representations of indigenous peoples.

Paul Landau's notion of an image-archive was used to describe the cumulative image(s) of Africa and of indigenous Southern Africans that formed over the centuries. Continuously pillaged and replenished, these cumulative images form the basis of contemporary postcard representations. Since the late nineteenth century, however, representations of colonised peoples seem to have become static. Landau (2002a:4) notes that, although popular representation of Africans increased during the twentieth century, the images became increasingly simplistic - this despite increased academic scholarship on Africa, the independence gained by African states and their increased access to and participation in international affairs. This is especially true of portrayals of native Southern Africans, who continued to be subjected to racial discrimination after the termination of British colonial administration.

"fake pilgrims" and "genuine tourists", David Brown (1996:38-9) stresses that there can be no single definition of the 'tourist' and that scholars should allow for a wide range of touristic experiences.

Postcards and cultural villages seldom represent lifestyles and individuals other than supposedly 'traditional' ones which reflect cultural identity in an imagined pre-colonial state. This raises interesting questions: are South Africans unable to discard these attributed identities, unable to alter them in a global tourist marketplace where cultural difference is translated into currency? Should one look to tourists themselves for the endurance of these hackneyed tropes? Or may it be due to their demand and expectation of the South Africa of adventure fiction, or perhaps the arrest in change is caused by a global tourist industry which assumes that tourists prefer romanticised and simplified versions of 'indigenous' cultures? In the following chapter I shall attempt to answer these questions by considering the ways in which such representations are authenticated, drawing on the legacy of the image-archive of Africa, and of indigenous Southern Africans, to investigate the commodification of 'authentic' and 'traditional' South African identities.

3. CHAPTER TWO: MARKETING 'AUTHENTIC' DIFFERENCE AND SELLING THE RAINBOW NATION.

Introduction

According to Deborah Root (1996:78), "authenticity is the currency at play in the marketplace of cultural difference". In a tourist industry where difference is translated into currency, authenticity is a market driven term which is necessitated by the lucrative international commodification of cultural identity. In post-apartheid South Africa, tourism, heritage and culture are brought together as nation-building project and economic empowerment. Barbara Kirchenblatt-Gimblett (1998:151) argues that the relationship between heritage and tourism is 'collaborative', with "heritage converting locations into destinations and tourism making them economically viable as exhibits of themselves". Tourism and the representation of South Africa's diverse cultural heritages have further provided unique opportunities for the revision and amendment of South African history, which had been exclusively constructed by the white minority for more than three centuries.

Heather Hughes (2003:2) writes that "tourism has become deeply embedded in this effort: it can provide jobs and therefore hope for the future, based on one resource that poor communities are thought to possess in abundance: their past and present". Yet the profitable incorporation of this 'resource' into the marketplace requires its' selective appropriation, re-inscription and marketing as saleable goods or experiences. In this chapter I investigate the various factors that influence the selective appropriation and commodification of certain South African cultural identities. Which heritages are considered suitable for marketing as 'indigenous', and what factors contribute to their suitability? Who determines the 'authenticity' of cultural practices, what are the benchmarks and where do these criteria come from?

Wang (1999) uses the term 'constructive authenticity' to describe the "projection of tourists' own beliefs, expectations, preferences, stereotyped images and consciousness onto toured Others" (cited in Hinch & Higham 2009:127). Created and sustained through the global circulation of visual and news media, the visitors' specific understanding of the

Other as different and 'authentic' often precedes the actual encounter with that Other – the encounter can be said to assume the function of the verification of preconceived beliefs. As explained by Edward Said:

Texts can create not only knowledge, but also the very reality they appear to describe. In time such knowledge and reality produce a tradition, or what Michel Foucault calls a discourse whose material presence or weight, not the originality of a given author, is really responsible for the texts produced out of it (1978:94).

Postcards, cultural villages and tourist paraphernalia function in both the creation and confirmation of specific notions of and criteria for 'authenticity'. As established in the first chapter, Western perceptions of indigenous South Africans were largely made up of diverse and even contradictory vignettes from Biblical and Medieval myth, travel writing, theatre productions and nineteenth century anthropology. Although ambiguous and by no means coherent in their depiction of indigenous peoples, colonial and apartheid portrayals emphasised the elemental difference between Westerners and Africans, often openly equating this difference with exoticism and inferiority. In this chapter, I will investigate the post-apartheid absorption and deployment of these images in the marketing of cultural heritage by various agents within the tourist sector.

In this chapter I refer to various cultural villages, either because specific postcards images were taken at them, or because of their specific methods of framing and presenting 'authentic' culture. Scholars such as Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001), Hayward (2007) and Schutte (2007) have noted the reliance of cultural villages on tribalism, primitivism and simplistic ethnic stereotypes. Their critiques provide a starting point for my own examination of the ways in which the 'authenticity' of cultural identity and heritage is invoked in cultural villages and contemporary postcards. In my discussion of both postcard images and the villages where images are produced, I examine the reliance on 'ethnic' particularism in the light of the colonial and apartheid ethnographic classification of South Africans. I further pay particular attention to the roles of authoritative figures, such as anthropologists and managers, who decide which practices and objects qualify for preservation and presentation.

3.1. Cultural villages

Several South African postcard companies have photographs for their products taken at cultural villages⁶⁴ as they offer both easily accessible and already stylised subjects and locations. Witz, Rassool and Minkley's (2001:279) suggestion that such villages offer tourists "portable, snapshot histories", has thus quite literally been exploited by postcard photographers in search of 'authentic' subject matter. South Africa is home to more than forty such villages, described as "a new genre of cultural museum" where the material culture, dance, music and living arrangements of a specific cultural group are made accessible to paying visitors (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:278). Van Veuren (2001) defines cultural villages as "complexes that are purposely built to simulate aspects of the way of life of a cultural grouping as they were at a specific period (or over several periods) of time (cited in Hayward 2007:22). "Cultural workers", mostly black South Africans from the relevant 'ethnic' and linguistic groups, are recruited to work and live in these villages, where they have to perform and demonstrate aspects of a purportedly 'traditional' way of life (Hayward 2007: 22).

According to Rassool and Witz (1996: 358), reconstructed scenes of 'traditional' life sold to tourists are the latest form of a process whereby 'indigenous' Africans have been created and recreated over time, linking them directly to human displays at world and empire exhibitions from the late nineteenth century. They write that, "these instances of displays of invented cultures and people as tribes are part of a genealogy of human showcases set up to compare the 'natural' world with a conception of modernity" (1996: 358).

⁶⁴ In 1973, an idea for an enormous African theme park was proposed to the Minister of Tourism by Credo Mutwa a self-styled indigenous knowledge expert. Upon his personal introduction to the Minister, Mutwa apparently confessed his belief in separate development and proceeded to convey his elaborate plans for "a huge building 'anywhere in the country', to consist of 'a modern hall for plays', where tourists could enjoy live African culture, and an 'ultra modern museum hall, a shrine of 1000 gods, a place of dancing and African wrestling, and sacred cornfields". According to Mutwa, this complex would be a "Place of Light where I would revive ancient Bantu sports, plays and arts on a scale never tried before" (Rochester cited in Grundlingh 2005:119). Mutwa's ambitious plans were not accepted by the Ministry, yet Grundlingh notes a close resemblance between Mutwa's theme park and Sun City's 'Lost City' complex (2005:119). From 1974 Mutwa did in fact start the construction of an African Cultural Village in Soweto, called the Credo Mutwa Cultural Village, which features an outdoor museum of African art, culture and folklore, with sculptures of human and animal figures and dwellings drawn from a variety of African building styles (see www.mojaheritage.co.za).

Contemporary cultural villages do share several features with the human displays at world and empire exhibitions, where reconstructed African and Asian villages were positioned at the lower end of the evolutionary scale, their displays located next to those of living and stuffed animals (Rassool & Witz 196:359). The West, on the other hand, was represented by the latest technological inventions and grand pavilions, thus maintaining a simplistic juxtaposition of nature/culture, primitive/modern. Cultural villages today are mostly situated in rural areas (yet with easy access to major highways and not too far from cities), and the tourist industry provides various routes which take international and domestic tourists from tribe to tribe (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:291). The framing of 'traditional' culture as spatially and temporally distant from modern, urban culture, further echoes the dichotomies maintained at empire exhibitions.

Most cultural villages represent a specific 'ethnic' group, and a few showcase several 'ethnic' groups or 'tribes' in one location. Each 'ethnic' group is reproduced through signifiers (often explicated by tour guides or informative texts so as to aid visitors in the differentiation between 'tribes') such as material culture, methods of production, dress, cuisine and often spectacular displays of music and dance. These markers of 'ethnic' identity and tradition are rooted in an archive of images accumulated by the West, and are based colonial and apartheid ethnographic designations (Enwezor 1997:28). The reproduction of these familiar signs – beating drums, animal skins, bare breasts, glinting spears, bounded tribes - ensure the recognition of 'traditional Africa' by those coming to see it. Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001:280) write:

It is the correspondence between nineteenth-century images of pulsating tribes and the performance of "ethnographic spectacle" that produces notions of authenticity and enables tourists to enthuse that the tribal village is the closest they can get to 'the real Africa'.

3.2. 'Authentic' Tradition and the construction of 'indigenous' identities

'Authenticity' acts as both criterion and ideal, measured as it is against the supposedly 'inauthentic', which with regards to Africa, is that which is 'no longer traditional' and visibly altered by modern, Western culture. In her writing on the commodification of the cultural heritage of previously colonised peoples by the West, Root (1996:85) argues that the explicit reference to a traditional system of meaning is the reason that cultural difference sells.

In a Westernised and postmodern world, 'traditional' lifestyles - mostly understood as meaning unindustrialised, rural and non-Western - are often perceived as carefree, pure and simplistic, and are actively marketed as being closer to man's 'natural state' and thus more 'real' and more 'authentic' (MacCannell 1976:3). This perception of a non-Western societies as pure, natural and carefree date from Europe's earliest contact with the New World and voyages of exploration (Dietrich 1993:85). Romantic perceptions of the Native Americans were tainted by classical and biblical accounts, and American Indians were heralded until the eighteenth century as 'Good Savages', untainted by European decadence⁶⁵ (Dietrich 1993:85).

Such perspectives resemble the Romantic vision of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who argued in *A Discourse upon the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality Among Mankind* (1755), that man is free, independent, happy, innocent and healthy in his natural state. The nostalgia for a purer, less materialistic and uncorrupted past is frequently utilised by entrepreneurs in their presentation of indigenous cultural tradition as generous, down to earth and unpretentious. Walter's Zulu Cultural Village promises to offer 'first world' inhabitants an experience of 'real' life unspoilt by materialism. The website entry reads: "This laid back tour is a great leveller for anyone living in the first world. You meet fantastic people who have almost none of the material things that you possess but can show you things about life which you have probably forgotten" (*Walter's Zulu Cultural Village*: Online). The 'good life'

⁶⁵ Some early European authors and visitors to Southern Africa similarly described the natural goodness of native inhabitants. In 1695, Johannes de Grevenbroek wrote of the Khoikhoi: "I found this people with one accord in their general daily life living in harmony with nature's law, hospitable to every race of men, open, dependable, lovers of truth and justice... From us they have learned blasphemy, perjury, strife, quarrelling, drunkenness, trickery, brigandage, theft, ingratitude, unbridled lust for what is not one's own, misdeeds unknown to them before..." (Schapera cited in Dietrich 1992: 149).

is clearly linked to a past that the so-called 'first world' has long ago surpassed, but continues to long for.

Following Max Weber's notion of the *Entzauberung*, or 'disenchantment' of the world' (1971), caused by the rationalisation and intellectualisation of the world, George Ritzer (1999) proposes that constructions that offer 'authentic' and exotic experiences constitute "places of re-enchantment in a rationalised and disenchanted modernity" (cited in Schutte 2003:484). Such spaces, and images, offer the visitor the brief chance to imagine a reunion with both nature and simple pre-industrial life. Visitors can project their own longing and fantasies of a simple existence without the material pressures and social mores of contemporary life onto the lifestyles and bodies of those performing the 'past' (the 'traditional', rural and 'tribal'), in the present. Several cultural villages invite visitors to physically participate in activities such as spear-throwing, 'traditional' dances and ceremonies, and visitors thus are immersed in the experience with all their senses as they can taste, listen, move, touch and see⁶⁶. The scripted and guided participation serve to realise fantasies and authenticate the visitor's experience, which are in turn memorialised through the photographing of actual events or purchasing a postcard depicting the location, activities and people that facilitated the experience.

Romantic portrayals of 'traditional' culture do however position it as the antithesis of modernity, and thus as archaic, unchanging and 'primitive'⁶⁷. Schutte (2003:485) writes that "entrepreneurs anticipate the pursuit of the 'primitive' by tourists" and therefore emphasise those aspects, such as bare breasts, mud huts, spears, drums and barefoot dancing, which evoke the primitive, in representations of indigenous people". The stark

⁶⁶Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's study *Maasai on the Lawn: Tourist Realism in East Africa* (1994), provides a detailed account of the construction of a multi-sensory experiences for tourists at a Kenyan ranch where young Maasai 'warriors' daily perform dances for tourist audiences. The events and environment are carefully scripted and tightly controlled to give visitors an intimate and stimulating experience of 'authentic' Maasai culture, while at the same time maintaining a safe distance between tourists and performers.

⁶⁷On "South Africa's official tourism website", www.Southafrica.net, this belief in the simple, unchanging traditional life which is lived in natural abundance, is perpetuated in the description of Zulu spiritualism: "The African ancestors, or Zulu 'amadlozi', are African ancestral spirits, and you'll find them revered in the lush province of KwaZulu-Natal, the stronghold of the Zulu nation. Here, they guide and direct their descendants in a rustic life that hasn't changed much over the centuries" (*Heaven Sent: African Ancestors and Amadlozi* 2000:Online).

juxtaposition of such selected representations of 'traditional' life, with the lives and worlds of tourists and viewers, fortifies the difference and distance between modern and traditional.

The paucity of South Africa's Indian, white and so-called 'coloured' individuals and lifestyles in postcards, as well as the few depictions of the lives of contemporary urban black citizens⁶⁸, testify to the continued popularity of that which is noticeably different to modern, Western society. The selection of 'saleable difference', is seen in three multiple view postcards, all simply titled "South Africa" (Figures 9, 10 & 11). These contain images of all that is considered typically South African: white rhinos, elephants, the Blyde Canyon, a Khoisan hunter, African penguins, Xhosa People, the Cango Caves, a Ndebele woman, African penguins and Table Mountain. Firstly, these postcards depict only people whose recognisably 'traditional' dress signify their status as legitimately indigenous, omitting those South Africans whose 'modern' appearances resemble that of the supposedly Western consumer too closely. Secondly, the cards⁶⁹ arbitrarily intersperse images of 'indigenous' people with that of fauna, flora and landmarks, creating a smorgasbord of all that is 'uniquely indigenous'. Like famous landmarks, flowers and predators, the groups these pictured individuals represent are presented as naturally bound to the very soil of South Africa. 'Indigenous' people become items on the list of 'must-see' sights and it is their perceived difference to that which the rest of the world, and presumably 'modern' South Africa, has to offer that makes them appropriate for representation and commodification.

Crosby writes that, due to the fascination with Otherness and the ability to employ its image and culture for entertainment and economic gain, "difference... has itself become a saleable commodity" (cited in Root 1996:70). In many contemporary postcards of 'indigenous' South Africans, as in those produced during the decades of colonialism and apartheid,

⁶⁸ South Africa's black middle class has grown over 30% in just over a year, according to the study *Black Diamond 2007: On the Move*, spearheaded by University of Cape Town's Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing and TNS Surveys. This study found that the number of black middle-class families living in the suburbs of the country's metropolitan areas grew from 23% in 2005, to 46% in 2007, thus constituting a substantial part of the country's urban middle-class (*Black Diamond Report 2007:Online*). The majority of South Africans chosen for representation on postcards thus come from a minority of rural, black inhabitants.

⁶⁹ The descriptions on the back of the postcards follow the arbitrary and blithe assembly of subjects seen on the front of the cards. The description on the back of Figure Ten briskly rambles off all the must-see attractions: "South African is very rich in culture and scenic beauty. South Africa is very well known for its diversity in animals like the king of the beasts, the Lion, Cape Point, Table Mountain, African Penguin, Xhosa People, Cango Caves & White Rhino are all featured on this postcard".

cultural difference is portrayed as both 'exotic' and 'primitive'. In *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government*, Nicholas Thomas (1994:173) distinguishes between the 'primitive' and the 'exotic', arguing that "exoticism has more to do with difference and strangeness than an antithetical relation to modernity". The 'primitive' is thoroughly steeped in evolutionary time and regarded as different "because of an originary, socially simple and natural character" (1994:173). This evolutionary paradigm, which presumes the progress of all of mankind according to the Western model, has both a temporal and spatial dimension as it conflates modernity with the geographic territory of Western Europe and North America. Picture postcards and cultural villages rely on the staging of 'authentic' and 'traditional' culture as exotic and 'primitive' by representing it as both strange and distant from the West in time and space.

With its calculated absence of mechanised technology, urban infrastructure and capitalist economy, the postcard "Tribal Life South Africa" (Figure 12), provides an example of such spatial and temporal distancing by positioning South Africans as non-Western and pre-modern. The postcard carefully frames those aspects and activities which conform to expectations of 'traditional' and 'tribal' South Africa as uninterrupted continuation of centuries-old lifestyles. The postcard publisher, The Photo Workshop, chose not to acknowledge that these images were all taken at a cultural village in the Eastern Cape, Khaya Lendaba, next to the luxurious Shamwari Game Lodge (D. De la Croix, personal correspondence, 9 September 2009). The decontextualisation of the images and open-ended caption allow for the projection of any number of perspectives onto these images and thus sustain, rather than challenge, popularly held stereotypes. The meeting of 'primitive' and hyper-modern in the combining of pre-modern technology and high resolution, digitally produced colour postcard, creates a temporal disjunction which informs the viewer that these are in fact contemporary people. The costumes, props and nudity used to signify African tribalism in the images further heighten the exoticism of the people depicted. Modern, Western viewers and tourists can thus visit and scrutinise these 'tribes' as 'contemporary ancestors', in a place and time that is geographically and temporally distant.

3.3. Ethnicity

Cultural villages reproduce specific ethnic identities, and like the multi-view postcards discussed above, the cultural village of DumaZulu in Hluhluwe, Kwazulu-Natal, offers visitors a choice of diverse cultural identities in one location. DumaZulu incorporates representations of various 'tribes of Africa', and its 'residents' feature on numerous postcards currently sold throughout the country. The description of DumaZulu Lodge reads:

Visitors are able to enjoy an authentic African cultural experience when they stay in the traditional, ethnic accommodation at DumaZulu Lodge. The lodge consists of twenty three units sleeping 2 - 4 persons each. The exterior of each "hut" resembles the different tribal peoples of Southern Africa, including Zulu, Swazi, North Sotho, Xhosa, Venda, Tsonga, and Ndebele, and the interior is tastefully decorated in ethnic fabrics and tribal memorabilia (*Far and Wild Safaris: Zululand Reservations* 2009:Online).

The very concept of DumaZulu is founded on the perceived inherent differences between the various 'ethnic' groups or 'tribes'; differences which are easily summarised and represented through varying styles of interior decoration. According to Hayward (2003:24), this kind of signification of individual 'tribes', through "stereotypical attributes", perpetuate "essentialist colonialist constructions of black Africans belonging to bounded and discrete tribal identities". DumaZulu uniquely combines the multiplicity of the traditional as kaleidoscope of ethnic 'types' with essential Western comforts (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:280). DumaZulu's 'ethnic' huts further include "private en-suite bathrooms with showers, air-conditioning, telephone and tea/coffee making facilities" (*Far and Wild Safaris: Zululand Reservations* 2009: Online). The need was apparently seen here to emphasise the modern conveniences offered by the lodge, despite the "ethnic fabrics and tribal memorabilia", which add atmosphere and authenticity to the setting, but fails to guarantee the comfort that paying visitors expect. Despite the webpage's repetitive emphasis on everything that denotes the authentically 'traditional', such as 'sangoma' bone-throwing, shield and spear-making and 'spectacular Zulu dances', the 'tribal' must be sanitised and domesticated to ensure that it is not too wild, too basic or too 'primitive' to appeal to Western consumers. This simultaneous emphasis on 'authentic' African traditions and

sophisticated modern infrastructure, has been a strategy of South African tourism imagery since the beginning of the twentieth century (Grundlingh 2006:112). The need to accentuate South Africa's infrastructural sophistication and modern amenities reveals that Western standards continue to dominate South African hospitality industries, even where "authentic African cultural experiences" and "traditional, ethnic accommodation" are promised.

DumaZulu's marking of ethnic groups through simplified and commoditised visual markers (Hayward 2003:24), is seen on the face of the card "Tribal Life – South Africa" (Figure 13). The postcard, which includes photographic images taken at DumaZulu, literally frames four 'ethnic groups' as visually distinctive units. In the individual images, each 'tribe' is presented by distinctive cultural signifiers: bright geometric patterns and beadwork stands for Ndebele culture while Zulu identity is encapsulated in the image of the leopard-skin clad chief. The caption further cements the notion of separate and contrasting cultural heritages which are signified through their 'traditional' dress, conduct and material culture. It describes the nameless figures as "pumpkin-carrying Pondo's, Zulu chief and small boy, blanketed Ndebele and pipe-smoking Xhosa", thus turning individuals into nameless icons for their 'tribes'. Like the individual 'ethnic' groups reproduced at DumaZulu, the postcard reduces the cultures of the people pictured to "a few simplified and easily commoditised visual markers" (Hayward 2007:24).

The visible adherence to 'tradition' thus becomes the most important marker of authenticity, and thus cultural legitimacy. With reference to the marketing of Native American art, Martin Cohodas (1999:146-6) writes that authenticity should be seen as "discursive boundary-marking construction specifically associated with late Victorian anthropological imaginings of 'primitive' societies". Mainly determined by perceptions of pre-colonial cultural formations, reconstructions of 'the traditional' are often predicated upon nineteenth- and early twentieth century ethnographic writing and photography. Despite these disciplines' rootedness in social evolutionary ideologies which situated non-Westerners in an allochronic framework outside of (recorded) history and the present, they have come to be entrenched in popular representations of indigenous South Africans as timelessly traditional, thus different and exotic through the eyes of consumers. In the next

section, I will elaborate on the contribution of colonial and apartheid anthropology to contemporary understandings of 'authentic' tradition.

3.4. Anthropology and notions of 'authenticity'

The focus of many contemporary postcards echoes that of early ethnography and anthropology: material culture, religious rites, dress, dance, technology, architecture and anatomy. In their imagery and accompanying texts, contemporary postcards and tourist villages are predicated on categorisations which perpetuate the colonialist and apartheid ethnic labelling and grouping of South Africans into "administrative tribal units", validated through the identification of cultural symbols and ancient customs (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:280; Rawlinson 2003:5). In the next section, I would like to briefly discuss relationship between the anthropological classification of indigenous people and contemporary signifiers of 'authenticity' and 'the traditional'.

Since the rise of the social sciences in late nineteenth century, indigenous Southern African people have been classified according to the anthropological spatial and temporal units of the 'tribe' and 'ethnographic present' (Littlefield Kasfir 1984:166). Categorisation, ordering, rigid boundaries and parameters are, according to Rawlinson (2003:5), required for the efficient administration of huge areas of colonised territory by external coercive forces. In what Sydney Littlefield Kasfir(1984:173) has called a 'tautological argument', 'tribes' were identified in terms of language and material culture, the linguistic boundaries often drawn by missionaries according to what they regarded as a specific language (Makoni cited in Hayward 2003:25). In a system of 'indirect rule', fragmented and small communities were amalgamated or assigned to other, larger groups and a single 'chief' chosen to represent them all (Rawlinson 2003:5).

The synchronic, single-culture studies and a-historical models of Functionalist and Structuralist anthropologists have further fixed living and constantly changing cultures in an idealised time and space prior to significant European contact (Littlefield Kasfir 1984:166). "Locked in an antihistoricist, decontextualised framework", writes Joseph Reilly (2005:217), past and even some present ethnographies "treat Africans as static subjects magically

avoiding history". Supposedly undisturbed by either other African polities or foreign influences, such studies have resulted in a 'scientifically' legitimated perception that 'indigenous' peoples all belong to isolated cultural monads, each with identifiable linguistic and stylistic characteristics which have not changed since contact with the West. Littlefield Kasfir coined the phrase 'one style one tribe', to describe the notion that each 'tribe' possessed a style of (visual) cultural expression which acts as a trait by which it can be identified (1984:168). She writes that; "style was assumed to be closely linked to ethnic identity in some primordial – if unprovable - sense" (1984:168-9). Although writing about material culture, her phrase and critique is equally applicable to the tourism industry's reliance on the identification of certain South African groups by means of stereotypical and easily recognisable visual traits. This principle is seen most explicitly in DumaZulu's furnishing of tourist accommodation according to the styles of individual 'ethnic' groups. This further domestication, whereby 'the exotic' and 'tribal' are profitably rendered comfortable, non-threatening and consumable, is founded directly on the colonialist and apartheid fixing and freezing of constantly shifting identities.

Colonial era anthropological studies of native Southern Africans were carried on and cemented by the anthropologists of the apartheid state, who placed strong emphasis on natural, historic tribalism and traditionalism in order to facilitate its 'divide and rule' strategy. The apartheid government divided black South Africans into separate 'national units', on the basis of their own ethnologists' definition of 'peoplehood', which described entities with discrete cultural, linguistic and political identities (Schutte 2003:474; Hayward 2007:25). In order to fully justify this categorisation of unified, ancient tribes, specific cultural symbols and long-standing customs had to be identified for each group (Rawlinson 2003:5). Through repetition in popular representations, museum installations and educational material, both the colonial and apartheid administrations entrenched the supposedly ancient traditions of individual cultural groups.

3.5. Preserving heritage and salvage anthropology

The values that contemporary entrepreneurs and some tourists attach to the unscathed tradition of those indigenous cultures that are marketed, echoes those of early anthropologists and photographers who bemoaned the increasing 'Westernisation' of indigenous culture. Although contemporary efforts at cultural documentation are increasingly motivated by financial concerns, the value attributed to 'traditional' cultural forms result from their status as threatened by Westernisation. Their perceived 'difference' and exoticism is thus made valuable due to their increasing scarcity. The ethnographic salvaging of 'traditional' culture was motivated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by the metanarratives of progress and evolutionism. As mentioned earlier, the fear of the inevitable extinction of 'savage peoples' due to Western progress, provided great impetus for the development of the disciplines of anthropology and ethnography (Gruber 1959). The gathering and documentation of non-Western culture served to collect information on ways of life presumed to disappear, but also to verify the progress of the West and evolutionist theories that foresaw the eventual extinction, or modernisation, of all 'traditional' cultures.

The photographer Alfred Martin Cronin, also known as Duggan Cronin, made it his life's work to "record for posterity the primitive habits and dress, environment and customs of all the major Bantu tribes living in Southern Africa", which he regarded as threatened by the spread of modernisation (cited in Bensusan 1966:104). His work was chiefly motivated by the certainty of the inevitable disappearance of 'primitive' indigenous culture. While working in the English colony of Rhodesia in 1934, Cronin wrote; "year by year the Natives are becoming more and more civilised, and any delay in the work would mean that valuable records of the Natives in their primitive state would be lost for all time" (cited in Bensusan 1966:104).

The photographic documentation of indigenous culture is thus regarded as an urgent process of preservation and documentation of cultures that are believed to stand no chance against the spread of Western civilisation. This perception of 'change' as destructive, assumes the notion that 'traditional' cultures are static and fails to "consider the dynamics, or rather the internal mechanism by which change can occur and by which, at the same

time, traditions can be sustained” (Drewal cited in Ben Amos 1989:13). The equation of Western contact with cultural disruption disavows pre-colonial cultural exchanges and transformations and insinuates that significant change is something that can only be brought about by contact with the West. Furthermore, Western ethnographers, rather than the members of those societies in question, are given the tasks of recognising change and choosing ‘traditions’ for preservation. The modern practice of ‘salvage anthropology’ thus entrusted Western outsiders with the authority to decide which practices and artefacts best signified uncontaminated, ‘authentic’ culture and were suitable for preservation for posterity⁷⁰. In the next section I shall discuss those contemporary anthropologists and other brokers of ‘authentic’ culture who decide which traditions are worth portraying and preserving.

3.6. Brokers of authentic culture

The process of commodification of difference necessitates authoritative agents who select, appropriate and produce ‘difference’ as exotic, exciting and titillating (Root 1996: 30)⁷¹. In the historical South African context, this agency has predominantly been limited to those with political and economic access to methods of popular and scientific representation, who have also been outsiders of the communities whose bodies and lifestyles were presented as different and exotic. As mentioned above, the equation of ‘authentic’ tradition with those cultural practices and objects produced prior to contact with the West, is largely the presumption of Western anthropologists. The adherence to, or divergence from, those ethnographically described lifestyles and styles that presumably pre-date colonialism, thus becomes an indicator of the ‘authenticity’ or ‘inauthenticity’ of a particular group, its activities or material culture. In the international marketplace, visible or guaranteed adherence to pre-colonial cultural ‘tradition’ has become substantially more attractive and profitable than the espousal of Western habits. By positioning that which differs from the modern West as worthy of display and preservation, the modern West is established as the

⁷⁰ The impact of the presence of the very ethnographer doing the salvage documentation on a particular society’s social and economic workings was however often overlooked (Ben Amos 1989: 6).

⁷¹ Root states that “differences clearly do exist between cultures, and the issues is not that these are noticed but how these come to be aestheticised and by whom” (1996:30).

norm or the yardstick against which the 'exoticism' of other cultures is measured⁷². Consequently, the construction of 'authentic' South African cultural identity in postcards and cultural villages is done through the utilisation of specific signifiers of ethnic tradition.

In an interview with the two main photographers and proprietors of Leopard Photo Enterprises, Johan and Fanie Kloppers explained that one of the key principles they employ in the portrayal of 'indigenous' peoples is the adherence to 'tradition' (personal interview, Fishoek, 4 June 2009). Neither provided a precise definition of their understanding of 'tradition', yet it became clear from the recounting of their direction of various shoots, that 'traditional' meant an absence of that which could be considered Western and modern. One photographer would ask his sitters to remove "things that do not fit in with what you want to photograph"; articles such as "a PEP-store's⁷³ blanket, or watches and spectacles". He would also ask people to clean the background, of "things such as cigarette cartons". (personal interview, Fishoek, 4 June 2009). In order to construct an idealised image of traditional, rural life, commodities that are mass-produced, modern technology and the 'ills of modern society', such as litter and cigarettes, are all banished from the frame. The statement, "things that do not fit in with what *you* want to photograph", makes it clear that the determining factor is not the people who are encountered, but that which the photographer considers necessary to fulfil his assignment.

The photo shoots for postcards of 'indigenous' people can thus be said to become assemblages of parts (pristine backdrop, traditional-looking clothing, black bodies) that create desirable pictures which were envisaged by the director-cum-photographer prior to the actual shoot. Although they always follow a very specific protocol when photographing the residents of rural villages and commercial cultural villages, arranging before-hand and making payments to chiefs of villages prior to the shoots, the photographers have most authority in the process of visual representation – both during the actual shoot and in post-production (F Kloppers & J Kloppers, personal interview, Fishoek, 4 June 2009). My point here is not that the authority of outsiders necessarily results in distorted representations, but that the agency is removed from the sitters who ultimately appear in the postcards, first by the photographers and then by the chiefs and cultural village managers who accept

⁷² I will elaborate on the construction of the West and white spectators as invisible norm in Chapter Four.

⁷³ PEP is one of the most affordable South African chain stores and sells clothing and home-ware.

payment and instruct residents to dress up and pose for the photographers. One may argue, as do the photographers of this particular company, that such communities are “tourism-orientated” and that they see this as source of income (F Kloppers & J Kloppers, personal interview, Fishoek, 4 June 2009). Yet the absence of any formalised system that regulates compensation, copyrights and royalties for those pictured in the postcards, as well as the privileged negotiations between the empowered parties (photographers, chiefs of villages and managers of cultural villages), all count against the sitters.

At DamuZulu Traditional Village, the role of authoritative curator is fulfilled by manager and trained anthropologist Graham Steward, also known as the “white Zulu” of the village (Schutte 2003:480). This academically trained anthropologist thus interprets Zulu culture and history and directs the Zulu ‘cultural workers’ in the performance of their culture and heritage. The designation of “White Zulu” constructs Steward as ‘intimate outsider’, serves to convince of his familial ties to his employees, and reassures critical visitors that the exploitative relationships of South Africa’s past do not exist in this homestead. The village’s promotional material further boasts its opening by King Goodwill Zwelithini, which puts the “royal Zulu stamp of approval on the objectives and authenticity of DumaZulu” (*Far and Wild Safaris: Zululand Reservations* 2009: Online). The endorsement of the village by a ‘real’, living Zulu King provides seemingly unquestionable authority to claims of ‘authenticity’, and his approval of the ‘objectives’ of this enterprise serves to ennoble it as institution of education and cultural preservation. Consumers are thus reassured that the motives behind the enterprise and the reconstruction of Zulu culture complement not only the vision of the King, but also those of the ‘Zulu people’, whom he represents.

3.7. Ethnicity, tribalism and authenticity

Both colonial and contemporary postcards often emphasise the distinctive traditional customs and lifestyles of the various ‘indigenous’ groups, depicting them as exclusively land-based and unindustrialised. Here emphasis is not on those features shared by the diverse cultures of the Rainbow Nation, but the customs and beliefs that differentiate them from one another. Depictions of activities, dress or bodies are regularly framed in ethnographic or pedagogic terms: to show and teach viewers about distinct and varied ‘traditional’

lifestyles, social customs and technologies. Captions help to instruct viewers: a picture of young boys in the entrance of a reed hut is a lesson in the “language” of beadwork (Figure Fourteen); various shots taken in a Ndebele cultural village serves to inform about the craft and architecture that they are famous for (Figure 15).

Roland Barthes pointed out that captions serve to anchor a visual image within a specified range of meanings, to the exclusion of other meanings (cited in Pines 2001:64). Edwards (1992:11) writes that the suggestion of the meaning of photographs through captions is especially pertinent in an anthropological context, as the text legitimates the image within the scientific and disciplinary domain. In the genre of ethnographic postcards, generalised, pseudo-ethnographic captions allude to the social sciences in order to justify particular portrayals, even if captions do not always correspond to the images they accompany. This is often the case in postcards of semi-naked women, where captions refer to hairstyles, beading, architecture or domestic tasks while the focus of the image is on the naked female body (see Figures 24, 25 & 26).

Just as specific ‘ethnic’ groups are suggested by means of easily recognisable visual markers, certain representational methods or conventions are employed for different South African ‘tribes’. Postcard images of so-called ‘Bushmen’ often portray hunters crouching or striding in an arid landscape. A mature man in ample furs, sitting squarely and facing the camera confidently is most certainly a Zulu chief, and bare-breasted women, cropped below the waist or reclining coyly, viewers have come to know, are probably Zulu. For Edwards (1992:11), “it is through the juxtaposition of a specific representational mode and caption that the ‘types’ are established or that an individual can become a generality”. The reiteration of specific ‘representational modes’ for specific ethnic ‘types’ in popular representations over more than a century, perhaps initially motivated by anthropological concerns, may be said to have contributed to another ‘one-style-one-tribe’ paradigm: one whereby ‘tribes’ are matched by specific technique of photographic portrayal. Thus, apart from being frozen in time through the ‘traditional’ dress codes, dance, architectural and musical styles, and ceremonial practices specified for their ‘ethnic’ unit, cultural groups may find themselves further restricted through the manner of visual representation deemed most ‘suitable’ for them.

Distinctive ethnic groups are further associated with geographic pockets within South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal becoming a “Zululand Zig Zag” of cultural villages by the beginning of the twenty-first century, and the region has been recently ‘reimagined’ as the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:279). Like DumaZulu, Lesedi African Lodge and Cultural Village presents visitors with a “kaleidoscope of cultural colour”, offering reconstructed Ndebele, Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi and Sotho ethnic villages (*Cultural Experiences: Lesedi African Lodge and Cultural Village* Online). In the promotional material of its traditional homesteads, Lesedi matches ‘ethnicity’ to specific territories: the home of the Zulus is KwaZulu-Natal, the Xhosa are from the “coastline of the Eastern Cape”, the Basotho are a “mountain people” from “The Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho” and the Pedi are from Sekhukhuni land in the Northern Province (*Cultural Experiences: Lesedi African Lodge and Cultural Village* Online).

Such convenient and reductive designations were institutionalised by the apartheid state’s 1968 ‘separate development’ policy, which saw the relegation of the majority of South Africans to ten ‘Bantustans’, where it was argued they could practice and preserve their own ethnic culture within the unit of the homeland. Cultural heritage was employed as benign motivation of institutionalised segregation, as the homelands were promoted as beneficial for the preservation of ethnic culture (Schutte 2003:474).

The apartheid government’s separation of ‘indigenous’ South Africans into ethnic units has in recent decades provided the blueprint for the ethnic divisions that are found in cultural villages and picture postcards⁷⁴. Tourist villages such as DumaZulu and Lesedi, which offer reconstructed homesteads or villages of the various ‘tribal groups’ living in South Africa, continue to use those categories of race and ethnicity consolidated under apartheid. In the ‘homesteads’ of DumaZulu and Lesedi, individual ‘groups’ continue to perform their unique cultural traditions for visitors. Both enterprises frame their ventures in terms of education and preservation, the latter closely echoing the apartheid state’s motivation behind the homeland policy.

⁷⁴ Schutte (2003:483) notes that in 1996, Satour’s official homepage presented the various cultures of South Africa using the symbol of the rainbow, yet making use of categories consistent with those under apartheid.

The equation of 'ethnic' group with geographic territory is found in the postcard "Traditional Zulu People of South Africa" (Figure 16), by Leopard Photo Enterprises. Zulu people are described on the reverse as "traditionally found in Kwazulu Natal" and "an extremely proud tribe decorated with animal skins like that of the Springbok or Leopard". The postcard shows those characters that Zulus have come to be associated with over decades of Western travel writing, theatre and television: bare-chested warriors, sangomas and a bare-breasted woman. The accompanying text serves to identify this 'ethnic group' and to anchor them to a particular geographic territory; thus giving them meaning through their naming and location on the map. Emphasis is placed on their traditional and thus longstanding relationship to the soil of their traditional home, this belonging is further underscored as 'natural' by the mentioning of their use of the skins of indigenous animals. Through claims to 'tradition' and nature, they are constructed as legitimately South African and Zulu. Through the employment of detached and authoritative ethnographic tone, the text ostensibly aids in the interpretation of the image, yet its failure to deal directly with the contents of the image (there are no leopard skins visible and the individual figures are not identified) or to contextualise it, allows for the free play of viewers' association and imagination.

This continued reliance of 'indigenous' people into ethnic groups must be scrutinised in the light of recent scholarship on pre-colonial Africa. Rawlinson (2003) and Ranger (1983) argue that pre-colonial ethnic identity was fluid, flexible and loosely defined, rather than the primordial units with clearly defined boundaries which formed the basis of colonial administration. Terence Ranger (1983:212), writing on the invention of tradition in colonial Africa, has indicated how British administrators in Africa purposefully identified that which they perceived as 'traditional', transforming flexible identities into fixed traditions through codification and promulgation, in order to facilitate the incorporation of Africans into a model "imperial monarchy". The boundaries drawn around indigenous people were thus largely motivated by the administrative needs of the colonial and apartheid administrations, rather than the social and political determination of the people themselves.

Rawlinson (2003:5) notes that "Africans themselves participated in this creation of 'tribes' because to not do so would exclude or marginalise them from the bargaining process of state-allocated resources". Communities amalgamated, not due to a newly emerged ethnic

consciousness, but to benefit from the increased influence afforded larger groups in the negotiations with colonial authorities (2003:5). Although the emphasis on pre-colonial cultural expression by the contemporary tourism and heritage industries may be of great value to both South Africans and foreign visitors, facile portrayals of indigenous lifestyles, freeze cultures at a moment of imagined pre-colonial purity – derived from colonial and apartheid ethnographic speculation. The reductive presentation of closed and static communities in fact ignores the cultural exchange and complex histories of pre-colonial Southern African peoples, inferring that change and thus history only commenced after the arrival of the white man. Rather than providing tourists and visitors the opportunity of dialogue or interrogation of the representation of South African histories and identities, Hayward writes that these attractions “simplify, commodify and display African cultures as static, unchanging and one-dimensional” (2007:38).

3.8. Conclusion

In the tourist industry, the commodification of ‘authentic’ and ‘traditional’ culture cannot be separated from the processes of selective appropriation, domestication and modification needed to turn objects of use into desired objects of commercial value. The equation of ‘authentic tradition’ with pre-colonial cultural purity has become one of the biggest touchstones in the representation of so-called indigenous cultures, and dominates most postcard images and cultural village displays. Although it may be tempting to presume the purity and ‘authenticity’ of cultural practices and objects prior to this process of recoding, this chapter has shown that such values cannot be divorced from Western anthropological imaginings of indigenous South Africans as ‘primitive’ and static Others.

The focus of this thesis is the representation of cultural identity, and although cultural villages may promote pride in indigenous heritage and educate both local and international visitors about South Africa’s diverse cultural heritage, the way in which representations continue to rely on themes of ‘tribalism’ and ‘primitivism’ is alarming. For nearly two decades, the de-colonisation of South African history and the transformation of various governmental, corporate, private and educational institutions have been priorities of

government, academe and the private sector, yet it seems that the leisure industry cannot depart from profitable colonial stereotypes.

In this chapter I argued that contemporary notions of 'authentic' and 'traditional' indigenous South African culture have their origins in both historical and mythical Western imaginings of Southern Africans, and in the theories of colonial and apartheid anthropologists. Despite recent scholarship and critiques of the processes whereby colonial and apartheid anthropologists and historians identified, documented and represented indigenous Southern Africans, it seems that contemporary cultural villages and postcards rely on the very same strategies of the previous regimes: categorisation of indigenous people according to ethnic differences and the assignment of each 'ethnic' group to a specific visual aesthetic and geographic location in South Africa.

Both postcard producers and cultural villages rely on the understanding that 'ethnic' groups are stable, bounded entities, each with its own set of recognisable visual markers which can be commodified and used to signify either a particular group's cultural heritage, or/and (South) African 'traditionalism' or 'tribalism'. Once photographed, cropped and digitised, individuals and their cultural heritage thus become compliant icons of any number of things; friendly hosts, proud tribesmen, staunch traditionalists, sensual or savage. Not much unlike the anthropologists of the colonial period who assumed the role of knowledgeable curator of indigenous culture, contemporary photographers, postcard producers and village managers 'curate' individuals and their cultural heritages according to preconceived and even vague notions of 'traditional' culture. In the process 'ethnic' difference is emphasised, a strategy ill at ease with the prevailing rhetoric of unification and reconciliation embodied in the symbol of the Rainbow nation.

The economic benefit of such enterprises to local communities and those groups they claim to represent, vary from project to project⁷⁵. Some of the biggest ventures, such as Lesedi, Shakaland and DumaZulu, are under white management, yet many smaller medium-sized enterprises are being established by individuals who market their own cultural heritage for tourist consumption⁷⁶. Hughes (2003:6) has however expressed concern that the sheer

⁷⁵ See Heather Hughes (2003); Hayward (2007); Witz, Rasool and Minkley (2001); van Veuren (2001, 2003).

⁷⁶ Examples include Ma Betty's Xhosa Cultural Experience in Bongoletu Township, Outshoorn, and Zulu Cultural Village Tours offered by Walter Cele's and Victor Mdludli Eshowe, KwaZulu Natal. Koch (1998) has

volume of such cultural attractions may prove too much for current tourist demand, which will impact negatively on their potential for economic empowerment. Yet more research is needed on the role of tourist villages to empower those previously excluded from decisions about their own representation and commodification. The control of the portrayal of cultural identity, and the management and distribution of profits, need to come under intense political and academic scrutiny for such ventures to truly benefit previously disadvantaged and disenfranchised South Africans.

In this chapter I have provided a general foundation which will facilitate the more in-depth case study in the next chapter, where I will investigate the ways in which Zulu identity is constructed in picture postcards, and also in the cultural villages where postcards photographs are taken. My focus is on the historical development of images of 'Zuluness' and Zulu nationalism, and its strategic use and commodification in contemporary tourist and heritage industries. This case study of one of South Africa's best known cultural groups, serves to investigate the possibilities and challenges posed by the emphasis on ethnic particularity in a supposedly non-racial society.

done research on families living near the entrance of the Kruger Park and Umfolozi Game Park, who have set up guesthouses and provide live dance entertainment (in Schutte 2003:483-4).

4. CHAPTER THREE – THE COMMODIFICATION OF ZULU CULTURAL IDENTITY IN POSTCARDS AND CULTURAL VILLAGES

Introduction

As established in Chapter One, the conventions employed in the colonial postcard representations of indigenous Southern Africans were inherited from a diverse image-archive of Africa established over the centuries preceding the nineteenth. During the late nineteenth century, picture postcards further absorbed the visual vocabularies of both the theatre and of scientific racism. In the second chapter I illustrated how such historical perceptions contribute to contemporary understandings of ‘authentic’ and ‘traditional’ cultural identity and heritage. This chapter is a case study of the construction and perpetuation of an essential and ‘authentic’ Zulu cultural identity in contemporary picture postcards and tourist villages.

The choice of my focus on the representation of Zulu culture is first of all motivated by the long history of the West’s fascination with, and representation of Zulu people, especially since the Anglo-Zulu wars at the end of the nineteenth century. Secondly, the representation of Zulu identity and culture has received considerable critical attention over the last two decades, and these insights will be drawn upon in my assessment of the construction of Zulu cultural identity as intrinsically militaristic and masculine. Lastly, with its powerful nationalist discourse and proud militaristic history, Zulu culture has further emerged as a distinctive identity within that of the greater South Africa. The commodification of Zulu cultural identity and heritage as simultaneously South African and Zulu, provides an apt case study in light of the tourist industry’s endorsement of ethnic particularity. The critique of the simultaneous emphasis on ethnic difference and national unity, raised in Chapter Two, thus pertains to the commodification of Zulu identity as both part of the Rainbow Nation and essentially different to other South African identities.

In this chapter I will focus on postcard images depicting Zulu culture, and those cultural villages where postcard images of Zulu cultural heritage are produced. With reference to recent research on cultural tourism and heritage in South Africa and the critical readings of the construction of Zulu identity and nationalism, I will discuss the relationship between the tourist display of Zulu culture, its political significance and its historical roots.

4.1. Hyper-real history

In the postcards produced from images taken at DumaZulu, carefully selected settings, props and costumes serve to communicate 'complete Zuluness' to visitors. As discussed in the previous chapter, notions of 'authenticity' and 'the traditional' are found on fractions and glimpses of a history and identity of 'Africa' established over centuries of myth-making, European anthropological and ethnographic writings, colonial and apartheid representations and invented traditions. Cultural villages that purport to represent coherent versions of 'authentic' South African traditions, or Zulu culture, therefore offer the viewer and visitor much more so-called 'authentic' tradition than had actually existed both historically and in the present.

Several critical examinations of the villages of Shakaland, Dumazulu and Lesedi⁷⁷ focus on the ways in which notions of authenticity are invoked or deployed in the reconstructed homesteads which are often "more concentrated than the real thing [and] more perfect" (Hamilton 1998:197). According to Rassool and Witz, KwaBhekitunga was one of the first 'cultural villages' in South Africa and "the beginning of the packaged tour through Zulu life" (1996:360). It offered traditional Zulu life for view at a time when visitors to the homelands were complaining that "in the 'native territories', the 'natives' where not native enough" (1996:360). The cultural village was thus established exactly because there was little or no sufficiently traditional 'native' life available for consumption by outsiders. Although framed in terms of the preservation of indigenous culture, the recreated Zulu kraal produced 'native authenticity' that would meet the consumer demand for "primitive and natural forms of life" (Rassool & Witz 1996:360). Such staged settings thus serve to fulfil the visitor's desire to gaze upon "confirmed knowledge" (Rassool and Witz 1996:358), and thus to re-confirm previously established beliefs, rather than learn something new or different.

Shortly after the completion of the television series *Shaka Zulu*, development of a holiday resort started on a film set of the series and in 1991 Shakaland, "unquestionably the most popular of all Zulu resorts", opened its doors (Rassool & Witz 1996:355). The cultural village and resort complex were developed by anthropologically trained entrepreneur Barry Leitch and Protea hotel group, aiming to give visitors an experience of 'Zuluness' without trying to

⁷⁷ See the studies by Hamilton (1998), Hayward (2007); Schutte (2003); Rassool and Witz (1996); Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001).

hide the fact that it was built on a movie set (Schutte 2003:479). Great care was taken during the first years of Shakaland's existence to challenge visitors in their understandings of Zulu history and guide them in the exploration of dynamic, albeit depoliticised, Zulu culture⁷⁸ (Hamilton 1998:199).

Built on a film set, Shakaland offered Zulu culture that was more impressive, more perfect and more concentrated than that which could be found at any other setting, not even at the homesteads of ordinary Zulu people from the adjacent Nkwalini village, argues Hamilton (1998:197). Quite forthright about its reconstructed character and its origins in the mini-series, Shakaland was a flagrant fake, yet in the words of Umberto Eco, it is "recognised as 'historical', and thus garbed in authenticity" (1998:30). Against the backdrop of the television set, clearly marked as reconstruction, visitors were treated to 'real' Zulu guides, were taught 'real' Zulu phrases that they could use outside the resort, visited a 'real, contemporary' Zulu shantytown where they could buy handcrafted goods. The reality of these actions of learning, speaking and purchasing contributes to the authenticity of the visitor and consumer, who actively participates in the fantasy that is reproduced at Shakaland (Eco 1998:41,43). Boundaries between fantasy and reality, hosts and tourists, insiders and outsiders are momentarily blurred, providing especially a white clientele with experiences that would fulfil their eagerness to learn about African culture, bridge divisions between black and white, or placate bad consciences (Hamilton 1998:195).

These 'faithfully' reconstructed simulacra⁷⁹ of elusive pasts further position themselves as places of learning and cultural villages such as DumaZulu and Lesedi market themselves as educational opportunities for South Africans. At a time when black and white South

⁷⁸ By 1997 the resort had however diverted from its initial aims and its tour guides, previously 'cultural brokers', gave mostly foreign visitors exoticised and standardised versions of their own cultural heritage (Hamilton 1998:205). According to Schutte (2003:479), it had simply "degenerated into a state of mono-dimensional commodification of cultural difference" as challenging insights were replaced by "pulsating tribal rhythms and assegai-wielding warriors".

⁷⁹ Jean Baudrillard gave new importance to the term 'simulacrum', a Latin word denoting a material representation or image, usually of a deity. He traces a series of stages for the emergence of simulacra: from the reflection of basic reality; masking reality; becoming predominant as 'originals' lost their authenticity in the age of mass production and finally, signalling the absence of reality they become imitations of imitations (Dictionary of Critical Theory Sv. 'simulacrum'). Baudrillard writes: "Abstraction is no longer the map, the double, the mirror or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyper-real. The territory no longer precedes the map. Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory [...] it is the map that engenders territory" (cited in Best 1995:51, 53).

Africans expressed a dissatisfaction at the lack of information about African history and culture, Shakaland in several ways provided access to exciting and attractive versions of 'African history': to visitors at its resort, by offering special programmes for school parties and providing educational material (Hamilton 1998:193).

Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001:281) write that "cultural villages are presented as a way to know yourself, to learn about the 'other', and become a nation". They cite the example of Mosiua Lekota, who visited the Basotho Cultural Village while president of the Free State, in order to learn about "authentic Sotho lifestyles" (2001:281). Several villages further present programmes for schools, and the website of Lesedi African Lodge and Cultural Village showcases a letter of thanks written in 2007 by Lucy Downs of Sparrow Schools Educational Trust. The letter expresses gratitude to Lesedi for providing students, many of whom are orphans and have "have missed out on learning about their cultural past from family members", "with a snapshot of where they have come from" (*Cultural Experiences : Lesedi African Lodge and Cultural Village* Online).

The hyper-realities presented by the cultural villages and postcards thus come to constitute the 'real' where there is no stable or accessible referent. The staged and scripted performances, purposely designed costumes and material artefacts come the closest to expectations of 'authentic' tradition, and assumes the place of the absent 'original', for both foreign and South African tourists. Although disavowing the hybrid nature of indigenous Southern African cultural identities and traditions through its emphasis on coherence and purity, it actively constructs new and hybrid cultures in its desperate attempt at 'authentic' reconstructions. The over-abundant bodily adornment in neon-coloured plastic beads, the conflation of various so-called 'ethnic' patterns and styles and anthropologically scripted ceremonies join forces with modern, Western infrastructure to (paradoxically) produce a new, truly postmodern assemblage. It may be very possible, especially as such villages are promoted as educational facilities and museums, that these scripted, hyper-real versions of cultural heritage may be (re-)absorbed as 'authentic' heritage and tradition by the very groups they supposedly represent.

4.2. Zuluness in popular representations.

[T]he exhibition transcends all others we have witnessed of the kind... As for the noises – the howls, yells, hoots and whoops, the shuffling, wheezing, bubbling, grovelling and stamping – they form a concert whose savagery we cannot attempt to do justice (*The Spectator*, 18 May 1853: 485, cited in Lindfors 2001:67).

Discernible from the review of one of the first performances by a Zulu troupe in London in 1853, are the associations of the Zulu with wild, animalistic energy and savagery (Lindfors 2001:66,67). Admired as a “martial race”, Zulus were often represented in an idealised fashion, making use of classical visual conventions, as seen in lithographs by George French Angas in *The Kaffirs Illustrated* (1849) (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:104; Dietrich 1993:306-314). During and after the Anglo-Zulu Wars of 1878 and 1879, the savage nature and military prowess of the Zulus were publicised widely and vividly. Representations ranged from derogatory depictions of ferocious, bloodthirsty Zulu warriors in the pictorial mass media, to admiring accounts of Zulu courage, chivalry and military discipline in the popular adventure fiction (Lindfors 2001:68-69).

Neverdeen Pieterse (1992:77) writes that news magazines covered the ‘small wars’ of empire by sending correspondents and artists to the frontlines in the colony, “which were sufficiently remote for the public almost to view them as a form of entertainment”. Copious depictions of heroic battle scenes, honourable deaths and hand-to-hand combat strategically promoted perceptions of Zulus as bloodthirsty and cruel warriors, and portrayed them as nude, disorderly and beastly in comparison to the disciplined colonial soldiers in uniform (1992:78-79). The caricatures of colonised people, including that of Zulu warriors and chiefs, found in the satirical periodicals of the late nineteenth century, are described by Neverdeen Pieterse as “of the grimmest enemy images of the colonised peoples” (1992:78). Unable to afford to send journalists to the colonies, artists relied on caricature and stereotype to describe the savagery of natives, which in turn legitimised European aggression (1992:80).

The portrayal of Zulus underwent a dramatic change, according to Neverdeen Pieterse (1992:80-81), in the years after the Anglo-Zulu wars, when the Zulus had been successfully

subjugated. Although the British did admire Zulu *impis* for their military organisation and discipline, representations were predominantly of “degenerate, bedevilled Zulus” (1992:80-81). With reference to French Orientalism, the Roman appropriation of Greek aesthetic and the romanticising of Native Americans, Root (1996:68) argues that this appropriation and commodification occur after the foreign or rival culture had ceased to be regarded as a threat, and after the appropriating culture had established military and economic hegemony over the area. The same can be applied to the European representations of Zulus, which could be transformed, after their military pacification, into a compliant spectacle upon which Western fantasies could be enacted (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992:67). Although the militaristic and physical strength of Zulu men continued to be emphasised, it was sufficiently emasculated and its power defused through its representation as sexualised, exotic sight (Coombes 1994:93-97). The London media’s generous praise for the “perfect training of the wild artists” (*The Times*, 18 May, 1853, cited in Lindfors 2001:67), and the description of the Zulus as “naturally good actors” (*The Illustrated London News*, 28 May, 1853, cited in Lindfors 2001:67) encapsulates the effective domestication of a people considered bestial, their previously deadly military strategies reduced to choreographed sequences designed to thrill European audiences. The military suppression of the once mighty Zulu is magnified by their susceptibility to ‘training’, the success of which pays tribute to the European trainers of the “wild artists”.

Lindfors writes that the public curiosity about Zulus peaked in the last two decades of the nineteenth century (2001:69), which coincides with the first golden years of the postcard industry and the scramble for Africa. Zulus increasingly featured in popular fiction, ethnographic exhibits at the World’s Fairs of 1899 and 1904, comic ‘minstrel’ shows and theatre productions, of which the extravaganza ‘Savage South Africa’, staged at the Empress Theatre in London in 1899, was one of the most spectacular (Lindfors 2001:71). The portrayal of caricatured and stereotyped images of Zulus coincided with the Anglo-Zulu Wars and aggressive colonial expansion, and the changes in the popular representation of Zulus are indicative of the changes in European socio-political context. Neverdeen Pieterse (1992: 88) writes:

After the smoke and gunpowder lifted and the colonial situation became stabilised, colonial imagery shifted from the enemy image to the colonial

psychology of superiority and inferiority. The colonial superiority complex was a political and psychological necessity to enable a tiny minority of foreigners to control the local majority.

Postcard manufactures, as discussed in Chapter One, similarly capitalised on, and fed the public interest in Zulu militarism. The postcard, "A Fight with Assegais" (Figure 17), posted in Pretoria in 1908, provide a theatrical display of Zulu militarism in two-dimensional form. Zulu 'warriors' hold a variety of frozen poses designed to illustrate the various movements and stages of a battle with traditional weapons⁸⁰. The uninhabited landscape provides a backdrop for the staged fight which is carefully composed of small groups engaged in combat and even includes the body of a slain warrior in the foreground. Although this staged image may attempt to create the impression of a real fight, the static figures of men supposedly engaged in battle clearly suggest that this event is a re-enactment for the camera. The unconvincing poses and inert bodies, including that of the slain victim sprawled in the centre, make the men and performance comical rather than fearsome. What the scene communicates is not so much ethnographic as it is political and ideological: these men could be made to assume and hold these poses by an outsider armed with a camera. Africans can be commanded and fashioned by Westerners for the sake of entertainment and profit.

Through the depiction of colonised natives as childlike, primitive, docile and sexualised, European colonial authorities established a visual foil for its own modernity, sophistication and maturity. The creation of stereotypical persona for conquered Southern Africans was thus as much the creation of an ideal subjectivity for the triumphant coloniser. Building a national and cultural identity for itself after gaining independence from Britain in 1910, Afrikaner Nationalists perpetuated and intensified the colonial construction of black South Africans as naturally different and inferior. The development of apartheid ideology coincided with a renewed focus on the pre-colonial history of African communities in South Africa, as government policy makers sought historical grounds for the "re-tribalisation" of urban Africans (Hamilton 1998:18). The apartheid vision of ethnicity and nationality was an

⁸⁰ Several colonial postcards portraying men stick-fighting explain the activity as 'fencing', the term significant of the translation or reconfiguring of indigenous cultures for comprehension by foreign audiences.

attempt, according to Sharp (1988:81), by a minority to represent the nature of South African society to themselves and to outsiders. 'Ethnicity' was employed as authoritative and innate marker of identity, belonging and difference, providing the needed justification of the 'divide and rule' policy.

4.3. Agency and representation

The agency of Zulu role players in the construction of popular perceptions of Zulu culture and identity should not be omitted from a critique of representational strategies. Through her meticulous study of Zulu oral accounts, colonial reports and popular representation, Carolyn Hamilton (1998) has charted the development and shaping of Zulu identity as predicated on the military heroism of Shaka. This thesis cannot accommodate a chronological or in-depth exposition of the contribution of African scholars, politicians and writers to the various perceptions of Zulu history and culture, yet it is important to highlight that essentialised images of Zulus should not be regarded as an entirely Western invention.

Hamilton's examination of the political deployment of the militant image of the 'King of the Zulus' by both nineteenth century colonial administrators and twentieth century Zulu leaders reveal the extent to which current essentialist representations of Zulu men as warriors are products of both European and indigenous engineering. She argues that the image of Shaka as a cruel despot, and the idea of "Zulu tyranny" were no mere inventions of early European traders (1998:70). The reputation of Shaka and the Zulu people were drawn from "a repertoire of ideas held by the Africans among whom the traders lived and travelled. In the 1820s they were well entrenched in the oral traditions of both Shaka's supporters and enemies..."(1998:70). Hamilton also states that the emphasis on Shaka's military greatness in African oral traditions were;

transferred into European written accounts of Zulu history in a variety of ways, but most decisively when the Natal native administration began to draw on Zulu history for a model of domination and control (1998: 34).

Malaba (1986) further examined Shaka's symbolic role in European fiction, African oral literature and praise poetry, and concluded that Shaka is "all things to many Africans, but

the mythopoeisis of Shaka is a largely African phenomenon” (cited in Hamilton 1998: 21). A close association between the character of Shaka, Africans and the identity of the Zulu people developed, a connection emphasised in particular by African scholars and politicians during the twentieth century. From the mid-twentieth century, several African academics, writers and poets promoted Shaka as symbol of a “distinguished African past, [...] African initiative and achievement”, especially as many African states were struggling for independence (Hamilton 1998:18-21; Enwezor 1997:25).

The twentieth century was further marked by the political reliance on Zulu militarism and ‘the spirit of Shaka’ as instruments of justification for land claims and the legal acknowledgement of Zulu customs and lifestyles. Through the nationalist rhetoric of King Goodwill Zwelithini, Buthelezi and the Inkhatha Freedom Party (IFP), the figure of Shaka assumed central place in the ideology of the IFP and Zulu nationalism⁸¹ (Hamilton 1998:10-11). In the post-apartheid years, the history of Zulu nationalism and militarism has been increasingly harnessed for heritage, conservation and tourist development projects in KwaZulu-Natal, where numerous memorials were erected and burial sites of kings, chiefs and soldiers have been upgraded (see Marschall 2008).

Hamilton’s book stresses that a critique of representation and the “West’s construction of the Other”, should not lose “sight of the historiographies of the people labelled ‘Other’, and the ways in which they have shaped the ‘West’s’ knowledge of those communities” (1998:27). Although drawing from centuries of pre-established ideas and beliefs, as explained in Chapter One, colonial views also emerged from colonial experiences, through processes of transformation, translation and rearrangement (1998:27). ‘Stereotypical’ understandings of Zulu people and culture have over the past century proven to be a source of strength and motivation for Zulu politicians, freedom fighters, entrepreneurs and also Africanist scholars⁸². The strategic deployment of Shaka’s legacy by twentieth and twenty-first century Zulu politicians and entrepreneurs, render unfeasible the simplistic deduction that essentialist Zulu identity is purely a racist colonial invention and ideological tool.

⁸¹ The militaristic ideology of the IFP was realised during deadly clashes between ANC and IFP supporters in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the time, the media seized on connections between Shaka and modern-day leaders, violent events in Shaka’s times and the violence of the twentieth century, a development apparently welcomed by Buthelezi (Hamilton 1998: 11).

⁸² Such a statement by no means endorses the often gendered and violent character of Zulu nationalist rhetoric, which will be dealt with shortly.

King Goodwill Zwelithini's opening of DumaZulu Traditional Village, indicates the contemporary harnessing of essentialist perceptions of Zulu culture for political and economic reasons by a member of the Zulu elite. The resulting postcard images are thus scripted products of hegemonic Western ethnographic tradition, current marketing practices and Zulu royalty. Although many cultural villages continue to be under white management, King Zwelithini's official endorsement of the village, and the benefit of the enterprise to his community, cultural heritage and tourism in the area, complicates understandings of the commodification of indigenous culture as based on the stable race and class divides of the previous regime. The commodification of difference seen in twenty-first century postcards and cultural village displays are thus anchored in a deeply complex socio-economic context, influenced by both century-old tropes and current political and economic objectives.

One may argue that Zwelithini's actions echo that of government appointed headmen during colonial and apartheid eras, yet the commodification of Zulu heritage has also been embraced by ordinary South Africans. Walter Cele is an entrepreneur who have in recent years established his own cultural village tours, and similarly rely on the close association between Shaka, militarism and Zulu culture to draw visitors. He advertises walking tours through the "rolling hills of Zululand right near King Shaka's military stronghold where Zulu and King Shaka were born" (*Walter's Zulu Cultural Village* Online). Although Cele employs claims to authenticity via the legacy of King Shaka, his visits to rural villages, creches, churches and farms are less centered around notions of pre-colonial cultural purity than those offered by venues such as Shakaland, DumaZulu and Lesedi.

4.4. Zulu nationalism and masculinity in tourist representations

As established above, the image of Zulu identity that developed over the colonial period is one of militarism, pride and masculinity. Rooted in the myths of military greatness and tyranny that formed around King Shaka, and embellished with reports and depictions of the Anglo-Zulu war, 'Zulu' has become synonymous with the figures of the warrior and the paramount chief. Along with images of Zulu women, chiefs and warriors were particularly common subjects of early twentieth century South African postcards, as the inventories of

several postcard producers suggest (Nicholson Online). African royalty has long fascinated Europeans, who have admired African rulers and their courts since the seventeenth century (Neverdeen Pieterse 1992: 36). News media, popular fiction, colonial reports and travel guides further reported generously on Southern African kings and chiefs during colonial times (MacKenzie 2005:32).

Several postcards dating to the first decades of the twentieth century depicted Zulu chiefs, some identified as individual figures, but mostly as typical characters (Figure 18). As mentioned in Chapter Two, depictions of typical figures are often done according to formulaic visual conventions, and the 'chief' portrayed in this image is no exception. A mature man is pictured in front of what seems to be the entrance of a woven reed hut, suggesting the setting of the 'kraal' and sphere of the chief's influence. He further appears to be seated, his back straight and his hands resting on his thighs in an assertive and authoritative pose.

Alternative postcards of African or Zulu leaders depicted them under arrest or incarcerated, and here the figures are often named, and descriptions of their transgressions are mostly supplied as captions. These bear a significant relation to those ample depictions of stick-fighting warriors and proud chiefs, as they assert clearly to whom the ultimate control of the colonised territory and peoples belong. Postcards of disarmed indigenous leaders, under armed escort or confined with their follow 'rebels', such as that of Dinizulu (Figure 19), served to placate Western viewers that law and order were being maintained in the colonies, and that European law had effectively replaced the rule of indigenous authorities. Indigenous rulers were thus celebrated and admired when they fulfilled European fantasies of African royalty, sumptuous ceremonies and costume, yet only when operating within the parameters instituted by colonial authorities.

During the twentieth century, stereotypes of the Zulu as brave warrior people and legitimate descendants of the great Shaka, was increasingly endorsed both by politicians and popular media (Hamilton 1998:10-11; Mersham 1993:3). The second half of the twentieth century saw Zulu history generously featured in popular media with the release of

the films *Zulu* (1964), *Zulu Dawn* (1979), the televised series *Shaka Zulu*⁸³ (1986) and *John Ross: An African Adventure* (1990) and works of fiction such as *Rage* by Wilbur Smith and *The Covenant*, by James Michener (Mersham 1993:3). The opening of the popular resort Shakaland in 1991 further popularised Zulu history and the legacy of the great Zulu king.

The figure of Zulu king or chief remains central in several contemporary tourist villages, and a chiefly figure would often act as primary host, welcoming and guiding visitors in 'his' village. During the initial years at Shakaland, 'chiefs' or 'headmen' had to be greeted by visitors according to correct Zulu etiquette in order to gain access to the homestead (Hamilton 1998:194). DumaZulu's mention of King Goodwill Zwelithini's opening of its cultural village not only authenticates the village, but also makes vital connections with 'authentic' Zulu royalty. Contemporary postcards and tourist villages similarly rely on the captivating figure of the Zulu chief, as patriarchal head of his 'tribe' or 'village' and custodian of his culture. In the two postcards, "The Zulu", by Wild Treks (Figure 20), and "Tribal Life: South Africa", by Art Publishers (Figure 21), both 'chiefs' are shown seated in what seems to be a village setting, both assuming the assertive pose reminiscent of the much older postcard discussed above. Despite the customary 'chiefly' costume of leopard's skin and ample furs, they appear passive rather than dynamic and authoritarian. As hosts and props in these faithfully re-created villages, the chiefly figures supply living icons of the great Shaka and Cetswayo, yet their role is often limited to meeting, greeting and guiding. At Stewarts Farm Kwabehkithunga, the 'Attractions' include the following: "The Zulu cultural program consists of a guided tour, where Chief Thomas will meet you with a Zulu handshake" (*Stewarts Farm Accommodation in Eshowe KwaZulu Natal* Online). 'Chief Thomas' thus functions to authenticate the experience of visitors, who gets the chance to shake the hand of a 'real' Zulu chief. The majestic chiefly figure depicted in postcards and cultural villages provides a prime example of the de-politicised nature of much cultural tourism dressed up as 'heritage'.

⁸³ Gary Mersham (1993:2) writes that the series *Shaka Zulu*, produced by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), was seen by 350 million people in 85 countries, suggesting that "its impact on overseas perceptions of South African history has been substantial". Two full-length feature films of the same name has since then been released, both featuring Henry Cele, who starred in the role of King Shaka in the television series.

The authority of African chiefs was the source of much contestation, conflict and social engineering from the late nineteenth century. Boonzaaier and Spiegel (1988:48) argue that the institution of chieftainship in South Africa's 'homelands' provides an example of the imposition of 'tradition' from outside. Designed to destroy the autonomy of legitimate indigenous authorities, the sources of the authority of chiefs and their roles within communities have been radically altered since colonial times through strategies of 'indirect-rule' (Rawlinson 2003:5). Recognising the institution of chieftainships, successive colonial and apartheid governments realised that they could exploit chiefs as political instruments, lending support to gain control over populations, yet also withholding support, removing rights, removing un-cooperative chiefs and appointing others in their place (Boonzaaier & Spiegel 1988:49; Reilley 2005:231-233). These paid government officials could also be appointed over an amalgamated group of smaller, scattered or linguistically similar cultural groups, without necessarily having familial or close cultural ties to 'their' people (Rawlinson 2003:5). In the service of first the British and later the Nationalist Party⁸⁴, appointed headmen were by no means the authoritative and respected leaders they are often portrayed as in postcards and cultural villages⁸⁵.

Skalník (1988:72) further observes that the political definitions of tribes as 'chiefdoms' ruled by 'chiefs', by such apartheid government ethnographers as van Warmelo and Jackson, were strategic designations. These were issued to overcome a recognised absence, in colonial and post-colonial situations, of definite cultural, political, economic and linguistic connections uniting supposed 'tribal' peoples. In the face of this recognition of the non-correspondence between political and cultural boundaries, Skalník argues that the continued use of the term 'tribe' to describe pre-colonial political groupings in Southern Africa, is therefore inadequate (1988:72). Contemporary commodified representations of 'chiefs', stripped of their burdensome histories, thus provide viewers and visitors with tidied simulacra of glorious and mythical pasts, yet paradoxically employ the redundant

⁸⁴ The 1927 Native Administration Act awarded the governor-general of South Africa with the office of 'supreme chief', giving him supreme power over 'homeland' populations, the ability to shape and create new 'tribes' and 'homelands', decide on the boundaries of the areas of tribes, amalgamate or divide 'tribes'. (Reilley 2005:231-231).

⁸⁵ According to Southall (1938), headmen appointed by the colonial administration in Transkei came to be called *isibonda*, or 'poles' supporting the government of the colonisers, and Bunday (1987) notes that headmen and their councillors were "described as being venal: they were 'simply put in the inside pocket of the jacket' of government" (cited in Boonzaaier and Spiegel 1988:217).

terminology and concepts of colonial and apartheid eras to authenticate reconstructions of pre-colonial life.

The construction of Zulu cultural identity in postcards and cultural villages rely on that which is understood as 'traditional' and therefore essential to the group's identity. The assignment of roles and tasks according to gender is notable, and representations conform to visitors' and viewers' expectations of 'traditional' dualisms of male and female, active and passive, outside and inside, authoritative and servile. Fighting Zulu warriors have become part and parcel of Zulu identity, and supplied the primary content of several theatre productions of the late nineteenth century.

The postcard, "Zulu Traditions – South Africa" (Figure 22) perpetuates this popular theme and depicts two athletic men fighting with sticks and shields in front of a landscape of endless green hills. In ethnographic manner, the reverse informs that, "[t]he art of stick fighting is a skill learnt by Zulu men from a young age," implying that most Zulu males are instructed in the art of warfare from boyhood. Described in the 'ethnographic present' (Fabian 1983:86), the image and accompanying text gives the impression of unchanging tradition which continues to constitute an integral part of every Zulu boy's education. The essential Zulu identity traits of militarism and bravery are thus portrayed as determined by 'tradition', as if individuals have no choice in the forms that their own identities should take. The scene is further constructed upon a stage that is set against the backdrop of rolling green hills that disappear into the distant horizon. The panorama suggests the natural playground that Africa has offered travellers and adventurers for centuries, and the bodies of the two Zulu warriors function to complement and enhance this landscape of adventure.

Also framed in terms of the timelessly 'traditional', two images of Zulu warriors with spears lifted above their heads, adorn the face of the postcard "African Traditions: South Africa" (Figure 23), by Art Publishers. The image in the bottom, right-hand corner of the multi-view card situates the warrior as part of the sight of a landscape. With spear and shield aloft, his silhouette melts into that of the foreground and frames a charming scene of the sun setting behind a wide landscape of lake and mountains, drawing on colonialist fantasies of Africa as uninhabited and waiting to be explored and utilised. Part of the packaging of the picturesque landscape, the fierceness of the Zulu warrior is defused through its

decorativeness which serves to enhance the romance and beauty of the sunset. 'Traditional' culture and people are presented as simultaneously integral to the South African landscape and its experience, yet sufficiently generalised and neutralised to simultaneously signify the essence of tribal 'Africa', as suggested by the caption.

The subduing of the image of the supposedly fierce and brave Zulu warrior is a commodifying strategy employed by producers who do not want to over-imply the savagery of the Zulu, which might repel rather than attract visitors. Photographer Fanie Kloppers of Leopard Photo Enterprises explained that he personally felt the image of a Zulu warrior with a raised spear was "too aggressive", and that action images on postcards are popular with tourists, but not "aggressive" or "horrific" (*walglik*) action (personal interview, Fishoek, 4 June 2006) The comfort of the viewers or tourists thus plays a decisive role in the careful construction of the Zulu warrior's image as powerful and erotic, yet sufficiently contained.

4.5. Gendered leisure spaces

Thurlow, Jaworski and Ylanne-McEwan (2005:5) write that people in postcards and tourist villages become metonymic of the country as tourist 'scape'. The gendered bodies and cultures of so-called 'indigenous' people can also be described as metonymic displays of landscape or leisure spaces. In their depictions of Zulu culture, the tourist and heritage industries repeatedly evoke the themes of masculinity, militarism and nationalism as intrinsic to Zulu cultural. In the next section, I will focus on the roles performed by or assigned to Zulu women within the contemporary reconstructions of cultural identity of postcards and tourist villages, drawing attention to their maintenance of gender hierarchies.

Popular narratives and fiction from the nineteenth century frequently framed travel in Africa as active masculine conquest or penetration of effeminate, passive territories which ultimately yielded their wildness and darkness to the compass, gun and camera of the hero-traveller, missionary, cartographer or hunter. According to Jeanne van Eeden (2009:126), feminisation of land was a typical colonial strategy, a "metaphorical gesture of domination that surfaces later in the rhetorical imagery used by tourism". The bodies of native inhabitants, regarded as part and parcel of the occupied landscape, were similarly feminised

through exploration, military subjugation, Christianising and domestication. The bodies of native women, especially, came to constitute accessible terrains upon which the fantasies of conquest and adventure could be played out.

Quoting Bunn (1988), Van Eeden writes that the rendering of Africa as exotic spectacle for Western consumption goes hand-in-hand with the process of feminisation and the framing of African culture as passive, irrational and primitive (2007:192). According to Root (1992:1997), feminisation further contributes to the framing of African culture as harmless. Cultural villages and postcards present indigenous cultures to consumers according to specific scripts, designed to facilitate the consumption of imaged spaces and bodies. As mentioned earlier, the feminisation of Zulu culture and -men is an integral function in the packaging of 'Zuluness' as consumable.

The scholarly focus on the gendered and ideological constructions of social space is helpful in the readings of postcards and cultural villages. According to Henri Lefebvre (1991:384) leisure spaces are arranged at once functionally and hierarchically and it is therefore necessary to problematise and denaturalise the spaces in which heritage and culture are consumed. The notion of hierarchically structured leisure space is particularly applicable to the postcard and cultural village reconstructions of Zulu cultural identity, which is often portrayed as synonymous with masculine nationalism.

The roles assigned to Zulu women in postcard images and leisure spaces demand closer inspection, as historical gender hierarchies continue to govern their positions. Lefebvre (1991:143) writes: "Activity in space is restricted by that space; space 'decides' what activity may occur, [...] space lays down the law because it implies a certain order...". The reconstructed villages and roles scripted for 'cultural workers' regulate the activities of performers⁸⁶ and serve to direct the possible interpretations of their culture. In contemporary postcard images and the villages where they are photographed, Zulu women are positioned as hostesses in relation to visitors, and as subordinates to Zulu men, supposedly re-enacting Zulu patriarchal traditions. Women are often objectified and their gendered roles reified in such images and leisure spaces, but within heritage tourism,

⁸⁶ The careful construction of cultural villages also serve to regulate the activities, access and actions of visitors. See Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1996).

according to Aitchison, MacLeod and Shaw (2001:127), women are frequently rendered invisible:

In contrast to other forms of tourism, the heritage landscape often emphasises nationalism and the construction of the nation-state by drawing upon a history that frequently renders women the invisible Other.

KwaZulu Natal, the 'Kingdom of the Zulu', which is home to the eMakhosini Valley or 'Cradle of the Zulu Nation', where many early kings lie buried, has in recent decades assumed the character of national landscape within the greater national landscape of South Africa. The post-apartheid memorialising of Zulu leaders, achievements and battles within this specific terrain is motivated by the promotion of cultural heritage conservation, official endorsement, tourist development and the promotion of indigenous knowledge and practices in the interest of "moral regeneration" (Marschall 2008:245-246). Newly erected or restored memorials are hybrid amalgamations of Eurocentric memorialising practices, local imagery and indigenous values⁸⁷ (2008:245-7). This process continuously re-inscribes the landscape with Zulu history, a history of military greatness and nationalism which is ultimately masculine. In the cultural villages and postcards, where history and heritage fuse with leisure, the engendered mythology of Zulu greatness is perpetuated as its greatest distinguishing feature. The next section will look at the gendered histories and spaces reproduced in examples of postcard images and cultural villages from the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

4.6. Images of Zulu women

The roles of Zulu women in contemporary postcard images and the promotional material of cultural villages are narrowly scripted around domesticity or sensuality. Zulu women are often associated with the domestic sphere: posed in front of the home, shown preparing and serving food or handling cooking vessels. This is contrasted with images of Zulu men

⁸⁷ See Marschall's article *Zulu Heritage between Institutionalized Commemoration and Tourist Attraction* (2008) for a details analysis of the impact of Western traditions of monumental public memorials and growing consciousness of the benefits of heritage tourism on the erection of memorials or the upgrading and renovation of existing, though humble, burial sites.

who are mostly cast in positions of authority or actively participating in war dances. Apart from chiefly figures, Zulu men are further positioned in uninhabited landscape, indicating freedom of movement and close relation to nature and the undomesticated.

In the public spaces of the 'village', Zulu women are presented as hostesses and entertainers, or they are displayed as sensual sights. Occasionally, women are also presented as 'sangomas' or 'traditional healers', occupying positions of authority within their communities. Their work is, however, often presented as 'mystical' and 'ancient', which serves to discredit their legitimacy and contemporary relevance. The leisure industry's presentation of Zulu women as hostesses and sensual entertainers is often naturalised by framing it in terms of cultural heritage and education. Zulu culture is presented as traditionally patriarchal and therefore Zulu women's roles portrayed in postcards and performed in cultural villages may seem like unproblematic extensions of the roles they have 'traditionally' occupied. The scripting of women's roles in terms of tradition can be seen in the promotional material for 'Attractions' and 'Things do Do' during the cultural tours offered at Stewarts Farm Kwabehkithunga:

The importance of the kraal, social structure, traditional dress, regalia, crops and food, hut building and the role of women and children are all explained.

Ancestral spirits play an important role in Zulu culture, with the Sangoma, holding a revered position in Zulu society.

Awe struck, you will witness the mystery of generations-old mystical practices as the Sangoma demonstrates her ability.

While you are taking in the ancient lore, quench your thirst by sipping traditional Zulu beer, freshly made by Thomas's wife, from a proper Zulu drinking gourd.

To celebrate your visit the Umuzi women will create an elaborate meal of six succulent traditional dishes - prepared the Zulu way, served with fresh fruit and washed down with your choice of more Zulu beer, wine or soft drinks (*Stewarts Farm Accommodation in Eshowe KwaZulu Natal Online*).

The role of the unnamed wife of Chief Thomas, who greets visitors upon entry, is that of kind yet mute hostess, and the other women of the village follow her example with their generosity. Within the cultural village, the women are bound by tradition (suggested by the

mention of the “proper Zulu drinking gourd”, “succulent traditional dishes – prepared the Zulu way”) to the domestic sphere: cooking, feeding and serving. They represent the hearth and heart of their culture, facilitating the comfort of the visitors and providing a foil for the authoritative male figures of their ‘village’. Critics have expressed concern about adopting simplistic and dualistic perceptions of hosts and guests, when in fact host and tourist interactions are immensely dynamic and complex (Aitchison, MacLeod & Shaw 2000:126). Such points provides inroads for the examination of possibilities of empowerment and cultural exchange offered by tourism, yet the environments and narratives of cultural villages are mostly highly scripted and tightly controlled, and hierarchical and formal relationships between host and visitors are maintained as part and parcel of professional business strategy. The brevity of many cultural village tours, some advertised to be as short as one hour, further hardly allows for dynamic negotiations between visitors and hosts.

The unequal status of women in leisure spaces, both as consumers and hosts, can be dated to the rise of public sector leisure provision in the Victorian era, when men dominated the both the definition of formal leisure policies and the decisions regarding provision and participation (Aitchison, MacLeod & Shaw 2000:120). The industrial revolution’s separation and distinction between work and leisure, public and private, the feminine domestic sphere and the masculine workplace, contributed to a definition of leisure in relation to paid male employment (2000:120). Western gendered spatial organisation was further imposed on colonised Africans and, buttressed by the patriarchal Christian religion spread by missionaries, altered indigenous work and leisure patterns and spaces to resemble those of industrialised Europe. Leisure spaces today often retain the hierarchies of colonial leisure industries that catered to a clientele made up primarily of male breadwinners. Female sexuality and servility remain part and parcel of the perfect holiday, especially in Africa, where postcolonial reconstructions of ‘traditional’ heritage often reproduce the gender, race and class hierarchies of colonial times.

Swain (1995) writes that,

Host societies differentiated by race/ethnicity, colonial past, or social position from the consumer societies are sold with feminised images. The tourism product – a combination of services, culture, and geographic location – is

consumed in situ, in various transactions from tourist gazing to the selling of otherness (cited in Aitchison, MacLeod & Shaw 2000: 126).

At many cultural villages, women are part and parcel of the 'tourist product' on offer, and their availability as products is visually translated into postcards. The access to and gazing at women's bodies are often legitimated by recourse to tradition or ethnography. Captions serve to frame images of semi-naked women in ethnographic terms, echoing the pretexts of 'science' and 'natural history' employed by early European anthropologists to justify their obsessive scrutiny of the anatomy of Khoikhoi women (see Dietrich 1993:165). A postcard titled "Tribal Life: South Africa" (Figure 24) depicts three bare-breasted young women who are draped in nothing but bright plastic beads, supposedly informs the viewer about the Zulu beadwork tradition. According to the description on the reverse, "Zulu beadwork holds messages in its intricate and colourful designs". The description makes no reference to the three women, who are obviously the subject of the postcard, but uses the detached and objective ethnographer's voice to inform about the deeper meanings of 'indigenous' culture. The ethnographic or pedagogical are thus employed in order to mask and legitimate voyeurism and soft pornography.

A postcard taken at DumaZulu village (Figure 25), also by Art Publishers, depicts a woman sitting in front of a reed hut, her body in the centre of the dark interior behind her back. The reverse reads: "A Zulu woman adorned in the colourful and intricate beadwork for which this race is renowned, poses at the entrance of her reed hut". A similar postcard (Figure 26), "Greetings from South Africa", taken at Kwabhekitunga Cultural Village, describes two young women as "grac[ing] the entrance to a traditional beehive dwelling". The close-up view of the entrance to the reed hut positions the viewer on the doorstep of the hostesses, whose home and naked bodies are opened up to the viewer and visitor. The women in the three postcards serve first and foremost as hostesses, examples of South African hospitality and the willingness of South Africans to share their heritage with visitors. On the postcards, the women's warm smiles and direct gaze serve to convince of their sincerity and warmth, conveying promises of intimacy and contact (Thurlow, Jaworski & Ylänne-McEwen 2005: 6).

Photographs for all three postcards were taken in cultural villages, and Figures 24 and 26 were taken at KwaBhekitunga at Stewarts Farm near Epangeni, one of the first cultural villages in South Africa. Initially framed in terms of the preservation of 'native' culture, the village is currently promoted on the *Country Roads* website as follows:

Travel back in time, return to an era of mystique and magical Africa, as you relive the excitement and romance of traditional Zulu culture. Adventure and excitement will prowl on your doorstep as you encounter Stewarts Farm Kwabehkithunga, an enriching experience affording a better understanding of the Zulu Nation, its people and their intriguing customs (*Stewarts Farm Accommodation in Eshowe KwaZulu Natal*: Online).

The visitor is invited to assume the role of early African explorers (Witz, Rasool & Minkley 2001:277), to travel to a time and space where the same privileges, adventures and enchantment enjoyed by the first explorers are available to modern visitors. The Africa of Kwabhekitunga is presented as mysterious, romantic and exciting, with a hint of danger eluded to in the evocation of 'prowling' (animals) on the doorstep. The website describes a Zulu culture of the silver screen, which has evidently become the definitive version of 'Zuluness' available to tourists. Although moderated by the reference to the gaining of knowledge about Zulu culture, the emphasis is on the excitement and mystery that the Zulu and Africa has to offer. The allusions to romance is extended through the closing line of this article, which reads; "This venue offers you a unique and affordable experience complete with our personal touch". The promise of adventure is thus accompanied by the promise of intimacy and even romance, all offered in a venue that exists outside of regular time and space. Lefebvre (1991:53,50) uses the term 'abstract space', produced by capitalism and neo-capitalism, to refer to the absence of time-space specificity and the negation of religious, political and historical contexts in such places. The centrality of the semi-naked bodies of indigenous women, as part of the consumable and depoliticised leisure space, is by no means uncalculated and amplifies both the spatio-temporal distance between host and visitor, and the mystique of this place where 'adventure' and 'romance' seems boundless.

In Figures 25 and 26, the curving shapes of the reed hut and its womblike entrance, the over-abundance of supposedly hand-crafted jewellery and naked flesh of the women saturate these depictions of Zulu culture and heritage with the feminine and erotic. Sitting flat on the ground, they are also anchored to the soil of the very country of which they have become tokens, thus deriving their identity from their supposedly primeval relationship to the land and 'tribal' culture. According to Thurlow, Jaworski and Yläne-McEwen (2005:6), people become "national hallmarks" in postcards, "prototypical bearers of ethnic characteristics of a community". The half-naked bodies of the women, dressed in beads and framed by typical architecture further indicate the ready access that privileged tourists have to the culture and bodies of their 'hosts-turned-spectacles'. The poses of these women, positioned in front of the dark entrances of their huts, are suggestive of free access to their bodies, facilitating the sexual fantasies of (male, heterosexual) consumers.

In the above postcards, the open faces and broad smiles of the women give an impression of their contentment with the manner in which they are presented. Apart from the wide smiles and direct gazes, which are often absent in colonial photographs of indigenous African women, most of the exotic and erotic qualities of colonial depictions remain in contemporary postcards. Geary (1998:145,148) notes that postcards of South African women specifically borrow stylistically and iconographically from earlier representations of other African and Middle-Eastern women. The attempt of studio photographers to turn Zulu women into classical nudes can be seen in several late nineteenth century postcards. In Figures 27 and 28, the classical subject of the female nude is 'Africanised' through the generous addition of beadwork, a backdrop of green foliage and other 'natural' props. The semi-naked bodies of the women, the first pictured in 'nature' and the second full of confidence, implies the supposed sexual liberty of Africans who are regarded as not encumbered by conservative Western mores.

From the eighteenth century, European naturalists, such as Abey Raynal, J.J. Virey, and Georges Cuvier contributed to the establishment of black women as icons of 'primitive' or deviant sexuality (Gilman 1985:212-213). By the late nineteenth century, pseudo scientific studies of African women's anatomy, most notably that of Saartjie Baartman, bolstered claims about the pathological nature of female sexuality and entrenched associations between black women and lasciviousness (1985:212-216). The 'scientific' discourse on black

women was accompanied by simplistic understandings of African attitudes towards nudity and sex as devoid of 'modern' Western concerns about chastity and fidelity. This has had enduring impact on later representations of black women as unashamedly sensual and 'traditionally' without qualms about displaying their naked bodies. The decontextualised images of smiling, semi-naked young women in contemporary postcards perpetuate this notion.

Ever since the nineteenth century, photographs of half-naked white women were subject to censorship, were described as pornography and heavy fines or prison sentences were issued against producers⁸⁸. However, claims made to ethnography and 'tradition' legitimised the sale, publication and distribution of images of naked or semi-naked non-Western women in journals such as *National Geographic*, in museum and exhibition displays and through the medium of the picture postcard. The same claims continue to legitimate the sale and exhibition of images of semi-naked black in public spaces such as cafes, bookshops and curio stalls, places where similar images of white women or 'modern' black women would be censored or prohibited. The three contemporary postcards of semi-naked young women thus indicate that they exist in, and welcome visitors into, a place outside of modern time and independent of Western values of decorum.

Offered for the gaze of the (presumably) heterosexual male patron, South African women further 'wear' their cultural heritage outside of its communal context. Like objects of material culture, the bodies of indigenous women are effectively removed from its environment and packaged, neon coloured beads and all, for the voyeuristic tourist gaze. Although it is entirely unfeasible to suggest that semi-naked African women are never eroticised or objectified by men from their own cultural background and within the space and context of their own culture or ceremony, it is evident that outsiders most often do not distinguish between nudity within the cultural, ceremonial context and that purposefully produced as pornography. According to the proprietors of Leopard Photo Enterprises (F Kloppers & J Kloppers, personal interview, Fishoek, 4 June 2009), postcards showing bare-breasted black women are of their most popular products, especially amongst German

⁸⁸ In 1851 Félix-Jacques-Antoine Moulin was arrested and sent to prison for a month for producing hand-coloured daguerreotypes of nude women, described in court as "so obscene that even to pronounce the titles ... would be to commit an indecency" (*Two Nudes Standing, ca. 1850* Online 2000). Images of non-Western women were however not regarded as equally "obscene".

tourists. In an industry where reproduction is motivated by popular demand, black female nudity is not about culture, but about profits⁸⁹.

The smiling faces on postcards however hide the history of the double oppression that black women suffered in a racist, patriarchal society. Black South African women were subjected to both racist and sexist discrimination, effectively withheld from quality education and professional employment opportunities in the homelands where they were dependant on the wages of male migrant labourers. Contemporary representations, where decontextualised images of black women are offered for the voyeuristic tourist gaze in the name of cultural heritage, do little to challenge historical power imbalances. In the engendered spaces of cultural villages, factors such as gender, race and class further impact on the opportunities that cultural tourism may hold for black women.

4.7. Conclusion

In the previous two chapters, it was shown that the contemporary tourist industry promotes so-called 'indigenous' cultures according the dominant themes of 'ethnicity' and 'tribalism'. This chapter has sought to investigate the commodification of one of South Africa's best known cultural groups as represented in postcards and cultural villages.

My analysis started with an overview of colonialist perceptions of Zulus, impressions fuelled by popular media, stage performance and fiction, resulting in ambivalent ideas that would be carried into twentieth and twenty-first century tourist reconstructions. With reference to Hamilton's exposition of the origins and political uses of the image of King Shaka, I have motivated that essentialist and stereotypical perceptions of Zulu culture cannot simply be dismissed as derogatory colonialist inventions. The figure of Shaka and the military legacy of the Zulu nation have provided beacons of hope and inspiration to Africans, especially in the struggle for independence in the mid-twentieth century.

⁸⁹ In her controversial *Rainbow Series* (1994-1996), South African artist Candice Breitz produced collages from ethnographic postcards of black South African women and pornographic photographs of white women. Enwezor (1997:34-39) writes that Breitz attempted to draw an analogy between the colonial ethnographic capture of the black female body and the pornographic capture of white women, yet failed to recognise the complicity of white women in the oppression of black women in South Africa. He argues that images such as those produced by Breitz paradoxically re-enact the traumatic experiences of violence (1997:36).

Due to its long-standing international renown, dating from the Anglo-Zulu wars, Zulu cultural heritage currently provides opportunities for economic empowerment and conservation. The contributions of Zulu politicians and entrepreneurs to present day representations of Zulu culture as synonymous with military pride, may suggest that a 'strategic essentialism' is employed by South Africans who realise the political and economic benefits of participating in the cultural tourist sector. These attractive possibilities should however be subjected to intensive scrutiny and in my examination of postcard images and cultural villages I have tried to highlight some areas of concern. Here my concern is not with the 'authenticity' or accuracy of the commodified reconstructions of culture, but rather with the material implications that such reconstructions might have.

I focused on the continued reliance of the post-apartheid tourist and heritage industries on redundant colonialist and apartheid perceptions of African populations and specifically Zulu culture. On the mobilisation of the familiar in heritage tourism, Aitchison, MacLeod and Shaw (2000:124) write:

The attempt to create and market places based on specific tourist attractions or unique type of heritage must coexist, however, with the need to facilitate tourist identification with such a place.[...] Thus, a balance must be sought between presenting something which is different and something sufficiently familiar for tourists to identify with. This can be achieved by using vehicles such as exoticism, eroticism, nationalism and militarism, present and past, near and distant, the familiar and the Other.

It seems that those "vehicles of identification" offered in twenty-first century South Africa, are the well-known tropes of Africa. The reluctance, or financial inability, to take risks by not offering tourists the familiar Other, unfortunately hampers the chances of hosts to move beyond the expectations of visitors.

Rooted in a diverse body of texts, myths and oral accounts, the historical images of Shaka and the Zulu nation are intrinsic to a nationalist discourse that legitimates, unifies, excludes and empowers. Contemporary touristic images of Zulu bravery, pride and militarism, found in numerous cultural villages and memorial sites in KwaZulu Natal, derive from a powerful

Zulu nationalism that is gender - and ethnically - exclusive. Kizito Z. Muchemwa's description of the origins of nationalism in twenty-first century Zimbabwe rings true for the construction of Zulu nationalism and ethnic exclusivity. He argues that the origins of nationalism are;

associated with historical exclusions from narratives of the nation: exclusion of women, exclusion of other sons and daughters who are not of the Zimbabwean soil, and exclusion of those whose ancestry is tainted with colonialism. In addition to the association of soil with indigeneity is the association of blood with ancestry and heroism (2009:3).

The historical legitimacy of the Zulu as heirs of KwaZulu Natal, or the 'Zulu Kingdom', by birth and bloodshed, is re-articulated in the apparently depoliticized narratives of tourist villages and postcard images. Although mostly deployed as authenticating devices in hyper-real reconstructions of history, very real conflict between different 'ethnic' groups over resources, political autonomy and land is not a thing of the pre-colonial or apartheid past. The profit and employment associated with the contemporary tourist industry's commodification of cultural heritage in fact provides increasing incentive for local communities' promotion of 'ethnic' difference.

Cultural villages further perfectly exemplify Baudrillard's postmodern 'hyper-reality', where images, spectacles, an infinite play of self-referential signs obscure the logic of production and class conflict as constituents of contemporary society (Kellner 1995:7). Yet Baudrillard's world of radical implosion, whereby social class, gender, economics and culture collapse and differences between individuals and groups are blurred, is not sufficiently rooted in the context of social, historical and economic relations to be productive in the critical examination of the reproduction of colonial and apartheid hierarchies by the tourist and leisure industries (Kellner 1995:8; Best 1998:56-57).

The simulacra produced by the tourist industry can by no means be regarded as objective representations or mirrors of 'reality', yet Kappeler (1986) argues that the images themselves are very 'real':

representations are not just mirrors, reflections, key-holes – somebody is making them and somebody is looking at them, through a complex array of means and conventions. Nor do representations only exist on canvas, in books, on photographic paper or on screens, they have a continued existence in reality as objects of exchange; they have a genesis in material production. They are more ‘real’ than the reality they are said to reflect. All of these factors somehow straddle the commonsense divide between fiction and fact, fantasy and reality (cited in Aitchison, MacLeod & Shaw 2000: 135).

In the absence of referents, signs are thus often allowed to speak loudest⁹⁰. Postcards and cultural villages offer attractively packaged and easily consumable snapshots of heritage and cultural identity to foreign and local audiences. The pop-histories of individual ‘ethnic’ groups, consumed to the rhythm of drums and washed down with home-brewed beer in as little as an hour, provide the latest in a long genealogy of packaged representations of Southern Africans (Rassool & Witz 1996:358). These reconstructed ‘traditional’ identities, which combine Western luxuries with various signifiers of ‘authentic’ Africa, generate new meanings and new hybrid heritages, not necessarily less or more accurate than the written reports, performances at World Fairs, anthropological photographs and dioramas that preceded them. Yet these heritage-cum-leisure spaces are not simply hyper-real sites where signs infinitely and playfully reproduce themselves, independent of social-political and economic actualities.

To regard cultural village performances and picture postcards images purely as postmodern chimera, would be to deny the historical and contemporary experiences of those very ‘real’ employees of hyper-real worlds who work for wages to put ‘real’ bread on the table. In a scathing attack on the postmodern “sleight of hand” which renounces all reality and history as fictive constructions and simulations, Ziauddin Sardar argues that “there is thus no possibility of unearthing the truth about the histories of all Others, the myriad of non-Western cultures that existed and have existed in history” (1998:9,38). The postmodern

⁹⁰ With reference to the popular series *Shaka Zulu* and common perceptions of South African history, Mersham (1992:4) suggests that “international audiences, intrigued by the ethnic complexities of contemporary South Africa, lack accessible references to ‘historical’ South Africa...such audiences are fertile ground for reception of the myths of the Shaka Zulu series”.

celebration of histories and identities as performances and simulations may thus challenge those metanarratives that have served to enshrine the West's hegemony, yet it simultaneously undercuts those crucial notions of group identity, histories of oppression, religion, truth and morality by which minorities are mobilised in their resistance to the West's cannibalism.

As highlighted previously, only certain histories, bodies and identities are chosen for display and representation and these choices are founded on historical power imbalances. The simulacra encountered in the cultural tourist sector are therefore by no means a-political. Colonial and apartheid perceptions of race and ethnicity are perpetuated in post-apartheid South Africa's celebration of cultural diversity, and this festive multiculturalism emphasises divisions within the national population. 'Ethnic' groups are defined, and define themselves, in competition to other groups by stressing their cultural differences (Hughes 2003:4). The marketing of KwaZulu-Natal, as the legitimate Kingdom of the Zulu, marginalises many others who have contributed to shaping the history of the province and the country. For example, some members of the Indian population in the region feel that the legacy of pacifism and non-violent resistance, symbolised by the one-time resident of the province, Mahatma Gandhi, has been erased by current marketing strategies (Hughes 2003:5). My examination of the construction of gender hierarchies in Zulu cultural villages and postcard images has further highlighted the exclusion of women from the narrative of the Zulu nation and their relegation to roles of servility and domesticity. The postmodern hyper-real spaces and cultures enjoyed by visitors are thus founded on very real class and gender hierarchies which remain largely unchallenged by entrepreneurs and a tourist industry unwilling or unable to depart from familiar tropes.

5. CHAPTER FOUR: MULTICULTURALISM AND THE POSTMODERN BEAUTY OF POVERTY

Introduction

A prominent tourism website, called *SouthAfrica.info – Gateway to the Nation*, presents the country's cultural attractions as follows:

South Africa is home to diverse cultures, ranging from the Zulus who resisted European conquest to the nomadic San of the Karoo desert. Each culture has evolved its own distinctive music, art forms and traditional rituals, while the descendants of colonial settlers have evolved variations of their European roots (*South Africa's Tourism Industry Online*).

According to this perspective, the South African nation is made up of dissimilar groups, each with its own recognisable forms of cultural expression which evolved over the centuries, supposedly in isolation. This approach to cultural identity confirms the emphasis on elemental 'tribal' identity and ethnic particularity found in postcards and cultural villages.

Several scholars have expressed concern about the tourism and heritage sectors' oversimplification of ethnic division. Hughes (2003:7) is apprehensive about the reliance on the "rampant ethnicity" and "legitimation of tribalism" that have come to underscore the commodification of cultural identity. Hayward (2007) and Schutte (2003) are also uneasy about the post-apartheid entrenchment of ethnic divisions by the cultural heritage sector of the Rainbow Nation. As previously emphasised, heritage and tourism have become inextricable linked to nation building in South Africa and in this final chapter I will briefly interrogate the notion of 'unity in diversity' with regards to cultural tourism. I will also consider recent additions with regard to the postcard rack as alternatives to contemporary ethnographic postcards: images of the inhabitants of South Africa's townships and squatter camps. I will examine the incorporation of these neighbourhoods and lifestyles as subjects for the tourist gaze, and interrogate the manner in which townships and squatter camps are positioned within South African multiculturalist rhetoric.

5.1. Ethnicity and multiculturalism

The credo 'unity in diversity' encapsulates the government and the tourist industry's promotion, and attempts to reconcile, both 'Rainbow Nation' and 'land of contrasts'. For JoAnn McGrecor and Lyn Schumaker (2006:665), this notion of the 'Rainbow Nation' reproduces "older racial and ethnic categories as the primary frame for understanding identity, although recast within international discourses of multiculturalism". This post-1994 nation-building strategy is however predicated on contradictory premises as it rests on the simultaneous over-articulation and dismissal of difference. According to Percy More (1995), emphasis is placed on both 'particularity' (ethnicity or cultural identity) and 'universalism' (non-racialism), yet the two are suspended in tension as over-articulation of one will constitute a denial of the other (cited in Boyce 1999: 234). This is clearly seen in the marketing of KwaZulu-Natal, where a territory that is home to people of various cultural backgrounds, has been appropriated in tourist and heritage discourse as the legitimate 'kingdom' of one group.

For Boyce (1999:235), a problematic implication of post-apartheid vision is the classification of South African citizens in terms of ethnic and racial criteria, rendering these (once more) in-transmutable and paradoxically undermining of the ruling party's commitment to non-racialism. By resorting to pluralism and emphasising ethnicity - a defensive and placatory strategy of "managing" diversity - engagement in more radical and transformative debate is avoided (1999:236). Bhabha writes; "[c]ultural difference must not be understood as the free play of polarities and pluralities in the homogenous empty time of the nation community (1984:162). The Rainbow Nation, however, seems to sell exactly that fiction: beautiful landscapes where reconciled 'tribes' can play themselves out.

Although depoliticised at face-value and used for the promotion of the miraculous reconciliation of South Africans, the emphasis on the essential and primordial dissimilarities between people are predicated upon fragile relationships. This strategy's euphoric celebration of reconciliation and multiculturalism conveniently smoothes away the deep-rooted tensions that mark the nation's past. Furthermore, the prominence given to ethnicity and elemental difference gives authority and legitimacy to claims of ownership and

belonging. The evocation of primordial identities and age-old traditions by individual 'tribal' groups, have often accompanied debates about indigeneity, 'first people' and the privileges of rightful ownership of resources. Sewn together into a patchwork rainbow, the seams of this imagined community do intermittently rupture violently, as was seen in recent xenophobic attacks and pre-election clashes.

The emphasis on indigenous 'ethnic' groups further leads to the exclusion of some South African identities and lifestyles. Here I would briefly like to address the omission of white South Africans from the majority of postcards and 'tribal' reconstructions in tourist villages, which may be largely motivated by the perceived demands by tourists for that which is different to Western (white) culture. This absence of the display and ethnic characterisation of whites possibly also indicates a perpetuation of colonial and apartheid visions of 'white' culture as normative and not subject to anthropological classification and presentation. In its assumptions about tourists and visitors as Western and white, belonging to 'nations' rather than 'tribes', the contemporary marketplace positions whites as sufficiently modern to participate purely as consumers and spectators, rarely as consumable spectacle. On the absence of the classification of some groups, Sven Ouzman writes:

Also critical to consider are the silences or lack of definitions for certain groups like 'whites' and 'Euro-Americans', a silence that tries to suggest there is no need to define a norm, but there is a need to define 'deviations' from this norm (Sven.Ouzman@up.ac.za. 27 August 2009).

In its invisibility or absence from touristic images and reconstructions which are predicated on historic categories of race and ethnicity, whites remain unchallenged in their roles as spectators of those who 'differ' or 'deviate' from the Western, modern norm. Richard Dyer (1997:1) similarly argues, "as long as white people are not racially seen and named, they/we function as a human norm. Other people are raced, we are just people". As the norm, white culture supposedly needs no performing, as everyone is presumed to be familiar with it. In the process both white hosts and visitors comfortably resist "historical self-consciousness" (Clifford 1988:229), and remain the privileged subjects of *Volkskunde* (later sociology), rather than *Völkerkunde* (later anthropology).

5.2. The postmodern beauty of poverty

The postcolonial critique of the stereotypical and disempowering popular, scientific and artistic representation of 'traditional peoples' has contributed to attempts by historians, artists, authors, politicians and some stakeholders in the tourist industry, to arrive at more inclusive and complex renderings. Since the mid-1990s, there have been additions to the stable repertoire of the postcard industry: members of South Africa's co-called 'coloured' communities and inhabitants of the country's sprawling squatter camps now adorn glossy postcards sold in airports and gift shops, purportedly representing contemporary life.

These postcards supposedly depict the day-to-day lives of 'contemporary' and ordinary South Africans; it shows the modern architecture and Western clothes, poverty, litter and power pylons which are edited from the photos taken at cultural villages. Instead of focusing on the cultural heritage of individual ethnic groups, these images of bustling streets concentrate on the vibrancy, energy, optimism and creativity of the multicultural South African society. In truly postmodern fashion, it snubs purity for pluralism and hybridity, and it can be argued that such images start to challenge the archaic and stereotypical images that belong to the modern image archive of Africa.

Picture postcards of townships should be regarded in the relation to the post-apartheid development of township tourism. According to Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001:283) whereas cultural villages evoke the bucolic and timeless, townships are presented as "sites of 'living culture', 'political resistance' and 'modern life'". By means of organised tours in townships and so-called 'informal settlements' situated on the fringes of most South African towns and cities, foreign and local visitors can enter neighbourhoods "previously inaccessible to whites", interact with inhabitants and experience 'real', contemporary Africa (2001:284,285). In their study of several township tours, Witz, Rassool and Minkley found that most tours offer samples of three elements: visual traces of apartheid deprivations, memorials of political resistance, and ethnic diversity (2001:284). Several township tours include extensive reference to their historical and political contexts by focussing on the traces of architecture of apartheid and urban resistance (2001:287; Hughes 2003:7). Tours further include visits to homes of anti-apartheid activists, the sites of conflict, local churches and crèches, historical mission schools, shebeens and traditional healers.

Townships are often described as sites of cultural diversity and exchange, where authenticity is not found in adherence to 'ethnic traditions', but in the supposedly unpretentious lives of those making do with little material possessions. According to Hughes (2003:7), township tours may subvert the "pastoral paradigm" of cultural villages as they "explicitly stress ethnic diversity". Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001:286) however argue that; "almost invariably on the township tour, the 'Struggle Route' gives way to the 'Shebeen Route'". In order to attract visitors who want to see 'traditional' Africa, township tours often include 'traditional' dances, crafts, food and 'sangomas' (2001:285-286). The sites of resistance and remembrance are thus in danger of becoming "embellishments upon what is essentially a township tour with all its traditional dressings", and thus absorbed into spectacles of cultural difference (2001:286).

Furthermore, although appearing to be inclusive, honest and festive, recent postcard representations of urban and contemporary South Africans practice a highly selective pluralism. While there is a move away from the emphasis on distinctive and 'traditional' ethnic identities, the majority of postcards focus on black South Africans in township or squatter camp settings; thus ignoring the supposedly less interesting (read different) lifestyles of white squatters and that of the growing black middle-class. Images of Indian, Chinese and white South Africans are largely absent, and the representations of 'coloured' South Africans and Cape Malay people play on themes of old-worldliness and peculiarity. Unlike the township tours, which often make extensive reference to their historical and political contexts, postcard images of townships are further depoliticised and the socio-economic realities of disadvantaged and marginalised people are rendered picturesque for visitor consumption.

5.3. Postcards of 'coloured' and Cape Malay people

Postcards of South Africa's 'coloured' and Cape Malay communities either show older women and men as quaint and curious relics from the rural backwaters, or they portray flower and fruit sellers as vibrant additions to the urban space. In a nostalgic image titled *Transport Memories of the Past* (Figure 29), a rural donkey-cart driver becomes an icon of 'the simple life', and a bearer of the (assumed) urban, modern viewer's reveries of tranquillity and closeness to nature.

In an eye-catching postcard (Figure 30) a jam-packed stall is arranged into a splendid collage which almost consumes the still body of the vendor, tidying her wares for the gaze of the consumer and traveller. A postcard of brightly painted houses in the streets in the Bo-Kaap, Cape Town, described on the back as "home to the Cape Muslim people" (Figure 31), portrays individual figures and pairs chatting and standing on their porches. The scene is one of a tranquil existence against the backdrop of Table Mountain and the city and the Cape Malay people are part of the scenic view; they serve to augment the architecture and cityscape in ways that white people presumably cannot. The postcards remind of colonial paintings of the Cape of Good Hope, depicting it as a settled space of leisure and consumption fashioned for the comfort of the settler communities. Concerning the representation of Islamic slaves at the Cape, Gabeba Baderoon (2009:3) writes; "the dominant style of such portrayals is the mode of the picturesque in which the violence of the slave-holding colony was rendered into a pleasing, domesticated view of the Cape and its environs". The Islamic slaves, with their foreign religion, cuisine and dress, added something of the Oriental to the newly established city, making it appear picturesque, exotic and colourful, a marked contrast to the uninhabited and undomesticated spaces of the interior. Quoting Jeppie (1988:3), Baderoon asserts that,

the picturesque tradition continued into the mid-twentieth century as Muslims were consistently staged in paintings, stories and news articles about wedding feasts and funerals as 'quiet, kind, slow-speaking, fatalistic and passive.' Rendered in paintings, popular cookbooks and travel writing about the Cape, Muslims were portrayed as placid, entertaining and exotic (2009:3-4).

The inert individual figures on the contemporary postcards represent a continuation of this visual convention; the individual figures are not productive or part of the city's professional and commercial spheres, and because of their immobility they can be absorbed as intrinsic to its beautiful panoramic views.

In the three postcards discussed above, the mute individuals are translated into colourful and romanticised caricatures, their lives and images chosen for representation on the presumption that potential buyers would consider them interesting and unique. These snapshots are highly depoliticised and aestheticised, which conceal the harsh socio-economic realities of some of South Africa's historically most dispossessed citizens, who continue to battle against dire poverty, unemployment, lack of decent housing and limited access to professions other than that of the informal sector. Therefore, although such images may be credited for representing (some of) the multiple identities and histories of South Africa, the acknowledgement happens through the decontextualising and appropriation of selected marginal histories for the nostalgic tourist gaze.

5.4. 'Authentic' back stages

It seems that the merits of postmodern critique, its mantras of inclusivity and pluralism, have come to be absorbed as props in the production of 'authentic' images of South Africans. The quaintness of hybridity and glamour of squalor, previously hidden, but now canonised as vernacular cultural forms by postmodern multiculturalism, have successfully joined the ethnographic displays in the postcard rack and tourist village.

McCannell's notions of the 'front' and 'back stage' spaces of tourist performance, where real lives are lived behind the scenes, is instructive when examining the tourist industry's production of further room for the enactment of authentic, or 'real' life (Frow 1991:128). John Urry (2002:9) argues that due to the awareness of the 'inauthenticity' of staged cultural practice, and the difficulty of accessing 'backstage' cultural practices, which are regarded as more 'authentic', "people being observed and local tourist entrepreneurs gradually come to construct backstages". Some tourist villages therefore construct clearly demarcated front-and backstage areas, communal, public spaces and private, domestic

spheres which are accessed by invitation only. Visitors to Shakaland were initially taken on a tour of a 'contemporary' Zulu village after their visit to the movie-set village⁹¹, and at Walter's Zulu Cultural Village visitors may accompany Walter whenever he is invited to Zulu weddings and coming-of-age ceremonies (*Walter's Zulu Cultural Village* Online). Lesedi Cultural Village, where local families live permanently in the five homesteads, gives visitors the option of "actually living amongst these families" (*Cultural Experiences: Lesedi African Lodge and Cultural Village* Online). This 'rare access' to the backstage spaces where 'real' people live their lives, prepare meals and celebrate special occasions, gives visitors the feeling that they are able to identify that which is inauthentic and staged.

"In urban South Africa, there seems to be no apparent need for the staging of reality, when township life seems to offer unmediated sense of continued harshness and deprivation", write Witz, Rassool & Minkley (2001:283). Township tours and postcard images thus take viewers into the backyards, kitchens and bedrooms of those living in South Africa's sprawling squatter camps, attempting to provide visitors with a more intimate glimpse of how 'real' people live. Yet this deeper probing of the lives of South Africans is based on the assumption that the "reality of 'real life', in its 'real state', is amenable for inspection", and that it is somehow more untainted than those lives encountered on the stage of the cultural village (Coupland, Garrett & Bishop 2005:202). This assumption, which facilitates tourist access to 'virgin territory', has ironically led to the establishment of a new canon of 'true' township style and 'authentic' poverty, portrayed in glossy postcards of vibrant squatter camps. Urban life, argue Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001:283), is however also amenable to staging, and townships are traversed with routes in which scripted performances contribute to the 'authenticity' of the special genre of the township tour.

According to Urry (2005: 26), this 'touring consumption' of culture may,

⁹¹Schutte writes that visitors to Shakaland would be taken by boat to a 'contemporary' Zulu village after their experience of the re-constructed 'traditional' village, built on the set of the film *Shaka Zulu*. He writes that visitors were "expose[d] to the reality of poverty and modified Zulu lifestyles in the face of modernity. [...] Here visitors could experience what was 'real' in contemporary terms" (2003: 479). This attempt may indeed serve to offer an alternative or "deconstruct the possible mystification of the Zulu at the performances at the movie-set village (Schutte 2003:479), yet the voyage by boat to the location of 'real', 'contemporary' Zulu lives positions the visitor as explorer of new cultures and overlooks the possibility that 'contemporary' identities may be equally scripted as 'traditional' ones.

lead to the consuming of place after place through an unrelenting visual economy of signs. Places can indeed be consumed, wasted, used up as they are merely a set of abstract characteristics. Consuming places can literally consume places as the tourism industry rushes headlong in a search for a new room with a view before it gets immediately 'postcarded'.

The quest for 'authentic' or 'real' lifestyles by both tourists and entrepreneurs has come to resemble quests for 'unchartered' territories and peoples by colonial explorers, anthropologists and fortune seekers. Township tours provide visitors with "journeys across the African frontier", to the sites of apartheid violence and bloodshed, previously inaccessible to whites (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:283-284).

Many inhabitants of townships welcome this new development, and numerous guesthouses, restaurants and local tour operators cater to the interest in township life. Tours of townships and interaction with local hosts may indeed make valuable contributions to overcoming historic divisions, yet the interactions between hosts and visitors, sights and spectators, cannot simply be described in terms of 'cultural exchange', a phrase suggestive of equal giving and taking. These are primarily economic transactions where services and goods are exchanged for capital, and controlled and scripted environments and exchanges ensure value for the money of visitors that are invariably more privileged than their hosts⁹².

The commodification of poverty (like the commodification of 'traditional' cultural heritage) relies on the presumed difference between those pictured and those buying the pictures. The difference represented by the urban poor is however uncomfortably closer to home in both time and space than that of the rural traditionalist. Here the 'difference' between viewer and impoverished native is an immense and very real class difference. The abjection represents a painful alterity which is both intriguing and repulsive, and the successful commodification thereof depends on the concealment or prettification of the true socio-economic hardship of the citizens of the Rainbow nation. The rhetoric of amicable hybridity also conveniently glosses over the tensions and violent conflict between groups of different political, religious and national orientation, who have little choice but to make their home in squatter camps. Postcards of squatter camps therefore frame these 'informal settlements'

⁹² The successes and obstacles of township tourism are examined by Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001) and Hughes (2003), and will not be addressed here.

as vibrant, lively urban spaces inhabited by energetic and resourceful people. The store keepers and fully stocked shop portrayed on the postcard “Africa – Spirit of Enterprise” (Figure 32) tells a heroic tale of success and abundance despite the odds. Two postcards of children playing in the midst of poverty and refuse (Figures 33 and 34), convince of the energy, optimism and exuberance of the next generation, whose smiles detract from the squalor and provide glimmers of hope for a better future. Their smiles insulate the viewer from the truth of the children’s lives and for the comfort of the paying visitor their images do not challenge or mention the socio-economic factors which sees them playing with fire in a broken-down bus.

5.5. Conclusion

My discussion of the presentation of multiculturalism and diversity in the tourist and heritage sectors focused on the contradictions inherent in the promotion of both ‘unity’ and ‘diversity’. In his critique of *The Family of Man*, an exhibition of photographs that aimed to show the universality of human actions, Roland Barthes (1974:100) writes as follows about this “ambiguous myth of the human ‘community’”:

This myth functions in two stages: first the difference between human morphologies is asserted, exoticism is insistently stressed, the infinite variations of the human species, the diversity in skins, skulls and customs are made manifest, the image of Babel is complacently projected over that of the world. Then, from this pluralism, a type of unity is magically produced: man is born, works, laughs and dies everywhere in the same ways; and it there still remains in these actions some ethnic peculiarity, at least one hints that there is underlying each one an identical ‘nature’, that their diversity is only formal and does not belie the existence of a common mould.

The myth of ‘unity in diversity’ that has been scripted for consumption by foreigners and South Africans alike, depends on depoliticised snapshots of particular South Africans, their histories, conflict and current socio-economic realities defused through recourse to the poetic and the picturesque. Although the emphasis on post-apartheid reconciliation,

unification and cultural exchanges has a valuable role to play, the celebration of multiculturalism entrenches rather than challenges colonial and apartheid categories of race and ethnicity.

It can be argued that the post-apartheid tourist industry's 'magnanimous' inclusion and representation of lives lived in abject poverty, previously concealed from sight in remote homelands, do serve to diversify and update the industry's repertoire of images. However, the selective representation of the urban and rural poor as picturesque conveniently depoliticises the lives of disadvantaged South Africans. It also draws on an infamous post-independence trope of Africa - that of poverty and desperation - yet prettifies and presents it as vibrant testimonies of resilience. The production of postcards of the inhabitants of townships and squatter camps should further be subjected to the same criticism as those produced in cultural villages: the absence of a formalised system of compensation, copyrights and royalties for those individuals who become the subjects in postcard images.

Just as Rainbowism circumvents complexity and cultural conflict through a focus on diversity, the realities of millions of lives are elided through the emphasis on the resourcefulness and endurance of the disadvantaged. Though the heroism and ingenuity of many disadvantaged South Africans deserve merit, their selective representation and consequent styling as quaint once more marginalises them as different and positions them as spectacles for bourgeois consumption. Township tourism may have a valuable role to play in the challenging of cultural and racial stereotypes, those held by South African citizens and foreigners. The commodification of poverty by postcard producers, however, seems to have done little more than cash in on yet another 'tribe', one whose shared 'heritage' is that of material disadvantage and oppression.

6. CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMODIFICATION OF CULTURAL IDENTITIES

6.1. Implications for the commodification of cultural identities

Neverdeen Pieterse (1992:23) reminds in his history of Europe's image of Africa that the myths of Africa correlate with a myth of Europe itself. Representations in contemporary postcards and cultural village performances closely resemble colonial and apartheid images, yet the post-apartheid context complicates readings of such images and performances as wholly unaltered mirrors of the West's image of itself. Representations of South African cultural identities and heritages are intricately connected to the tourism and heritage industries, which respond to and take their cues from current governmental bodies that envision tourism as an ideal medium for the profitable preservation of heritage. Since the late 1980s, South Africa has had to compete in "the international order of images", deliberately constructing itself as a distinctive commodity and negotiating its own images (Rassool & Witz 1996:336-7). The 'new' South Africa chose to market itself through an amalgamation of natural beauty, modernity and 'authentic' African primitivism (1996:337). In this thesis contemporary picture postcards of South Africans have provided a focal point for the investigation of this specific post-apartheid marketing strategy, and its impact on the ways in which cultural identities are selected and packaged for consumption.

Looking at contemporary postcards depicting so-called 'indigenous' South Africans, it seems that colonial and apartheid dichotomies of modern and primitive, host and guests, the West and the Rest, have remained largely unchallenged. Uncontested images which objectify black bodies and portray rich cultural heritages as static, seem to have eluded decolonisation. The colonial and apartheid eras have further established authoritative criteria of 'authenticity', a repertoire of tried and trusted signifiers of legitimately 'traditional' indigenous culture, which the postcard and tourism industries continue to mobilise.

The reproduction of colonial and apartheid notions of 'traditionalism' and 'tribalism' in cultural villages and postcards become part of a circular flow of images and function to re-authenticate those reconstructed heritages. When asked whether they take photographs for postcards at cultural villages, an employee of Art Publishers replied that they "photograph what tourists come to see" (personal correspondence, 10 September 2007).

There is an awareness of tourists' desire to reify prior knowledge, and provide mementos that will verify the process of confirmation. Visitors to tourist villages, who photograph performances of cultural identity or purchase postcards of the village displays, therefore not only capture reconstructed images derived from a historical and mythical image-Africa, but also maintain that image-archive (Frow 1991:126). John Frow (1991:126) writes that photography became central to the industrialised tourism of the twentieth century, partly due to;

its power of capturing any piece of empirically witnessed reality and transforming it into a sign of itself... Photography as witness, as commemoration, as aesthetic framing [...] performs the crucial task of establishing a concordance of an empirical and personally experienced reality with an ideal pattern.

Frow (1991:126) argues that the photographic portrayal of tourist sites and sights function as a 'hermeneutic circle', a perspective suggested by Albers and James (1988), and Urry (1991) (in Caton & Santos 2007:1). Authoritative representations such as guidebooks, postcards, tourist village performances and websites publicise images that are visited and photographed by tourists⁹³, consequently displayed or sent to friends and family as a further set of representations which confirm the original set and its relationship to the 'real' (1991:126). For Frow, this is "a process of authentication, the establishment of a verified relay between origin and trace" (1991:12).

This hermeneutic circle, its smooth circulation between signs that infinitely duplicate and authenticate themselves, is maintained by cultural villages and postcard images that gauge their criteria for authenticity from ethnographic and touristic sources that date from the colonial and apartheid eras and have since been absorbed by the post-apartheid tourism and heritage industries. Its steady course is further sustained by the successes of popular

⁹³ In their study of the holiday photographs of a group of students on a study abroad programme, Caton and Santos (2007: 11) have found that the images produced by the students seem to echo tourism media representations very closely. Even though this group of students were travelling with a programme of 'educational tourism' aiming to promote cross-cultural dialogue and provide a critical context for exposure to other cultures, the photographs and captions they produced continued to position the inhabitants of host countries as timelessly traditional and exotic Others, and "suggest that the hermeneutic circle may stand complete" (Caton & Santos 2007:11).

destinations such as Shakaland, DumaZulu and Lesedi, ethnic super-parks which have become dominant players in a new genre of “cultural museums” (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2001:178) and the locations for many postcard images. The popularity of such destinations confirms the presumed tourist demand for stereotypical performances and representations of ‘traditional’ Africa, making them attractive models for other entrepreneurs.

From the late 1990s, the South African Tourist Board positioned itself as a community development organisation and currently, cultural tourism is earmarked as medium for empowerment (Rassool & Witz 1996: 339). However, cultural villages do not necessarily address historical socio-economic imbalances as the performers and subjects of the images are mostly not the key stakeholders in the corporations representing them. In the examples discussed in this thesis, the postcard companies Leopard Photo Enterprises and Art Publishers, and the cultural villages of DumaZulu, Lesesi and Shakaland, management is in the hands of individuals who are themselves outsiders to the cultures commodified in their products. The three large and successful cultural villages further require financial investment and corporate partnerships beyond the scope of local communities, who have at the most been able to establish small businesses that yield fairly small returns (Hughes 2003:4). Here I echo Hayward’s call for the increasing academic and political scrutiny of cultural tourism in order to regulate the controls and profits of cultural heritage (2007:28).

The emphasis on ‘the traditional’ and its establishment as criterion for authenticity further creates difficulties for entrepreneurs who wish to challenge prevailing stereotypes. In several ways it impacts on the efforts of those who wish to present visitors with more nuanced representations of their cultural heritage than those commonly found in postcards and mainstream tourist villages. Entrepreneurs and heritage organisations must negotiate with the canon of marketable cultural identities which has been established by contemporary cultural villages and postcard producers, one founded largely on the clear delineation of ethnic units and recognisable adherence to reconstructions of pre-colonial ‘tradition’. In order to appear ‘authentic’ and assume cultural legitimacy, communities must adhere, to a degree, to the ‘expertly’ delineated criteria of their respective cultural units - criteria constituted from an amalgamation of oral narratives, ethnographic writings and popular representations. They are confronted with a centuries-old image of themselves, which impacts on their choices about and efforts at preservation and

commodification. The weighty image-Africa also makes for stereotypical assumptions about tourists; and their presumed longing for untainted pre-colonial South African traditions reinforces essentialist reconstructions of 'indigenous' cultural identity. In this regard, much research is needed about the expectations, views and preconceptions held by international and domestic consumers of cultural tourism and heritage.

6.2. Images of Africans by Africans?

More research is needed to understand the perpetuation of stereotypes by some local communities. These may be acts of 'strategic essentialism', yet it may be that the performance and presentation of selected signifiers of 'tradition' and 'ethnicity' offer small-scale businesses a much-needed draw card – a medium with which to attract visitors. This is perhaps the strategies employed at Walter Cele's Isinamva Cultural Village in Eshowe and Ma Betty Jantjies' Xhosa Village in Oudtshoorn's Bongoletu Township. Both market their enterprises by means of references to the familiar markers of 'authenticity', such as 'traditional' dances and 'sangomas'. They do, however, seem less concerned with the obsessive styling of their own heritage as untouched by outside influences, clearly noticeable in the absence of standardised costumes and the tolerance of those so-called signs of 'Westernisation' edited from the cultural villages discussed in this thesis. There have also been several larger public initiatives that challenge essentialist views of culture and heritage as static, yet more research is needed to determine the successes and popularity of such small-scale and public ventures (Hughes 2003:8).

Township tours are regarded by Hughes (2003:7) as potentially subversive of the stereotypes perpetuated by rural cultural villages, and Ma Betty's 'Xhosa Experience' may offer one such an example. Witz, Rassool and Minkley are however more cautious and propose that many such tours frame townships as "extension[s] of the rural village in an expression of timeless ethnicity" (2001:285). I have further highlighted the problematic portrayal of the lives of some disadvantaged South Africans as more 'real' and less 'performed' than those encountered in cultural villages. Postcards of townships and of impoverished South Africans may steer away from tropes of primitivism and tribalism, yet exploit the much publicised post-colonial trope of Africa: that of Third World poverty.

Is it at all possible for South Africans to rupture the 'hermeneutic circle' sustained by the picture postcard and cultural village representations discussed in this thesis? Can visitors be 're-educated'; their preconceptions challenged through exposure to more nuanced presentations of cultural heritage, without risking accusations of 'inauthenticity'? Can Africa de-colonise its own images, peppered with essentialist derogatory stereotypes? Semi-naked black Zulu women are not figments of the Western imagination, neither are Xhosa initiation ceremonies or indigenous methods of food production and healing, but can practices and lifestyles that fill many with pride and a sense of belonging ever shake off the connotations of lasciviousness, backwardness and primitivism attached to them over the centuries?

A seemingly straightforward recommendation would be to urge Africans to take charge of the production of their own images and of the ways in which they are represented to the rest of the world. In her critique of the image of Africa produced by Joseph Conrad and Karen Blixen, the late Zimbabwean author Yvonne Vera (2001:120) proposed that "Africa must restore its symbols and identity, and confirm and initiate more fulfilling images". Christa van Zyl's study of stereotypes of black Africans concludes with the proposition of a 'cultural decolonisation', and she attaches great value to the 'own voice' that Africans are increasingly giving to popular representations of Africa (2008:127). Their recommendations at first hand sound reasonable, yet a simple strategy of 'images of Africa by Africa' is problematic and impracticable for several reasons.

Firstly, such a recommendation overlooks the economic and socio-political barriers that hamper the creative and entrepreneurial work of many people who regard themselves as Africans. Of course African communities and states vary greatly in their capacity to produce and publicise images of themselves, but the most sincere and original of ideas and projects struggle to see the light in contexts of political instability, unemployment, food insecurity and infrastructural insufficiency. African artists and entrepreneurs must further compete with the 'images' produced and broadcast globally by international media giants, entertainment industries and multi-national tourist service providers. Secondly, who are included under the designation 'African'? Does it include Europeans and Asians who have been living on the continent for centuries, or is the title reserved for 'black' inhabitants? Does it include the diaspora or African Americans? Such a suggestion, if not considering

'Africa' in all its complexity, may paradoxically perpetuate the same tropes of 'black' Africa that form the foundation of the stereotypes that necessitate decolonisation.

Thirdly, it assumes that there exists a homogenous body of 'Africans' who are unified in their aims and able to agree on images of themselves that are more sincere, nuanced and complimentary than those produced by Westerners. Who will determine the nature of such representations and how will their successful communication be ensured? How can such images steer clear of essentialising Africans and falling prey to stereotypes of Africans as united by a primordial 'African spirit'? I am by no means disputing the fundamental necessity of such initiatives, yet one cannot assume that all 'Africans' share the same view of 'problematic' images and representations, or that their views will complement those of scholars who encourage the decolonisation of African imagery. As the similarities between colonial and some contemporary Zulu representations of Zulu culture and nationalism suggest, 'Africans' may not all wish to do away with the very tribalism that so troubles critics.

In this thesis I have undertaken to investigate the representation and commodification of postcard images of South Africans. I have done this from the perspective of an outsider to those cultural groups portrayed in postcards and cultural villages. My readings of visual texts were influenced by the research of other academics, most of who utilise post-colonialist and poststructuralist theoretical perspectives, and like me, do not belong to the previously colonised people or minority groups depicted in the images they engage with. In this thesis I have emphasised the necessity for the scrutiny of current processes of control and production, and the increasing scholarly challenge to stereotypical representations of culture as static.

However, what seems to be lacking in the critical discourse about tourist representations of South African heritage and cultural identity, are the viewpoints of those very South Africans who are the subjects of both tourist images and visual studies research. How do contemporary women, who regard themselves as Zulu, feel about the ways in which their heritage is portrayed in picture postcards? Can ordinary South Africans identify with the images of themselves that are sold to the world? Are cultural villages a source of pride for South African performers and visitors, for those whose cultural institutions are

commodified? Extensive investigation of the opinions of South Africans about such images of themselves is thus required, in order to stimulate dialogue and provide a point of departure from which to challenge, enrich and diversify current representations and their mode of production. Although this may be a mammoth project to propose, one which no doubt needs substantial refining and will give rise to many theoretical and ethical challenges, it may provide a starting point for the opening up of exclusive academic critiques to the general population and the ones whose images are deconstructed. Responses to representations will most likely be diverse, ambiguous and contradictory, yet this divergence of opinion might provide the most powerful challenge to the prevailing canon's predilection for static 'tribalism' and its outmoded foundation upon a modern/traditional dichotomy.

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APPENDIX: ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig 1. *Good Specimen of Strong Zulus.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. Original size unknown.

Published by Braune and Levy, Johannesburg, South Africa. Internet image.

(http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html.)

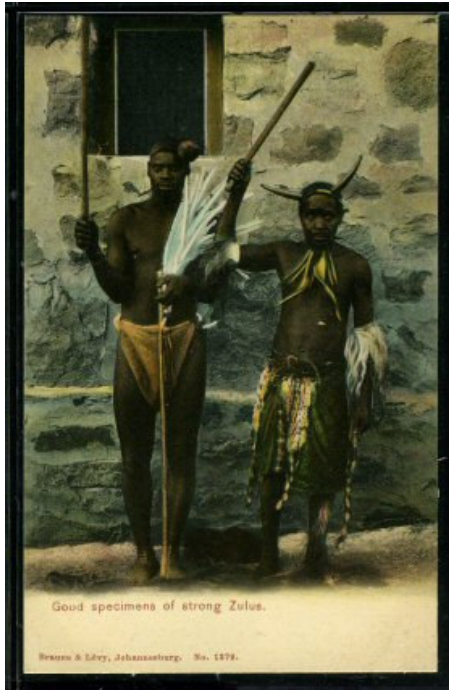


Fig 2. Wallace Bradley, *A Group of Girls – All Sisters.* Colour postcard. (ca.1900). Original size unknown. Published by Hallis and Company, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. (Geary & Webb

1998: 158).



Fig 3. George Washington Wilson, *Zulu Girls Eating “Mealie Pap”*. (ca.1900). Colour postcard. Original size unknown. Published in Cape Town, South Africa. Internet image. (<http://www.stamps-auction.com/ethnic-naked-zulu-girls-eating-mealie-rap-old-postcard-for-sale-47038>).



Fig 4. *South African Rickshaw Boys*. (ca.1904) Colour postcard. Original size unknown. Printed by Stengel and Company, Dresden, Germany. Sponsored by A. Rittenberg, Durban, South Africa. (Geary & Webb 1998: 35).



Fig. 5. *Native Barber.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. Original size unknown. Published by Braune and Levy, Johannesburg, South Africa. Internet image.

(http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html.)

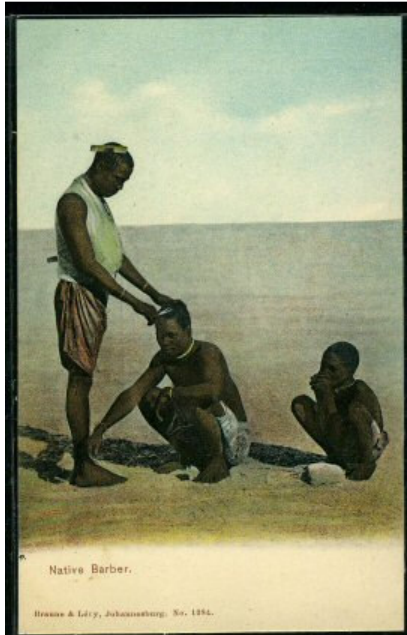


Fig 6. *A Group of Pondo Christians at Nkanga – Rev. Cyril and Mrs Green at the Back.* [Sa].

Black and white postcard. Original size unknown. Internet image.

(http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html.)



Fig 7. *Going to Sunday School.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. Original size unknown. Published by Braune and Levy, Johannesburg, South Africa. Internet image.

(http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html.)

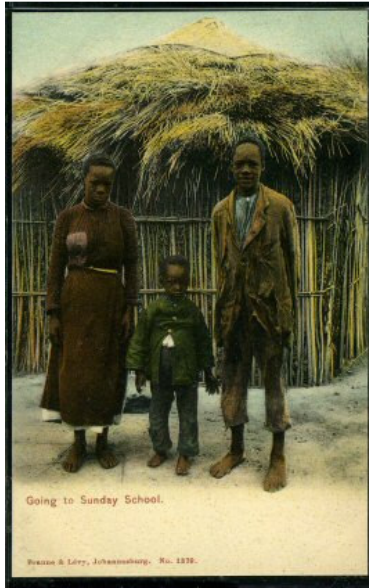


Fig 8. *Zululand.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. Original size unknown. Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa. (Postmarked 1989). Internet image.

(http://judyspostcardsplus.blogspot.com/2008_12_01_archive.html.)



Fig 9. *South Africa.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. 10 x 14,8. Published by Wild Treks, Cape Town, South Africa.



Fig 10. Johan Kloppers and Fanie Kloppers, *South Africa.* *Johan and Fanie Kloppers.* (2008). Colour postcard. 15 x 12. Published by Leopard Photo Enterprises, Cape Town, South Africa.



SOUTH AFRICA
JOHAN & FANIE KLOPPERS



Fig 11. Johan Kloppers and Fanie Kloppers, *South Africa. Johan and Fanie Kloppers*. [Sa].
Colour postcard. 15 x 12. Published by Leopard Photo Enterprises, Cape Town, South Africa.



Fig 12. *Tribal Life South Africa*. (2003). Colour Postcard. 15,5 x 12. Published by The Photo Workshop, George, South Africa.

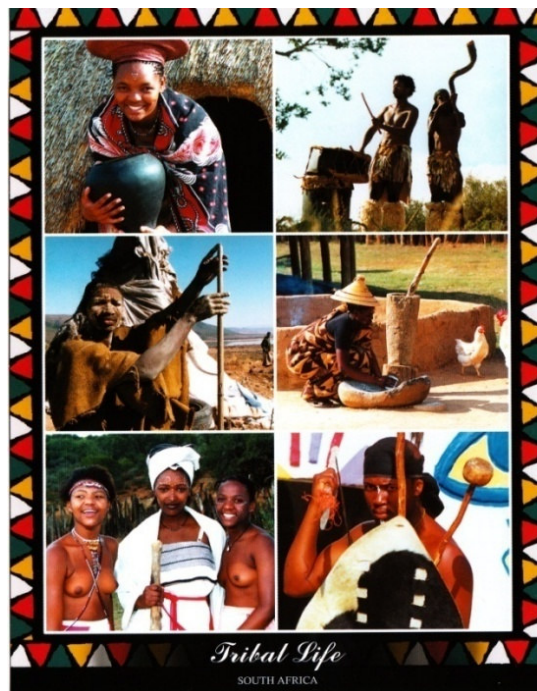


Fig 13. John Hone and Nigel Chapman, *Tribal Life – South Africa*. [ca. 2000]. Colour Postcard. 14,9 x 10,5. Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.

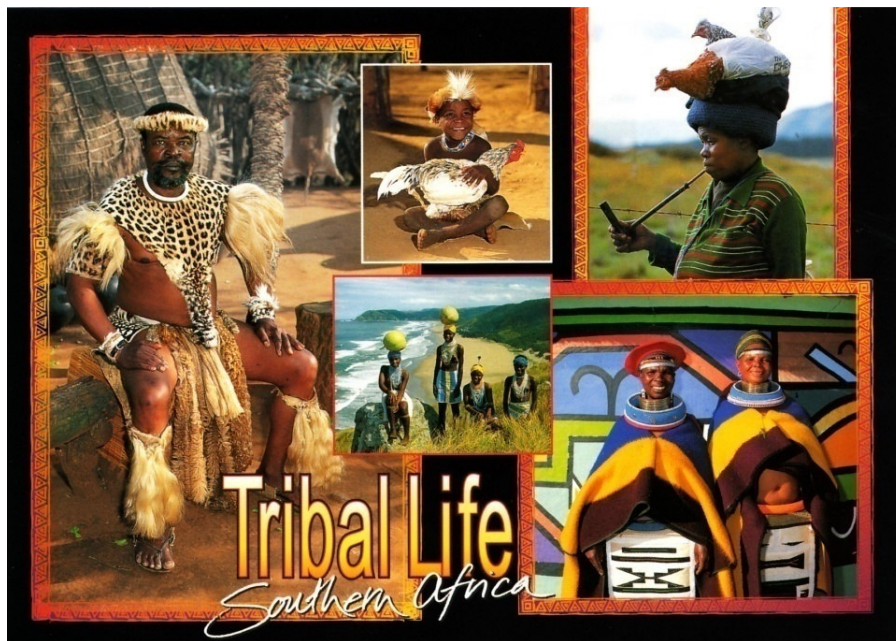


Fig 14. John Hone, *Tribal Life: South Africa*. [ca. 2000]. Colour postcard. 14,9 x 10,5. Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.



AFRICAN LIFE · SOUTH AFRICA

Fig 15. Johan Kloppers and Fanie Kloppers, *Traditional Ndebele People of South Africa - Johan and Fanie Kloppers.* (2006). Colour postcard. 15 x 12. Published by Leopard Photo Enterprises, Cape Town, South Africa.

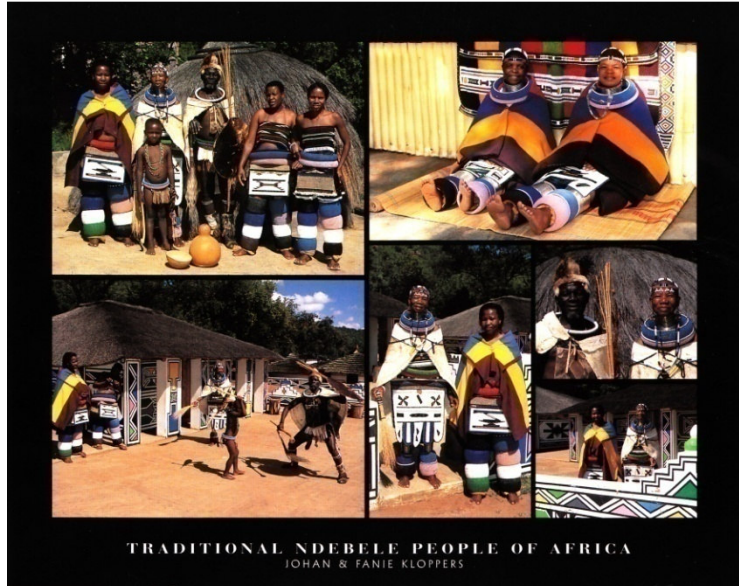


Fig 16. Johan Kloppers, *Traditional Zulu People of South Africa - Johan Kloppers.* (2006). Colour postcard. 15x 12. Published by Leopard Photo Enterprises. Cape Town, South Africa.

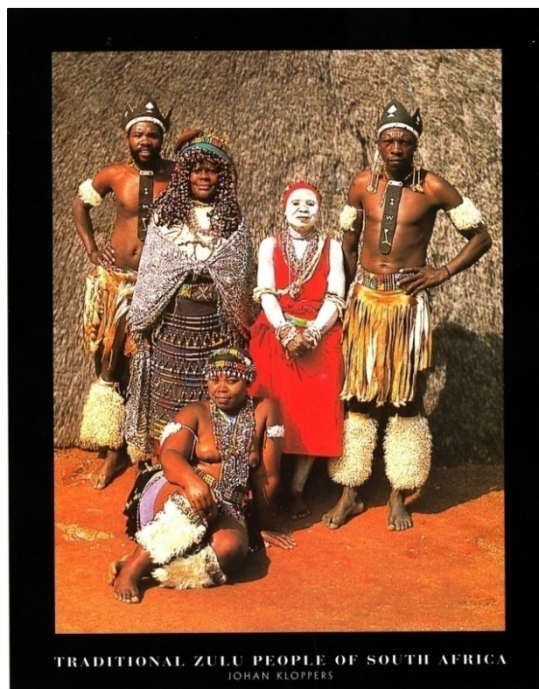


Fig 17. *A Fight with Assegais.* [Sa]. Black and white postcard. Original size unknown. Published by Sallo & Epstein, Johannesburg, South Africa. (Postmarked 1908). Internet image. (http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html.)

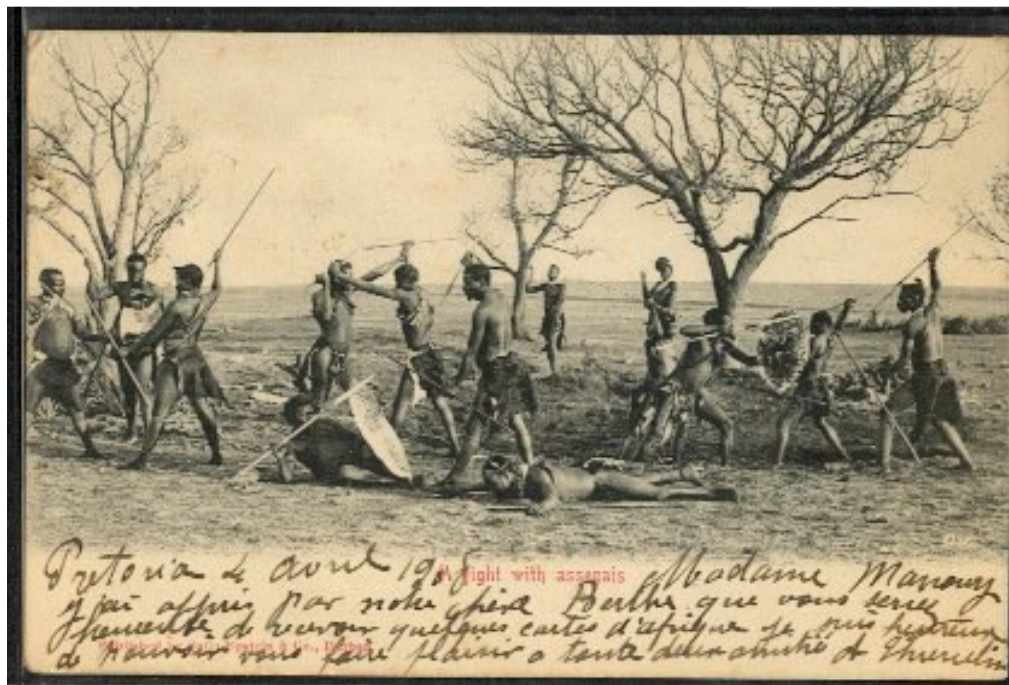


Fig 18. *A Zulu Chief.* (1904). Black and white postcard. Original size unknown. Internet image. (http://judyspostcardsplus.blogspot.com/2008_12_01_archive.html.)

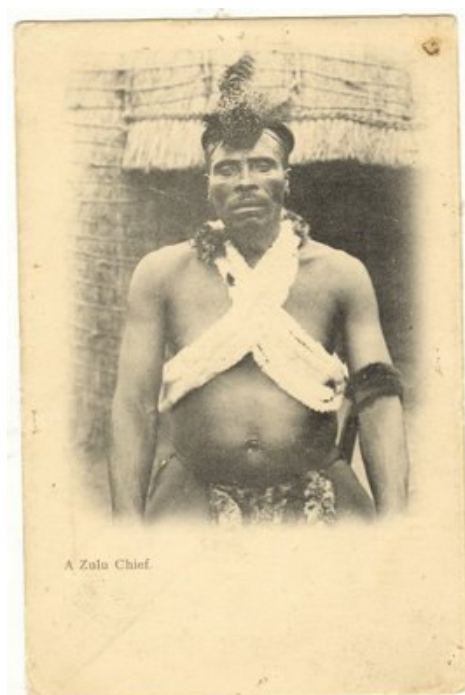


Fig 19. *Dinizulu en route for Martizburg, under Arrest.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. Original size unknown. Internet image. (http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html.)

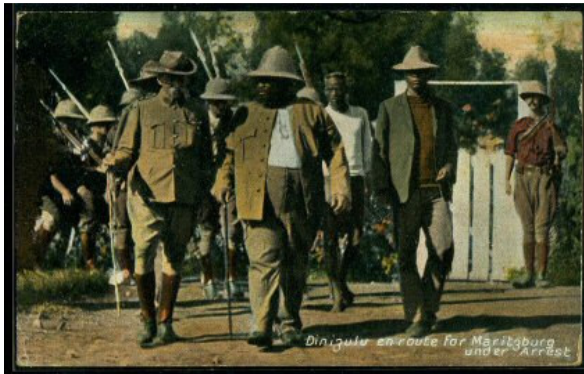


Fig 20. Denny Allen, *The Zulu* (detail). [Sa]. Colour postcard. 14,8 x 10,1. Published by Wild Treks, Cape Town, South Africa.

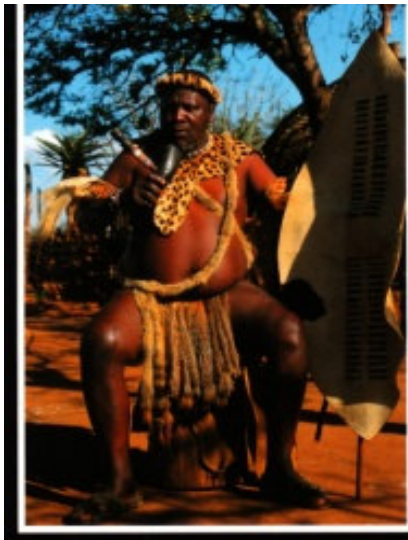


Fig 21. John Hone and Nigel Chapman, *Tribal Life-South Africa* (Detail). (ca.2000). Colour postcard. 14,8 x 10,5. Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.

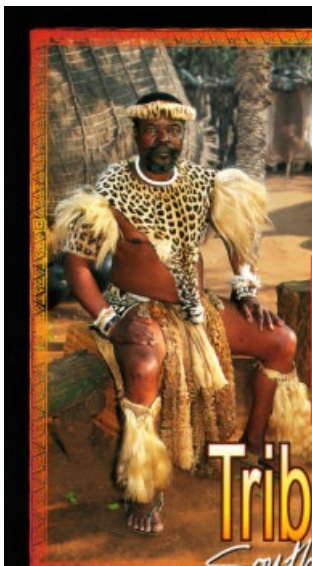


Fig 22. John Hone, *Zulu Traditions – South Africa*.(ca 2000). Colour postcard. 14,8 x 15,5.
Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.



ZULU TRADITIONS · SOUTH AFRICA

Fig 23. John Hone, *African Traditions: South Africa*.(ca 2000). Colour postcard. 14,8 x 10,5.
Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.



Fig 24. John Hone, *Tribal Life: South Africa*. (ca. 2000). Colour postcard. 14,8 x 10,5.
Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.



TRIBAL LIFE · SOUTH AFRICA

Fig 25. John Hone, *African Life: South Africa*. (ca. 2000). Colour postcard. 14,8 x 10,5.
Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.



AFRICAN LIFE · SOUTH AFRICA

Fig 26. John Hone, *Greetings from South Africa*. [Sa]. Colour postcard. 14,8 x 10,5. Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.

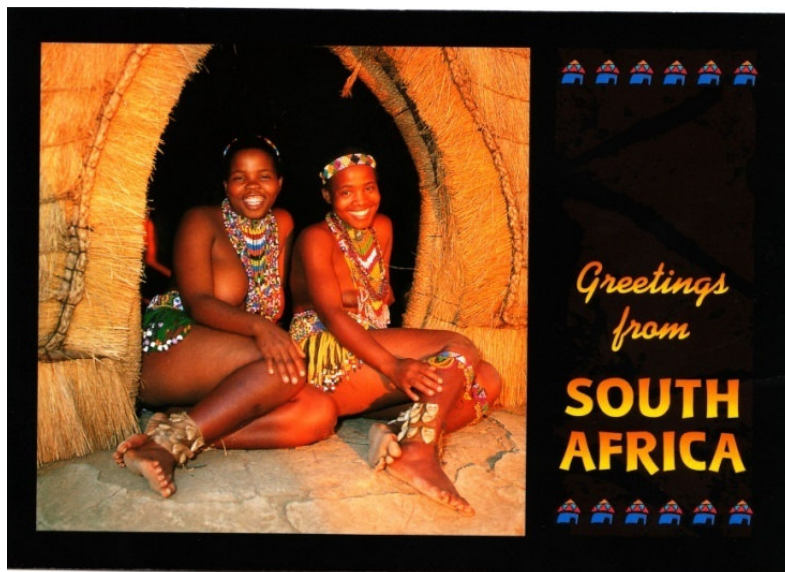


Fig 27. *Zulu Girl*. [Sa]. Colour postcard. Original size unknown. (Postmarked 1906). Internet image. (http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html).

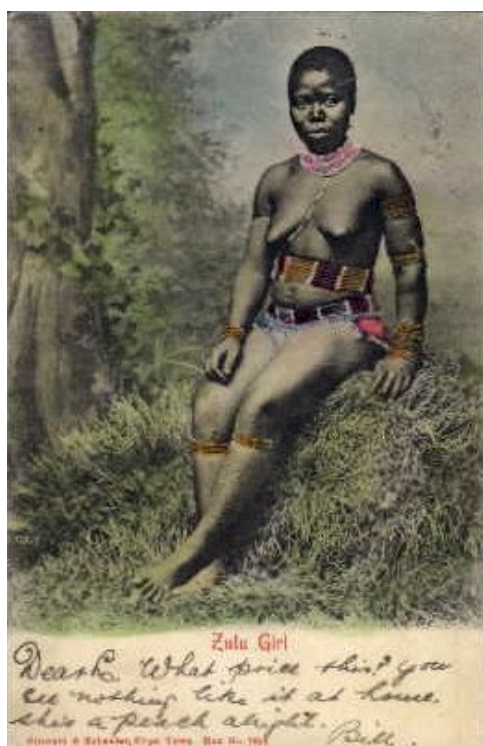


Fig 28. *Zulu Woman.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. Original size unknown. Published by Braune and Levy, Johannesburg. Internet image. (http://www.postcardman.net/sa_ethnic.html.)



Fig 29. Wicus Leeuwner, *Transport Memories of the Past - Wicus Leeuwner.* [Sa]. Colour postcard. 15 x 10,5. Published by Ziya Fana Images, Caledon, South Africa.



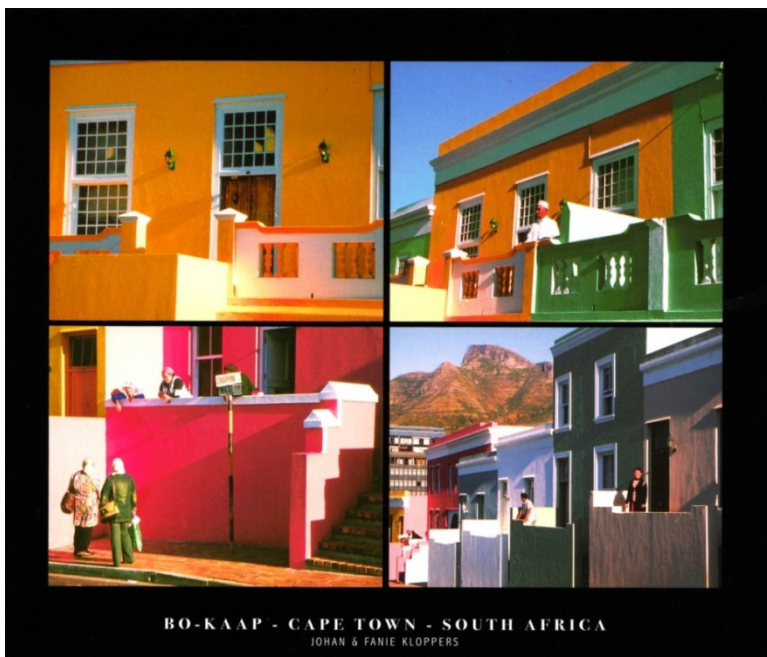
TRANSPORT MEMORIES OF THE PAST
WICUS LEEUWNER

Fig 30. *Fruit Seller - Cape Town, South Africa.* (1996). Colour postcard. 15x12. Published in 1996 by Bateleur Publishing, Cape Town, South Africa.



FRUIT SELLER
CAPE TOWN - SOUTH AFRICA

Fig 31. *Johan Kloppers and Fanie Kloppers, Bo-Kaap – Cape Town – South Africa: Johan and Fanie Kloppers.* [Sa.].Colour postcard. 15 x 12. Published in by Leopard Photo Enterprises, Cape Town, South Africa.



BO-KAAP - CAPE TOWN - SOUTH AFRICA
JOHAN & FANIE KLOPPERS

Fig 32. Gerald Hoberman, *South Africa – ‘The Spirit of Enterprise’ – Gerald Hoberman’*. (2000). Colour postcard. 15,5 x 12. Published by Gerald Hoberman, Cape Town, South Africa.

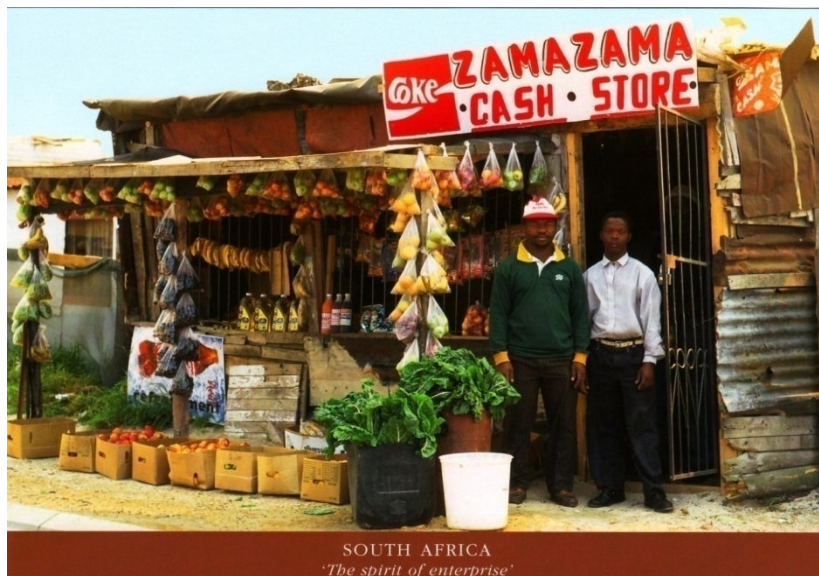


Fig 33. *Townships – Cape Town: Football World Cup 2010 on the Horizon*. [Sa]. Colour postcard. 21,5 x 10,8.. Published by La Compagnie du Cap, Vlaeberg, South Africa.

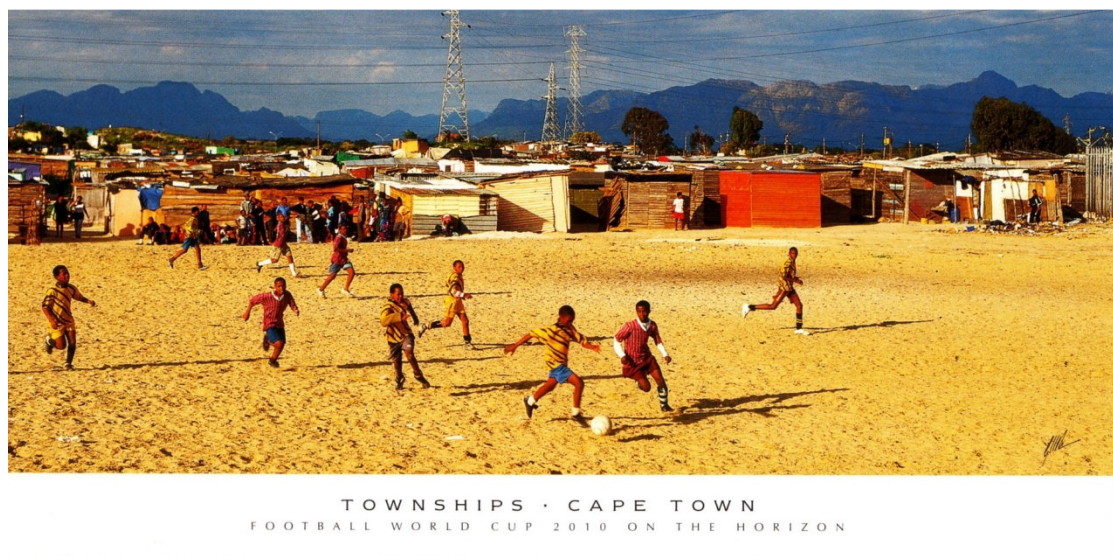


Fig 34. *Informal Settlement – South Africa.* (ca. 2000). Colour postcard. 14,8 x 10,5..
Published by Art Publishers, Durban, South Africa.



INFORMAL SETTLEMENT · SOUTH AFRICA