

Cultural Pillages of the Leisure Class? Consuming Expressions of Identity

by

Kieran Tavener-Smith

Dissertation presented in fulfilment of the Degree of Master of Arts,
in The Centre for Communication, Media & Society,
School of Literary Studies, Media & Creative Arts,
Faculty of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban, South Africa

– November, 2011 –

Declaration:

I, Kieran Tavener-Smith, the undersigned, hereby declare the originality of the work contained in this dissertation, that where it draws upon prior research, this has been duly acknowledged and referenced. It has not been presented to any other university or for any other degree.

The dissertation is submitted in totality of the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts, in The Centre for Communication, Media & Society, Faculty of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Signature: _____

Date: 25 November, 2011

Acknowledgements

The work presented here is to a large degree the result of numerous sources of assistance and support. I must thank Professor Tomaselli, my supervisor, for guiding me in becoming enrolled in the Rethinking Indigeneity research track. I am extremely grateful for the financial assistance provided by the National Research Foundation, without which I would not have been able to pursue this work.

Prof. Tomaselli's comments and reviews of this dissertation and its many drafts were pivotal; his critical conceptual and stylistic insights ensured revised versions were far superior to original ones. In this regard, I'd like to also thank other staff members and fellow students who reviewed parts of this dissertation. Jeanne Prinsloo, Nhamo Mhiripiri, Donal McCracken and Shanade Barnabas provided engaging critiques on individual chapters. Also thanks to those fellow graduate students in CCMS who scribed or provided a pertinent thought or two.

Thank you ever so much to my parents; it is only by their generosity and support that this work was possible. Many, many thanks to you. My mother, Anne Tavener-Smith, kindly assisted with final copy editing. Of course, any mistake herein is my own.

K D Tavener-Smith

November, 2011

Abstract

Society ‘obscures itself’ by presenting a world that is self-contained and logical (Barthes, 1973) – a world underpinned by a transparency of its underlying systems of meaning. This formulation maps the theoretical location of the dissertation, by which an investigation into tourism, as an economic and political expression of contemporary culture, occurs. More specifically, the dissertation addresses the type of tourism that bisects narratives of history and of cultures – that popularly described under the label of cultural tourism. Thus it employs an array of critical tourism and cultural theory, to offer an exposition on how best to understand the articulation of meaning in the consumption of ‘place’, formations of heritage and Otherness.

The study also explores the epistemological nature/agendas of the so-called ‘Image of Africa’ and the ‘Absolute Other’, and how these are recycled in the parameters of modernity. Using a genealogical approach to studying discursive formations articulating some kind of Zulu Otherness, the dissertation grounds these conventions of identity predominantly in the symbolic practice of a colonial Western society. This exposes the arbitrary, constructed nature by which contemporary society governs itself.

Methodologically, the research applies participant observation and semiotic analyses, predominantly in the cultural/filmic village of Shakaland, near Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal, to explore how the constructions of identity manifest and are negotiated and consumed in the activity of this tourism.

Acronyms and abbreviations

ANC – African National Congress

ATLAS – The Association for Tourism and Leisure Education

CCMS – Centre for Communication, Media and Society

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

IFP – Inkatha Freedom Party

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

SATOUR – South African Tourism

WTTC – World Travel and Tourism Council

UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organization

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Social Commodity? The Adventure of the Other

We live in a world of meaning, of symbols and language – of signifiers articulating some kind of reality to us; a reality through which our lives are lived. This is a study primarily concerned with one particular mythical signifier: the Absolute ‘Other’, and how it mobilises a class of people to search the globe for it. This is a dissertation in the consumption of place – an exploration of how our current economic, social, political and symbolic circumstances intersect the physical environment and the life forms it supports and how this becomes a tourist commodity.

Ideas of a dichotomised Other are a fundamental invention of Western society, linked to the very core of ideas that this society has had about the universe and its own place in it. In the contemporary era, the Other has been revived as a prime commodity. This dissertation seeks to explore one particular historical Other – the Zulu – and its value on the cultural market shelf. There are many different ways via which culture finds itself on the market, and this dissertation uses the touristic cultural village of Shakaland as the object of research. In South Africa, these villages are almost expressly the domain of the country’s native, indigenous populations.

Cultural tourism enterprises are not uncommon throughout the world. There has been a notably drastic rise in the demand for structured tourism experiences with a high entertainment value (Bruner, 1989), with the management of historical and cultural sites responding with depictions of living history that attempt to portray “... an authentic view of the past, often with a historic house or setting as the backdrop to their performance” (Harvey, 2004: 7). According to Edward Bruner (1989), this entails a desire to experience authenticity – though this does not negate the fact that these performances are in fact a demand-led product as determined by a market of tourists. And, as I explore in this dissertation, it is a fascination with the “authentic primitive” that drives many of these cultural villages and living history museums economically.

The dissertation is thus concerned with how much of today’s world commences according to the epistemological endeavours rooted in the past. It aims to discuss the contexts within which discursive regimes emerge which claim an interpretive right to circumscribe reality and convert linguistic operations into ‘truths’ and ‘objective’ ‘facts’. Of course, this study is concerned with issues of race, ethnicity and identity and as such, it is the aims of this study to establish how, and to what degree, these givens of the contemporary era were once in the service of a colonial ontology aimed at the expansion of imperial agendas. The dissertation considers the nature of stereotypes of the historically victorious colonisers, attempting to analyse how these address contemporary

representations found in the cultural village and how this, in turn, informs how the performers represent themselves. I will explore how the representative conventions of an essentially imperial narrative describing the events of nineteenth-century KwaZulu-Natal fuels one of the most lucrative tourist products in KwaZulu-Natal, if not South Africa.

What is cultural tourism?

There are two main branches of defining ‘cultural tourism’ within the field of tourism studies, though this arrangement is relatively loose (see Richards, 1996: 21-22; Ivanovic, 2008: 75-77). The first is a technical approach, a quantitative language which elaborates on cultural tourism as *the movement of people for essentially cultural motivations* to engage in arts, festivals and other cultural productions, monuments, enlightenment, pilgrimages, and so on (Ivanovic, 2008: 76-77). This is also called the narrow definition of cultural tourism. It is a focus on the touring of the *products* of culture. The wide definition, a conceptual approach, defines cultural tourism as ‘all movement’, because this leads to the ‘cultural fulfilment of the practitioner’. The idealist ambiguity of this conceptual definition of tourism received a greatly needed overhaul at the Cultural Tourism Research Project, initiated by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS), in 1991. It defined cultural tourism as follows: “*The movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs*” (Richards, 1996: 23). This definition identifies education and ‘novelty’ – authenticity and uniqueness – as major motivations for cultural travel, thus signifying cultural tourism as a relatively new form of travel (Ivanovic, 2008: 77), although I explore this more thoroughly below. It also seems to reconcile with its quantitative counterpart (its mention of cultural attractions – the cultural *product*), instead of existing alongside it.

Tourism¹ is inextricably the search for difference and dissimilarity. Cultural tourism is tourism concerned with the engagement, contemplation, and consumption of the products and processes of culture(s) detached from one’s normal residency. This expanded definition differs from less holistic conceptions of cultural tourism as concerning strictly the touring of indigenous cultures only (see Lanfant, 1995). In fact, it is but one category comprising the typology of cultural tourism as described by Melanie Smith (2003) – indigenous cultural tourism. Let me take this opportunity to clarify the various constituent labels within cultural tourism, those of (in addition to indigenous tourism), heritage tourism; arts tourism; creative tourism; urban cultural tourism; rural cultural tourism; and popular cultural tourism (cf. Smith, 2003: 37-43).

¹ Functionally defined as: “Tourism is deemed to include any activity concerned with the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, and their activities during the stay at these destinations” (British Tourism Society in Middleton, 1988: 6-7).

Heritage tourism concerns a variety of sites which gain meaning through historical significance. Arts tourism is about cultural products – concerts, galleries, festivals, and so on. Creative tourism is about participation in such activities as pottery, crafts, learning language, painting, and so forth. Urban cultural tourism concerns the touring of cultural environments which are strictly urban. This includes the domains of shopping, nightlife activities, waterfront developments, etc. Rural cultural tourism, conversely, includes the attractions sited in rural environments – the wine route, agro-tourism, the eco-museum. Indigenous cultural tourism describes the tourism that facilitates some kind of participation with some sort of ‘indigenous’ folk, locating the tourist as the bona fide “pop anthropologist” (Tomaselli, 2005: 177). Cultural tourism includes theme parks, shopping malls, sporting events, media and film sets, pop concerts, and so on (Smith, *ibid.*). This short synopsis of the constituents of cultural tourism serves merely to introduce the nature of cultural tourism to the reader, I will locate this research in terms of this typology in due course, as the case study demands a more intricate contemplation than a word or two here.

The most desired South African tourist attractions are the climate, the opportunity to visit friends, and the splendour of the relief of the land (Ivanovic, 2008). Together, these ‘pull factors’ constitute about seventy percent of the tourism demand of the country. In addition, the other main tourism commodities offered, in descending order of demand, include South Africa’s wildlife, its value for money, the opportunity to experience different cultures, to see the country’s progress following political change, and the promotion of business interests (Allen and Brennan, 2004: 12-13).

Although ‘experiencing other cultures’ is but a narrow component of the wider cultural tourism oeuvre, given South Africa’s famed cultural diversity, perhaps it is somewhat surprising that this commodity is not ranked higher in terms of demand. Indeed, South Africa’s operation of cultural tourism products is acknowledged to be lower than the global level (Ivanovic, 2008): between fifteen and thirty-five percent of global tourism is of a cultural nature (cf. UNWTO; ATLAS; Smith, 2003). In 1998, one fifth of foreign tourism to KwaZulu-Natal was culturally motivated (Allen and Brennan, 2004: 51).

It’s not only South Africa’s ethnic diversity that offers a valuable cultural commodity; the country invests in the hosting of popular sporting and conferencing events. Sports tourism made several key economic contributions in the 2009 and 2010 period. In 2009, the country hosted the FIFA Confederations Cup and the British and Irish Lions Rugby Tour, which together totalled about fifty-two thousand visitors worth six hundred and sixty-nine million rand (SATour, 2010). In 2010, the country hosted the FIFA World Cup, though the economic impetus provided by this event is more difficult to gauge. The sport tourism industry makes an annual contribution of six billion rand to the

economy, with sports related tourists comprising more than ten percent of the country's total tourist numbers (Political Bureau, 2010).

Synopsis of study

In Chapter 2, tourism is discussed as a social practice which has its roots in very particular social circumstances. It is as such that we can make reference to the routines, or culture, of the tourist. The sites and practice of organised travel for reasons of leisure commences according to particular epistemological endeavours which have pervaded industrial modernity. Thus, it is argued that tourism was the logical outcome of the set of sociological, economic, legal, cultural and labour related circumstances surrounding the implementation of industrial means of production, loosely employing the work of Thorstein Veblen (1898) as a starting point.

Tourism also intersects with greater questions of ideology, the role of culture and of the nation, in the form of a heritage industry. The chapter explores this in terms of the interpellative capacity of cultural texts, employing previous case studies of heritage tourists, to illustrate the complexity of pushing a narrative of the past into the mainstream popular market. By offering predominantly constructivist accounts of tourism phenomena, the chapter locates the research within such an ontology.

In Chapter 3, knowledge is examined in terms of the contemporary epistemological configurations that govern cultures at certain historical points (Foucault, 1970; 1972). These discursive regimes constitute the concepts whereby a reality is assimilated by the subjects of a cultural entity (cf. Hall, 1997). With these theoretical postulates in mind, the chapter investigates the overarching epistemological contexts of Europe and how the constitution of cultural 'Others' is a symbolic practice implicated in questions of the nature of the 'Same'. As such, it is argued the articulations of Africa and Africans were constructed within very specific discursive agendas, and inherently implied issues of power and of identity. This creates a framework through which colonial ethnographic narratives can be considered – as texts functioning within specific atmospheres of thought and discourse, as opposed to a concern with the reliability of the authors to gauge the complexity of their encounters. By narrowing the scope to southern Africa and then Natal, the chapter explores the mobilisation of the Zulu Other vis-à-vis the nineteenth century interests of colonisation, and European imperialism and industrialisation generally.

The chapter begins with the linguistic construction of Shaka. It considers the nature and circumstances surrounding early settler ethnographies. In the encounter between the Same and Other, the articulation of the Zulu resided exclusively in concepts employed by the settlers, and the agendas which contextualise these concepts.

The chapter then considers the evolution of these narratives, arguing that these are the product of specific political, economic and conceptual agendas prevalent at the time. They also create a symbolic entity, which described a portion of the Bantu people, and which would come to be mobilised for many a purpose for the next couple of centuries.

If this exercise illustrates the complex negotiations of power which commence in such narratives, it also points to the arbitrariness of many of the conventions used in the representation of this Other in the contemporary condition under the guise of capitalism, and within its associated popular culture. The Zulu, evidently, comprise a popular visual, cultural commodity, exploited in many diverse media: decorative weaponry and regalia; coffee-table books; performance and dance; painted ‘typical African landscapes’; beadwork; ‘tribal’ jewellery and other fashion commodities; sculpture; postcards; thatch mats, baskets and bowls; wood carvings; in modern architecture and amenities; on rickshaws; and, for a time around 2002, in international rugby union matches played in (and involving) South Africa.

This literature review chapter then, seeks to elaborate on the epistemological and political contexts within which these re-presentative conventions – the imperial constructs of a ‘Zulu identity’ – are articulated.

As such, the chapter employs a constructivist logic in understanding Zulu identity. This allows the study to explicate the ideological and mythical formations being referenced in the production and consumption of cultural goods. The chapter provides a context of re-presentation to be explored and worked fully in Chapter 5. It offers a Foucauldian-derived method of considering text to illustrate the arbitrary nature of a circumscribed reality and how this deploys power through society.

Methodologically, Chapter 4 describes the employment of participant observation, the interview and semiotic analysis. This chapter considers the applicability of research techniques vis-à-vis the nature of this study and its fundamental aims and driving questions. It thus begins with a discussion on the possibility of science to apply in a social, inherently linguistic context of research, and offers a succinct critique of positivism that is in line with the paradigmatic orientations of this study. In answer to such a critique, the chapter presents the method of ethnography as a possible answer to the shortcomings of science in a social research context. Considering the nature of the ethnographic enterprise allows one to elaborate on potential strengths and weaknesses, which leads to a more considered, tactically savvy research design. It is also able to divert some of the methodological errors which have plagued much ethnography, especially that which attempts to heed the postulates of positivism and eradicate the “metaphysical concerns” of naturalism.

The chapter also provides a model of textual analysis that can be used to locate the texts of Shakaland within greater mythical and ideological currents. As such, it is the endeavours of Saussure, Peirce and Barthes – with contributions from Fiske and Tomaselli – in the tradition of semiotics, that are employed for this purpose.

Having established the epistemological context within which tourism is analysed in this dissertation then, Chapter 5 presents firstly an in-depth semiotic analysis of the Protea Hotel Shakaland tourist brochure. This serves to illustrate how a set of interpretive norms function in constituting Shakaland as a place to be consumed. Part II of this chapter is constituted by a discussion derived from participant observation research into the routines of consumption that occur at Shakaland, again employing a constructivist and semiotic framework in the analysis of such procedures. This allows me to locate Shakaland in terms of the greater interpretive norms of our society, and trace the lineage of these conventions from their origin to their manifestation in the present era.

Chapter 6 offers the conclusions of this study, a brief summary of the dissertation's narrative, and brief word and its place in the corpus of work of which it is part of.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This chapter is concerned with how ‘place’ is consumed in contemporary Western societies under the prescriptions of tourism, and how these routines are often conceived in specific cultural contexts. Firstly, the sociology of leisure and the rise of tourism are considered. The chapter then investigates the emergence of a heritage industry in relation to a national disdain of the phenomena of urban decay and de-industrialisation, under the notion of nostalgia in Britain. This leads to a contemplation of the role of heritage in the context of a system of representation of national politics and ideology. The mid-to-latter parts of the chapter explore the process of touring and the symbolic formations that are performed, and participated in, whence subsumed as the tourist. A final section considers the semiotic operation of authenticity in contemporary tourism, and how the label is easily vilified by both constructivist and postmodernist discourses, leading to revised hypothetical models of the tourist. The chapter defines the paradigmatic parameters by which the dissertation proceeds.

Part I: Leisure in Western Society

The emergence of the leisure class

The modern world system is rooted in a series of political and epistemological reforms, circa 16th century Europe (see Wallerstein, 1974). This is the context within which the gradual hegemonic ascension of a Western capitalist, liberal democratic order arose. It is an order premised on free market economics, democratic citizenship, ‘rationality’ and ‘reason’, science, empiricism, and private property, though these ideals were often the result of long, drawn-out, and frequently bloody affairs. For those whose disposition lent itself to profiting in the capitalist system, this climate provides the contextual framework for an inevitable emergence of a class of leisure². The term was coined by Thorstein Veblen who, in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), investigated the social dynamics of a ‘class’ that *demonstrates esteem through leisure pursuits*. Veblen holds that ruling social classes annex activities of leisure, while subordinate classes are relegated to positions of labour. Leisure comes to be associated with prestige, social rank, and power... but leisure activities produce no monetary value themselves – they are largely symbolic, or *conspicuous*³. Leisure is the ability to ‘buy’ time off work and engage in vacation activities, “exempt from all useful employment” (Veblen, 1899: 40). The leisure class not only can afford leisure activities, but – centrally for Veblen – it is in the interest of the class to partake in leisure to sustain their status,

² Leisure is concentrated in vacations, amusements, games, play and religious observances (MacCannell, 1999: 34-35).

³ It is possible to eat the meat accrued from the genteel British fox hunt – recently outlawed of course – but it is much more productive to farm or domesticate animals.

symbolically; for 'well-being' (see below); for self affirmation; and for the perpetuation of the capitalist machine.

For contemporary academics, Veblen's writings reflect most accurately only a mid/late nineteenth century, post-American Civil War Gilded Age preoccupation, and presently, leisure patterns are immensely more complex⁴ (Urry, 1995: 130). Everyone has at least some rights to leisure, whether it is exercised at the end of the working day, week or year. Nonetheless, Veblen's conceptions of leisure and consumption are usually considered the roots of the sociology of leisure and still hold weight for many, being resurrected as a critique of the present day political economy⁵. As shall be demonstrated, leisure and cultural industries are considerably significant components within advanced capitalist economies – as much as they are rooted in the genesis of such societies.

The emergence of a class of leisure is inextricably bound within greater societal processes which came to be a cornerstone of the very civilisation the class is germane to. These legal and socio-political developments have encouraged its existence and prosperity on a global scale, something implicated in the emergence of capitalist 'cultural villages' in economic peripheries.

There are several points to be made here in connection with the societal production of a class of leisure. Work, in its entrenchment in society, also came to be regulated; the concept of 'free time' available to workers (which came to be the idea of the 'eight hour day'), and the right to paid annual leave – the ability to buy time and consume it elsewhere, compartmentalised the activity of labour, by some arrangement of time, place and social relationships (Roberts, 2004: 3). It is designed for maximum production per unit of time, largely without the concern of pleasure (but not always). Pleasure is thus sought in the 'own' time of workers; "[work] repulses the individual, sending him away to search for his identity or soul in off-the-job activities: in music, sports, church, political scandal and other collective diversions" (MacCannell 1999: 36). Work came to be a structured, time- and space-bound activity, "separated off from play, religion and festivity" (Urry, 2002: 19). These are the activities which are sought in the time accounted for in the idea of the eight hour working day. These are also the activities which are served by leisure industries. Thus, leisure pursuits are presented as activities of consumption, and these activities presently constitute a thriving profit-making economic sector. (I will elaborate on the economic significance of these industries shortly; for now I merely aim to show how a class of leisure is the economic and political logic of the liberal democratic, capitalist configuration). For salary-earning workers, "[t]he

⁴ For instance, the widespread consumption of alcohol amongst the poor is a leisure activity. At what stage does transport, eating, and dress become leisure? (cf. Roberts, 2004: 4-6)

⁵ See Chao and Schor, 1998; Johnston, 2000; Barnes, 1997; *Journal of Economic Issues*; among others. These theories are also at the forefront of 'new institutional economics' – theoretical ground which lies so-called between Marxian and neo-classical economics (Johnston, 2000: 551).

proportion of income devoted to basic needs declines. More is spent on satisfying 'luxurious' wants. Thus demand for leisure goods and services increases, creating more and more employment in these fields" (Roberts, *ibid.*). This observation is echoed by Anna Stupnytska (in AFP, 2010) who asserts "[a]s people get rich, move to the middle class, they spend less money on necessities [as a percent of income]...and the [leisure] sector explodes". Labour and leisure are "organised as separate and regulated spheres of social practice in 'modern' societies"⁶ (Urry, 2002: 2). Leisure presupposes its opposite, "namely regulated and organised work" (Urry, 1995: 132). If labour and leisure are mutually determining, leisure plays a pivotal role in the operation of a capitalist society. It is an economic motive which regulates work, not an empathetic social one.

The major leisure service

The big three (in terms of percents of income) in the provision of leisure are tourism, television, and alcohol (Roberts, 2004: 4), but it is tourism that comprises the world's largest industry overall (Lippart in MacCannell, 1999: x). In 1960, there were sixty million international arrivals globally. In 1989, there were four hundred million such arrivals. In 2008, international arrivals topped nine hundred and twenty-two million. Domestic arrivals triple or quadruple their international counterpart (Urry, *ibid.*). In 2010, tourism's contribution to the global economy is predicted to be around nine percent (AFP, 2010) – slightly below the 2005 prediction (cf. Sharma, 2005) of eleven and a half percent⁷, at a four and a half percent growth rate. This equates to the global net value of export earnings through tourism for 2010: nine hundred and nineteen billion US dollars (World Tourism Organisation, 2011). The industry employs about two hundred and thirty five million of the world's people (Urry, *ibid.*).

South Africa's tourism industry is slightly below these global averages: 2009 WTTC estimates put the tourism industry's direct and indirect contribution to the South African GDP at about seven and a half percent, representing one hundred and ninety-eight billion, four hundred million rand – a three percent growth on 2008. In 2009, South Africa experienced just over seven million international tourist arrivals (cf. World Tourism Organisation, 2011). The South African Ministry of Tourism⁸ defines this growth as the result of an increasing number of Asian and, to a considerably

⁶ At least since the *United Nations Declaration of Human Rights* of 10 December 1948, rest and leisure; paid leave; and freedom of movement were located as universal human rights. A string of legal declarations on leisure followed (see, e.g., *The Manila Declaration on World Tourism* [1980], *Documents on the Rights to Holidays*[1982], etc.), which sought to reinforce the right to leisure, as well as "facilitate" its industries (Ivanovic, 2008: 48; 279).

⁷ This is perhaps the result of a series of events which were significantly obtuse to the tourism industry: the 2007-11 global economic recession, the H1N1 epidemic and the ash cloud which resulted from the eruption of Eyjafjoell Volcano, Iceland (Robinson in AFP, 2010). The estimated cost of the volcanic eruption and the subsequent shutdown of European air space alone, is estimated to have cost 4,7 billion US dollars (*ibid.*).

⁸ This portfolio was formerly part of the Department of Environmental Affairs. This institutional amendment was enacted by the Jacob Zuma cabinet.

lesser degree, African visitors, with Chinese visitors up around twelve and a half percent and Indian visitors seventeen and a half (Political Bureau, 2010).

A conventional understanding of tourism reads as a movement of persons, who spend at least one night away from home in various destinations which are considered distinct from 'the normal'. Much contemporary tourism concerns an experience of liminality, where the "codes of normal social experience are reversed" (Urry, 2002: 3; 11.). Residence in these sites is short-term, with an intention always to return home. It is inherently a social activity (cf. Urry, 1995: 130-132).

Modern tourism scholars have indicated the importance of daydreaming and fantasy in constructing the promise of intense pleasures of place. Collin Campbell (1987) argues that this stage of daydreaming is of central importance to the operation of consumer society. In fact, consumers seek out 'in reality', *the pleasurable theatre which has already transpired in their imaginations* (what post-structural cultural theorists call *discursive negotiation*). The discourse of such places is "constructed and sustained through a variety of non-tourist practices, such as film, TV, literature, magazines, records and videos, which construct and reinforce that gaze" (Urry, 2002: 3). The objects of the tourist gaze are considered to be exclusively out of the ordinary, separated from the everyday world of the tourist. These objects are generally routinely captured on photographs, film, postcards, and so on; allowing the gaze to be perpetually stimulated after first-hand witness to the object is gone.

Media, cultural and knowledge industries are complicit in creating a vast array of fantasies about places which manifest under the guise of the tourist. MacCannell (1999: 5) speaks of tourism as the practice of "self-discovery through a complex and sometimes arduous search for an Absolute Other". Such an exercise, he continues, is "...a basic theme of our civilisation, a theme supporting an enormous literature: Odysseus, Aeneas, the Diaspora, Chaucer, Christopher Columbus, *Pilgrim's Progress*, Gulliver, Jules Verne, Western ethnography, Mao's Long March". Today, most newspapers, online news agencies and television bouquets have entire sections dedicated to the construction/consumption of place.

In Chapter 3 below, I examine the role that *difference* has played in the formation of a 'modern society', locating the symbolic articulation of 'Otherness' as a reflection of the mythical core of this Western society. Without going into too much detail about this at this point, if the ideological imperatives of otherness are indeed true, the consumption of tourism is most certainly central to how this is achieved. Here, tourism is an ideological practice employed in the cultural linguistic construction of the world.

Despite being the major earner in the global GDP (or perhaps because of it), tourism raises widespread ridicule. According to literary critic Paul Fussell (1980: 41), tourism is about: “raising social status at home, and to allay social anxiety; to realise secret fantasies of erotic freedom; and most important, to derive secret pleasure from posing momentarily as a member of a social class superior to one’s own”. Such discourse on the derision of the tourist constitutes a plethora of people who find them irritating and parasitic, probably best typified by Daniel Boorstin (1964), who describes the tourist as primarily pleasure-seeking; ‘passive’ – s/he waits for the tourist bubble to wield interesting ‘surprises’; and expects to be served – for things to be done for him or her. Tourism is epitomised in the activity of “sightseeing”, an activity discussed in greater detail below (see *Tourism signification and participation in myth*).

Many people, of course, have at least an understandable reason for loathing tourists: mainly those whose livelihoods and environments have been dramatically impinged upon – sometimes destroyed⁹ – by the tourists. In Hawaii, the tourist-to-native ratio is thirty-to-one¹⁰ (Trask, 2001), and in Florence, the half million residents are encumbered by almost two million tourists per year (Urry, 2002: 54). The sheer number of tourists going to popular destinations can outweigh the land capacity generally, wrecking scenery, while the fossil fuels burnt in the process of transportation contribute to global warming (Smith, 2003). Even a great many tourists themselves are aware of the self-destructive nature of their activity¹¹, reflected by the attitude of wanting to visit the site before ‘the masses’ get there and wreck it¹² (Urry, 2002:54).

In terms of its role in the modern psyche, the activity of ‘going on holiday’ has become entrenched in the idea of modern citizenry, embroiled in the popular discourse of ‘health’ and ‘well-being’. As Urry (2002: 5) states, “‘I need a holiday’ is the surest reflection of a modern discourse based on the idea that people’s physical and mental health will be restored if only they can ‘get away’ from time to time.” Around the turn of the last millennium, sixty-three percent of the population of the United Kingdom defined going on holiday for at least one week a year as a ‘necessity’ (Urry, 1995: 130).

⁹ Just a few examples of such places include: the Great Barrier Reef in Australia; Machu Picchu in Peru; the Galapagos Islands; Angkor Wat in Cambodia; Stonehenge in the United Kingdom; Mount Everest in Nepal; the Phi Phi Islands, Thailand; the Great Wall of China; Antarctica; and Bali. Many of these places have been listed (or are in the process of such) on the World Heritage Sites in Danger List.

¹⁰ Direct effects of tourism include: crime, for which it is the primary cause; a massive surge in property values, inflation and cost of living; and the alienation of its citizenry, many of whom leave Hawaii in search of better economic conditions (Trask, 2001).

¹¹ The English economist Ezra Mishan criticises the great belief that travel has been democratised following a mass expansion of leisure and more affordable means of travel. Democracy is about equal access to resources, and tourism is compliant in the destruction of locales, thus the democratisation of tourism is paradoxically anti-democratic. Mishan’s *The Costs of Economic Growth* (1967) is generally regarded as a precursor to the principal concerns of the Green Movement.

¹² See also GoTravel24, 2011.

If tourism is taken to simply imply leisure migration, we can highlight such a practice in pre-industrial eras. In Ancient Athens, people travelled for “pleasure or education, sport, religious purposes, and reasons of health” (Nash, 1989: 39). Ancient Romans also engaged in travel. In both cases, travel was practiced by wealthy elites (Urry, 2002: 4). A large percentage of pre-industrial travel also occurred through pilgrimages, and by the fifteenth century, organised tours from Venice to the Holy Land were offered.

Between 1600 and 1800, the ‘classical Grand Tour’ was popular for the sons of the English aristocracy and the gentry, so much so that by the mid-1700s, an estimated twenty thousand English were abroad at any given moment (Ivanovic, 2008: 32). The grand tour was conducted in the interests of education and (what we would presently term ‘high’) culture. It entailed the son(s) of nobility, and his private tutor, to travel for a period of about three years to the main cultural centres of continental Europe (Rome, Vienna, Paris, and so on). The curriculum consisted of classical languages and other Greek and Roman intellectual heritage; ‘new’ classical sciences; art; the avant-garde, and so forth (ibid.). (There was also an element of hedonism). These examples illustrate the existence of pre-industrial travel, though it has hitherto been restricted to the nobility. As Nash (1989: 39) summarily writes, “tourism is not totally confined to industrial or modern society; but it is also true that only in such a society does it become a pervasive social phenomenon.”

This form of tourism looks quite different from that which we find in modernity and in postmodernity. Perhaps the most glaring omission is the concept of ‘scenery’ as a reason to travel. This only developed during the ‘romantic Grand Tour’ of the nineteenth century (Urry, 2002: 4), the context of which will be explored in the next few sections. Nature was seen as a return to essence, values, primacy, the healing of the body and the mind (ibid.: 20). The bourgeoisie which pioneered this tour, did not have its roots in nobility; but instead, in a class born of profitable exchanges in the processes of industrialisation. As such, they did not have a history, a tradition, of education and ‘classical’ appreciations. This marks a conceptual break in the practice of tourism, where education was no longer its object, as this had given way to leisure (Ivanovic, 2008: 33); the emergence of the leisure class.

In 1841, Thomas Cook & Sons, pre-empting a massive increase in infrastructural mobility, organised what is now regarded as the first packaged tour¹³, and the character and demographic of travel began to change (Urry, 2002: 21). For the first time, the proletariat had access to travel, predominantly owing to the development of rail in northern and western industrial England. 1841 England thus signals the beginning of a culture of mass tourism – the “decline of the traveller and

¹³ Perhaps I should qualify this briefly: these 1841 tours were the first privately chartered excursion tours that were advertised to a general public, with a price of one shilling for the ticket and for food (Ingle, 1991).

the rise of the tourist” (Boorstin, 1964: 84-5). The destination of choice was the seaside¹⁴ resort. In the wake of this inter-class participation in tourism, a resort hierarchy developed in England whereby otherwise similar sites were endowed with considerable differences of ‘social tone’ (Urry, 1995: 130).

The County of Lancashire, north-western England, was among the first sites of widespread industrial revolution in the eighteenth century. For two hundred years, Lancashire hosted an extensive, lucrative industrial basin, driven mainly by textiles¹⁵, coal mining, textile engineering, linoleum, and, later, aerospace engineering (Urry, 1995: 157). Accompanying such industrial towns in the region were resort-based coastal towns. In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, these towns were “the very first holiday resorts for the lower middle and skilled working class” (Urry, 1995: 157-158). The most famous of these was Blackpool.

What was the basis for the widespread adoption of organised leisure travel in industrial Lancashire in the mid-1800s? Apart from infrastructural development, Lancashire is illustrative of the symbiotic relationship between leisure (the seaside resort) and work (intensive industries) which shared a mutually determining existence – economically, socially, and epistemologically, the latter I shortly explore in considerable depth. Another sub-text within the development of the mass seaside holiday was the idea (between employers, middle-class reformers and the state) of “civilising the ‘rough’ working class through organised recreation” (Urry, 2002: 19).

The “pervasive social phenomenon” (Nash, 1989) that is today’s tourism, has its roots in the romantic and pleasure-driven tourism of the nineteenth century. The most central characteristic of tourism in modern societies is that it predominantly consists of people travelling to places and engaging in activities largely unconnected with work¹⁶ (Urry, 2002: 5) – or, in Veblen’s terms, in a form of conspicuous consumption.

Part II: The Significations of a Culture of Consumption

Representation, and the context of heritage and culture tourism

If the classical grand tour consisted of the touring of cultural phenomena, the touring of a notion of culture is not limited only to a modern inception. However, there has been a certain and particular paradigmatic rise of the heritage and cultural industry, which has its roots in post-Second World

¹⁴ In fact ‘the sea’, or ‘the beach’ itself, transpires a certain (cultural) code within western society; embroiled within historical discourse and myth which purport to its regenerating, healing, relaxing, rebellious, existentially connecting properties. The beach is the ultimate leisure space.

¹⁵ By the 1830s, eighty-five percent of all cotton manufactured worldwide was produced in Lancashire (Urry, 2002).

¹⁶ Although, as we shall see in more depth later, postmodernism is typically breaking down the border between work and leisure time, as cellular phones, laptops, etc., mean work can be conducted anywhere.

War England. I will now direct this discussion to the operation of perceiving the objects of tourist sites and how the past becomes embroiled in the understanding of the self and his/her world.

By the 1960s and 1970s the dynamics of the capitalist economy had shifted considerably; developed societies began to de-industrialise. Other economic sectors like a tertiary service sector and quaternary information sector became dominant as the rise in the notion of worker rights meant secondary activity (manufacturing) could much more successfully (easily and cheaply) be accomplished by exporting such production to third world countries under the alibi of development (see Frank, 1969; Wallerstein, 1979; Cabral, 1980; etc.). This resulted in widespread dereliction in segments of towns and cities where industrial activity was previously practiced, leaving behind factories, steam engines, blast furnaces, and so on, as well as the patterns of life that emerged around these technologies. As economists, planners, businessmen, politicians, architects et al. proceeded to invest time and money in the paradigm of de-industrialisation, a very peculiar and unforeseen phenomenon occurred. The discussion will be limited to the phenomenon in England only.

The English were the pioneers of industrialisation in the mid-eighteenth century¹⁷, laying the foundation for its economic ascension for a couple of centuries until this was depleted by international war and the collapse of its empire in the twentieth century (cf., e.g., Kitchen, 1996; Lloyd, 2001). The scale of industrialisation within the superpower it created was thus extensive, with the inevitable occurrence that, when industrialisation was replaced as the major mode of production, widespread urban decay manifested in the late twentieth century. Such ubiquitous ruin came to constitute an overwhelming visual sense of a passed era, reinforced by the juxtaposition of the perceived vulgarity and “unappealing, distasteful nature of modern architecture” (Urry, 1995: 155). The associated realisation that the British way of life was in decline persuaded a class of Britons that the past was, in every possible manner, “far superior to the chaotic present and dreaded future” (Dann, 1994: 29). The past is presented as pleasant, sanguine, uncomplicated, and far less chaotic; a time when people lived simply and were self-sufficient. The undoubted hardships and pains of the day were inevitably glossed over by a mass psyche which spoke to the past poetically, and saw only a utopia that would remain forever out of reach. Robert Hewison (1987) speaks of how the English yearn nostalgically at a past of English cultural purity, a time when *England* was the most superior national power in the world and how this translates into a programme of ‘museumisation’. Fred Davis explains that a social disposition for nostalgia should be regarded as the manifestation of some “negative feeling toward present or impending circumstance” (Davis,

¹⁷ I make this assertion based on the fact that the major technological innovations which provided the means for an ‘industrial revolution’ to occur, were contrived by Englishmen: James Hargreaves and Samuel Crompton in textiles; James Watt in steam engines; Henry Cort in advanced production of ironworks; and so on.

1979: 18). It is thus founded on a dissatisfaction with the general configuration of contemporary circumstance, and a worry for the future. In this context how can one understand the modern cultural disposition of nostalgia? It is the result of ruptures of whole ways of life – the realisation or belief that ‘things were better *then*’. For Jeff Guy (1998: 157), “the heritage industry invokes a sentimentalised past which makes bearable a sordid and painful present”. In extension, as Graham Dann observes, isolated tribes and villagers, living for many generations in remote, self-sustaining communities in Third World locales would be perplexed by our notions of nostalgia - thus emphasising its arbitrary conception (Dann, 1994: 39). It is the modern-day, “dislocated Western traveller”, he asserts, “...who experiences nostalgia to its fullest and who, incidentally, travels precisely on account of such disorientation” (ibid.).

As such, the relics of the industrial phenomenon¹⁸ signified to a great many Britons, a ‘glorious’ industrial era – linked to ideas of national power and wealth. As Urry explains:

...the rows of terraced housing thrown up during industrialization are now viewed not as an environmental eyesore but as quaint, traditional and harbouring patterns of human activity well worth preserving. Another example is the steam railway, which in the nineteenth century was seen as an environmental disaster but is now viewed as benign, traditional and particularly attractive as it belches filthy smoke into the atmosphere (Urry, 1995: 174).

It was thus a demand for the past, accentuated by the distasteful invasion of slum and associated urban decay specifically in 1970s and 1980s Britain, which culminated in a rapid uptake of industrial lots *under the veil of heritage and cultural tourism*, an industry which served this nostalgic demand. This anomaly of ‘late capital politics’ (cf. Jameson, 1989) provided an economic escape from the domain of dereliction in these places; a massive economic on a regional level, as well as the desirable aesthetic activities of regeneration, gentrification and façades. By the mid-1990s, the number of listed buildings in Britain was over half a million, and a new heritage enterprise opened fortnightly (Urry, 1995: 159).

The esteem by which the Victorian (and forebears) era is regarded, though, belies the harsh reality that characterised the age, one of poor livelihoods for the majority of the people. Industrial districts of the Victorian era – generally terraced housing juxtaposed with heavy industry within easy walking distance of each other – were geared towards an economic activity of mass production, and bereft of any social amenities to ease the lives of the economically exploited, alienated working class that dwelled there. There was nothing rosy about industrial districts of the nineteenth century, contrary to its symbolic manifestations under tourism. Theorists like Urry, Davis, Dann and

¹⁸ These constitute just one, albeit one very potent, of the many objects that constitute a nostalgic gaze.

particularly Hewison, speculate on the future of a British society living as a museum in a vast collective nostalgia.

Let us recall the case study of Lancashire where, for most of the twentieth century, the majority of its textile towns, were plagued by long term terminal decline, following the global pattern of exporting its industrialism. The internationalisation of leisure – principally, competition from the Mediterranean – also meant that traditionally leisure towns like Blackpool began to decline. In the words of Urry (1995: 158), Lancashire “was a place on the margin of British life, a place rendered peripheral by virtue of global economic process.” In the 1970s, nobody would have thought of visiting Lancashire for any other reason than visiting a relative or for business, such was its perceived backwater-ness. But the extensive regeneration of industrial relics under the touring of heritage has arrested the growing squalor, with millions of leisure visitors visiting the county every year, Liverpool¹⁹ alone receiving twenty million.

I raise these points to illustrate, following the endeavour of Urry (2002; 1995), how the rise of the heritage industry has its roots in the widespread de-industrialisation of British counties in the decades following World War II, and how extensive lots of industrial dereliction have been transformed into thriving nodes of economic activity, under a widespread cultural disposition of nostalgia. Industrial buildings become signs of the refined, genteel myth of a prosperous Victorian England – repositories where cultural nostalgia is transpired and gleaned (see below). A dominant and flourishing leisure industry has arisen in the wake of de-industrialisation that has provided massive economic success and resulted in the widespread regeneration of neglected urban space.

Income generated by tourism in certain locations translates to a greater node of economic activities²⁰ which are symbiotic with the tourist venture. In terms of local government bodies, they have been keen to invest in such tourism: the costs of creating jobs in leisure industries are generally less capital intensive than other industries, and it is the locus of modern urban renewal. Yet the massive appeal of industry to tourism exists only in its indexical and symbolic functions.

The economic surge in heritage-related activity has not always been a fruitful, wise or democratic investment, especially when it has been exported to developing societies, as I shortly investigate. Inevitably, the presentation of history and culture implicates the politics of representation, of imaging and of discursive contestation, especially in populations with fundamentally different

¹⁹ At time of writing *Consuming Places* (1995), Liverpool was still included within the borders of the county of Lancashire. The county borders have since been revised, with several new counties emerging in what was south western Lancashire.

²⁰ Other actors which have been able to make use of these buildings are schools; other leisure outlets like bars, clubs, restaurants and pool saloons; hotels; conference centres; and other leisure and cultural uses.

interpretive communities. I will shortly investigate how the articulation of culture is inherently ideological due to its constitution in an insider/outsider dichotomy.

Geographically, the ‘developing world’ corresponds with areas that have previously been exploited, annexed, and/or occupied by imperial powers – the ‘developed world’ – from whom the former has then gained independence. One legacy of imperialism in the developing world (owing to the ‘administration’ of ‘natives’) is the capricious coexistence of ethnic groups included within the same territory (see Chapter 3). This is particularly evident in regions that experienced the brunt of the dramatic reconfiguration of the global political, economic and ideological landscape in the post-colonial era (including South Africa, post-1994), and following the fall of communism in 1989, where, in both instances, the dynamics of the mismatches between nation and state continue to be addressed, often in bloodshed. In the wake of the dissolution of imperial and socialist formations in the former Second and Third Worlds (cf. Heywood, 2002: 29), historically repressed notions of nationhood were given prominence under the notion of freedom of expression and of speech (Tomaselli and Ramgobin, 1988; Domic and Goulding, 2009; Poria and Ashworth, 2009; etc.). The phenomenon of nationalism (common during the Cold War) is one which was thought, by many modern intellectuals, would be ultimately displaced by the final hegemonic victory of capitalism, or, for Marxists, Marxism – the former exemplified by Francis Fukuyama (1992) who theorised the so-called ‘end of history’. Yet recent observations of the re-emergence of nationalism in certain sections of the globe (cf. Smith, 1986; Heywood, 2002; Goulding and Domic, 2009; etc.) are indicative that, despite the intensified supranational economic and, less ambitiously, political and cultural integration, perceptions of nationhood and culture continue to be omnipotent operators²¹. It is perhaps helpful to briefly recall the constitutive functions of the nation.

The classical nation-state was not just an entity of political and institutional designs. It also entailed “a symbolic formation – a ‘system of representation’ – which produced an ‘idea’ of the nation as an ‘imagined community’, with whose meanings we could identify and which, through this imaginary identification, constituted its citizens as ‘subjects’” (Hall, 1999: 38). In other words, the ‘nation’ constitutes its subjects by interpellating them into its dominant interpretative practices (Althusser, 1971). This is the very means by which the perpetuation of the nation is ideally guaranteed (cf. D’Andrade, 1984). The imposition of a system of representation is an exercise in fixing and defining the meaning of things, the prescription of a method of making sense of the world. The articulation of the nation (in which heritage is complicit) attempts to produce and maintain compliance of its epistemological orientation, through interpellation. This discursive identity (that

²¹ In fact, scholars like Huntington (1996) argue that it is because of such cultural integration under globalisation, that regional or national loyalties strengthen.

is, one produced in the discourse of the nation) is said to gain currency in a perpetual state of affirmation, negotiation, opposition, and rejection (of external, counter discourses) (Hall, 1995).

Heritage is a means of a system of representation; *it is a means by which 'linguistic concepts' – symbolic ideas – used to articulate reality, are given some kind of narrative coherence and injected into a cultural domain as a representation of the past.* It thus involves an inherently political agenda. It aims to articulate the historical circumstances which led to the present scenario, in a way which seems logical, which seems to account for itself, and often with teleological implications. History and heritage systems are thus involved in *discursive contestation* about the events of the past: they contend to prescribe, to justify, how events and the world are to be interpreted, spoken about, and made meaningful. This also implies that heritage formations are not always tied to the strict orientations of the 'nation', but rather multiple discursive communities (see Tomaselli and Ramgobin, 1988: 107). Thus 'history' and 'heritage' "...are social constructs: they are truths that are held to be 'known' about the past, by a given population or within a given society or culture" (Hollinshead, 2002: 172; also cf. Carr, 1961). Heritage is the assertion of a system of representation which attempts to define the parameters through which things (through their historical constitution) can be 'known'.

Thus, the past can only ever be re-presented; there is indefinitely a past, a set of events, independent of the text, but it is, in such a state, 'unknowable'; there is no meaning outside of discourse (Foucault, 1970; 1972). Media can only re-present, they are not transparent windows through which the reality of the world can be gauged. Rather, conventions of representation (ideas of meaning) are observed in any successful articulation (preferred reading). Heritage mediates, gives meaning, to the audience about the past (referent) that is represented.

Representation is the activity whereby a system of linguistic phenomena, a signifier (like a word), stands for something else. It is the production of meaning through language or, more accurately, "the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language" (Hall, 1997: 16; 17). It is concerned with the articulation of meaning in context. Heritage ascribes meaning to/a language of the past whereby it can be known; it re-presents the past. *Re*-presentation refers to the set of conventions and codes that are observed and adopted in the articulation of meaning (Lacey, 2009: 146). These are both culturally and media specific; they carry certain meanings within the contexts of culture and indeed, in media (though as we shall see, language *is* media). Audio visual signs, for example, already encoded within certain subtextual/genre conventions, are employed in the articulation of, for example, 'the hero' in mainstream Hollywood film, especially those that comprise the Western (genre): handsomeness, masculinity, Caucasian, the white (versus black) hat, some sort of moral observation and so on (see Kitses, 1969; Fiske, 1987). Similarly, the linguistic

sign t, r, e, e is employed to stand for the referent tree (the object delineated from the world signified by the word 'tree') in the English language (Hall 1997: 21). In cultural tourism, the media of tourism and the cultural encounter both pertain respective conventions (or codes, or languages) which are employed in the articulation of meaning in the context of touring culture.

To participate in the articulation of meaning is to employ the linguistic concepts that one gains by being a cultural subject, by utilising a system of representation. That is, what are essentially arbitrary signs, can only be understood by assuming the intended system of representation. This is indeed what it means to belong to one culture. For culture is found in every transaction that exists between humans and the world (we might also call this: every 'meaningful' transaction); it is the set of meanings, the language, the 'conceptual map' (Hall, 1997: 18) which makes the world comprehensible, intelligible, perceivable, workable, malleable, and indeed, *re-presentable*²². Meaning is gained by participation in the linguistic contraptions operated by the underlying culture. 'Culture' provides (and is) a conceptual 'toolkit' through which its subjects contrive meaning about/to the world; it is the set of linguistic concepts by which the world is explained in a coherent manner. There is no meaning that is found in the material world; trees don't 'mean'. Rather, there is a functioning system of representation which constructs meaning (identifies/categorises/differentiates) about the material world (Hall, 1997: 24-26; see also Chapter 3; 4 of this dissertation). Proficiency in this system of representation is critical in the successful articulation of especially the preferred reading of the text.

Here I am offering the *constructivist* theory of representation and language, which asks questions of more traditional approaches to representation, namely, the reflective and intentional approaches. Under the *reflective* approach, the 'text' is not considered separate from the thing it represents; rather, meaning is innate to the referent. A tree is something that can be known without the workings of discourse which seek to represent it. It is a large organic entity found in nature before the symbolic practices of man; its features 'define themselves'. For constructivists, a 'tree' is a linguistic concept which includes the concepts of 'root'; 'trunk'; 'branch'; and 'leaf' (themselves discursive variables that have their origin in the practice of man), through which we might know what the object actually is. As such, we are able to articulate the world; the world means something. Additionally, we can talk about trees without physically using the referent represented by the letters t, r, e, e.

²² This definition of culture was forwarded by pioneering cultural theorists like Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart in the mid-1960s. This entails a key conceptual move from a notion of culture as something pure, of 'high standards', of human perfection, as something attainable, to the 'social definition': culture as "a description of a particular way of life which expresses certain meanings and values, not only in art and learning, but in institutions and ordinary behaviour" (Williams, 1965:57).

The opposite of the reflective is the *intentional* approach, which posits that meaning resides in the speaker, who imposes language onto the world by which readers can understand it. The meaning produced by a producer of meaning is entirely the result of that practitioner's linguistic mastery and manipulation, the text means what the author envisaged. It is also the case that such linguistic representations lay the basis for a reader's understanding of reality (Lacey, 2009: 147). Yet this theory presents us with a difficult contradiction to face: language is fundamentally a social practice, there is no such thing as a private linguistic system. Thus authors must subsume the social linguistic endeavours which present the subject with the ability to speak and be intelligible (Hall, 1997: 24-26). The approach also has difficulty in explaining the ubiquitous phenomenon of negotiated and oppositional readings of texts and signs.

The *constructivist* approach to representation, then, explores a middle ground between the reflective and intentional. Meaning resides neither in the material world, nor in individual speakers. Rather there is a functioning system of representation particular, and constitutive of, the society which uses it in its dealings with a material reality – meaning is conveyed through “the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts” (Hall, 1997: 25). In terms of a constructivist approach then, the objects that pervade the cultural tourism enterprise are only ever social constructions, *arbitrary signs that convey (represent) meaning – an idea(s)*. These are signs embroiled in the conventions of media language, objects whereby a set of conventions is being obeyed in the articulation of meaning, models whereby instances in ‘the tourist conceptual map’²³ are appeased. Reference is made to meaning via social concurrence. What is being represented is only arbitrarily/indexically connected to the referent being represented. The meaning of the elements which comprise the concept of the thing being sold under tourism manifests only through a social design of the marriage of material and symbolic activities.

What does this mean for ‘heritage’, in the light of these observations? Heritage, in fact, is the arrangement of linguistic concepts which answer questions regarding to ‘the way things are’. Heritage seeks to interpellate subjects into its systems of representation. Discursive location through interpellation is the primary constituent of identity. Thus for Stuart Hall (1996: 4), identities are “produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies”. And in a national context, as Christina Goulding and Dino Domic (2009: 88) aptly put it, “national cultures construct identities by producing meanings about ‘the nation’ with which people can identify” – the system of conventions of representation. Representation exercises the agenda of those who control media enterprises²⁴ (including tourism)

²³ The issue of a heterogenous tourist class is beside the point.

²⁴ See Chapter 4.

(Althusser, 1971). It serves a class interest (Tomaselli, 1999). It is thus hardly surprising that the articulation of heritage tourism is so closely related with whatever epistemological universe is currently in vogue at a national and institutional level (cf. Tomaselli and Mpfu, 1997).

The most politically sensitive scenarios appear in states where different elites have exercised power within a relatively confined temporal era, and where the nation-state is contested and heterogeneous, particularly in the grappling of the legacy of oppressive regimes. In these cases, the re-presentation of heritage is not merely a common-sense, popular ideological subscription, but a political mobilisation effort which uses history to achieve such ends (Wright, 1985; for examples of contestations in South Africa at the end of, and after apartheid, see Coetzee and van der Waal, 1988; Tomaselli et al., 1996; Tomaselli and Mpfu, 1997; Tomaselli and Shepperson, 1997). I will now make reference to a case study in the light of the above theoretical exposition.

Croatian history is littered with perpetual accounts of invasion and war since antiquity²⁵. The 1900s alone bore several ideological and military regimes²⁶, the legacy of which is particularly emotive for its citizens, as the qualitative research of Goulding and Domic (2009) illustrates. Given this tumultuous political landscape and essentially heterogeneous, fragmentary population demographic, it is hardly surprising that the question of identity in the Croatian context raises considerable complexities.

Goulding and Domic (2009) illustrate how the contents of tourism sites in Croatia are involved in the greater ideological and institutional agendas of the state, and that many sites “reinforce and inculcate a set of social ideas and causes”, with “...the state [assuming] the role of marketer of cultural meaning” (ibid.: 91). The state exercises its ideological muscle in the construction and transmission of heritage; and this is done in coordination with contemporary political ideas and the reinforcing of identity, specifically with emphasis on the nature of the same (Croats) and the other (Serbs)²⁷.

The motivation for contriving nationhoods in many developing ‘new democracies’ often revolves around “trying to construct ethnically (or culturally, religiously or racially) closed or ‘pure’ formations in the place of the older, corporate nation-states or imperial formations” (Hall, 1999: 38)

²⁵ Parts of modern day Croatia, such as the historic town of Trogir, have been subject to invasion since antiquity. Trogir’s particular geographic placement and its proximity and thus susceptibility to both European and Asian turbulences, has resulted in numerous foreign occupants, including ancient Greeks and Romans, Mongolians in the 12th century, Venetians in the 15th, and French and Austrians in the 19th century.

²⁶ During this time, the territory was subject to numerous political and ideological impositions, which saw shifting notions of allegiance and cultural identity, including the Nazi-Germanic invasion in 1941 and the ensuing fascist regime; the ascension of a socialist federation from 1945; the re-emergence of Croat nationalism following the fall of the USSR in 1989; Croat-Serbian war and ‘ethnic cleansing’ until 1995; and finally, the emergence of liberalism and a turn to social democracy by the turn of the millennium (Goulding and Domic, 2009: 86).

²⁷ Cf. Footnote 26 to see how this relates to the present political arrangement in the country.

– a model which was never subscribed to in the imperial context, which is one more of domination²⁸. The construction of identity (of an epistemological ‘same’), therefore, is a socially produced, imagined notion, which realises in definition via contemporary contextual factors, and as said, through what it is not. This is a basic method of human survival; since its earliest beginnings, man has banded together to form ‘communities’ in order to increase its chances of survival²⁹.

The heritage sites in democratic South Africa are also influenced by the ideas of the state, though in this case, the agenda is geared towards universal inclusion. Within the agenda of the African National Congress to unite a fragmented population under a single, rainbow nation, it has been necessary to review and, at times, re-articulate existing monuments which were incompatible with this agenda and of a separate epistemological universe (cf. Tomaselli and Mpofo, 1997: 67). This is further indication of the powerful role played by heritage. As Tomaselli and Mpofo (1997: 62) assert – in concurrence with the thesis of Goulding and Domic (2009) – “Monuments are one way that preferred cultural meanings about history and power are articulated into a group’s consciousness. They...intersect with official discourses of history, religion, and education.”

Heritage is a landscape by which competing discourses struggle to attain an interpretive hegemony. The research of Goulding and Domic identified certain explicit ideological formations that arose in the consumption of heritage in Croatia. Specifically, notions of nationalism were affected positively for many tourists, and this was done with reference to how, during the previous regime, Croatian heritage was suppressed. Thus the Croats are reclaiming an ideological landscape that was previously suppressed (ibid.: 92-3). As Jeff Guy asserts (1998: 157), “new elites defend challenges to their status with histories of domination. Politicians play on present tensions by invoking past victories and injuries to establish and mobilise around ethnic sentiment...and nationalist triumphs...to reach across class...to fight the battles of today”. He continues: “Versions of history, ideas and interpretations of the past, are used in the present for good and for evil” (ibid.: 168).

Heritage is often revised in the wake of political reforms, where earlier epistemological formations become untenable under the new era. For instance, Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980), the most prominent 20th century Croat whose life embodied the idea of the former socialist regime, is a taboo subject in contemporary Croatia. The country’s heritage sites have borne aggressive nationalist cleansing programmes, with all reference to Serbs removed. This may seem contradictory; while it is argued that identity transpires through difference, here markers of difference are removed. In fact, it operates at a more covert level, by which “Croatian values” – invented traditions (Hobsbawm,

²⁸ Hall further asserts that this ambition to achieve the ideal marriage of nation (a people-hood) and state (the geographic, political and institutional entity) is ill-informed or paradoxical: the model aspired to, embodied by western nation-states, has never been of this ethnically pure kind (ibid.)

²⁹ As played out in the *Gorgias*, the conversations between Socrates and Callicles (cf. Hailton and Cairns, 1989).

1983) – revolve around what this imagined Croatian community ‘knows’ the Serbs’ nature to be; present in their absence. As such, it is an unspoken, subconscious articulation of the identity of the Croat. Presenting a Serbian version of history would defeat the unifying intentions of a nationalist orientation of heritage. Unlike in 1990s South Africa, even certain amenities and partisan remnants, like public fountains and so on, were destroyed due to their indexical and symbolic aspects. This is illustrative of the powerful link, as assumed by governmental authorities, between cultural markers (that is, signifiers), even architectural and partisan ones, and a national sense of identity and cultural memory (mythical signifieds)³⁰. These markers of politically deplored regimes do not survive the transition to a Croat nationalist state. In terms of the ‘history’ that heritage sites usually articulate, Croatia’s is largely the accentuation of one history – a Croat nationalist – and the erosion of all others. Goulding and Domic thus question the nature of ‘history’ especially in terms of ‘authenticity’, naming Croatia as case of staged authenticity – a “partial and selective version of history that denies others their place in history” (ibid.: 95). Others might understand it in terms of constructivist authenticity – how heritage signs are a stake in semiotic and discursive struggles at the ideological level (cf. Culler, 1981; Pearce and Moscardo, 1986; Bruner, 1994; see below). Importantly, the research also illustrates that there was a considerable degree of awareness amongst some informants about the historical re-workings of history, and the overtly political nature of representation in Croatia, with many expressing displeasure as to the tenacious and unbending severity of the propaganda-like presentation of their heritage, especially as a whole decade had passed since the Serb-Croat War (Goulding and Domic, 2009: 94). Lastly however, as with the industrial relics of Lancashire, the Croatian past/history was spoken of with a great sense of nostalgia and pride. Many Croats “...adored going to the archaeological museum and seeing the cot of the first Croatian king” (Goulding and Domic, 2009: 98).

The research by Goulding and Domic (2009) and that of Tomaselli and his colleagues (Tomaselli and Ramgobin 1988; Tomaselli et al., 1996; Tomaselli and Shepperson, 1997; Tomaselli and Mpofu, 1997) illustrates the complexity of the re-presenting of heritage, most extremely exemplified in states where conflicting ideological narratives have been exercised within the domination of certain social groups. What do the concerns of constructivism mean for the endeavours of heritage tourism? The articulation of heritage recycles the interpretive concepts which constitute the culture by which the interpreter makes sense of heritage narratives. The discursive formation which annexes the denotative terrain is not a ‘natural’ language, emanating

³⁰ The toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in Firdos Square, Baghdad, in April 2003, for instance, was widely mobilised as the symbolic surrogate of the dissolution of ‘despotism’ and the ascension of ‘freedom’. The English social commentator and journalist Robert Fisk (2003) described the event as “the most staged photo opportunity since Iwo Jima”.

‘from nature’, but an arbitrary and constructed one emanating in the symbolic practices of society (see also Chapter 3, Part I). More on this below.

Ultimately, this explains how a neoliberal model of heritage tourism becomes captured by fundamentally ideological interests when it is developed, that is, exported, in new, developing states. Or this explains how imported neoliberal models of tourism encounter political obstacles not obvious in first world, more culturally homogenous societies.

The tourist gaze

This section offers a closer examination of the relationship between the tourist and the toured, continuing the constructivist theoretical framework of analysis. More specifically, I argue that the things gazed upon in the routine of tourism are never gauged in their neutrality, but rather that this gaze is “as socially organised and systematised as the gaze of the [i.e. Foucault’s] medic” (Urry, 2002: 1).

The tourist encounter, in this constructivist vein, is made sense of by submission to the set of conventions, codes, concepts, ideas, readings, obligations, logics, and activities that underpin the discursive subjectivity of *the tourist*. That is, the working of ‘the tourist gaze’ necessarily locates the subject position of ‘tourist’ in the discourse of (the consumption of) place. Discourse is the macro framework in which utterances gain currency. Just as discursive orders of medical sciences – the culmination of societal expressions of power and knowledge towards medical subjects – prescribed routinised ways of making sense of the symptoms (iconic signs in semiotics) of medical problems, the order of the consumption of place means objects of the gaze are ultimately the product of societal ways of making sense of reality (Foucault, 1972; 1976). Thus tourism commences through a set of discursive mechanisms, providing the societal basis for talking about and ‘knowing’ “a particular topic at a particular historical moment” (Hall, 1996: 44).

As explained above, while things might reside in the world, the world is not a place of meaning, *this is the domain of culture*; these things in the world only acquire meaning *in discourse*, in the language (*set of linguistic concepts*) which categorises, divides, labels and circumscribes pieces of the world and makes it comprehensible to its subjects (Winch, 2008; Foucault, 1970; 1972; etc.)³¹. The linguistic turn of science suggests that there is no meaning outside of discourse³².

³¹ See Chapter 3, Part I.

³² Peircean semiotics might take a different approach as it argued that interpretants occur at the level of firstness, that order of signification in which the emotional interpretant resides, where signification is identified as a general and unspecific quality or feeling, perhaps at a pre-discursive level (see Tomaselli, 1999: 37; Tomaselli and Shepperson, 2001: 93; see also Chapter 4).

The main point of importance here is the emergence of a dominant *way of consumption* that gains hegemony and replaces earlier discursive formations which held differing views of the objects which are now toured in tourism, in discursive contestation. The romance of nature, which I will investigate shortly, indeed, has very specific epistemological contexts, captured in industrialism, from a paradigm of terror – the woods as wild, ‘for animals’, contrasted to ‘civilisation’, and so forth (cf. Williams, 1972). Urry suggests four broad ways by which societies have intersected with their land: firstly, a practice of stewardship, to conserve the land for a better inheritance for generations of the future; secondly, as exploitation, where the environment is perceived in terms of instrumental appropriation; thirdly, through scientisation, that is, understanding environmental mechanics, and thus regulating its usage; and fourthly, in terms of visual consumption, through producing an environmental ‘landscape’, “not primarily for production, but embellished for aesthetic appropriation” (Urry, 1995: 174). The latter is offered as a definition for landscape in this context.

The roots of the tourist gaze developed within a particular epistemological trend that occurred in reaction to the industrial inundation of cities. The romantic movement conceived of nature in a very specific way – as a pure entity without the contamination of man imposed on it – it was a bastion from the ruinous tendencies of man, a space where the ‘natural’ and the ‘wild’ could still be engaged. This existed through a loathing view of the grotesque industrial lots and “dark satanic mills” (Urry, 2005: 20) that were rapidly transforming the landscape in an industrialising England. I referred to Raymond Williams’ (1972) thesis as to how this view of nature as a park-like, scenic arena of purity and of play betrays the earlier connotation of ‘the woods’ as a source of sublime terror and fear. Similarly the Alps, before the nineteenth century, were conceived as inhospitable, ugly and terrible. But under the veil of romanticism, the Alps become ‘civilised’ – “a unique visual, cultural, geological and natural phenomenon, indissolubly wed to European history” (Ring, 2000 in Urry, 2005: 20). *The desire to consume nature is thus the product of the destruction of such nature, much like the desire to consume industrialism in the latter twentieth century was the product of processes of de-industrialisation.* The shift to a romantic paradigm was afforded by technological developments in the form of the “camera obscura, the claude glass, the use of guidebooks, the widespread knowledge of routes, the art of sketching, the balcony, photography and so on” (Urry, *ibid.*). These tools preserved its aura at other spatial and temporal points. William Wordsworth, Caspar David Friedrich³³ and their kin were also complicit. The emergence of a visual sense was

³³ In the painting *Man and Woman Contemplating the Moon* (1830-35), for instance, a couple pause on a semi-discernible footpath in the woods at early dusk to contemplate the moon. There is no trace of human contamination or alteration on the landscape; it is remote, melancholy, magical, dreamy. A dark, twisted old tree dominates the foreground as the figures dissolve into the scenery, perhaps indicative of the dream-like contemplation being

entailed by the reactionary intellectual, artistic and literary development of romanticism in the nineteenth century. The romantic Grand Tour, of which I spoke above, served this growing phenomenon; when the ambition of travel changed from one of scholastic intentions to one of pleasure and ‘scenic tourism’.

This intellectual movement of romanticism, the development of techniques of photographic reproduction, and infrastructural development to increase popular mobility (discussed above) all combined to create the context in which the tourist gaze was born. With the gradual diversification of tourism types since 1841, several types of “tourist gazes” have manifested – affecting how objects are read (the epistemology brought forward in interpretation) and what they mean. I will now describe the *inventory of the tourist gaze*, with a view that these will inform my own analysis of tourism routines in cultural tourism. These are the romantic, the collective, the spectatorial, the reverential, the anthropological, the environmental, and the mediatised gazes. Though I list all, their relevance for the current topic can only be deemed once an ethnographic consideration of the tourist is conducted.

The first gaze to develop was thus the *romantic gaze*, its roots contrived in the reactionary intellectual movement of its namesake; where industrial modes of production ultimately ruptured the form and aesthetic of the landscape. This is the context wherein the movement developed. In escaping the callous of industrialisation, the individual entered an almost existential or semi-spiritual relationship with the landscape – one of fantasy and solitude. Importantly, the gaze is normally private and intense, with perhaps only significant others being invited to do the same. The romantic gaze is thus implied in its own destruction, as more people exercising the romantic gaze intrude on each other’s possibility for its realisation. This is the case with such sites as the Taj Mahal, which are worthy indeed of investment by the romantic gaze, but owing to its popularity it is difficult to do so. There is thus a tendency by the practitioners of the gaze to scour ever new objects of the gaze through which romance can be exercised (Urry, 1995; 2002; 2005: 21).

In contrast to the solitary contemplation entailed within the romantic gaze, the *collective gaze* involves social conviviality, a need of crowds to take place. An assembly of people – other tourists – contribute to a sense of vibrancy, of carnival. Large crowds become intrinsic to the attraction. So the collective form of visual consumption relies on a tourist bustle that is found at certain sights, an enjoyment of participating in some cultural collective. The collective gaze delights in a mass subscription to the wonders of a sight, where the romantic gaze could not survive. Connected to the collective is that of the *spectatorial gaze* – a gaze which proceeds within the company of the

experienced by them. The moon featured heavily in the work of the German romantics, embroiled in the discourse of dreams, semi-consciousness and contemplation; it remained aloof from our earthly activities.

collective, yet which is restricted to a mere collection of sights, not a fully-fledged contemplation of any sight, as happens through the windows of taxis, coaches, trains, cruise liners and aeroplanes (Urry, *ibid.*; Davin, 2005).

The *reverential gaze* is practiced by those whose journeys are essentially spiritual. The pilgrim falls into this category, as do tourists whose reasons for travelling are less of a strict religious obligation and more of a leisure activity. The reverential gaze is exercised as a strong, liminal concentration directed towards some sight which bears a spiritual significance. Thus those who practice the reverential gaze do so via a set of meanings at the symbolic level of signification. Similarly, tourists can ply their attention towards an *anthropological gaze* – whereby “individual visitors scan a variety of sights/sites and [are located] interpretatively within a historical array of meanings and symbols” (Urry, 2005: 21; see also Gordon and Garland, 1999; Tomaselli 2005; Finlay 2009). Thus, like the practitioners of the reverential gaze, those of the anthropological are situated within a cultural discourse which elaborates the activity of tourism and makes it meaningful. By this very process, tourists are located within a ‘pop anthropological’ investigation: one which considers the cultural appropriation that is at play in the sanctifying of some highly appreciated good.

The *environmental gaze* is one engaged in by tourists who are aware of the carbon footprints they generate in the touring routine. There is a substantial scholarly and NGO campaign serving and stimulating this interest. The gaze is thus unique to a community of environmentally minded travellers, who develop ways to reduce their carbon footprint to the smallest possible degree, and this, thus, actualises the gaze through which they experience the toured objects (see Mishan, 1967). Lastly, the *mediatised gaze* is also one used by tourist practitioners. The gaze is one that is necessarily employed when there is nothing to be understood unless it is an awareness of some media event that occurred at that site, which thus pervades it and provides its meaning, as for example at Shakaland, the set for the TV series (see Chapter 3 Part II; Chapter 5). This describes film-sets, literary descriptions, and other locations which are culturally construed by the media surrogate and the events which surrounded it. This gaze accounts for the actions which are assumed by filmic and literary tourists (see, e.g., Tomaselli 2001a; 2001b; 2002; Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004; Mhiripiri, 2008). The extent of this particular industry made possible by the mediatised gaze is considerable, with many people willing to pay to participate, in some small way, in the mediated event itself, through sharing the spatial location upon which the media event unfolded. This explains the large contingents of tourists driven by the products of Hollywood, seen at the Phi Phi Islands popularised by the film *The Beach* (Boyle, 2001) which wrecked the once pristine beaches (Smith, 2003). New Zealand’s tourism sector also profited greatly by virtue of it being the film set for *The Lord of the Rings* films (Jackson, 2001; 2002; 2003).

These are the seven variations which comprise the inventory of the tourist gaze – *ways of consuming places*. Because (the inventory which constitutes) the tourist gaze implies conventions adhered to in the activity of tourism, the semiotic relationship that exists within tourism sights is worth exploring and leads to a greater understanding of how the tourism practice transpires.

Tourism signification and participation in myth

The tourist gaze allows for the activity of consuming place. Tourism is a purposive activity of capitalism – it locates ‘place’ as an object to be consumed. It transforms nature – that sign we use to describe the physical and climactic components and conditions which support an innumerable number of ecosystems in which man perseveres with his survival – into a commodity which renders capital. Regardless if the tourism is scenic, cultural, wildlife, ‘extreme’ and so on, the ‘place’ being sold by the tourism industry should not, in any study such as the present one, be considered in a strictly Cartesian sense, determined solely by a set of geometric coordinates, that is, the land as it is empirically perceptual. In addition to these sureties, ‘place’ is equally a set of associated material activities, particularly, the production and consumption of “distinct and often specific goods and services” (Urry, 2005: 22). The consumption of these material activities is usually procured as an ensemble inherent to the touring of place, and are implicit to the activity as such (eating out, purchasing a taxi-ride, etc., operate as necessities which make the activity of tourism possible). These activities become metonymic of the actual sight/site they serve. I will return to this thought in just a moment.

For Dean MacCannell, probably the seminal scholar in the structural tradition of tourism analysis, this is a question of the relationship between an attraction’s real, physical site; its numerous on-site and off-site markers; and the processes which occur in the context of psychological registration/recognition³⁴. MacCannell (1999) draws on Charles Sanders Peirce’s original phenomenological formulation of the sign: “A sign... is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity” (Peirce, 1931-58: 2.228). A sign represents something to someone. MacCannell replaces the variables as follows: an attraction [sign] = markers [represents] + a sight [something] + (to) the tourist [someone] (MacCannell, 1999: 109-110)³⁵.

³⁴ In effect this is a structural approach to understanding tourism activity, and so this is a diversion from the general paradigm employed here, which grants more agency to the subject and thus sits more comfortably in a post-structuralist or constructivist paradigm. I can only say that this paradigmatic plurality offers a more holistic perspective on tourism phenomena. However, as is and shall become evident, tourism can hardly exist without some degree of prefigured, structured, routinised protocol which makes the experience *meaningful*, as well as regulates – specifies limits – of tourist behaviour and response. In addition, I present a postmodern approach which subverts the preferred structures in tourism hereafter.

³⁵ This formulation also allows for the slippage one sees between a marker, a sight, and the tourist as *the attraction* (to be discussed shortly).

Just as important as the physical site of a tourist attraction is its set of associated markers. These function as tools of interpretation and psychological navigation of the iconic skin of the perceived *mise-en-scène* of any site; in fact, these *constitute* the site in its own discourse. Without markers, a site is unspecified from the greater land in which it's found. MacCannell begins this argument with the postulate that the first contact a sightseer has with a tourist site is not usually through first hand presence, but with some mediated representation of it³⁶. A *marker* is any piece of information that constitutes a site as a sight³⁷ – “by giving information about it, representing it, making it recognisable, it marks something, present or absent, as a sight for tourists” (Culler, 1981: 3). This includes both information pegged exclusively to the sight (a plaque reading: “Younghusband’s Last Stand”³⁸ for instance), and markers that merely refer to the sight in any other temporal and spatial dimension: those found in the postcard business, movies, paintings, “travel books, museum guides, stories told by persons who have previously visited, art history texts, ‘dissertations’ and so forth” (MacCannell, 1999: 110). So these are referential instances performed off the site which contribute to the set of a sight’s markers. For this reason, MacCannell distinguishes between such off-site markers and on-site ones (those informational media found at its site). The forms a marker can take are thus diverse. Discursive markers are, furthermore, created in the real time activity of sightseeing, that is, when people discuss a sight, reach consensus, they effectively articulate an arbitrary set of concepts which come to act as markers³⁹. Furthermore, MacCannell limits the marker to the *information* – only – that is offered by a *vehicle*. The vehicle does not constitute the marker itself – only the information is classified as a ‘marker’ (ibid.: 111). Thus, for example, the marker includes a tombstone’s inscription, but not the stone itself⁴⁰. The stone is the sign-vehicle upon which the marker is exercised.

The argument is thus that sightseers consume sights in terms of a greater symbolic/discursive dialogue, which constitute the sight. The Golden Gate Bridge (‘the world’s longest suspension bridge’ from 1937 to 1964) can be consumed as a marker of San Francisco, or as a sight/site of great architectural accomplishment, “worthy of attention in its own right” (ibid.: 112). This is a sight successfully reconciled with its marker. The other possibility is as unfolds when a sight loses its marker: its relevance as an item worthy of attention diminishes as other sights command a greater degree of the relevant attribute deemed worthy of being construed as a sight. The Golden Gate Bridge could be interpreted as ‘paling in comparison’ to the architectural scale of, for instance,

³⁶ This is also the basis for why MacCannell’s notion of authenticity has been dubbed ‘objectivist’. Please see the last section of this chapter – *The dilemma of authenticity*.

³⁷ The latter term is preferred by MacCannell.

³⁸ Located on the terrace of Isandlwana.

³⁹ For example: “You know, this [waterfall] [reminds] me of [home]”

⁴⁰ So vehicles can be the attractions themselves.

the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge (which assumed the mantle of longest suspension bridge from the Golden Gate in 1964). It loses its marker as a bridge worthy of an appreciative gaze. Similarly, the Twin Petronas Towers lost its marker to the Burj Khalifa as the ‘world’s tallest building’ from 2010.

When a sight loses its markers (whether they have been appropriated by other sights, or whether the markers have been forgotten/removed), the exodus from such interpretive terrain leads to an increase in the degree of *sight involvement*. This is where the agency of the sight’s interpreter increases and the real, perceivable, non-symbolic attributes of a sight are scrutinised. The sight is interpreted without the symbolic paraphernalia that circumscribes its significance (*marker involvement*). Thus it is true that markers can conceal an otherwise ordinariness. Rembrandt paintings are much more awe-inspiring knowing the discursive formations surrounding one neo-classicist Rembrandt van Rijn. The Mona Lisa is at its most awesome knowing the discursive formations which engulf the painting (such as the legend that ‘the eyes follow you around the room’; that archaeologists are on the trail of the figure’s body and that it, furthermore, might belong to that of a man; and so on) and the artist Leonardo da Vinci, without which, the picture is, quite possibly, disappointing. When an ounce of moon rock went on display at the American Museum of Natural History in 1969, one boy commented, with a seemingly acute awareness of the distinction between sight and marker, “It looks like a piece of something you could pick up in Central Park [New York]. But it’s cool that it’s from the moon” (in *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 17th November 1969: 3). These examples draw to attention that often it’s actually a marker involvement (as opposed to sight involvement), on the part of the tourist, which informs the process of sightseeing, and ensures it is interpreted within certain discursive parameters. A sight without its markers is ‘meaningless’ insofar as it ensures the tourist does not participate in some agreed upon cultural framework of significance (MacCannell, 1999: 112-113). This explains, in large part, a proliferation of tourist sites that appear as little more than patches of grass, yet are represented as ‘shoot-out areas’, ‘ultimatum trees’, ‘outspan points’, and so on. Tourists generally ‘see’ the sights’ markers.

Markers guide tourists before the sight is visited (off-site markers) and while it is being toured (on-site markers). Both sets of markers prescribe how objects are to be consumed. Thus tourists, some have suggested, merely participate in an exercise of recognition rather than perception (Burgelin, 1967: 69). They engage in an activity of identifying certain features of a sight which are emphasised, described by off- and on-site markers – verifying their preconceptions of what the sight ‘is’. Recognition, for MacCannell (1999: 121), is a marker → sight replacement; “information about the object gives way to the object itself” in a moment that lasts less than a second (ibid.). This

process consists of a series of embedded marker → sight verifications – a mental process which substitutes visual contents with those conceptual markers the tourist brings to the encounter⁴¹ (cf. MacCannell, 1999: 123).

Thus if tourists see the sight only as the physical manifestation of the essential markers which circumscribe it, one could say the marker *is* the sight. One sees the operation of markers. The sight merely provides the means against and by which a prefigured inventory of markers can be satisfied. The sight – semiotically – erodes into its markers. In a scenario of *constructed recognition*, “sightseers have the capacity to recognise sights by transforming them into one of their markers” (ibid.). A second scenario of MacCannell’s sight erosion is that of *identity*. This is the category of charms, souvenirs, replicas, and so forth. Often – not always – this is achieved by sacralising a sight’s marker (or even the sight!⁴²). These items ‘speak for themselves’, in that they don’t need any tangible on-site marker to identify it. As a result, they might make good decorative paraphernalia, detached from their original context – when a painting of a New York panorama [marker] becomes an “awesome picture” in its own right [sight], which adds to the ambience of an otherwise plain wall. Thirdly, sight *obliteration* occurs when a marker of something else annexes viewpoints of a declared sight⁴³. This is common of intensely capitalist states, where corporate signifiers – in the form of large advertising placards – are erected in scenic, natural zones, blocking access to the consumption of scenic sights and contributing to aesthetic pollution (MacCannell, 1999: 123-131).

In tourism semiotics, tourism is about the participation, the consumption, of myth (MacCannell, 1999: 4). This hypothesis, although still highly relevant and very useful for tourism scholars, was particularly dominant in the 1970s and 1980s⁴⁴. Although semiotics is thoroughly unpacked as method in Chapter 4, a very brief definition is necessary here. Ferdinand de Saussure described signs as consisting of a signifier (some kind of perceivable form, like a word) and a signified (the mental concept of the object which being referred to) – as f, r, o, g = the concept of the amphibious animal, and the colour red = the concept ‘stop’ in English culture. When the signifier and signified are successfully reconciled so as to constitute a sign, this motivated sign becomes a signifier to refer to another signified on a second level of signification: the level of myth (Barthes, 1973).

⁴¹ For instance, a Cape Town traveller who is on a train from Woodstock to the central business district looks out the train window and sees an old, large, fort-like structure. The traveller begins to wonder whether he has just seen the Cape Town Castle. He looks back (in what MacCannell calls a ‘double take’) and a certain marker manifests in the traveller’s mind: the Cape Town Castle is a *star fort*. Substituting this mental off-site marker for the contents of what he has perceived, the traveller realises he is looking at the Cape Town Castle and thus enacts the necessary gaze.

⁴² As has happened in the Yellowwood Trees in the Knysna Forest, and the Cango Caves in Oudtshoorn, where tourists were breaking off souvenirs from the dripstone formations which take a century to build one centimetre.

⁴³ This is also the case when certain brands exercise a discursive monopoly over certain commodities, and transcend to the rank of generic: as has Coke, Xerox, zipper, Kleenex, vacuum cleaner, Tupperware, and so forth.

⁴⁴ The behaviour of certain tourists cannot be totally and adequately explained by this paradigm. Below I make reference to the post-tourist.

“Tourists are essentially semioticians”, imploring the symbolic level of signification of sightseeing paraphernalia, “reading cities, landscapes, and cultures as sign systems” (Culler, 1981: 1). It is the nature of contemporary tourism that tourists understand “seeing”/touring a place as a consumption of its iconic (not in the semiotic sense), visually ubiquitous, multi-mediated simulations and an engagement of its clichéd, popular myth. Thus, one has not *been* to Paris without consuming the Eiffel Tower (see Glaser, 2009); not to London without the consumption of Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament and the Thames (see Scott, 2009); not to Agra without the Taj Mahal; nor Manhattan without the Empire State Building (see Tomaselli and Scott, 2009). This extends beyond mere architectural landmarks. As Culler (1981: 1) elaborates, “...the tourists are fanning out in search of the signs of Frenchness, typical Italian behaviour, exemplary Oriental scenes, typical American thruways, traditional English pubs, [etc.]”. It is argued (Culler, 1981; Urry 1995; 2002; etc.) that the objects of the tourist gaze are consumed as signs of themselves – this means that *the symbolic level is sought*, just as the Zulu dancer construes the pre-colonial mighty warrior tribesmen in line with its articulation in an imperial narrative (Mershman, 1990a+b; Taylor, 1994; Guy, 1998; Tomaselli, 2002; Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004; Mhiripiri, 2008; see also Chapter 3 of this thesis). Mostly the activities are being commenced in line with the situational demands affecting the practitioner, only under the tourist gaze are they interpreted through myth.

I return now to a claim I raised earlier: the point at which the consuming of place intersects with the procuring of material activities – particularly the purchasing and consumption of goods and services – to represent place. Often procuring goods and services are ‘innocuous’ or even necessary; they merely facilitating the procedures of tourism. At other times, these activities are engaged in relation to the very myth of the place, that is, their real function is the fulfilment of such. That is, the service or good is *metonymic* of the place it is consumed within, as “cheeses in France, malt whiskey in Scotland, chardonnay in Australia and so on⁴⁵” (Urry, 2005: 22). The San Franciscan myth can be engaged by eating cracked crab and garlic bread at the Fisherman’s Wharf (MacCannell, 1999: 131); a material activity of consumption operates metonymically. Whether an activity or product, certain stereotypical phenomena are seen as some sort of cultural essence, possibly relics from a pre-capitalist contamination of ‘purity’. For MacCannell at least, they satisfy the tourist desire for ‘authenticity’ – a real cultural product/embodiment.

The tourist desire to seek out, ‘in reality’, the concepts or signs germane to this culture of consumption, results in an industry which provides mythical references to pop culture under the

⁴⁵ Importantly, and telling of the nature of globalisation, these goods need not necessarily be consumed in the place they are metonymic of – many entrepreneurs around the world exploit this conundrum, especially airport shops which have come to be a kind of global supermarket (Urry, 2005: 23). Thus *metonymy can also be complicit in a sights destruction!*

guise of the ‘authentic’. Tomaselli and Caleb Wang (2001) agree that the tourism industry sells “myth, not culture”; an industry providing instances of a clichéd, stereotypical mythology. I argue that this is largely the reason for the homogeneity of tourist commodities one tends to see in major tourist spots. The producers (of tourist ‘texts’) subscribe to what the tourists wish to see, and as such, an “authentic” cultural product (which serves a cultural purpose) gives way to the popular myth which articulates/*re-presents* what ‘traditional’ is.

Tourists are more interested in signifiers of Africa (symbolic constructs – signs – of the very essence of “Africa”), rather than empirically perceivable constituents of Africa, like its sand and stones, or its disease, poverty and war. As Boorstin and others deplore, the tourist looks less for what is African than for what is African-like. Boorstin asserts (1964: 106) “the tourist seldom likes the authentic...product of the foreign culture; he prefers his own provincial expectations”. The subscribed, dominant tropes are favoured over the actual thing, paradoxically probably the most authentic – *yet least semiotically articulated* – manifestation of any sight. This is also illustrated by the bizarre activity of food manufacturers to inject hams with chemical nitrates “for cosmetic purposes to make them more pink, appetising and desirable, that is, more ham-like” (MacCannell, 1999: 93) – to subscribe to the dominant trope of what ham is. Tourists “pay to see tourist traps, while the real thing is free as air” (Culler, 1981: 4). In order for the “real thing” to be considered a notable sight, worthy of an investment of sightseeing, it needs to be *marked* as such, the more the better. *The most sought after sights are those which are most heavily articulated by markers* – both on- and, perhaps more significantly, off-site⁴⁶. It is a semiotic articulation which builds contents of tourism.

The dilemma of authenticity

The notion of authenticity is a powerful semiotic operator in the business of tourism. The tourism industry has been quick to oblige to this phenomenon, with labels like “off the beaten track” and “unspoiled wilderness” persuasive euphemisms used to lure tourists from their hotel rooms to various locations (Culler, 1981: 3). For authors like Boorstin and MacCannell, a central ambition of the tourist is to participate in a search for an authenticity (this ambition does not apply to post-tourists, see below)...but it is one he will never find in an exercise of tourism, at least as it relates to objects, as the *construct* of ‘authenticity’ is inherently slippery, persistently evading the seeker. I will explore why this is so by tracing the notion of authenticity as it is theorised and presented by the objectivist, the constructivist and the postmodern schools.

⁴⁶ One of most powerful semiotic operators within sightseeing construction is the declaration of ‘world heritage sites’, ‘wonders of the world’ and so on.

Perhaps a notion of authenticity most frequently satisfied by tourists is one which accompanies merely being witness to a sight – that the need for its markers, especially those visual reproductions of the sights, erodes as they are replaced by the real thing, the actual sight. The nature of tourism here is synonymous to the age-old activity of the pilgrimage: the tourist, like the pilgrim, engages in purposive travel to a sight consecrated by the cultural disposition of the practitioner, practices ‘worship’, and then returns having experienced a feeling of upliftment (cf. Bauman, 1996; Urry, 2002: 11; Davin, 2005; etc.)⁴⁷. This is probably the most consistently satisfied understanding of authenticity for the tourist – all the discursive mechanisms for persuading a tourist to venture to a certain sight in the first place are finally appeased because the tourist exercises a consumption of the sight, for a brief moment, without mediatory apparatus: without the paintings, videos, postcards, discourse and so on which depict/represent the sight at different spatial and temporal locations. This understanding of authenticity is thus based on a distinction between the original, and the numerous multimedia surrogates which signify it.

Yet for Boorstin, the pseudo-event far outweighs the original’s capacity to impress (Boorstin, 1964: 107). This caricature of the tourist describes how s/he is moved along by his/her ‘surrogate parents’, gullibly enjoying contrived ‘pseudo-events’ and mistaking them for authentic realities. External environments and peoples are presented to tourists in highly commodified ways. As tourism opens up previously exotic locations for consumption by tourists, the result is argued to be not a gateway to another existence, but a mirror of our own societies. Critical of Boorstin, yet within a consistent paradigm of authenticity, is MacCannell. As with Boorstin, MacCannell argues the tourist ambition revolves around the search for authenticity. Because tourists are searching for the authentic original to replace the mediated markers, and participate in myth, this has resulted in a state of staged authenticity. The search for authenticity manifests in a deep interest in observing other people’s ‘real’ lives, the private ‘backstage’ of their existence – in opposition to the ‘frontstage’ which is ‘manufactured’ for viewing – with the paradoxical result that ‘work’ has become an object of tourism. The intrusion of tourism into institutional and work spaces is made possible through the provision of viewing areas in these workspaces, and the construction of backstages. The contrived backstage is the touristic method of appeasing a desire to witness real life experiences. This is what MacCannell refers to as ‘staged authenticity’. Thus contrary to Boorstin, who argues that pseudo-events are contrived to directly appease the tourists search for the (in)authentic, MacCannell argues that these pseudo events of staged authenticity are the result of the social relations inherent to modern tourism.

⁴⁷ In fact, the comparison between the tourist, the pilgrim, the stroller, and the *flâneur* wields a considerable literature which investigates such similarities. See Bauman, 1996; Urry, 2002; Davin, 2005; etc.

Both MacCannell and Boorstin, while offering separate versions of the role and nature of the authentic in the exercise of tourism, are concerned with the authenticity of originals (positing the value of authenticity on the original, the sight, as opposed to the multitude of markers – including pseudo-events and instances of staged authenticity – which represent it). For Ning Wang (1999: 353), this is commonly understood as a museum-linked and/or *objectivist* conception of authenticity. The authentic original exists and is attainable, but not in the exercise of mass tourism, which offers pseudo-events and staged authenticity. What is also important to take cognisance of, is the ambiguity of the application of authenticity: “That which is judged as inauthentic or staged authenticity by experts, intellectuals, or elites may be experienced as authentic and real from an emic [s/he actually undergoing experience] perspective – this may be the very way that mass tourists experience authenticity” (Wang, *ibid.*).

This last point leaves us with deeper questions about the meaning of authenticity: the cultural baggage that the label ‘authenticity’ carries and the role of the text as it traverses an array of interpretive communities. For constructivist and postmodern scholars, the objectivist approach to authenticity is simplistic and problematic. For theorists like Culler (1981), authenticity presents an impossible dilemma for those concerned with it – elusively retreating the more one looks for it. This is because for such constructivists, pure authenticity means a zero tolerance to symbolic appropriation of objects; one cannot engage the world outside of discourse, but any imposed discourse is a contamination of ‘authenticity’. That is, authenticity is a connection with something without any ‘symbolic baggage’ providing an interpretive role. Culler (1981: 5) presents the example of the Grand Canyon, which, he argues, can never be gazed at directly, because it is perpetually involved in a massively obtrusive, monopolising symbolic complex – those determining discourses – which is merely fulfilled in the process of sightseeing the canyon. The thing – in this case, the canyon – is measured up in terms of its markers. The markers circumscribe the sight, and it can never be authentically consumed.

The *constructivist* approach to defining authenticity does not offer a solitary, uniform, consistent conception of the subject, though several constructivist characteristics can be identified. Constructivists deny the empirical stance that the world becomes known to us firstly through our sensory perception (see also Chapter 3 and 4) – that there is a neutral world that exists ‘out-there’ independent of any intrusive cultural language. Constructivists follow the Marxist route: that meaning (intelligibility) is constructed by people’s activity whereby they are linked to nature; ‘the world’ is only meaningful insofar as we have a language and a use to circumscribe it; the world as text. Constructivism presents a pluralist, chimerical reality, and is accused, by empirically inclined scientists, of its self-defeating relativism. For constructivists then, multiple and plural meanings are

attached to the same object by different contextual/interpretive communities. Each interpretive community has its own language for knowing the object, and thus, knowing the object can only be relative. The ability to ‘know’ the object is always contextually circumscribed (cf. Winch, 2008).

The school of constructivism therefore, cannot, by nature, be content with the objectivist conception of authenticity. For Edward Bruner (1994), authenticity has several different aspects. Extending the attribute to apply even to the nature of the copy, it refers to the degree of historical verisimilitude of a given re-presentation – that is, the degree to which a display appears to be true, appears to be a convincing, life-like representation of the original. The higher the degree of verisimilitude, the more authentic a representation is. Dingane’s capital at uMgundlovu of the 1830s is authentically represented by the traditional reconstructions of the homestead. On this note, another aspect of authenticity is the deployment of power and the role of authority. State bodies, and other ideological machinery, have the power to legitimise certain manifestations as “the real one, the authentic one”. Representations gain authenticity if they carry this powerful certificate: as Bruner states (1994: 400), “there is only one officially reconstructed New Salem, the one approved by the state government.”

Some aspects of authenticity that generally apply to the constructivist school are as follows. Firstly – this encapsulates the clauses proposed by Bruner – there is no absolute, static original which can be deemed the authentic, because all objects/*signs* are socially constructed; and the measurement of authenticity is itself, arbitrary/socially constructed. Secondly, traditions, cultures, and so on, are themselves social and semiotic constructions, and we have come to accept that culture exists in a perpetual state of contestation and negotiation of competing texts, so conserving something under the euphemism of authenticity negates a natural, ‘authentic’ process – the struggle for meaning. The myth of authenticity is complicit in the ascension of a particular history. Thirdly, authenticity is an interpretive tool, which exists in accordance with what the interpreter deems to be authentic – authenticity may exist for some and not for others, it is pluralistic, plastic, and can exist regardless of the judgement of ‘experts’ (cf. Pearce and Moscardo, 1986). If tourists experience toured objects as authentic, these viewpoints are real in their own right (cf. Cohen, 1988). Fourthly, authenticity is commonly asserted by the tourist when there is a recognition that what is perceived is in accordance with the obtrusive, dominating myth that tourists hold of a place, people or thing (Culler, 1981). The result is that “authenticity is thus a *projection* of tourists’ own beliefs, expectations, preferences, stereotyped images, and consciousness onto toured objects, particularly onto toured Others” (Wang, 1999: 355 – original emphasis). The tourists “pay to see the noble savage, a figment of their imagination” (Bruner, 1991: 243). A final point on constructive authenticity is that of ‘emergent authenticity’ (Cohen, 1988). This occurs when something originally conceived as

inauthentic and diabolically fake, over time, becomes considered as an authentic object in its own right, a sign of itself as opposed to an amalgamation of pop culture pastiche, as might be the case for Disneyland and other hyper-realities (Wang, 1999: 355).

To conclude this section of constructive authenticity then, constructivists' assert the search for authenticity is indeed complicit in the activity of tourism, but this search is never for the authenticity of originals, but for a *symbolic authenticity* consented by a social construction of mass tourism and leisure.

The *postmodern* approach to authenticity entails the total dislocation of any perennial meaning. Whereas the constructivist approach is concerned with the intrusive pervasion of discourse, for postmodernists this is not a problem, but rather a source of textual play. For theorists like Umberto Eco and Jean Baudrillard, through the invention of technologies and notions of reproduction and referendum, the instance of the original is displaced and irrelevant. For Baudrillard, in the contemporary era – the “third order of simulacra”⁴⁸ – people live “by the mode of referendum precisely because there is no longer any referential” (Baudrillard, 1983: 83). In Baudrillard's condition of postmodernity, meaning is ruptured from the images which were hitherto its vessels, and “reality from representations of it” (Hollinshead, 2002: 173). Reality presents itself to us in sequential pastiche, detached references of a whole array of cultural contexts (Smith, 2003: 18; Jameson, 1991). Only through the *metaphysics of the code* do we experience any ‘reality’ – albeit a simulated and referential one. For the postmodernist school, the laws of reality exist in a multifarious, plastic, symbolic anarchy; without perennial meaning. The possibility for all-encompassing narrative disappears and the tourist becomes involved in a hyper-reality of play and meta-narrative.

Techno-companies, such as Walt Disney and Disneyland, where the lines between real and fake are anarchic, received considerable attention from Baudrillard who was scathing of its role in the commodification and de-contextualisation of culture and heritage. Technology is used to make the real “more real”, that is, to ‘improve’ on the original. This is illustrated by the fact that zoo and park managers have implemented audio devices to simulate bird noises in order to *exaggerate the amount of reality in a space* (see Wang, 1999: 357). That is, sights can become saturated by their

⁴⁸ Baudrillard (1983) argues that there are three developmental phases which have transpired in order for the age of simulation to be realised: the first, spanning from the Renaissance to the beginning of the first industrial revolution, he termed “counterfeit” – the emergence of representation, as kings ruled by religious decree (stood in for God) for example. The second is the order of production, which appears in the industrial era. This order allows for the infinite and exact reproduction of good, particularly in the production line. The third, and contemporary order, is that of simulation, the ultimate loss of the real.

constitutive signifiers. The park needed to simulate park-likeness to achieve park-likeness when it was already a 'park'.

Postmodernism provides a justification of the contrived (Wang, 1999: 357). I just noted how technology can seem more authentic than the authentic – and, given that manifestations of staged authenticity are tourism surrogates for often fragile cultures, they demarcate the territory of the tourist and thus, conversely, the territory of the culture in question, protecting them from tourism's propensity for acculturation and homogenisation.

The type of tourist to delight in postmodern authenticity cannot be explained as a search for the authentic. This is, instead, something different: the post-tourist (Feifer, 1985). George Ritzer and Allan Liska (1997: 107) assert, "...in contrast to MacCannell, [we would argue] that many tourists today are in search of inauthenticity." There is thus a tendency to define MacCannell's tourist (one who quests for an authenticity), as the 'modern' tourist; the postmodern tourist thus being engaged in perpetual search for "an aesthetic enjoyment of surfaces" (Wang, 1999: 357). The first feature of post-tourism is that the frame through which scenes are regularly seen in conventional tourism, like the hotel window, plane window, cabin porthole and the car windscreen, more and more, become metonymic of the television screen, a frame almost constantly flicking like the multi-channel experience offered on the television. Objects of the tourist gaze thus no longer command an auratic, once-in-a-lifetime appreciation by tourists; objects of the gaze merely comprise the bricolage of experiential euphoria for the post-tourist. In fact, television is fundamentally complicit in a "massive upward shift in the level of what is 'ordinary' and hence what people view as 'extraordinary'" (Urry, 2002: 92). For Solange Davin (2005), the tourist is the quintessential television viewer: both (tourist and television viewer) are intrigued with Goffman's backstage, tours of fire stations parallel the backstage of doctor's lives explored in the ultra-successful medical dramas *E.R* and *Grey's Anatomy*. Both are scolded for their conservative ideological nature, perpetuating a hegemonic consumer culture. Both can be destructive to wildlife and the countryside, both tend to commercialise tradition, exploit the underprivileged, and fuel cultural misunderstanding (Davin, 2005: 171-2).

The nature of the tourist ensemble leads to the second characteristic – a delight in the multitude of choice, an awareness and ability to swap sensations. This is illustrated in Maxine Feifer's oft-quoted caricature: "Now he wants to behold something sacred; now something informative, to broaden him, now something beautiful, to lift him and make him finer; and now something just different, because he's bored" (Feifer, 1985: 269). The breakdown between high and low culture – another central feature of postmodernism of course – is reflected by the tourist's chimerical participation in mass pastiche. The world merely offers a multitude of games to be enacted by tourists. The third,

and most important characteristic according to Urry, is that post-tourists know the implications of the role of the tourist, the condition of outsider, and how business interests present tourist myths to tourists. S/he is aware that it is essentially performative and staged. Mostly, post-tourists are disdainful of any firm, rigorous structure of meaning imposed onto objects; they delight in negotiation and opposition of preferred readings of tourism texts⁴⁹. However, despite the awareness of the contrived objects of tourism, this does not necessarily result in a willingness to subvert the role of tourist – many post-tourists participate in the game of being the child, of following instructions.

I have been writing on three schools' approaches of object related authenticity: objectivism, constructivism and postmodernism. Both constructivism and postmodernism describe the crisis of the authenticity of the original (as defined by objectivism), yet while constructivism attempts to relocate the possibility of the original and refine its meanings, postmodernism buries the notion (Wang, 1999: 358).

Conclusion

The above theoretical explication has explored several components of the nature of tourism in the contemporary era: The first sections sought to contextualise the modern phenomenon of tourism, dealing with the social, economic, and epistemological context within which leisure gains currency; as well as the global economic proportions enjoyed by the tourist industry in the beginning of the twenty-first century. Thereafter, I investigated how a modern heritage and culture industry was spawned in the wake of urban decay following the 1960s in England, driven by a nostalgia which implores the past as the superior surrogate of the ugly, complex, alienating present; ironically the very adjectives that would more suitably fit the industrial working lives being glorified in tourism. When the character of the national population of states was affected by forms of imperialism, the presentation of heritage was inherently more political, and thus became an agent of ideological constitution. In this, theories of representation offered much light on how being able to make sense of something, particularly 'preferred readings', relies on our subsumation of the codes and conventions ascribed by cultural and mediated contexts. As such, I offer a constructivist approach for the endeavours of this dissertation. From here, I explored the relationship between people, particularly a class of leisure, and nature, explaining both how a tourist view of nature is both contextually moulded, and routinely exercised; in discourse. This was explored via the Foucauldian-derived notion of the tourist gaze, and a semiotic approach to understanding tourism sights. It was only logically thereafter, that this would lead to an exploration of the dimensions and crisis of

⁴⁹ See e.g. Mhiripiri and Tomaselli (2004: 254) who describe a particular tourist who delighted in exposing the fake reality presented by Lesedi Cultural Village in 2001. This tourist "pointed out every noticeable modern Western gadget, furniture and a census sticker to prove the inauthentic nature of the experience...he was being playful in his own way".

authenticity, which elaborated on the social construction and arbitrary nature of 'the authentic'. The postmodern approach, much like the tourists it describes, seems to delight in wholesale demolition of theory which makes any considerable headway in explaining tourist phenomena, dismissing it as reductionist, essentialist, structuralist, and so on.

While many paradigmatic explanations to several aspects of tourism phenomena have been presented, discussed and referenced, it is argued that it is the constructivist approach within which this research is most suitably pursued. That is, participating in modern tourism requires the practitioner to acquire proficiency in the discursive order of tourism – familiar with the protocols of tourism that give the practice its meaning.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter seeks to explore how certain contemporary discursive formations of the Other – ‘the Zulu’ – are rooted in a very specific set of political, economic, social and epistemological conditions. Principally, the chapter is concerned with how such arbitrary conventions for representing the Other assume a hegemonic status in myth, and how much of contemporary society’s repertoire of meaning has its roots in the serving of a (very often, colonial) society operating under vastly different epistemological climates.

Part I of this literature review includes both an explication of the social production of knowledge regimes, and an investigation into the historical circumstances in nineteenth-century Natal in which the popular tropes of Zuluness that abound in today’s society emerged. The events in Natal are investigated chronologically, through a critical engagement of the various “ethnographic” media texts which were recorded by numerous European explorers, traders, authors, colonial officials, missionaries, and so on, operating in Natal at the time.

Part II employs the conceptual conclusions of Part I in an analysis of the methods of representation that are prevalent in the present day articulation Otherness. This is an exploration of how ‘the Zulu identity’ and the myth of Africanness, both colonial, ethnocentric inventions, are both utilised, recycled and re-presented in light of the contemporary political, social, and economic context, using Shakaland, a cultural village in Zululand in KwaZulu-Natal, as the object of study.

Part I: The Symbolic Practices of Eras

This first part elaborates on the nature of discourse, and how this applies to conceptions of historical ‘Others’, as symbolic endeavours attempting to circumscribe, categorise and articulate the world, being reflective of the very nature of European, ‘rational’, Christian, empirical, Cartesian society. In the section, *The myth of the ‘black Attila’*, the chapter explores the various motives which informed the early knowledge and myth of Shaka and his kingdom. The chapter then progresses chronologically, through the various discourse that attempted to ‘understand’ (produce) something called a ‘Zulu identity’ in the mid-and-latter-nineteenth century. From this, we can identify a set of conventions which were used in the representation of the Zulu in the nineteenth century, by which, in Part II, contemporary conventions can be compared and explored.

Philosophical bearings

The condition of a ‘modernised’, contemporary Africa (as is popularly constructed in the media) today has its roots in the political, economic and symbolic European colonisation which began, in its earliest strains in southern Africa, in the middle of the seventeenth century⁵⁰. Africa was firstly a continent of strategic thresholds whereby the trade routes with the East Indies could be consolidated. In time, this prerogative developed; becoming a continent of economic prospect for investor countries. Colonialism would eventually occur through the construction of industrial, commercial, and labour infrastructures wherever opportunities were present, stripping the land of its mineral, animal and natural wealth⁵¹ and exporting it to the mother country (see Frank, 1969; Wallerstein, 1979). Frequently, the costs to the native populations found in these regions were catastrophic⁵² (see, for e.g., Oliver, 1957; Ascherson, 1999; Hochschild, 1999).

In collusion with this ‘economic logic’ (of imperialism and of capitalism) was a set of epistemological devices – a set of linguistic concepts, or *language* – which articulated the world, its objects, and the practices revolving around these things in ‘culturally compliant ways’⁵³ – that is, in ways congruent to the everyday necessities of cultural members. The conventions of this language, arguably, continue to frame representation of Others even today. Thus we shift a focus to the relationship between contexts – the “political, economic, social and historical processes” (Tomaselli, 1999: 29) which constitute a ‘culture’ – and texts: the pieces and bodies of discourse transmitted through media. Any study which aims to understand the concept and condition of “Africa” and its various populations then, must surely critically study the linguistic tools employed by colonial societies, by which this symbolic entity is popularly articulated and indeed, constructed.

Writers like Michel Foucault (1970; 1972; 1976) have shown how the world is experienced through a set of discursive regimes, operating under a relatively coherent *episteme*, which prescribes the parameters through which meaning about things is made and articulated. That is, the meaning of the things and the world lies not in the thing itself, but in the symbolic articulations which constitute this object *in discourse*. Foucault reminds us that the meaning of a thing is not the property of the thing, but that it exists in the totality of “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment” (Hall, 1997: 44). The *episteme* is the atmosphere of thought and discourse; it “defines the

⁵⁰ Though much earlier in other places like the so called ‘New World’ of the Americas, which experienced colonisation from around the 16th century.

⁵¹ Such as the endeavours of Cecil John Rhodes and the numerous hunting economies around the more lush zones of abundance.

⁵² This occurred due to a variety of causes, including policies of genocide, the introduction of European diseases, unsanitary conditions of work, and so on.

⁵³ As spoken of in Chapter 2. See also Chapter 4, Semiotics.

conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in practice” (Foucault, 1970: 168). Epistemological shifts occur in society when its constituent knowledge practices are unable to reconcile newer perceptions and ideas that are discursively untenable (Foucault, 1970). Thus, the meaning of things is not fixed. Rather, systems of meaning, or *cultures*, are sets of social linguistic constructions, applied to things to make these things meaningful to the cultural member encountering them, in terms of the governing episteme.

That an object exists independently of its meaning is referred to by semioticians as the relationship between the signifier and the signified. Keyan Tomaselli (1999: 38-39) discusses how the mundane motor vehicle tyre, for instance, is conceptually appropriated in webs of meaning, that derive from that particular interpretive community’s use for the tyre. In an apartheid revolutionary context, the tyre connoted an instrument of execution⁵⁴. In another context, the concept of the tyre is derived via its use in automobiles. In rural Africa, the tyre may connote shoes, or door hinges (ibid.). It could also connote hand catapults. Similarly, nowadays, within the con-text (Tomaselli, 1999) of political liberty from the state, we might view dying for ‘one’s country’ as a needless, archaic servitude to the leviathan state, but in revolutionary, nationalist France and Imperial Britain (and most societies which engage in violence and war), the connotation of ‘death on the battlefield’ was one of valour, the participation in the myth of a glorious imperial code of honour. Cultures entail the introduction of ‘language’, ‘ordering things’ (to borrow from Foucault’s literary title) in ways complicit to the functioning of the hegemonic culture⁵⁵. It defines the world in ways that seem naturalised.

It is through this conceptual framework that we can understand the representation of the historical ‘Other’⁵⁶ at various points in history, and its connection to the greater contemporary political, economic and epistemological currents in operation at particular times. Summarily, the cultures which colonised Africa, namely Western European ones, experienced the ‘Other’ through a “fetish of ‘difference’ and ‘the exotic’” (Tomaselli, 1999: 89). In other words, the ‘Other’, itself, was a symbolic articulation – an ideological construction – produced in a context with an ontological inclination of ‘difference’.

The modern notions of race are consistent with a discursive and paradigmatic lineage beginning in the ages of discovery and colonialism. In Greco-Roman antiquity for instance, a far different discursive/symbolic formation articulated ‘the negro’, as illustrated by Gustav Jahoda (1999):

⁵⁴ The politically motivated executions known as ‘necklacing’, where a tyre encapsulated an individual, was filled with petrol and combusted.

⁵⁵ This does not exclude contesting subcultures which struggle to impose their own languages onto the world and its things.

⁵⁶ That “strange, exotic, incomprehensible creature, feared, abhorred, and yet in some ways also envied” (Jahoda, 1999: 1). Generally people tend to dislike the unknown.

There was little or no prejudice against blacks as such...They were often slaves, but were also employed as mercenaries or travelled to Greece or Rome for commercial or diplomatic reasons. Intermarriage occurred and was accepted...Moreover, until the latter part of the Roman period, blacks were not linked to any of *the monstrous races* (Jahoda, 1999: 26 – emphasis mine).

The ‘monstrous races’ concept was a symbolic device in vogue in ancient Mediterranean society used to understand the question of the relationship between ‘people’ and ‘the world’. Philip Curtin (1965: 28) asserts that major racial differences are conceptually unavoidable and instantly recognisable and as such, become a primary benchmark, or categorisation, from which the identities of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ are construed. The constructivist account would draw attention to the arbitrariness by which ‘negro’, ‘Caucasian’, and so on, are identified/constructed. Yet there has also been “race-ism” – sets of ideas, myth, used to understand the races of the Self and Other. As the concept of Africa was produced within the active symbolic and discursive mechanisms of a particular western epistemological context, Curtin (1965: 479) asserts, the early European “authors” essentially asked the question: “How does Africa, and how do Africans, fit into what we already know about the world?” – or, how was ‘the African’ articulated by dominant discursive regimes? The image of Africa was thus “far more European than African” (ibid.). It is illuminative of the linguistic concepts peculiar to colonising societies. “Africa” was/is a *symbolic* invention (Mudimbe, 1988) – a social construction; it was *made* (by the West)⁵⁷, as a way of interpreting the world (Fabian, 1990).

As is apparent in the above account of the African in Greco-Roman society, the un-favourability of the Other was the outcome of a certain epistemological agenda. We can make some very likely and credible suggestions as to the reasons responsible for the “shift”⁵⁸ towards less cordial attitudes towards ‘Aethiopes’⁵⁹ – ‘Africans’. Firstly, there is the historical fact that the ‘land of the blacks’ south of the Sahara, had been cut off from Europe since the Arab invasions of North Africa, and so contact between Africans and Europeans was vastly diminished for a time (probably less than a century). When the African reappeared in Europe, it was defined in theological parameters. According to Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1992: 24), this unfavourable shift occurred during the early Christian period, where the colour black represented iniquity, profanity, darkness and the devil. In a similar vein, others (see Elfasi, 1988: 19) have argued it occurred in early medieval times as a result of the Moorish invasions (the conflation of Islam and blacks under the term ‘Moor’ meant they were perceived as heretic Islamist sinners – enemies of the Christian world).

⁵⁷ Hamilton (1998) argues that such symbolic construction occurs within ‘limits of invention’ – these are ascribed by the conventional discourses of the time, whose limits are set by the actuality of the reality of the situation.

⁵⁸ In fact to use the term ‘shift’ is misleading: the shift was not temporally defined, nor a homogenous, all encompassing categorical phenomenon.

⁵⁹ An ancient term referring to non-whites, meaning ‘burnt faces’.

These meanings (of ‘Africans’) were, according to both authors, biblically informed. The church was the foremost authority on knowledge until ideas of the Renaissance took hold – particularly on issues such as life, death and their meaning in the world. The Catholic Church had persistently asserted that the Earth was a mere six thousand years old. It had constantly perceived the origin of species in relation to the escapades of Adam and Eve, and the assembly of species inhabiting the Garden of Eden (Jahoda, 1999: 75). As an epistemological institution, the church held sway over a medieval society that was largely illiterate, highly superstitious and God-fearing, with the majority of the populace (save the aforementioned clergy and the nobility) governed by their oral culture. Oral culture has a tendency to allow what we might call ‘legends’, to perpetuate in popular, accepted knowledge because of the necessarily related lack of written, tangible evidence to contradict and disprove such claims. Only in the literate culture, are we predisposed to recording events, which ‘guarantee’ that they can become truly known – through their consumption, speculation, and contemplation at different spatial and temporal locations (Tomaselli, 1999: 123-124). This allows us to understand how the existence of ‘spirits’, ‘monsters’, ‘semi-humans’, ‘man-eaters’ and ‘wild-men’ came to, not only commonly thought to exist, but, importantly, function as symbolic constructs/linguistic concepts, employed by cultures to explain the nature of the reality of the world they inhabit.

Many authorial travellers, adventurers, and those that collected their works nth-hand, perhaps only exacerbated the perpetuation of monster concepts. The following is a quote from a 14th century memoir written by Sir John Mandeville):

In one [isle] is a manner of folk of great stature, as they were giants, horrible and foul to the sight; and they have but one eye, and that is in the midst of the forehead. They eat raw flesh...In another isle are foul men of figure without heads, and they have eyes in either shoulder...In another isle are men without heads; and their eyes and their mouths are behind in their shoulders (in Jahoda, 1999: 2).

This is not plagiarism of Homer’s *Iliad*. From our contemporary standpoint in history, we might say that the author has a promiscuous relationship with reality, perhaps to increase his work’s monetary value, or inflate the grandeur of his legacy. Apart from the obvious, these texts of faraway places say much about what *could* be said without being deemed unbelievable. In addition to the description provided by Mandeville, Marco Polo – deemed an early anthropologist – produced the concepts of nakedness and of the devilishness to describe the Other; Mathieu Paris, Brunnetto Latini, Roger Bacon talk of ‘debauchery’; and Ludolph de Suchem of the “bodies of monkeys” (in Jahoda, 1999: 27).

Scholarly knowledge systems were also operating in the discourse of the native in the same time period. Most scholars however, were separated from the possibility of empirical observation of the native, and relied heavily on the information provided by travel writers⁶⁰. Western scholars were preoccupied with taxonomic questions of species largely in relation to the Great Chain of Being (Mudimbe, 1988: 12), a socially constructed, comprehensive hierarchical doctrine “instituted by the Creator” (Jahoda, 1999: 32), intended to make sense of life on Earth. It was the dominant mode of conception, in various forms, until the rise of new Biology at the turn of the nineteenth century (ibid.). It aimed to classify the various objects of creation “in infinitely small gradations, from minerals via plants, animals and humans right up to the angels, in increasing degrees of perfection” (ibid.). Humans were closer to angels at the top of the hierarchy in that they shared with angels their ‘intelligence’, their ‘reason’, and so on. The myth of native *animality* was a central feature of research operating within this broad paradigm⁶¹. The native’s place, in fact, was a vital breakthrough in the grappling of the puzzle of the world – a final realisation of ‘humanity’s’ place in ‘nature’. Saint Albertus Magnus provided the so-called ‘missing link’ between men and animals, inserting between man and beast the category ‘man-like beasts’, which included the pygmy and the ape (Janson, 1952: 85). As an interpretive tool, western constructs of the Other “formed part of the series of oppositions [e.g. savage/civilised; polygamous/monogamous] demanded by the logic of the chain of being and the stages of progress and social development” (Mudimbe, 1988: 13).

The fact that the construct of the African had shifted unfavourably in European society, does not mean that there were no Africans found in Europe at this time, nor even that some were not accepted and even liked. There are accounts that the English aristocracy and nobility preferred Negro servants to their white counterparts (Curtin, 1965: 35). Yet towards the onset of modernism⁶², even this support fell away. Ironically, it was in the context of the dissolution of the slave trade that the meaning slid even more treacherously. When those people whose interests’ revolved around the perpetuation of slavery had become jeopardised, the popular convention to represent the African turned to that of the inhuman savage (Curtin, 1965: 36). It was a paradigm which would come to feature heavily in the scientific expeditions in the early to mid nineteenth century.

⁶⁰ Interestingly, the racial antagonism that was often the product of scholarly discursive practices, was unusually less acute within the travel writings themselves (Curtin, 1965: 34).

⁶¹ And, if we are to obey our assertion that knowledge is performed according to greater social context informing that knowledge, the Chain probably has its roots in the myth of animality, and theological explanatory tools.

⁶² There is no agreed upon date for beginning of modernity, and indeed, there are differing interpretations of what actually constitutes modernity. The following events/years are common to interpretations of modernity: the execution of King Charles I and the erection of the British parliament in 1649, the onset of the industrial revolution (1750), and the Napoleonic Wars (about 1800).

An epistemological rupture had occurred when increasing geological evidence had begun to raise serious doubt on such literal interpretations derived from the Biblical account of the origin of life, that had informed research and debate in times prior. The discursive practices of ‘science’, the “body of knowledge rationally derived from empirical observation” (Curtin, 1965: 29) came to circumscribe the issue of race in the nineteenth century, until even the 1940s. ‘Science’ came, through its theoretical tools of conception, to describe how race came to determine the attributes of the subject: “attitudes, endowments, capabilities, and inherent tendencies” (ibid.) among different races. The discursive practice of Biology had itself evolved from a simple taxonomic practice (labelling and grouping species), into one which established a language to explain ‘the link’ between external geographic circumstances and the biology of the species that dwelled there.

One of the figureheads of this era of Biology is the naturalist/zoologist Georges Cuvier (1769-1832), who attempted to establish a relationship between physical and mental characteristics of species. Succinctly, he argued that the more highly organised a nervous system, the more advanced the ‘higher faculties’. To this end, he explained that the greater the facial area and smaller the cranial area, the more the ‘organism’ is tied to instinct, mere sensory capability, and hardwired to simply ensure survival. Conversely, a smaller facial area and larger cranial area indicated a higher level of individual liberty through intelligence, and the capability to exercise restraint from pure instinctual drives (Jahoda, 1999: 78). This measurement of animality was indicated through *prognathism*, and measured by ‘facial angle’. Another scientist to theorise on the animality of savages was Herbert Spencer, who described how savages expend all their energy on perception, which leaves none for deliberate thought (ibid.). In a similar vein, the psychiatrist William Rivers asserted that “[i]f too much energy is expended on the sensory foundations, it is natural that the intellectual superstructure should suffer” (Rivers, 1901 in Berry et al., 2002: 198).

These theorists hold in common their belief in, and contribution to, the conceptions of the myth of animality of savages. The defining features of this conception are that the savages possess deficiencies in intelligence, an inability to control impulsive tendencies, and that they are unable to exercise personal autonomy, much like a child.

Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* was published in 1859, and it was at the forefront of a dramatic change in the understanding of life and the world. Though Darwin was a naturalist, and his magnum opus written from a perspective of biology, his theory of evolution came to inform the human sciences. Indeed, Social Darwinism held that “Evolution, conquest, and difference become signs of a theological, biological, and anthropological destiny, and assign to things and beings both their natural slots and social mission” (Mudimbe, 1988: 17). Social Darwinism applied the notion of survival of the fittest to human cultures, and described them in terms of stages of development. This

epistemological rupture ushers in new societies. This society – driven and informed economic, religious and ontological interests – believed it necessary for civilised nations to expand into, and control, the “virgin areas of the world” (ibid.) and that it was their responsibility to civilise the savages found within these lands – the ‘white man’s burden’.

The above, then, is a very short exposition on the foundations of knowledge of the European society in the beginning of economic expansion – the sets of epistemological constructions used to make sense of the colonial encounter.

The myth of the ‘black Attila’

Dutchman Jan van Riebeeck established a small colony at Table Bay, under mandate from the Dutch East India Company in 1652. Since 1488 – under Bartholomew Dias – Europeans had sailed past this point, but these Portuguese never built any bases in South Africa itself. Unlike other colonies, until 1657 Table Bay existed solely for the facilitating of trade operations between the United Provinces and the Indies – the hinterland was looked upon with antipathy. Only in 1657, was the land settled for use other than that of the business of the East India Company. Until the late 18th century, these settlers had pushed the frontier eastwards, into seemingly limitless expanses of land. This increasing isolation cut their ties with Cape Town, Holland and the rest of the world, by whom they were neglected and ignored, perhaps playing a role in propagating a culture of individualism and liberty (Morris, 1965: 23). There were twelve thousand families thinly dispersed over the five hundred miles from Cape Town (ibid.). Over the generations, new farms had constantly emerged at what was, for a short time, the very edge of Boer civilisation – only to be leapfrogged by other Boers engaged in the same process. This process of expansion then ended abruptly at the Great Fish River.

The Boers had come into contact with small parties of indigenous people, themselves migrating south and making small, rudimentary settlements along the way. The frontier had run its course, and the Boer expansion subsequently began to swell towards the northern borders (Taylor, 1994: 9). The Boer experience of natives had been confined to the apparently inferior specimens of the Bushman and the Khoi Khoi⁶³, whom the Boers had treated with disdain. This new race was known simply as ‘kaffers’, the Arabic word for infidel.

The borderland of the Great Fish River was the site of flickering squabbles between Boer and Bantu, almost always revolving around cattle or land, but at first, this was not a major issue for the recently acquired British Cape Colony (colonised in 1795 and again in 1806), who merely sent

⁶³ Described by van Riebeeck as “black stinking dogs” and “dull, stupid, and odorous”. Such attitudes, reinforced by the musket and alien diseases, resulted in their widespread extermination (Taylor, 1994: 9).

agents to quell the increasing tension on the Fish River. According to John Noble (1879: 20), the natives were inherently disposed to war. By the 1820s though, the attitude towards the eastern seaboard had changed; the government wanted an overland route with Delagoa Bay (Maputo), and the emerging merchant class was eager to establish new opportunities for trade, opportunities which seemed to be offered in abundance in the rich populations of animals, timber, and so on.

Under this climate, exploration and the chartering of the south eastern coast commenced. Several Europeans had ventured through the region prior to this government decree – most, shipwrecked Portuguese, Dutch and English mariners⁶⁴ (see, for e.g., Isaacs, 1836a; Noble, 1879; Morris, 1965). Knowledge of Europeans among the Bantu was but a brief flicker of curiosity, before descending into myth – there remained only the curious story about a strange white race that lived on the seabed searching for beads, occasionally emerging to the surface on “animals with great white wings in search of the ivory on which it fed” (Morris, 1965: 71).

It was these British expeditions that materialised in the establishment, and later, settlement of Port Natal. These expeditions, operating first from Delagoa Bay, also quickly brought to the attention of the Cape and Britain, through Henry Francis Fynn and his naval counterparts, the existence of the mighty “Zoolos” – a powerful civilisation of “warlike Kaffers” (Capt. William Owen, 1822 in Taylor, 1994: 10). The first symbolic construct was to conceive of an entity known as “the Zulu”. As authors like Carolyn Hamilton and others have shown, what the early traders and missionaries encountered was not a definitively articulated and bounded culture⁶⁵. There was a profusion of ethnic identities with contested meanings and histories (Hamilton, 1998: 6). As Michael Mahoney (2003: 567) states, the region from Maputo to Port Elizabeth formed “a linguistic and cultural continuum with no clear breaks”⁶⁶. The identity ‘Zulu’ was not something the colonists found ‘in nature’; only through the application of linguistic concepts does such a label gain any currency – gain a referent. Despite the disparity between the collective term ‘Zulu’ and the lack of homogeneity in the people it implies, there was a king called Shaka, and he invested major reforms to a large portion of Bantu people in what came to be called Zululand (Morris, 1965; Burness, 1976; Hamilton, 1990; 1992; 1998; Taylor, 1994; etc.).

⁶⁴ Interestingly, tales from this period (discussed in Morris, 1994) make reference to a reconnaissance party in 1790 stumbling upon a tribe whose offspring bore the names Bessie, Betty and Tommy. This is attributed to the incorporation of marooned European female survivors into the numerous regional clans. British mariners had navigated the Cape of Good Hope from 1598.

⁶⁵ This practice of ethnic conception, of course, was popular under Apartheid, where ethnicity was argued and interpreted to imply nationhood (Tomaselli, 2002: 131, 133).

⁶⁶ Mahoney (ibid.) continues: “It would be just as easy to view all three as one ethno-linguistic group (the Nguni) or, conversely, to further subdivide each of them, for they are all internally heterogeneous.”

The early settlement at Port Natal was all about the establishment of individual wealth – first and foremost through trade with the natives. It consisted of a band of men like Francis Farewell, James King, Fynn, Owen and Nathaniel Isaacs: opportunists looking to establish business and trade agreements with established tribes in the area. Farewell (1824), in a letter to Charles Somerset, Governor of the Cape Colony, 1814-1826, described the excellent potential for trade at Port Natal, and that the “natives have requested that we come and traffic with them.” From this early trade, the ideological industry with the native Zulu began to unfold, or, as Daphne Golan (1994) describes, the colonisation of Zulu history commenced. This symbolic colonisation of which Golan speaks is an essential tool in the operation of colonialism – the ideological means through which it is possible.

The earliest symbolic excursions into the construction of a Zulu identity made frequent allusion to Shaka. Shaka was – in very early times – conceived as a “benign patron”, with the portrayals of only James King⁶⁷ an exception (Hamilton, 1998: 36). Farewell described Shaka as well disposed towards the British, and enthusiastic about their settlement at Port Natal. Ivory was the main traded good, but some academics argue a quite possible activity in slaving (Cobbing, 1983; 1988; Golan, 1994), though this thesis is discredited or not supported in counter circles (cf. e.g. Omer-Cooper, 1993). The development of an agricultural sector that could supply the settlement at Port Natal, however, was not successful, as there was not yet the existence of a cheap pool of labour – essential to the competitive pricing of produce – and most agricultural products appear to have been procured through trade with the natives (Hamilton, 1998).

The earliest writings on the Zulu were those written in the early days of Port Natal, specifically by these traveller traders whose errands brought them from the settler community to the unknown regions of Zululand. These texts were characterised by an emphasis on the constituencies of the Other. Commonly, especially within books, the narratives follow the assembly of diary entries, detailing adventures in exotic, unknown wild lands (cf. Thompson, 1827⁶⁸; Gardiner, 1836; Isaacs, 1836a+b). These are accompanied by various political letters and newspaper reports which are framed in more formal conventions (cf. Farewell, 1824). Within these texts, however, writers generally purport, sometimes explicitly and sometimes not, on the potential and suitability for *colony*, and as such, the texts are underpinned by an economic motive (Golan, 1994: 35).

As the colonial relationship with the Zulu unfolded⁶⁹ however, the connotation of Shaka (especially posthumously) shifted to one of murder and savagery. The first patron of this connotation is King.

⁶⁷ Twice these coincide with King facing financial ruin.

⁶⁸ Generally considered the first book to bring to the attention of an English readership, the existence of Shaka and the Zulu (Taylor, 1994: 12).

⁶⁹ As well as the increasing predicament of the early traders at Port Natal. More specifically, the treachery of the eastern seaboard had robbed the settlers of a vessel. As a result, cargo exports, and much needed imports of supplies

King is often portrayed as a desperate, devious operator plagued by financial blunder. His reasons for venturing to Natal he articulated as saving the isolated, endangered ‘castaways’ at Port Natal, yet through a loss of his own vessels and cargo, he ultimately became their burden (Hamilton, 1998: 40). To strengthen his rescue alibi, he shifted the image of Shaka (in Taylor, 1994: 12), describing him as the archetype despotic and cruel monster (an elusive postulate of King’s; its employment determined by the specific demands of the relevant situation) (Hamilton, 1998: 40).

As the settlement grew, the settler interest was embodied in the idea of a Natal Colony. Julian Cobbing (1988) argues that to pursue this interest, it was necessary to mobilise Shaka’s tyranny as a reason for Britain to annex Natal. It is true that the processes of Shaka’s rule and the expansion of his kingdom continued during the settlement at Port Natal. But for James King, the shifting of the image of Shaka to that of a capricious bloodthirsty emperor engaged in acts of genocide was “a desperate ploy to force the hand of the [Cape/British] authorities” to colonise Natal (Hamilton, 1998: 45). George Thompson’s *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa* (1827), which elaborated on the destructive and barbaric nature of Shaka’s kingdom asserted:

This savage conqueror is said to be supported by an armed force of about fifteen thousand men...prepared to execute, without hesitation, the most hazardous or bloody orders of their chief. Failure or defeat...are [sic] punished with immediate death (Thompson, 1827: 201-2).

Apart from the prospect of a shifting, turbulent economic dynamic in the region, the growing fear in the Cape was that there would be a stream of refugees seeking refuge in the Cape in the aftermath of these wars.

Subsequently the myth (semiotically speaking) of the *mfecane*⁷⁰ – ‘the crushing’ – was widely purported by the early travellers and traders, becoming synonymous with Shaka’s rule. In the 1990s and beyond, the *mfecane* myth still enjoyed almost universal acceptance – an anomaly considering most settler history was extensively revised or discredited, though not necessarily popularly endorsed, in most colonial situations post-World War Two (Cobbing, 1988: 487). Yet revisionist historians like Cobbing and John Wright⁷¹, have described the *mfecane* myth as an alibi – a tool employed by contemporary colonial missionaries and traders (and later, seized upon by the Vorster and Botha Apartheid state apparatus) in order to conceal the practice of slavery in which they were engaged. These ‘Bantu crusades’ of the *mfecane* were the result of an apparently “*self-generated*

were lost at sea. The Natal community was cut off from the Cape, and surviving on Shaka’s patronage and the ingenuity of presenting him with “gifts” – as times grew dire, increasingly more desperate frivolous items, the mast-head of a wrecked ship for example (Hamilton, 1998: 39-40).

⁷⁰ This specific label, however, was coined only in 1928 by one E. A. Walker (Cobbing, 1988: 487), and popularised more extensively by the work of Omer-Cooper in 1966.

⁷¹ From which the works of scholars like Alan Webster (1988), Jurg Richner (1988) and Jan-Bart Gewald (1990) are situated.

internal revolution” (Cobbing, 1988: 487 – original emphasis) south-west of Maputo in about 1790, triggering a series of destructive migrations, set in motion by the quest for power under Shaka, into the interior and down the southern coastline. Under such campaigns, the general ‘depopulation of the region’⁷² (as proposed in Capt. William Owen’s journals, published in 1833) occurred, itself ideologically mobilised to support the postulate that the land was empty before white people arrived – a thesis commonly found in Apartheid era text books (Cobbing, 1988: 487-8). Apartheid discourse also adjudged that the tribal nature of *mfecane* is indicative of the “natural pluralism of African societies and how they self-sequestered themselves into proto-Bantustans in the time of Shaka” (Golan, 1994: 1). As asserted by John Wright (1991: 409), the concept of the *mfecane* “has remained one of the bedrock concepts around which the history of southern Africa in the later eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century has been written”. I am illustrating how the symbolic, economic, and political structure of today’s world is contingent on the mobilising of fragments of the past.

In the beginning, the Cape authorities were generally not predisposed to King’s tidings of impending Armageddon, and generally circumnavigated his influence. After Shaka’s death (1828) though, the discourse articulating his barbarity became hegemonic. The reason for such a general shift is temporally linked with the rupture of peace between the Zulu kingdom under Shaka and their white neighbours. The myth of the ‘black Attila’ had been born, and the most notable and authoritative colonial persons joined the throngs of discourse rearticulating the Zulu King in such contemptuous conventions. Even Francis Farewell (in Taylor, 1994: 13) was to involve himself in deploring his former benefactor: “Chaka [sic] is one of the most monstrous characters that ever existed; Attila himself was hardly his fellow”. According to Hamilton (1998: 47) though, Farewell’s reasons for such re-articulation were grounded in a judicial inquest investigating his participation in Shaka’s military conquests. Farewell defended himself by asserting that Shaka had ‘violently threatened’ the traders and forced them to participate in his campaigns, and thus necessarily shifting Shaka’s image (ibid.). No doubt, such military involvement on Farewell’s side wielded his cause numerous economic and political rewards.

Nathaniel Isaacs, another young pioneering merchant attempting to make his fortune in the ivory trade, asserted that after Shaka’s death, the Zulu people were not so frequently called upon to “commit ravages on the innocent, [nor] to annihilate man and beast without mercy” (Isaacs, 1836b: 25). He wrote:

Chaka seems to have inherited no redeeming quality; in war he was an insatiable and exterminating savage, in peace an unrelenting and ferocious despot...The world has heard of monsters – Rome had

⁷² The ‘region’ being the future white lands of the Transvaal, the Orange Free State and Natal.

her Nero, the Huns their Attila, and Syracuse her Dionysius; the East has likewise produced her tyrants; but for ferocity, Chaka has exceeded them all (Isaacs, 1836a: 336-7).

Isaacs was one of the first Europeans conducting himself in Port Natal and Zululand, and his travel guides⁷³ – written as the diary of the adventures of a boy in a dangerous land – provide a litany of ‘Zoola’ savagery, mutilation and barbarity. He described how Shaka presided over a reign of terror, and how domination and execution were commonplace (ibid.: 309). Just one of the innumerable acts of extreme violence to pervade the text reads as follows. After the defeat of one tribe he killed one hundred and seventy boys and girls:

He began by taking out several fine lads and ordering their own brothers to twist their necks, their bodies were afterwards dragged away and beaten with sticks until life was extinct. After this refined act of monstrous cruelty, the remainder of the victims in the kraal were indiscriminately butchered (Isaacs, 1836a: 159-160).

He described Shaka’s wholesale polygamy⁷⁴, but how of these women, he knew nothing of love; as having three hundred to five hundred girls at each of his “palaces” who were “denominated servants...If any became pregnant, they were immediately taken away, and some imaginary crime alleged for putting them to death” (ibid.: 327). And he described a world of barbaric chaos and regicidal tendencies: after plotting and executing Shaka’s assassination, after his brothers had:

Spared him to death, they left to execute a similar deed on the chiefs who were with him, and who had attempted to escape, but were arrested in their flight, and put to death in the same manner as their ferocious master. One of them was an old grey-headed man who had, but a short time before, put to death his seven wives with their children, for not having mourned the death of Chaka’s mother (ibid.: 315).

Isaacs’ work on the Zulu was probably the most comprehensive of the time, *the* seminal text on the Zulu, and relied upon by many future generations of anthropologists, historians, and colonial administrators, routinely imitated and plagiarised (Taylor, 1994: 15). In 1979, the book was reviewed and praised by D. Colvin (in Golan, 1994) describing it as ‘fascinating’ and comparing it to Robinson Crusoe. Through all the descriptions of his adventures and dealings with savage peoples, however, Isaacs aimed at publicising the interests of merchants and traders at that time, as well as convincing the British government of the prosperous nature of Natal, and thus its potential as a colony (Golan, 1994: 36).

⁷³ Provided in two volumes – the first on Shaka (1836a), and the second on Dingane (1836b).

⁷⁴ A highly debated and controversial point. Shaka is believed by many historians to have been homosexual.

Within his book, Isaacs protests such malevolent intentions, defending his intentions as a lust for knowledge. He writes further “however uninteresting the details seem to be, they are the truth, and nothing but the truth” (Isaacs, 1836a: 272). This motive, however, is belied by another he transmits in a private letter to Henry Francis Fynn, dated the 10th of December, 1832 (in Golan, 1994: 36):

Make them out as bloodthirsty as you can...describe the frivolous crimes people loose [sic] their lives for, introduce as many anecdotes relative to Chaka as you can, it all tends to swell up the work and make it interesting.

The myth of the Black Attila, for Isaacs, was also constructed in relation to Shaka’s successor, Dingane, whom he adjudged a benevolent leader. His advocacy of Dingane’s relative civility was intended to demonstrate the possibility of commercial relations with the Zulu (Golan, 1994: 36). A complementing appraisal of the benevolence of Dingane sits most oddly in the vast historiography which argues otherwise. Capt. Allen Gardiner’s *Narrative of Journey to the Zoolu Country* (1836) in which he portrayed Dingane as an oppressive tyrannical atheist, of whom only Christianity could depose, was among the first such progenitors. It was only after the Anglo-Boer War however, in work like Gustav S. Preller’s *Piet Retief* (1906/1920) that the myth of Dingane the slaughterer of men, and his mass murder of Piet Retief and his party of Voortrekkers, was symbolically mobilised as a tool of unity and Afrikaner nationalism⁷⁵, and proof of the “evil character of their black neighbours” (Golan, 1994: 39-40)⁷⁶.

The barbaric tales which emanated from this corner of the world were taken to be indicative of the brutish nature of life in those ‘less civilised’ parts. I have explained how the texts penned by the likes of Owen, King, Isaacs, Farewell, Gardiner and Fynn (ragtag opportunists, not schooled authors) were arenas whereby their own agendas (economic, epistemological, political) and cultural ignorance came to the fore. It is this image of the Zulu – the primal berserker who inhabits the dark South; adorned in dramatic feathers, porcupine quills, animal hide, and decorative regalia culled from the most ferocious beasts to grace the Earth – that became the symbolic surrogate for the common Zulu citizen – the dominant Victorian myth.

Thus, the early texts which recounted the nature of the Zulu Kingdom in the 1820s were obsessed with the military campaigns (and their associated culture of barbarity) that commenced under what

⁷⁵ As Tomaselli (2002: 131) asserts, generations of Afrikaans speaking whites defined their “national identity around the killing of the Boer leader Piet Retief.”

⁷⁶ Equally important (in light of footnote 75 above) is the celebration of the Boer victory at Blood River. Monuments like the Voortrekker monument, become embroiled in the society’s symbolic discourses, become repositories where ones culture is gleaned, substantiated, and restored, as well as, the converse: repelled and constructed in opposition (See Tomaselli and Mpofu, 1993). As a sign of the shift from a hegemonic Afrikaner nationalism in the mid twentieth century to a heterogeneous rainbow culture, the Voortrekker monument – previously depicting a Zulu about to smash open a baby’s head with a rock – has had to be modified.

would later gain currency as the *mfecane* theme. The ferocious aggressions of the ‘black Attila’ – Shaka Zulu – provided a mythology that would lend credence to many an agenda over the next almost two centuries. This was a mythology that explained that the problems in southern Africa were due to the ruthless ambitions of power of *one* (emphasised) bloodthirsty, tyrannical dictator: Shaka. The work of revisionist historians I have discussed does not, however, argue that the period of the 1820s was not one of upheaval in much of southern Africa, as it was first comprehended by Omer-Cooper (1993). Rather, it is articulated as having its roots in a greater period of political instability in south-eastern Africa that occurred several decades before the birth of Shaka (Wright, 1991: 409-410). Additionally, Cobbing’s more contentious point is that the rapid and vast expansion of the slave market in Delagoa Bay ruptured the relatively peaceful existence of Africans, triggering the multiple exoduses of Bantu expeditions south and west of the port town. The campaigns of Shaka are thus interpreted as a product, not a cause, of greater widespread instability.

The extent of Shaka’s political and military power and influence, as presented by these early traders, have also been rubbished and not based on empirical fact, but on serving external agendas they thought would lead to the accruelement of fortunes. Attila, Nero and Dionysius are hardly relevant metaphors for Shaka in terms of the scale of infliction of executions, assassinations and other atrocities committed by the former school. Wright (1995), for instance, asserts that for most of Shaka’s rule, the Zulu kingdom was still a relatively weak entity. It was only when he moved his kingdom further south in the 1820s to avoid the rival Ndwandwe in the north, and in 1826 when Shaka employed the British traders and their guns to defeat his rival Sikhunyana, that the Zulu became the dominant force from the Tugela River to Maputo (Wright, 1995). This was a mere two years before his death. Such revised interpretations of history illustrate the role ‘objectivity’ played in the production of the early texts on the Zulu.

By recounting the very first ethnographic texts to emerge on the Zulu, and the economic, political and epistemological contexts underpinning their production, one is able to trace the arbitrary (constructed) nature of the conventions used to articulate ‘the Zulu identity’ (an ethnocentric symbolic construct). In section 1 of this chapter, myth was explained as not an innocent language that is found in nature, rather it is a set of connotations that, over time, become naturalised; denotation and connotation appear to be pre-linguistically connected. Yet by investigating the power relations that operated between text and context during the reign of Shaka, I described the inception of a symbolic monopoly that is dominant until today (yet is being increasingly rearticulated). The remainder of Part I explores how this mythical lineage evolved in the remainder

of the nineteenth century, with a view (in Part II) to exploring how these links surface in contemporary articulations of Zuluness, specifically in the medium of the cultural village.

The Colony of Natal, and the ideological conquest of the native

The European fetish of the Zulu was in many ways typical of the European reaction to the Others from all around the world, although the Zulu commanded a physical/military respect – something not always bestowed upon other native populations. Just as the ‘Hottentot Venus’ was exported to Europe and exhibited in a cage for European consumption in the early nineteenth century, and George Catlin’s successful North American Indian Circus in 1843, so did the Zulu occupy a favourable slot of the Western gaze. They were intriguing for the British, who had been awestruck by the tales of barbarity and physical and military prowess under Shaka, just recounted. A troupe of thirteen of them was exhibited in London, including one display for the Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace. A correspondent for *The Times* described the exhibit as follows:

Now the Caffres [sic] are seen at their meal, feeding themselves with enormous spoons, and expressing their satisfaction by a wild chant...Now the witch-finder commences his operations to discover the culprit whose magic has brought sickness into the tribe, and becomes perfectly rabid through his own incantations. Now there is a wedding ceremony, now a hunt, now a military expedition, all with characteristic dances; and the whole ends with a conflict between rival tribes (*The Times*, 18th May 1853: 8).

These men were said to be performing the events representative of “the tenor of their brutish life” (Lindfors, 1996: 16). The visual nature of these exhibitions meant, not only that people who had previously only read of such savages could now see the real thing, but that illiterate people could also gain access to the epistemological construction of the savage other. This system of informed gaze upon the native savages, and the subsequent interpretations of the Other and of the Same, were enacted according to very specific relations between knowledge, power and the subject – that was made reference to in Chapter 2 under the section, *The tourist gaze* (cf. Urry, 2002; Foucault, 1970: xi; 1972: 52; 1976: 89; etc.). The subject is conceived in a circumscribed set of interpretive conventions, so that *the subject exists in its representative conventions*. The same group of Zulus were witnessed by Charles Dickens, who could not comprehend the rules governing their savagery:

What a visitor left to his own interpreting and imaginings might suppose these noblemen to be about, when they give vent to that pantomimic expression which is quite settled to be the natural gift of the noble savage, I cannot possibly conceive; for it is so much too luminous for my personal civilisation that it conveys no idea to my mind beyond a general stamping, ramping, and raving, remarkable (as everything in savage life is) for its dire uniformity (Dickens, 1853: 338).

Back in Natal, although Port Natal and Pietermaritzburg were loosely established entities, the Colony of Natal and policies of settlement only materialised in 1843. At this point there was a shift in the epistemological relation between Same and Other. The interest of the settlers – expounded in the early adventure writings of Isaacs, King, etc. – had been satisfied with the proclamation of colony, and a shifting set of conditions and agendas was being experienced in the colony. Dingane had been overthrown and Mpande, with the help of the Boers, had assumed kingship of the Zulu kingdom. Despite Mpande’s success in maintaining peaceful relations with the Europeans, there were several problems with such an arrangement. Settlers attempting to farm – driven by the opportunity to establish themselves in business in the colony – could not compete, through a market economy, with established black farmers, and so their interest entailed forcing the natives into a labour market, in order to become more profitable. There was also the agenda of missionaries, who tried to civilise Africans and ‘save’ them from their savagery (Golan, 1994).

The savage image of Shaka that was now established was dominant throughout the nineteenth century, though of course, was revised and manipulated at several points (Hamilton, 1998: 72). The path erected by the political interest at the time was characterised by both economic and symbolic manipulation. I shall briefly deal with the former first in order to establish the context within which these power relations and discourses unfolded (although separating them in such a linear fashion belies their text-context interconnectedness).

For Theophilus Shepstone (1817-1893), the balancing act between the colonial settler and missionary demands, and the impositions of his station as prescribed by the British Colonial Office, (sans any ethical concern for the native of course) resulted in the most inexpensive and ‘practical’ solution for the time and circumstances: to subscribe an area of land (two-and-a-quarter of a million acres, about one sixth of Natal’s total land by 1864) for African occupation. As far as possible, these zones were divided on the assumption of ‘tribal’ groupings. Shepstone believed that these regions should be governed by native law and custom⁷⁷, to minimise cultural disruption and “to save the soul of the people” (Gordon, 1968: 131). The Hut Tax was also introduced, in order to pay for native administration. Daphne Golan (1994: 42) argues that these measures were implemented for rendering subsistence impossible for Africans⁷⁸, thus forcing them to look for work on white farms, with the alibi that the reserves allowed for the continued operation of customary law, and so was thus ‘natural’ and just. The settlers wanted more, however, lobbying for a decrease in reserve

⁷⁷ In particular, Shepstone upheld the institutions of chiefship, polygamy and *lobolo* (Hamilton, 1998: 88).

⁷⁸ Although, to be fair, Shepstone did uphold that the land reserved for Africans be arable and able to support their subsistence. Empathy may or may not have been a factor in this supposedly moral clause – it definitely supported his native affairs policy which as has been said, was probably the most practical and inexpensive solution to the ‘native problem’ at the time.

space. They also argued that the persistence of their traditional culture allowed them to lead an idle life – and thus escape working for the whites.

Missionaries also objected; the tribal system allowed the African to remain encased in his pagan capsulation. Polygamy was constructed as one of the most sinister, primitive evils plaguing the African. For those with commercial agendas, it allowed for the maintenance of the homestead and the perpetuation of the well-being of the native existence – again shielding them from forced labour (ibid.: 43). Thus the process of colony in Natal, since the very beginning, revolved around a conflict with the African, in which the white settlers constantly tried to break down their systems of existence in order to increase the profits of settling land owners.

The symbolic aspect of this process of colonisation was equally important in the management of colonial practices and identities, and will now be discussed through several major role-players of the times. This is what Daphne Golan (1994) refers to as the colonisation of Zulu history. The field of personal adventure narratives gave way to academic discourses of history, ethnography, folklore and comparative religion (ibid.). As has already been asserted, ‘the Zulu’ was not a bounded, static, uniform entity, although it was in some actors’ interests to construct it so. It is merely a sign. These attempts at writing/recording/*constructing* what was always a *process* of ‘identity’ came to restrict the natural evolution of a proliferation of cultures that abounded before attempts of recording (and thus bounding) it.

One such epistemological incident was a historical theory expounded by Shepstone. Shepstone was fluent in Zulu, and had experience of the traditions and way of life of the people. He was deemed a foremost specialist on the Zulu, and thus for the settlers, their political bulwark against a Zulu initiated invasion. Shepstone’s theories manifest in his colonial policy. Much of his political necessities of the time were concerned with deteriorating the political centrality of the Zulu Kingdom. He expounded a theory in 1867 which re-articulated the common notion of Shaka as a military tactical genius. The *amabutho* system of regiments, popularly attributed to Shaka’s strategic nous, was instead explained by Shepstone as having its origins in European military thought. He asserted that Dingiswayo, Shaka’s mentor, who had been exiled to the Cape and thus was in contact with Europeans, was in fact the originator of this system in the Zulu context. This de-emphasis of Shaka can be considered as wanting to break the political power enjoyed by Shaka’s line, which in turn implies a factional, heterogeneous Zulu entity – which in turn supports *Shepstone’s policy of tribal separation* (Marks, 1989; Golan, 1994; Hamilton, 1998). This re-articulation of Shaka was repeatedly referenced in succeeding Zulu ethnology. In 1903, James Young Gibson published his *The Story of the Zulus*, a textbook which became definitive in mission schools, and subsequently, this Shepstonian postulate was reproduced by the students passing

through these mission schools (Golan, 1994: 44-46). Shepstone's historical endeavours were also free of the sensationalism and settler stereotype of the mass slaughter of the *mfecane*, a further de-emphasis of Shaka – diverting it from a linguistic paradigm to one of ordinariness.

Paradoxically, Shepstone also relied on Shaka's (posthumous) authority as a model for rule in native affairs. This gave Shepstone the grounds by which to articulate the 'sense' governing several devices of his native rule and policy, vis-à-vis the myth of 'how things occurred' in 'Shakan times' (Hamilton, 1998: 75; 91-94), and as we shall see, Shaka also becomes mobilised in a manipulative game of meaning between Shepstone and Cetshwayo in the 1870s.

Ideological discourses were also construed by the missionary element in Natal. Such works – published between 1850 and 1880 – are characterised by an obsession to understand the mindset of the 'savage' and its origins, as prescribed by the monogenesis of the bible. The Zulu people were popularly portrayed as politically powerless subjects, susceptible to the brutal tendencies of their kings. They were a people only Christianity could save. One such missionary, Henry Callaway, explained his intentions as thus: "In dealing with these people...we are dealing with savage men, who only need culture to have developed in them the finest traits of human nature" (Callaway in Golan, 1994: 47). As with regards the origin of the Zulu, writers such as Holden argued that the Nguni dispersion into Africa occurred "at the time of Babel when God added racial to linguistic division among mankind" (ibid.: 48).

One missionary couldn't accurately be described under the generic title of his colleagues, and that is Bishop John William Colenso (1814-1883). Colenso was an unconventional missionary, who accepted many savage acts logically deemed irreconcilable with Christianity, for example polygamy. By this, Colenso struck a mutual friendship with Shepstone⁷⁹. Both believed in the preservation of African institutions and that the social and political authority of Zululand be upheld. Colenso maintained there was no biblical clause for condemning polygamy in the Zulu context (Hamilton, 1998: 101). Yet Colenso's "conversion to savagery", as then British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli put it, made him live in relative solitude from his white counterparts, with whom he had a tumultuous relationship; alienated from the settler community, and excommunicated from the church. As a result, he took to delving deep into Zulu history and lore, and producing written records, aimed at informing future generations of Zulu children, whose culture he perceived as being under threat – he took to record it lest it be forgotten. These were, however, the histories, the imagined identity, as articulated by his informants – more specifically, the Zulu royal family – who addressed their own agenda in the production of a Zulu identity. This revolved around a culturally

⁷⁹ Inevitably, as the colonial interest clashed with the continued existence of the Zulu, and the Langalibalele campaign commenced, the friendship soured.

homogenous, united, loyal, and powerful entity, who should serve the Zulu royal family with pride (Golan, 1994: 48-50).

There was another major symbolic phenomenon concerning Shepstone later in the century. At the coronation of King Cetshwayo (1826-1884) of Zululand, the image of Shaka again came to the fore in a myriad of mutual political trickery and struggle. Succinctly, the invitation was extended to the British to participate in the coronation of Cetshwayo, and there were several interests at play in this engagement. For Cetshwayo, the presence of Shepstone was used to legitimise Cetshwayo's claim to the throne against his rivals. Cetshwayo mobilised Shaka as describing the nature of his house and rule (again, most probably for internal support against his rivals). Shepstone mobilised the Shakan myth because *he* had recognised British sovereignty, himself asserting that the Zulu were most respectful of, and sacredly bound by this legacy. This also gave Shepstone political weight back home in Natal, as it cast him as the expert of native habitation, thus making him the most obvious candidate for running the office of native affairs. The paternalism of Shepstone's policy was emphasised by Cetshwayo, however, in order to bind Shepstone to his paternalistic responsibilities (Hamilton, 1998: 94-98). Hamilton asserts that Shepstone had several personae: he is seen firstly as a colonial bureaucrat, passing law and drafting policy for the colonial endeavour. Secondly, Shepstone 'others' and 'becomes' between Zulu and colonial cultures. Finally we see Shepstone 'as Shaka' (in the Cetshwayo coronation saga) (Hamilton, 1998: 100).

During the middle of the nineteenth century then, Anglo-Zulu relations were diplomatically at peace, but I have illustrated how the European Same commenced with their symbolic construction of the Zulu Other, and how a great deal of this reticulated with Shaka posthumously. I have shown how the past of the Zulu culture – a dynamic, relatively unbounded identity in constant flux, governed through orality – became recorded, frozen, bounded, and circumscribed prior to 1879, and how these identities and discourses are produced according to the epistemological requirements of their authors – the cycle of power relations between texts, and their epistemological context. How missionaries expounded the sick, pagan tendencies of primitive savages, that 'needed European attention', to gain public support, and to carry out God's work. How Colenso authored several works using the Royal Family as sources, and how those sources' interests – a unified Zulu culture – informed these texts. How Shepstone revealed his contradictory relationship with the meaning of Shaka, authoring a theory to de-emphasise Shaka and suggest natural tribalism, which supported his economic policy of African reserves on the one hand, and using Shaka as a template for his native rule on the other.

The schizophrenic British ontology

Towards the latter part of the nineteenth century, the settler community finally got their wish – the invasion of Zululand and the destruction of Zulu subsistence. With the discovery of minerals in the area, the Colonial Office finally approved a plan of confederation⁸⁰, and the termination of the independence of Zululand (Golan, 1994). The intention to neutralise the Zulu was articulated via an ultimatum which cited numerous barbaric crimes committed by the Zulu, and was greatly concerned with what it saw as a well drilled, obedient army with powerful centralised leadership. The ultimatum was issued by Sir Bartle Frere in December, 1878⁸¹.

Historians have asserted numerous reasons for the war: an unpleasant necessity for the elimination of savagery; the military threat the Zulu posed; and, substantially more radically, the capital interest of producing an exploitable black labour force (Guy, 1998: 169). This latter hypothesis has made little impact in popular history, and has been met with severe resistance from ‘less radical’ (or so-called “liberal”) historians who interpret it as Marxist and thus, as economically deterministic (cf. Webb, 1981). The scholars which occupy the more radical, critical approach to history (e.g., Guy, Wright, Cobbing, Marks, Golan, etc.)⁸² reject a deterministic interpretation, which is argued to be a mere application of the concepts germane to anti-Marxist liberalism and its academic practitioners (cf., e.g., Guy, 1998: 170). And while our (popular) knowledge of the battles of the Anglo-Zulu War and its participants has grown commendably, for Guy (1998), this growth is limited to technical details; the greater interpretive paradigm of these analyses remains largely rooted in an imperial narrative – a narrative largely conceived within the epistemological context of greater social reform and intense social and political debate peculiar to Britain, circa roughly 1880-1900.

The imperial war policy prescribed new representative conventions for the rise of Cetshwayo, who was said to “show much of the barbaric character of his uncle Chaka” (Noble, 1879: 27). The myth of the black Attila was thus rehabilitated in this context. Frere described Cetshwayo as Shaka’s counterpart in brutality, whose histories were written in “letters of blood” (Theron, 2006). He also described Cetshwayo’s intention of enlisting every “young man in Zululand [and turning him into] a celibate man-destroying gladiator” (in Hamilton, 1998: 142). John Noble, a Clerk of the House Assembly, read a paper to The Royal Colonial Institute in February 1879 (and was subsequently published in London that same year), and in it described the outbreak of the Zulu War by asserting

⁸⁰ One aimed at a united South Africa.

⁸¹ In the words of Ian Knight (2004: 9), “Frere had engineered a diplomatic crisis” with the Zulu. Several isolated ‘acts of barbarism’ were mobilised as symptoms of a general dangerous and barbaric neighbour, which needed to be dismantled in the interests of peace. It was an ultimatum Frere knew Cetshwayo could not comply (ibid.: 11). Frere used Shepstone’s coronation of Cetshwayo as binding him to English law (Hamilton, 1998: 105).

⁸² I am not suggesting they present uniform historical arguments. Compare, for example, Cobbing’s (1990) and Wright’s (1995) interpretations on the role of slavery.

that the Zulu were hazardous, unpredictable and warlike, and that “no one could tell when or where his [Cetshwayo’s] warriors, eager to flesh their spears, would burst forth” (ibid.: 29). Cetshwayo’s force, according to more conservative estimates, numbered forty thousand, and to more liberal ones: sixty thousand (Noble, 1879: 28-29). He continued further:

The ordeal through which the country is now passing is a painful one; but it will be productive...to the tribes and people of South Africa, if it teaches Great Britain to profit by the lesson which each Kaffir outbreak should have [taught] us – that we cannot live in immediate vicinity with any race or portion of our fellowmen...neglecting and ignoring our duties towards them, without suffering those evils which form the fitting punishment of our neglect and indifference. If we leave the aboriginal races, within and beyond our borders, in ignorant barbarism, forming communities of savage tyrants and slaves, we are strengthening powers of evil which will again and again reproduce themselves. But if we are true to the position and the privileges which Providence has assigned us, in giving us such rich possessions on the threshold of Africa, we have before us the glorious destiny of working towards the regeneration of a whole quarter of the globe – of extending the domain of Freedom, and the boundaries of Christian civilisation into the Interior of the Dark Continent (ibid.: 30).

The first engagement of the Anglo-Zulu War resulted in the massacre of an entire British battalion of foot at Isandlwana, overcome by an army of twenty thousand Zulus. With its economic interests in the area suddenly in jeopardy, the British government – which initially, had pursued the problem of the Zulu military power with only moderate enthusiasm – now acted decisively, placing its trust in its favourite soldier, Field Marshall Sir Garnett Wolseley, to replace the humiliated Lieutenant-General Frederic Augustus Thesiger, Lord Chelmsford. The official line articulated by Wolseley himself, was that the British had nothing against the Zulu people, only their brutal and tyrannical king. Once the war was won, he continued, and the British deposed of Cetshwayo, Britain would give the Zulus the freedom ‘they wanted’ (Wolseley in Preston, 1973: 59).

The events at Isandlwana captured the imagination, and horror, of Britain. In the eyes of the British, the Zulu came to achieve a distinct identity from the masses of natives which littered the colonial experience. They had inflicted on the British their biggest defeat at the hands of an indigenous foe – and the heaviest defeat of the entire Victorian era. Politically, Isandlwana ignited some wide-reaching questions. This social context thus comes to the fore in constructing the numerous representations – the linguistic concepts – used to articulate the events in Zululand in 1879.

In some, more ‘radical’ – that is, middle class – corners in Britain, Isandlwana posed questions of the very nature of the pre-Cardwell structuring⁸³ of the British Army, with Chelmsford epitomising the last vestiges of the bumbling, inept, Eton-schooled British military commander, whose

⁸³ This refers to a predominantly middle-class attempt between 1868 and 1874, largely legislated by then Secretary of State for War, Edward Cardwell, to loosen the stranglehold the aristocracy exercised over commissions in the British Army (see Ensor, 1992).

commission was derived by birth and privilege, not by skill and proven effectiveness⁸⁴ (Guy, 1998: 181). Isandlwana was a manifestation of the incapacity of British military administration circa 1879 to wage an effective military campaign, bungled in military red tape, with a culture conducive to the promotion of incompetent military commanders. Reports emerged of a campaign conducted amidst flogging, ‘funk’, “beastly” inebriation and cowardice being made (see Orme, 1984). As characteristics for interpreting the events in Zululand, these conventions have been termed the *radical* narrative (Guy, 1998).

As scathing of the British Army, yet from a settler perspective, was the *colonial* narrative (ibid. 178). Although not opposed to invasion, the colonials were disdainful of opportunists like Frere, who, they argued, exploited fragile tensions in the colonies in the pursuit of personal glory. Furthermore, at Isandlwana, a tactically-outdated and out-of-place Chelmsford failed to take heed of the colonial counsel of *laagering*⁸⁵ the imperial camps. The colonial narrative interpreted the events of Isandlwana as the responsibility of an imperial mindset of cowboy-and-indians heroics, arrogance and tactical conservatism suitable mainly for European terrain and conditions.

A last ‘discrepant’ view of the events of the War was provided by Colenso and his allies (his daughter Francis, students like Magera Fuze, and Zulu royalists, among others). The *Bishopstowe* narrative has largely been considered as extreme, radical, and construing a ‘pro-Zulu bias’ (Guy, 1998: 18). It placed the blame for a war on colonial politicians and opportunists who had manipulated the history and representation of the Zulu in order to launch a war based on a massive public relations/propaganda exercise. Although the Bishopstowe narrative has increasingly been used by historians detailing events of the British invasion of Zululand in 1879, only the findings have been appropriated; its larger ontological argument has remained ignored.

According to Guy, our historiography of the Anglo Zulu-War has largely been derived from the conventions of the pro-establishment *imperial* narrative (Guy, 1998). This was the narrative of glamour and tragedy, of whiskered imperial redcoats and noble savages, where “old Africa inevitably succumbed to forces of European progress” (ibid.: 178). Socially, it reflected the agenda of a conservative gentry inhabiting an old (pre-reform) military order. Guy argues it is this narrative of Anglo-Zulu relations that has perpetuated into modernity as a result of economic forces affecting the articulation of history in the present era (to be explored in Part II). Yet it was only after the heroics of Rorke’s Drift (22nd January 1879) (in which eleven Victoria Crosses were awarded)⁸⁶, the success at Khambula (29th March 1879) and the total victory of the ‘Battle of Ulundi’ (4th July

⁸⁴ Conversely, opponents of the reforms laid the blame at the reforms themselves, arguing the introduction of shorter terms of military service had replaced veteran military campaigners with inexperienced rookies (Guy, 1998: 181).

⁸⁵ This was a Boer tactic involving the arrangement of wagons into defensive fortifications.

⁸⁶ Interpreted by many, including Wolseley, as a cover-up to the bumbling at Isandlwana (Preston, 1973).

1879), that the imperial interpretation of the war was able to emerge discursively victorious over what would become deviant interpretations, discussed above. Ultimately, the imperial narrative defeated, often in ferocious debate and controversy (cf. *ibid.*: 184), the colonial, Bishopstowe and radical narratives for the ‘right’ to articulate the Anglo-Zulu War. Each narrative is largely connected with social group and agenda.

Under such an imperial interpretation then, neoclassical and romanticist depictions of honourable redcoats, formed square with bayonets fixed, awaiting to die ‘as British soldiers do’ at the hands of an overwhelming horde of Zulu barbarians dominate. Perhaps the most famous visual depiction in this tradition is the painting *Last Stand of the 24th, Isandlwana* by C. E. Fripp (1885), which centralises the ‘glory’ of the last moments of a small band of soldiers awaiting their annihilation.

In 1965, the imperial narrative was given a major commendation by Donald Morris in *The Washing of the Spears*. Morris’s book was the first major work on the rise and fall of the Zulu Nation (see Morris, 1965: 9), and beyond a doubt the most detailed and cohesive account of the Anglo-Zulu War at the time of publication. As such, it was the first to assemble many of its sources into a vast bricolage of military history. It is a stirring read, although its historiographical method and ontology seem particularly dated in the present context. On matters of interpretation, accuracy and inference, the book has been widely criticised⁸⁷ and many contributions to detail and fact have been published elsewhere (see footnote 87). Yet for Guy, our knowledge of the war as an historical phenomenon has increased little, with most histories entrapped in the conventions of the imperial narrative.

The imperial narrative was spawned in the context of military reconfiguration (which had a liberal-conservative split); in the defeat at Isandlwana; and in the question of empire⁸⁸, by which deviant narratives “capitulated”, as the weight of Isandlwana in British politics circa 1879 lost impetus as defeat shifted to victory at Khambula and then at Ulundi. In the formation of the imperial narrative, Chelmsford and his staff were victorious not only “militarily, but historiographically” (Guy, 1998: 185). At the conclusion of the war, those involved authored their experiences of the campaign (cf. Parr, 1880; Emery, 1977; 1979). Lieutenant Horrace Smith-Dorrien, who was one of only five imperial officers to survive Isandlwana⁸⁹ – and was later to attain Generalship by the outbreak of the First World War – penned one such text. Its tone seems to reverberate throughout its contemporaries accounts.

⁸⁷ This critique comes from academic circles (Wright, 1979; Coan, 1998), more commercially orientated historians (e.g. Knight, 2004), and military personnel (Snook, 2005), with many accounts of the war are now available.

⁸⁸ Guy also notes the role the rise of Prussia played in International Relations at the time.

⁸⁹ Some fifty two commissioned officers were killed, along with about 1 300 British soldiers and non-commissioned officers, colonials, and native contingents (Laband and Thompson, 1999: 3).

The red line of the 24th, having fixed bayonets, appeared to have but one idea, and that was to defeat the enemy. The Zulu charge came home, and, driven with their backs to the rock of Isandhlwana [sic], and overpowered by about thirty to one, they sold their lives dearly (Smith-Dorrien, 1925).

Another memoir, written by an ex-German Legionnaire Friedrich Schermbrücker (1879 in Emery, 1979: 14), spoke of the carnage administered during cavalry pursuit of retreating Zulus – this time following their massacre at Khambula. His words seem to ring with frontier adventure. The Zulus, he attests, “became exhausted, and shooting them down would have taken too much time; so we took the assegais from the dead men, and rushed among the living ones, stabbing them right and left with fearful revenge...No quarter was given”. Schermbrücker’s small cavalry platoon quickly annihilated three hundred shattered Zulus. Another mounted officer, though his name does not survive, spoke of the bloodshed:

Towards the end of the pursuit, they were so tired and exhausted that they couldn’t move out of a walk, some scarcely looked round and seemed to wish to die without seeing the shot fired. Some turned round and walked to meet their death without offering resistance, some threw themselves down on their faces and waited for their despatch by assegai or bullet...It was indeed a slaughter (Anon, 1879, in Emery 1979: 14-15).

As the details of the full-scale war administered to a native foe digested, an idea of regret and pity emerged in England, with eight thousand Zulus killed in the war (cf. Taylor, 1994: 15). In the light of prior discussion in both this chapter and the one that precedes it concerning the context of industrialisation by which the intellectual expressions of romanticism materialise, the fact that the capitalist destruction of a native people was met with a paradigm resembling the conventions of the noble savage, makes perfectly congruent sense. Thus, the imperial narrative accorded some measure of admiration to the Zulu. This usually made reference to the legendary bravery in which the Zulu warrior ‘defended his home’⁹⁰, and his method of giving battle: charging over empty fields in packed masses against deployments of line infantry armed with Martini-Henry’s. The Zulu were mythically rehabilitated in defeat. “With their splendid appearance, burnished black bodies draped in animal skins and ostrich plumes, they were...the most spectacular of all theatrical enemies the British Empire felt itself obliged to fight” (Taylor, 1994: 16).

Zulu military success paid dividends where the theme could be commodified. Benjamin Disraeli (in Player, 1998: xi) himself shed several words on the topic: “A remarkable people, the Zulu. They

⁹⁰ Another linguistic concept germane to the colonisers; Guy (1998) elaborates on the meaning of these battles for the Zulus, from which one can argue these notions do not adequately encapsulate the semiotics of battle for the Zulu. Contrary to how the colonisers described the natives (as defending their home), very little were aware that their political independence was at risk.

defeat our generals, convert our bishops and put an end to a great European dynasty⁹¹.” Queen Victoria described the Zulus as the finest and bravest race in South Africa (Hamilton, 1998: 112). As asserted by Victor Kiernan (1972: 232), no other African people captured the western imagination in the imperial age more than the Zulu. Although the British came to respect the Zulu⁹², particularly with regards their chivalry and courage, the popular connotation was that they were still militaristic and dangerous (Lindfors, 1996: 18). The warrior image, with the connotations of violence, was the typical convention employed in Europe to re-present the Zulu citizen. Issues of the *London Illustrated News*, and other visual platforms, were packed with such depictions of romanced warriors and Anglo-Zulu abattoir-esque carnage.

The deposed Cetshwayo himself arrived in England in the early 1880s, his dignified manner, for some commentators, both charming and deceptive. The Spy portrait in the August 1882 edition of *Vanity Fair* played havoc with perceptual congruity: his modest, calm persona clad in grey suit, cravat and blue slippers was starkly belied by his “enormous bulk and toothy grin. His seemingly innocuous appearance contrasted all too sharply with his reputation for barbarism” (in Lindfors, 1996: 19). But such a view was the exception rather than the norm (ibid.). The British public intrigue would later reach a crescendo when another troupe of Zulus (this time comprised of three of Cetshwayo’s nieces – ‘true Zulu princesses’ – a baby, another chief, and twenty three warriors who had surrendered to the British authorities in South Africa) arrived in Britain later that decade. The public interest in this troupe is demonstrated by the fact that “their arrival in London was greeted by over one hundred thousand people on the docks and as far up the street as the eye could reach” (Coup, 1901 in Lindfors, 1996: 19). The proliferation of this Zulu imagery was quickly reflected in the production of Zulu spears, shields, feathers and war paint, which was sold at almost every carnival and circus shop (ibid.).

The romance of the myth of noble savage was further construed in the popular adventure fictions and imperial romances of the late-Victorian ‘Lost World’ literary genre, including George Alfred Henty, Bertram Mitford and Henry Rider Haggard (Lindfors, 1996: 18). Haggard’s literary devices allowed him to insert fictitious personalities and reinterpret historical events. In *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours* (Haggard, 1882), Haggard maintained that Cetshwayo had broken promises he had made with Britain. *King Solomon’s Mines* (Haggard, 1885) deals with many aspects of Zulu culture, tradition and folklore, but it also goes a long way to constructing the trope of natives as

⁹¹ A reference to the ambush and death of the French Prince Imperial Louis Napoleon. The ‘bishop’ is presumably John Colenso.

⁹² As was typical of the European experience of othering in the African context, admirable characteristics of the Other were limited to such traits as courage, physical power, machismo and endurance – traits that supported the popular connotation of militarism, and that didn’t challenge the intellectual, moral, technological and philosophical superiority of the white race.

irrational and superstitious (Golan, 1994: 53). Implicit to Haggard's literary work is a romancing of the past as more glorious than the present. Haggard was a most loyal advocate of his former employer Shepstone. As such, his support for the Zulu follow much the same line as the arguments as presented by Shepstone (for instance, he believed that Shepstone's tribal system – aforementioned – preserved the Africans 'natural' way of life). Like Shepstone, Haggard also argued for the reinstating of Cetshwayo (Hamilton, 1998: 114).

Haggard had a fundamentally ethnocentric purpose. In the vein of Social Darwinism, Haggard employed the centuries-old hypothetical construct that primitive people were noble savages⁹³, occupying a pre-civilised state of nature, from which Europeans had passed many centuries earlier. Thus, the journey into the unknown was actually a journey into the core of the European – the European past. This unknown was constructed as a world of little taboos, in which "incest, polygamy, cannibalism, nudism, necrophilia, patricide and homicide were everyday occurrences" (Golan, 1994: 54).

I will now briefly discuss how the imperial narrative, the myth of the noble savage, manifested in one form of visual media: the photographic image. Photography had, of course, previously been used in and for colonial practices, and missions of civilisation. Power holders had seen the medium as holding immense potential for purposes of propaganda, and missionaries captured, in visual form, before and after shots to demonstrate the success of their conversion from savage to Christian (Bensusan, 1966). It was only during the last two decades of the nineteenth century though, that such imagery became commercially popular. The technology had itself evolved (in no small way thanks to the colonial demand) and such albumen prints could now be conceived both in the studio and the field. Photographers themselves were great manipulators and stylists, often saturating the frame with prototypical cultural artefacts (Webb, 1992: 52), cultural conventions of what articulate 'barbarity'. In semiotic terms, photographers employed and articulated a set of signifiers of 'Zuluness'. Needless to say, the Zulu cited in these pictures are almost always 'half-naked', clad in cow hide and decorative regalia, living in isolated beehive huts. When reviewing the photographs of the era, several stylistic conventions are prominent in the catalogue. These are standardised repetitive tools through which the native, the Zulu, was popularly imaged.

Firstly, there is the standard portrait shot, endorsed by many photographers, but featuring heavily in the archives of George Taylor Ferneyhough. These are generally single subject shots, moderately close-up, with the highly detailed subject occupying centre-space against a stark, nondescript

⁹³ "In the beginning all the world was America" was how John Locke worded it (in *Two Treatises of Government*, 1689, § 49.) to imply that in the beginning, all the world were noble savages, prior to the social contract. (America was a land of indigenous tribes then embroiled in colonisation at that time.)

background. As such, Virginia-Lee Webb (1992: 52-53) has compared these pictures to those colonial images which construe 'racial types', which "they formally resemble. Only the measuring devices and profile views are absent."

Another picture convention found frequently in photographs from this time depicts a group of Zulus in some symmetrical formation, in rows and tiers, standing in front of a traditional abode, frequently flanking its entrance. This convention was also regularly employed by Ferneyhough. These pictures generally position their subjects in a static group pose, bereft of any (cultural) activity. This structured inactivity and suspension of interaction disregards, as Webb (1992: 56) states, "their identity as human beings". Sometimes the group would assume a semi-encirclement around a cooking fire.

Another common tool used in the visual construction of the Other concerns the substitute of the elaborate studio backdrops popularly used in imaging European families – the idyllic parks and formal gardens with trellises, or the scholarly signifiers like books, formal chairs, ornate columns and mass drapery. When the subject was the native Zulu, the backdrops shifted to signifiers that were thought more accurate to depictions of Africa and Africans. Columns were replaced with logs; cloth drapery with animal skin; carpets with thatch; books and sewing machines with spears and shields (Webb, 1992: 57). One of the foremost producers of this exotic, romantic Africa in photography was the Scotsman George Washington Wilson.

Like all fads, and just like the people it re-presented, the Zulu theme declined around the turn of the twentieth century. The tales of the Zulu War, for many decades thereafter, were conserved in folktales and books of "stirring deeds written for children" (Morris, 1994: 9). Informative documents were scarce. The war was successfully rejuvenated in the British psyche with the filmic production, *Zulu*⁹⁴ (Endfield, 1964), based on the Battle of Rorke's Drift, and the aforementioned *Washing of the Spears* (1965). One tourist to the battlefield of Hlobane (28th March, 1879) explained, "It was stirring stuff [the movie] that got you interested. Without that film it would be a forgotten war" (cited in Guy, 1998: 161). The link between film and tourism is investigated below. In the new era of popular interest in experiencing other cultures under the veil of cultural tourism, the Zulu are "a favourite spectacle of Westerners", as is evidenced by the proliferation of Zulu cultural villages, arts and crafts, and so on (cf. Mhiripiri, 2008).

After the war in Zululand, the British government dismantled the unitary kingdom forged by Shaka, and replaced it with thirteen chiefdoms – each governed by British appointees (Hamilton, 1998: 106). Member of Shaka's household were largely stripped of their power and influence. The new

⁹⁴ The film, according to Guy (1998: 162), has "entered into British folk history", being aired every Christmas.

chiefs elected by the colonial authorities struggled for legitimacy in the eyes of the people they ruled over and, by the end of 1881, civil war broke out in Zululand (see Guy, 1979).

Part I of this chapter has revolved around how reality is experienced through language, itself a social construction. This constructivist insight was applied to the language that was constructed to signify Zuluness in the nineteenth century. Through this, I have painted a picture, of considerable scope, by which the meanings of the present (to be explored next, and in Chapter 5) can be linked, genealogically, to the texts which served and reflected very specific agendas and contexts in the nineteenth century. This allows one to trace how the Zulu myth was made, and how it is re-articulated (if at all) in the light of the democratic reconfiguration of the South African state and the global spread of neoliberalism and consumer culture.

Part II: Shakaland, and its relationship with history and society

The Anglo-centric myth of the Zulu explored in Part I is argued to be responsible for the favourable space they occupy on the menu of cultural tourism in South Africa⁹⁵ (Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004; Mhiripiri, 2008). Cultural tourism offers one medium whereby the/(a) Zulu identity appears as a historical re-presentation of itself in the contemporary age – one avenue of its commercial exploitation. Most prominently, it is the nineteenth century convention of the warrior people which is commonly employed in contemporary cultural enterprises. However, as will be demonstrated, the emergence of a cultural tourism market in South Africa at the end of the 1980s, emerged as the country was embraced in anxiety and coming to terms with inevitable racial integration and the end of colonialism and apartheid. This part of the chapter explores the nature of representation subscribed to by Shakaland, and the relationship between the cultural village of Shakaland and the epistemological context in which it operates.

Capitalism is the overarching contemporary paradigm within which representations of Others in the venture of cultural tourism proceed. Because the re-presentation of culture is occurring only as its value as an economic commodity, for Guy (1998), there is little doubt as to which representational conventions are adhered to. In *Battling with Banality* (1998), Guy is concerned with how critical history can survive as a practice when neoliberal market forces are rapidly transforming academic disciplines into market commodities⁹⁶. By extension, the articulation of history, in today's economic climate, is deeply determined by market forces. Because the patronage of Shakaland

⁹⁵ As I explicate in Chapter 2, history is an avenue through which an imagined community is transpired – in this case, that of the British identity. The history of the Zulu is explored in media texts with specific agendas (entertainment, learning, and so forth) – but they also explore the nature of the identity of 'being British'. The 1964 film *Zulu* (Endfield, 1964), for example, airs every year in Britain on Christmas Eve (Guy, 1998: 161).

⁹⁶ This has been explored in relation to other disciplines, see, e.g., Rivers (2010) in relation to art and design schools in the US.

occupies the upper echelons of the national and international economic elite, a certain history is sold. This is merely the nature of capital economics; supply and demand and market segregation. It is one which is most compatible with the epistemological orientation of Western consumers, one that has its roots in those societies that buy history, under the notion of nostalgia (Chapter 2). In the context of economic enterprise, it is the imperial narrative that is articulated; its conventions most profitable (Guy, 1998). The perpetuation of this narrative leads to a “weak, uncritical, misleading historiography unable to challenge colonial customs and imperial traditions which market opportunities have revived” (ibid. 159). The economic articulation of history, in other words, allows for the perpetuation of otherwise epistemologically archaic colonial customs, traditions and prejudices.

Despite the major commonalities between cultural villages generally in their techniques, modes and conventions of representation, Sabine Marschall (2003) stresses the importance of not making blanket assumptions about Zulu cultural villages, and tourism forms generally. The essential formula and procedure abided to by cultural villages selling a Zulu identity in KwaZulu-Natal has its roots in the European and North American conventions of framing culture for economic means. Live re-enactments of the past dominate (Marschall, 2003: 111). The villages offer performance based shows, and not spontaneous products of culture, when they are enacted within the economically derived apparatus of the ‘cultural village’. The ensemble of cultural elements that comprise the product of cultural tourism are usually limited to a set of easily conceivable, easily understandable traits of the culture in question. In this sense, they are stereotypical (though not necessarily in any pejorative sense): they function as a reductive tool in an easy, uncomplicated articulation of reality (ibid.). Academics have noted how these cultural villages sell back to consumers (prototypically thought to be Western) the very tropes, or linguistic concepts, bestowed upon them by the west⁹⁷ (cf. Tomaselli and Wang, 2001; Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004; Mhiripiri, 2008). Almost always, the culture investigated in tourism is presented as an independent self-sustaining, romantic utopia; innocent, and free from the crass disposition of western vulgarity. For some tourists, the romanticism elaborates to a time when Africans were “not victims, but had power, control and their own value systems” (ibid.). Cultures are presented as simple, self-bounded entities which perform through several institutions, operating in a linear, neat fashion, belying the notion of identity popularly subscribed to in the social sciences today after the work of the so-called ‘Birmingham School’ of cultural studies (Chapter 2).

Shakaland is a prominent, profitable cultural village, near Eshowe in KwaZulu-Natal. It is among South Africa’s big three cultural villages, along with Shangana cultural village in Mpumalanga and

⁹⁷ This is a fundamental requisite to commercial survival (ibid.).

Lesedi cultural village in North West Province (Ivanovic, 2008: 233). In 1988, the Protea Hotel chain invested in Shakaland and presided over its transformation from a small, “marginally successful operation into a major tourist attraction” (Hamilton, 1998: 187). As such, it is economically more productive than its competitors in Zululand, who perhaps struggle for the proliferation of commercial presence activated through the filmic link with *Shaka Zulu*. Following Mandela’s release in 1990, the resort hosted thirty two thousand visitors in the year⁹⁸, including various local and international celebrities and royal families (ibid.). Shakaland is promoted as offering a cultural experience which is both educational and conservational (Tomaselli, 2001a: 177). It is a tourist enterprise which inhabits the old film set of the series *Shaka Zulu*, built on white farmland then neighbouring the kwaZulu homeland.

The cultural activities occur in and around the ‘traditional’ Zulu *umuzi*, the film relic, which consists of several hut-like structures, each of which is designated for a particular traditional activity to commence – shield making, spear making, beer making, carpet weaving, stick fighting, spiritual conventicle and so forth. Sabine Marschall (2003: 115) elaborates that this space performs an indexical function – it is the embodiment of the nineteenth century representation offered by a filmic introduction comprised of pieces of the *Shaka Zulu* series, with a narrative disposed to entice the tourist quest for participation in this history. This space has also been described by Tomaselli⁹⁹ (2001b: 65-66; see also Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004; Mhiripiri, 2008: 59) as a convergence of the performative front and back stages; performers conduct their backstage activities – that “culturally mysterious” space where performers “live, retire, and conduct their own social, leisure and symbolic lives” (Tomaselli, 2001a: 176-177) – primarily in the tourist front stage just described¹⁰⁰. There is no strict separation between the performers living quarters and the contrived space reserved for their performance (of traditional activities). Perhaps this adds weight to the notion of authenticity of the lives conducted under the tourist gaze, but it also leads to conflict as the ill defined borders between public and private space means the associated ‘correct’ behaviour is not prescribed in such grey areas. Perhaps the main difference (or marker of) is that off-limit beehive-huts have television sets inside (cf. Tomaselli, 2001b: 66).

The ethnographic script of the Shakaland product has been described favourably, with Hamilton describing it as “an exercise in hyper reality” (Hamilton, 1998: 197), noting the superior, and more precise attention to detail in comparison to its competitors. Umberto Eco describes the scenario of hyper-reality in which the simulated world is not merely an imitation, but an improved,

⁹⁸ That’s an average of eighty-seven visitors each day for the year.

⁹⁹ Following Goffman (1959) and MacCannell (1953).

¹⁰⁰ While the tourists are invited to stay at the sanitised, luxurious beehive lodging adjacent to the umuzi.

contemplated, idealised model from the original article in its original cultural context (Eco, 1986; Chapter 2).

Unlike villages like KwaBhekithunga, Shakaland purports to offer, not the ‘real thing’, but the film set (Hamilton, 1998: 189). Marschall (2003: 115) concurs, stating the tour experience “stresses the overlap between the film and the reality of the village.” Constant references are made to the programme in the field. The “real goat” from the television miniseries, calmly grazing about the site in disinterest, was interpreted via its televisual fame, rather than as a stereotyped object inhabiting the myth of the African countryside (Mhiripiri, 2008: 125). Hamilton (1998: 190) argues that the village is trading on the success of its televisual counterpart through these devices, a stimulus for tourism (cf. e.g. Tomaselli, 2002; Riley et al. 2008; *The Annals of Tourism Research*). Tourists appreciate the filmic connection, and it construes a feeling of familiarity (Mhiripiri, *ibid.*). It also serves, perhaps, as protection against claims that the village presents a stereotypical, detrimentally commercialised representation of Zulu culture (Mhiripiri, 2008: 280). Despite this, the ethnographical script has scored well with tourists for quantity, accuracy and avoiding the more blunt clichés which can so easily emerge in such texts (cf. Hamilton, 1998: 192).

Although the tourist site is inherently tied up to the *Shaka Zulu* series, this does not mean the two offer the same interpretation of Zuluness. Hamilton (1998: 199) asserts that while the *Shaka Zulu* television series sought to exoticise Zuluness, the 1991 Shakaland script sought to assimilate it. In fact, Shakaland abounds with contradiction between the meanings of the original filmic apparatus and its appropriation by tourism. Whereas through Shakaland, the Zulu world during the reign of Shaka is presented as a Golden Era, the apparatus in the original *Shaka Zulu* context describes tyranny and barbarity (Marschall, 2003: 116). I have illustrated how the myth of the ‘black Attila’ and the campaign of murder orchestrated by Shaka has its roots in early trader adventure narratives which are underpinned by an economic motive. I have also illustrated how romancing the past is an inherent act of contriving cultural tourism, how the romantic gaze is *initiated* within certain tourism practices (Urry, 2002), and how this is viewed within an agenda of a longing for a pre-capitalist utopia and existential authenticity. These two factors are responsible for the contradictory narrative imposed on the filmic set of signifiers. Nonetheless, in terms of its status as a site of movie-induced tourism in South Africa, Mhiripiri (2008: 125) asserts that it is comparable only with the association that occurs between international viewers of *The Gods Must be Crazy* and the Kalahari Desert.

As stated earlier, a ‘Zulu ethnicity’ has always been a heterogenous entity, a construct invented by colonialism – although the converse is emphasised in most cultural tourism. Shakaland, like most cultural villages, trade on ethnic distinction and exclusivity (Mhiripiri, n.d.: 3). References to the Zulu ethnicity feature heavily, and directly within tourism advertisements. Such western categories

also apply to the cultural ‘souvenirs’, arts and crafts which are found in and outside of Zulu cultural villages – most are classified in terms of ‘style regions’ which links such cultural products to neat, easily conceivable labels. This is just another example of how western discursive devices define reality, and the “common-sense” method of understanding such phenomena, and the pre-figuration of a way of ‘seeing’ and ‘knowing’ (Mhiripiri, n.d.: 4; see also Vansina, 1984: 29). This also leads to a generic blueprint which crafts must adhere to, to appeal to the tourist need and desire to deal in “ethnic” cultural goods. Davydd Greenwood (1989) has noted how the production of cultural products for commercial purposes erodes the original cultural function performed by that product, leading to the destruction of non-Western cultures and processes of identity. Hobsbawm (1983; see also Chapter 2) describes how traditions inculcate a set of values and norms. Thus, these values and norms – the cultural entity – weaken as the device of reinforcement is replaced by a commercial one.

Shakaland has assumed an important place in Zulu historiography and representation. Its performers feature often in English and German tourist and coffee-table books which image the culture (see De la Harpe et al., 1988). The iconic identity which pervades Shakaland and many other cultural villages is pre-modern, transpired through pre-colonial ‘traditional’ institutions. The operation of the conjoined backstage in seemingly real time presents the Zulu as “a pre-modern people living in the contemporary world” (Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004: 250).

Research done by Marschall (2003) has shown that in 2001, a tour guide(s), while elaborating on the traditions then unfolding in the tourist schemata, made consistent assertions that they were still practised in parts of Zululand. Additionally, one guide known as Richard, claimed to wear his traditional animal skin regalia even in the urban environment of Durban (Mhiripiri, 2008: 135). The effect on – especially – the foreign tourist is that s/he assumes “the reality of the cultural village as a microcosm of the reality of the wider region beyond” (Marschall, 2003: 115). This also garners a sense of “authenticity” for the village¹⁰¹. However, not all tourists at Shakaland were convinced of the common application of the represented traditions. Prior research conducted by CCMS affiliated researchers (cf. Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004: 254-255; Mhiripiri, 2008) has revealed that tourist conceptions of authenticity at Shakaland vary, yet most seem sure it is a representation of something not practiced today. Some feel it is quite an accurate reflection of pre-colonial life, while other tourists do not extend such an appraisal at all.

While the donning of traditional attire by contemporaries who call themselves ‘Zulu’ is frowned upon by their aesthetically Western brothers, many feel a sense of pride and “mental liberation”

¹⁰¹ It also offsets a general disappointment which abounds in the reactions of tourists who expect to see the beings depicted in films (cf. Tomaselli and Wang, 2001).

(Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004: 252). Performers assert they are voluntarily staging their traditions, which provides outsiders with an informative, enlightening look into African culture. They also feel they are “redefining themselves as people with integrity and not acting out stereotypes” (Mhiripiri, n.d.: 7). However, the ethnographic performance has generally been described as one that sells popular myths to appease the tourist, a victim of the culture of mass consumerism (cf. e.g. Tomaselli and Wang, 2001; Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004; Mhiripiri, 2008).

Comparisons have been drawn between the ethnographic scenario operating in the village and the popular media stereotypes of the harmless, jovial, but uncivilised primitive. Loud burps and nonchalant, yet ostentatious, yawning satisfy the popular tropes of the simple, good-natured disposition of the *atechnical noble savage* (cf. Marschall, 2003: 116; Tomaselli, 2001a+b). What one would, in a ‘civilised’ society, consider lacking in manners and refinement, rude and obnoxious, in the context of cultural tourism, they appease the tourist yearning for signifiers of *uncivility*, of the pre-industrial noble savage.

The cumbersome translations that take place between the guide and the various ‘elders’ populating the tourist site has been said to enhance the notion that real, authentic knowledge is being extrapolated from the elder who knows not western ways (Hamilton, 1998: 196). The arduous process of native discourse could also appeal to the trope that natives are free from the grip of the civilised world, where people are constrained by many things, not least of which is time. Furthermore, the guides at Shakaland perform a key role as cross-cultural brokers. Their discursive position as produced by the text is one whereby they are essentially relied upon: he performs the relevant cultural etiquettes to allow the ethnographic experience to unfold without embarrassment (*ibid.*). The in between-ness of the guide was also emphasised by his urban (thus not traditional) Zulu disposition.

Factors external to the discourse of Zuluness sometimes interfere with the prescribed functioning of the text. Mhiripiri and Tomaselli (2004: 252) make note of a discursive struggle over the drinking of beer, and frame this phenomenon within an ideological landscape of resistance: In order to subvert the possibility of SARS¹⁰² infection, the tourists requested to drink the Zulu sorghum from individual cups. As the communal drinking of Zulu beer has a cultural meaning (namely, one of intercultural acceptance), the chief interpreted this as a Western contravention and contamination of his traditions, and hastily declined the request.

Shakaland though, and other commercial cultural villages, occupy a certain space in the historiography of representation. During the massive transformation afflicting the country in the late

¹⁰² Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, which reached near pandemic levels in 2003.

1980's, and a mercurial, rapidly slipping political sensitivity, the tenure of academics, historians, museum curators, and knowledge institutions on the subject became severely embattled. As a result, there was a general exodus of the terrain previously monopolised by such role players. According to Roy Rosenzweig (1986: 47) this creates a vacuum in popular history, conducive to the manifesting of commercial forms of history. This coincided with a great dissatisfaction as to the popular availability of information about African history at the time¹⁰³, and many expressed a desire to become better informed on the subject (Hamilton, 1998: 192). Shakaland commenced in economically favourable conditions, because there was a popular demand for the knowledge it offered, especially since the role of historians and academics had decreased in light of the shifting landscape of South African politics in the 1980s, and people had begun to appreciate the extent of the ideological engineering that had occurred under apartheid.

In the late 1980s, South Africa was embroiled in the accelerated currents of the political dismantling of apartheid. During the reign of Pieter Willem Botha, the Nationalist government had legislated numerous amendments which remodelled several tenets of classic apartheid, leading to drastic changes in the socio-political landscape of South Africa. The vast majority of South African whites were beginning to see the inevitability of a black majority government, and most, were consenting of such a prospect¹⁰⁴.

The inception of Shakaland coincided with this era of political uncertainty. It was a period which entailed various re-articulations of prior apartheid induced interpretations, a highly charged political and social environment. Within this terrain, Shakaland etched out a script exploring Zulu tradition in relatively rich detail, devised by Barry Leitch¹⁰⁵, a graduate in anthropology. As such, cultural villages like Shakaland offered a space whereby whites could come to terms with their soon to be national cohorts, a space whereby the minority of the (historical) Same could explore the psychological and cultural terrain of the Other. Such spaces offering cross-cultural interaction were previously denied to the South African citizenry by the apartheid government, and even as late as 1991, were still rare occurrences (Hamilton, 1998: 196-197). In the words of Leitch (in *ibid.*), Shakaland was “an oasis within what was essentially an apartheid society.” Amid the disintegrating end of white rule in South Africa, Shakaland offered a safe, controlled, guided course on the central tenets of ‘the Zulu culture’.

¹⁰³ Namely a market survey initiated by the authorial and production component of the Reader's Digest, which published *Illustrated History of South Africa* (1989) responding to such survey data.

¹⁰⁴ Confirmed, perhaps most summarily, by the 1992 white-only referendum, which confirmed the support of white people for political democratic change (68% approved of change).

¹⁰⁵ Who still has shares in Shakaland.

Many began to look at spaces like Shakaland as key facilitators in “better understanding between racial groups” (Small, 1990, in Hamilton, 1998: 194). Concerns such as these¹⁰⁶, reveal the great widespread anxiety borne by most South Africans about the impending interracial political scenario (Hamilton, 1998: 194; 196-7). Getting to ‘know the Other’ was seen as a proactive way of embracing democratic change and, no doubt, a majority rule government. This occurs against a backdrop of televised “civil war”, “black on black violence” and “tribal and ethnic warfare” – concepts regularly used by whites to describe the Zulu-Xhosa bloodshed seen on the TV screen and in the newspapers (Golan, 1994: 5). In the early 1990s, violence that had previously been confined to Natal surged dramatically across the Reef in Johannesburg. The imagery usually depicted bloodshed between Zulu *izimpi*, often hostel dwellers, pitted against non-Zulu supporters of the African National Congress (Hamilton, 1998: 203).

The preconceived script of Shakaland – the text – mentioned hitherto also constructs a subject position for the visitors as one of just that: a visitor. This entails the set of manners and other power relations that are usually activated when one is a stranger in the house of another person. For most South African whites at the end of apartheid, such a subservient position of power in relation to Africans was a most peculiar and alien scenario.

The communal drinking of *utshwala* at Shakaland entails symbolic and metaphorical components. A temporary community is formed via its common consumption, between the chief, guide and guests. Drinking from a shared cup symbolises mutual acceptance and respect between different bodies as they come together. Hamilton (1998: 195) argues this is a symbolic transformation of the same whereby s/he ‘becomes the Other’. However, in the context of the dawn of a new socio-political era, the “drinking of *utshwala* was the consumption of the Shakaland promise of a new future” (ibid.). The new community of elder Zulus, more contemporary, urbanised guides and visitors represented the new ideal rainbow community, united in diversity (ibid.: 199).

The ethnographic interpretation commenced by Shakaland proceeded in a political terrain where the popular discourse of the Zulu was defined as terrorist insurgents. Yet the subject of politics and the political violence then dogging the country, in fact, was utterly eschewed in the Shakaland script, especially the conflict between Inkatha and the ANC (Hamilton, 1998: 200-202). Despite the signifiers of Zulu identity pervading the tourist space, it was an environment that was controlled, safe and sanitised; a cultural experience conducted in the familiarity of tourism activity. However, because the script relied on the knowledge supposedly inherent to the guides or at least the traditional elders, and relied on these voices to provide content to tourist questions, there was a

¹⁰⁶ This particular one initiated by the Rotary Club of Eshowe.

space for political disposition to manifest. Some of these have been described by Hamilton as nationalistic, even chauvinistic. One voice expressed “The Zulu are the most powerful people in all the country; only the Zulu are really kings” (in Hamilton, 201). Tourists were also prone to subvert the predesigned script. The performance of martial activities was easily assimilated by many tourists to resonate with, and confirm, the dominant stereotype of innate Zulu militarism (ibid.:202).

Shakaland is also sensitive to African visitors, whom it had calculated would play an increasingly prominent role in its future tourist clientele. Indeed this reveals another reason for people to engage in the sort of ethnographic cultural tourism offered by Shakaland. Many people of African descent (Zulu or otherwise) visited Shakaland not to learn about a dichotomised Other, but to partake in a symbolic celebration of pre-colonial African independence and power. Others come to witness the performance of their ‘African roots’ (Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004: 254).

Of course, with tourists bringing both their own identities and agendas into the cultural experience, the whole performance means different things to people – differing inferences abound (see Chapters 2; 5). Thus, while the resort is built around an ethnographic text, it also activates other identities to gain in definition. Hamilton argues that the “definitions enacted in Shakaland potentially assisted both Zulu speakers and non-Zulu speakers to legitimise themselves in a new way” (Hamilton, 1998: 200).

Conclusion

Part I of this chapter offered an overview of the colonial representation of the Zulu Other, and the contexts in which these arose. Part II has presented a literature survey of the previous research conducted at Shakaland, that is a discussion on what these studies have concluded about the representation of the Other at Shakaland and how this relates to greater conceptual formations of South African society.

The aim of this investigation into cultural tourism is to illustrate how the consumption of the identity of the Other often relies on the commodification of colonial conventions of representation, wherein ‘the Other’ first gained currency. I will now discuss the methodology of this research.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Media and cultural studies often proceeds in three directions, that of texts, industries and audiences. Though broadly concerned with each, this project perhaps best fits within the field of text, as it is concerned with the production and consumption of meaning (texts), and how these relate to historical institutional and epistemological contexts. Each field prescribes a set of commonly employed methods. It is a semiotic analysis that is the primary interpretive mechanism in the investigation of text in this study¹⁰⁷. Participant observation is used to ground interpretation in the ‘culture of tourism’, being the primary mechanism whereby I could extrapolate data concerning the consuming of Shakaland by the tourists. This research is thus largely concerned with *interpretation*, and rooted in *analysis*.

Rationale: The place of the ‘text’ and the philosophy of science

Positivism consists of the following fundamental components. Firstly, there is the logic of the experiment: identified variables are manipulated to reveal the underlying relationship between them. This forms the defining feature of science. Secondly, these findings are converted into a particular mode of explanation: they become natural laws or at least prescribe a degree of high probability. Thirdly, scientific theory must correspond to a ‘neutrally observable’ – that is, in sense perception (classical empiricism) or public scrutiny – phenomenon. As such, the intangible is ignored as it is a metaphysical concern. Scientific theory is open to testing; it can be confirmed or falsified. As such, it is an imperative of this ontology that the role of the researcher is diminished, or at least procedurally standardised (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 4-5).

A scientific investigation essentially comprises a triadic relationship between the researcher, an object of study, and the epistemological/discursive community of ‘science’ through which the object is being investigated. Scientific investigation is typically empirical. In the course of some experiment, the contents of what one sees are considered by ‘detecting regularities’, by ‘discovering uniformities’, by noticing ‘certain facts’, etcetera. But to say that the scientist is doing this is to imply that s/he is adept in the hegemonic methods of identity and categorisation which circumscribe the world – adept in the language of science: “He [the researcher] already has a mode of communication in the use of which rules are already being observed. To notice something is to identify relevant characteristics, which means that the observer must have some concept of such

¹⁰⁷ A critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989) would also have worked well and was considered. However, given the inherently vast visual component to cultural productions at contemporary cultural villages, there is undoubtedly a significant amount of meaning that is articulated outside of the discourse (not Foucauldian) that occurs at Shakaland.

characteristics” (Winch, 2008: 79). S/he must have a symbolic surrogate (concept) which is fulfilled by empirically gleaned phenomena. This is an activity of subscribing to a set of rules; in this context alone, can s/he be said to be doing a scientific investigation. An investigation entails the application and development of the concepts which are germane to his particular scientific field. As such, the endeavours of science are a fundamentally social activity – dictating participation in a community of fellow investigators. This participation is not necessarily in the form of direct communication and close physical proximity with fellow researchers (though it certainly could be of course), but more accurately:

They are all taking part in the same general kind of activity, which they have all learned in similar ways; that they are, therefore, capable of communicating with each other about what they are doing; that what any one of them is doing is in principle intelligible to others (Winch, 2008: 80-81).

That is, they are subjective embodiments in the discourse of science.

Rules allocate a meaning to phenomena, so that things *mean something*. In order to be proficient in the meaning of things, one needs to know the language being spoken – the rules governing action. Assimilated, subscribed rules (or concepts) are then employed to circumscribe reality, and to communicate this reality (and all the concepts which circumscribe it) to other cultural subjects. In any physical science, “the relevant rules are those governing the procedures of investigators in the science in question” (Winch, 2008: 79). The language of science is one that takes cognisance of the historical endeavours of the researchers of the field, including “learning the criteria according to which they make judgements of identity” (ibid.) – learning the methodology of categorisation; constituting identity. The language of science is thus fabricated within a social context of common activity, where the symbolic appropriation of reality is consistent and verifiable.

Those researchers – and they come historically from ‘symbolic interactionism’, phenomenology, hermeneutics, linguistic philosophy and ethnomethodology (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 7) – who take issue with the inability of positivism to be applicable in a social world do so primarily according to one fundamental argument. The positivist model of reality derives in empiricism, and as such, it neglects the inherently human activity of symbolic engagement and interpretation. In fact, human engagements with reality are embroiled in a linguistic reality which makes the world perceivable (so it is not only in sense perception that meaning is made). For positivism, the world exists before method, that is, methods merely provide explanations of an obdurate empirical world. For naturalists (as it is named by Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson [1995] for functional purposes), reality exists in the methods (that is, again, in ‘the text’); it is only in the application of some kind of linguistic practice that the world gains in currency, becomes meaningful. For such

ontologically located researchers, the method we need must give us access to this conceptual map underpinning the context of the researched. For people “interpret stimuli in terms of such meanings, they do not respond merely to the physical environment” (ibid.: 9). Fortunately, such a method exists in participant observation.

Participant observation

Bronisław Malinowski (1922) described the fundamental goal of ethnography as “to grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realise his vision of his world” (in Tomaselli et al., 2008: 348). Perhaps inevitably though, it came to intervene in the internal matters of exotic cultures, “transforming the discipline into an enterprise of acculturation” (Mudimbe, 1988: 20). It also annexed the station of controlling evolutionary processes: “Anthropology...is now faced with the difficult task of recording how the ‘savage’ becomes an active participant in modern civilisation” was how Malinowski described the enterprise by 1938 (in Mudimbe, 1988: 20).

The primary method anthropology provides social science with is that of ethnography. Ethnography is:

A particular method or set of methods which in its most characteristic form...involves the ethnographer participating overtly or covertly in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues with which he or she is concerned (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 2).

As a method, anthropology thus bears a close resemblance to “the routine ways in which people make sense of the world in everyday life” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 2). This is, for some commentators, its primary strength, for others, its fundamental weakness. The latter argument often dismisses the ethnographic method as inappropriate for social science; resorting to the positivist benchmarks of subjectivity, verifiability, and so on: that “the data and findings it produces...are mere idiosyncratic impressions that cannot provide a solid foundation for rigorous scientific analysis” (ibid.). Those who champion the ethnographic method reject the possibility of science to explain human behaviour as it does non-linguistic objects.

Because of the ‘neutrality of science’, the role of researcher is standardised/eliminated through a rigorous set of procedures which govern the research process. It is difficult for the practice of ethnography to commence under such conditions, as the very role of researcher includes as its task, participation in the organic routines of the cultural context. Ethnography thus locates the researcher (the participant) as the primary instrument of research (Walsh, 1998: 217). As the role of the researcher is acknowledged to be fundamental to the production of knowledge (it does not exist in

nature) – that is, it cannot be separated from the social, linguistic world – attempts to reduce ‘subjectivity’ are futile. In fact, the best kind of ethnographic research offers a high degree of reflexivity – that is, a critique of how the presence of the researcher affects the research and how the research findings are tied up in very contextual symbolic exchanges (cf. Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 17).

The participation implied by ethnography – that is, the occupation of the social and symbolic space that any cultural/linguistic subject of the governing culture would inhabit – is the very method by which any organic, yet still ethnographic, account of the world can materialise (Walsh, 1998: 218). Ethnographers study people in their natural setting, “seeking to document that world in terms of the meanings and behaviour of the people in it” (ibid.). In the exercise of ethnography, it is often the case that theory is not only tested, but generated and developed (cf. Tomaselli et al., 2008; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 23-4).

Ethnography is distinctive in several ways. Firstly there is no real segregation of research processes of theorising, construction of hypothesis, data-gathering and analysis. Rather, the ethnographic experience is one where theory, questions, data collection and analysis generally materialise in the field, even where research strategy is made before-hand. Thus ethnography is inherently flexible, able to materialise according to circumstance (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 24). The second distinct factor is that of its techniques of research. As ethnographers try and capture a holistic view of life of the culture in question, from an insider’s point of view, the only realistic way this can be achieved is to assume the position of cultural subject, and interact with research subjects on this basis. This means that research proceeds along direct observation; formal, and more commonly so, informal interviewing and a participation in popular discourse; counting; analyses of documents and artefacts; and a certain open-endedness as to which direction the study might take (McCall and Simmons, 1969: 1). Thirdly, as mentioned above, the observer is the primary research instrument. As David Walsh ascribes, this means the researcher/observer:

[accesses] the field, establishing field relations, conducting and structuring observation and interviews, writing field notes, using audio and visual recordings, reading documents, recording and transcribing and finally writing up the research (Walsh, 1998: 221).

Burford Junker (in Walsh, 1998: 222) theorises four observer-roles employed by ethnographers, each, of course, with its own strengths, weaknesses and speciality in application. The first is that of ‘complete participant’. This role can be characterised by complete overt participation. It seems to promise the possibility of breaking down intercultural barriers, yet is constrained by the problem of ‘going native’ – of abandoning the position of analyst. It is also problematic from the point of view

that the research is produced in a climate of what the researcher is assuming as a member of cultural practice. The second role is 'complete observer'. This type is an observation of people without any interaction, often, though not always, using one-way mirrors and other concealing devices. This probably limits the effect the presence of a researcher might have on the subjects under surveillance, yet is in danger of producing ethnocentric accounts, because the researcher fails to participate in the underlying linguistic universe of meaning, which is more properly grasped in participative scenarios (Walsh, 1998: 222). The third observer role is the 'participant as observer'. This describes an awareness in the relationship between observer and observed as existing only as a matter of field enquiry, with an emphasis on participation and interaction, and on the trust that is gained over a longer-term relationship. This minimises the problem of pretence, but carries the danger of reactivity (an over-determination of data generation) and holding the researcher accountable. The fourth role is 'observer as participant', which is the same as the previous point, but just with the preference of observation over participation. Like other modes of observation though, the nuances which arise from participation are missed, and phenomena may be perceived without the interpretive meaning it carries in the culture of the observed: an error of methodology. This role protects against the abandoning of the position of analyst in research – the notion of 'going native'.

The semiotic ethnographic approach (Geertz, 1973) is an exercise in the analysis of the meaning of signs, which provide textual manifestations of the workings of deeper cultural structures. Geertz most famously applied this approach to understanding culture in/through an analysis of the cultural script of the Balinese cockfight. An approach of this sort contends that any such cultural script offers a condensed arena whereby the linguistic workings of culture are at their most active. Of course, total de-stabilisation of (an object's) meaning, the relativity of meaning, when taken to its extreme, comprises a total denunciation of science and the possibility for truth, leading to an exodus of researchers, particularly in the postmodern paradigm, from social research to the realms of deconstructive activity (Walsh, 1998: 220).

Yet it seems absurd for social research to be commenced firmly within the ontological world of relativism, where expositions of reality occur solely within the university, and field research is shunned. Instead, a middle ground should be explored by ethnography; one that takes a reflexive cognisance of the discursive practice of research, yet one which is also firmly grounded in a social and cultural context (ibid.; Ruby, 1977).

The use of previously generated data is also of use to ethnographic studies. These include statistical data, previous surveys, diaries, letters, autobiographies, media texts and so on that provide a document about some facet of the culture under question. Of course, this assumes that the subject

culture participates in the literate tradition and produces these texts. Obviously, this was historically a futile expectation of exotics, though today this is much less so. In ethnography, documents are likely to be analysed in terms of the conditions of their social production, rather than as a static secondary text of cultural information. This means a contemplation of the production and consumption of textual meaning, of the ownership and agenda of production, and so on (Walsh, 1998: 228).

I was caught up in an ethnography as the tourist (I paid the necessary fee and was guided through the performative village), yet I was also conducting ethnography as an exploration of the meaning generated by both the tourist enterprise and the fellow tourists. Of course, my limited visits to Shakaland do not qualify as classical ethnography; it is more accurate to describe it as a participant observation approach. I was only able to make two trips to Shakaland, and this emanates from several reasons: firstly, financial (including the extensive costs associated with petrol and the numerous toll gates); secondly, the amount of data generated by the two visits was substantial, and there weren't significant differences in data between visits; and thirdly, while the people who comprised tourists and tour guides changed, the script broadly commences along very similar lines each time. Adding to this last point is the fact that an abundance of tourists is far from guaranteed.

My first visit to Shakaland was on the 21st and 22nd of June, 2010. It was an overnight stay, in order to view the entire cultural package, named the Shaka Programme. My second visit to Shakaland was on the 9th of April, 2011, this time staying just for the day and purchasing the Nandi Programme. On both visits, only a portion – far less than half – spoke English. On the first visit there was a massive South Korean contingent of perhaps thirty, as well as smaller parties of Dutch and Italian. There were also a group of Americans and Nigerians.

The selection of June the 21st and 22nd 2010 was a very strategic decision: I hoped to visit Shakaland during the 2010 FIFA World Cup and make use of the larger-than-normal amount of tourists in the country. I made a calculation, based on team schedules and fixtures in Durban, and which teams were more likely to have large tourist contingents, as to when Shakaland might be busiest. Of course, this was not an exact science and based on a number of ideal scenarios and assumptions. Although, there were a significant number of tourists on these dates, I was to learn, in fact, that the World Cup was a quieter-than-usual period for Shakaland (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011).

On the second visit, there was a large group of Russians, being led by a Durban-based, Russian-born, tour guide who translated for them. The group was probably about fifteen to twenty. There were also four Australian tourists. The large groups of South Koreans and Russians were not,

strictly speaking, part of the same guided tour I was on, instead, on both times, the tours were separated by ten minutes. However, they frequently overlapped, as their tours were before the those that I was part of, and, given the tourists' propensity for filming everything in exhaustive detail (including individual shots with each performer), we were frequently waiting on them. For the dances and stick fighting, the groups coalesced.

The participant observation of tourists was largely aimed at how tourists reacted to the Shakaland script, that is, how they consumed it. This was far more fruitful for the English speaking tourists then, who asked questions, and passed comments that I could understand. Of course, there are other, non-verbal signs that I could detect in this process, such as the tapping of feet and bobbing of heads during the dancing, clearly signs of enjoyment and 'becoming' within the script. Sometimes I would pose purposeful questions or comments to the tour guide or perhaps my fellow tourists to elicit their attitude towards something deemed relevant at the time of research.

Of course, I am embedded in this research. The data and knowledge produced and recorded here does not exist 'in the world', but is a consequence of my physical, purposive and theoretical intrusion into this community. The ethnographic narrative that emerges, therefore, often draws on, and employs, auto-ethnography. I also employ the insights gained by the textual analysis of semiotic to understand how meaning is being articulated and consumed at the village.

During the participant observation phase, the camera was essential as was the Dictaphone. Both ran for the entirety of the script. The camera was a cellular phone feature; what it lacked in visual quality, it made up for in portability. My regular digital camera did not have a memory card big enough to record the entire script, no doubt owing to its superior picture quality to that of the cellular phone. I needed these records so that I might be able to view the data at a later date.

Interviews

Quantitative interviews are usually conducted in the form of a survey. The answers are subsumed into a large database whereby modelling, trends, predictions, and so forth are calculated. As such, quantitative interviewing relies on large numbers of people to be interviewed. It also assumes that informants provide truthful, objective accounts of their realities. The relationship between text and context (in this case, how external factors beyond the stats influence what comes to be reflected by samples) is not considered.

The interpretivist reaction to quantitative methodology from the 1950s and 1960s took issue with this factor, arguing that a discrepancy exists between the information provided in an interview and practice. This criticism was most pertinent to structured, closed interviews, though it can certainly

apply to any style of interview. Additionally, the structure and nature of the quantitative interview prescribed a subordinate role to the informant, who was bounded and reduced by the standardised structure of the interview, and had no power to elevate issues pertinent to him/her. Rather, their issues came to be articulated via a specifically western, ethnocentric way of articulating things – their issues were bounded on the terms and concepts of the researcher (Seale, 1998: 204-5). In such a research scenario, there is a very particular relation of power in effect, as the research design, and its architect, exercise the sole ability to circumscribe the researched. Thus in the desire to eliminate subjectivity and interpretation from scientific work, the result is that *the power to represent*, to circumscribe, lies in the hands of the researcher and his epistemological convictions.

The qualitative interview develops from this critique. At the core lies a concern to pass this power on to the research subject: let them be represented on their own terms. A greater degree of agency is granted to the informant, and this is done as an enabling device to ascertain higher quality data. These ‘depth’, or semi-/un-structured, interviews avoid the mechanic nature of structured interviews, allowing the discourse to meander between relevant, and often unforeseen, information that cannot be accrued if the instrumental design of the research is too rigid to cater for rich, spontaneous, dynamic, organic data that exists beyond the parameters specified in the survey. The nature of the qualitative interview is a more to-and-fro complement of agenda-setting and debate between researcher and researched. The ‘structure’ of this interview is a far looser arrangement than that ascribed prior, often directed by preconceived topics rather than fixed questions, although sometimes the informant is entirely the agenda setter (ibid.: 205-7).

The above descriptions pertain to the interview as it is used as a resource in the pursuit of knowledge. Yet the interview can serve another purpose in social research: the interview can be employed as the object, or topic, of research. In this, conversation and discourse analysis are regularly employed to investigate how the practice of language is party to all sorts of negotiations and sub-textual agendas being commenced. It is an investigation into the operation of language, of meaning, of ideology, of power, etc., and how these are served, deployed, abused, and so on, through language – though at the denotative level they are merely conversational techniques being implored and manipulated to articulate ideas and concepts.

This does not imply a rejection of the worth of the interview as a resource for data, however. Rather, if used in parallel, as resource and as topic, then the amalgamation of results would be better than any by itself. The investigation of interviews as a topic in itself is a tool that can be used to combat the inherent weaknesses of the interview as an instrument, outlined above. Words that are gathered in the transcription of interviews are one set of information. The analysis of tone, expression, punctuation, exaggeration, and of discursive negotiation, linguistic repertoires, and

subject position – issues of power and ideology – leads to another form of data that is inaccessible in the interview-as-resource approach. The use of the interview as both resource and topic, I argue, is the strongest and most advanced form of interviewing (Seale, 1998: 215). Of course, this positions the research almost exclusively in the interpretive and abstract dimensions, which I ascribed earlier.

Not all researchers pre-construct interviews as part of the ethnographic method. Some (following the tenets of naturalism) argue the accounts of research subjects should always come unsolicited, to avoid the reactivity (as said above, over-determination) of formal interviewing (Walsh, 1998: 227). However, as explained above, the mere presence of a researcher (regardless of techniques), might alter the informants' behaviour anyway (perhaps the researchers race, age, gender, affiliation, language, accent, clothing, etc. bring their own symbolic baggage to their encounter). This problem faces both positivists and naturalists. Instead of forever trying to develop techniques to eliminate this impact – as it is one of futility – the nature of the research encounter can just be considered and problematised in reflexive considerations. The more common type of interview found in ethnography is the depth, open-ended interview, where the interviewee is encouraged to discuss pertinent issues at length and on their own terms.

An interview with Sibusiso¹⁰⁸ was conducted on 9th of April, 2011 at Shakaland. Sibusiso was the tour guide of the programme to which I was assigned. The interview was conducted after the tour was complete, with Sibusiso being kind enough to give some of his time to discuss several questions. The interview was unstructured, open-ended and in-depth.

Although I also interacted with tourists, these weren't fully-fledged interview sessions, but rather, spontaneous. Thus encounters are treated as participant observation. The interview with Sibusiso was thus my only formal, extended interview.

Semiotics: Saussure, Peirce and Barthes

Semiotics locates texts within greater ideological and discursive structures which organise meaning at a particular historical moment (Stokes, 2003: 72). Semiotics is the analysis of how systems of meaning, common-sense, myth and ideology pervade, and exercise their interpellative role within, the cultural texts which saturate the contemporary condition.

My employment of semiotics is largely necessitated by the research concerns driving this study, and the paradigms that offer the best approach to explaining the operations of culture in the performance based articulation of Otherness at Shakaland (cf. Stokes, 2003: 23). Because semiotics entails an in-

¹⁰⁸ Not his real name. See Appendix 1 for the report of ethics.

depth analysis of individual texts, the scope of semiotic analysis revolves around a smaller number of textual samples, investigated in rich detail (see, for e.g., Stokes, 2003; Bertrand and Hughes, 2005). Clifford Geertz (1973) refers to this as ‘thick descriptions’ – textured, complex analyses. As stated, semiotics is interpretive; different readers interpret signs and syntagma differently. A successful semiotic analysis though, should emanate from within the interpretive community under investigation (Stokes, 2003: 73).

Objects of analysis include various frames produced in the actual activity of touring Shakaland and the site itself, including the natural and architectural landscape within which Shakaland is situated and commences. This is largely a semiotic of reflexive ethnography; that is, in my discussion of the cultural village, semiotics is largely applied within a greater ethnographic narrative. Also presented is a semiotic analysis of the official Protea Hotel Shakaland tourist brochure. The brochure presents a concise, easily consumable summary of the essence of the village, as determined by the corporate division of Shakaland.

The two dominant models are derived from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce (Chandler, 2004: 17). Saussure’s ‘semiology’ is derived from a European linguistic paradigm and hermeneutics. Peirce’s ‘semiotics’ emerged roughly in the same time period in the US, in the ontology of phenomenology. Much has been made of the triadic (Peirce) versus dyadic (Saussure) components of the sign, and how the latter compensates for the theoretical service of the ‘interpretant’. Interpreters are active producers of meaning; what is contested is the extent to which Saussure accounts for this in the dyad. Paul Thibault (1997: 184) argues that the domain of the interpretant is accounted for implicitly within Saussure’s model. (More on this below).

Semiology/semiotics explores how systems of meaning (what is above loosely called ‘cultures’) are articulated in language (Bignell, 1997: 5). Signs can “take the form of words, images, sounds, odours, flavours, acts or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and only become signs when we invest them with meaning” (Chandler, 2004: 17). That is, these signs come to act as signs when they “serve to express or communicate ideas” (Culler, 1976: 19). A sign is something which ‘stands for’ – represents – something other than itself.

Signs are organised into groups called codes, a system of conventions within which the correlation of meaning between signifier and signified occurs. For John Fiske (1987: 134), “a code is a rule-governed system of signs, whose rules and conventions are shared amongst members of a culture, and which is used to generate and circulate meanings in and for that culture.” Although, the meaning of a sign is inherently polysemic, codes provide some measure of semiotic stability. Codes are employed by cultural subjects to make sense of the signs they perceive. As such, codes are the

means whereby meaning can be more accurately articulated between encoders and decoders of signs (Fiske, 1987: 134) – “[c]odes help to simplify phenomena in order to make it easier to communicate experiences. In reading texts, we interpret signs with reference to what seem to be appropriate codes. This helps to limit their possible meanings” (Chandler, 2004: 157). That is also to say that reality is already encoded in cultural conventions by the time a cultural subject is given interpretive agency (ibid.). The meaning of the sign will be consistent within the operation of and subscription to a particular code. There are, for example, numerous ‘dress codes’ whereby clothes are categorised and given social meaning. The wetsuit is perfectly acceptable if ‘beachwear’ is the code, but if the code is one of formality, the attire would not sit so well. The significance of the sign emanates by virtue of its belonging to a certain code (Bignell, 1997: 10).

Linguistic signs are assembled into sentences (that is, temporally) for example, while visual signs are assembled into images (spatially). Both phenomena are known as *syntagma*, a horizontal axis of meaning whereby signs determine each other. Syntagm is concerned with the combination/positioning of signs insofar as each limits the polysemy of the other. That is, signs reverberate off (give meaning to) each other within the syntagm. The individual signs which constitute the sentence are selected according to paradigms. A *paradigm*¹⁰⁹ is an identificatory term; it is the name of a category that is constituted by a set of signs (Lacey, 2009: 70). The constitutive signs are arranged according to rules of categorisation. Paradigm is concerned with the selection of signs through differentiation. Where syntagmas are ‘horizontal’, paradigms are ‘vertical’. ‘Mammal’ is a paradigm that includes the signs of human, dog, cat, rabbit, etc., but it excludes the signs frog, snake, pelican and snail. Paradigms within a sentence determine each other, in that “the syntagm helps us to determine the appropriate paradigm of the sign” (Lacey, ibid.). “Temporally, syntagmatic relations refer intratextually to other signifiers *co-present* within the text, while paradigmatic relations refer intertextually to signifiers which are *absent* from the text” (Chandler, 2004: 80 – original emphasis).

These dimensions are useful when examining how meaning accrues in context – how polysemic signs become anchored in a syntagm. Of course, one still needs considerable cultural competence to make sense of syntagma. In the analysis of a text, these dimensions are useful. In *commutation testing*, the researcher is able to elucidate implicit cultural assumptions that are essential to building the preferred meaning of the text in question, by merely substituting signs with others that fall within the same paradigm (ibid.: 71-2).

¹⁰⁹ In film and television, “paradigms include ways of changing shot (such as cut, fade, dissolve and wipe). The medium or genre are also paradigms, and particular media texts derive meaning from the ways in which the medium and genre used differ from the alternatives” (Chandler, 2004: 81).

Signs consist of signifiers and signifieds. Together, they constitute the sign – “the sign is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified”¹¹⁰ (Chandler, 2004: 19). The *signifier* has a physical *form* that is perceivable. Its manifestation may be “material, acoustic, visual, olfactory or taste” (Lacey, 2009: 64). The *signified* is the *concept* that is triggered on perception of the signifier, in the mind of the interpreter. This concept makes recourse to a *referent* found in reality, that is, to something ‘pre-language’. Thus we can communicate about dogs (the referent), by using signifiers of dogs (like the signifier ‘dog’, or a photo of a dog), which correlates to the concept (signified) of a dog in the interpreter’s mind¹¹¹. We don’t need to bring the actual, living dog (referent) into the equation to articulate what we are talking about; we can *represent it* through signs. Importantly, “although the signifier and signified are separated for the purpose of analysis, in terms of perception they are inseparable” (ibid.).

Whereas Saussure conceived as the sign in terms of a signifier and a signified (and a referent), Peirce’s sign consisted of the representamen, interpretant and the object. The representamen is analogous to the signifier, and the interpretant roughly equates to the signified – the sense made of the signifier. However, for Peirce, the interpretant has a quality over and above Saussure’s signified: it is itself a sign in the mind of an interpreter – “a sign...addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. The sign which it creates I call the *interpretant* of the first sign” (Peirce, 1931-58: 2.228 – original emphasis). The interpretant “is the idea to which the sign gives rise in the mind of the interpreter” (Tomaselli, 1999: 131). Now, the interpretant can be divided further: the immediate, the dynamical and the final. The immediate interpretant refers to the ability for interpretation of a sign, before it is actively interpreted by an interpreter; “[t]he immediate interpretant is the logical potential or possibility of a sign to be interpreted” (Peirce in Tomaselli, ibid.). The dynamical interpretant is the effect on the interpreter produced by a sign, and is itself divisible into three types: the emotional, energetic and the logical. The emotional is the feeling invoked by the sign (Tomaselli, 1999: 131); it is the emotional response triggered by the sign. The energetic interpretant is the realm of a physical or mental response; it involves the effort of the interpreter (ibid.). The logical interpretant is the realm of intelligibility, of intellectual concepts in relation to the sign. The final interpretant is “that which ‘would be’ if one understands the laws of connection which structure the posited phaneron or sign”; it is “the interpretation of the sign which would be made by the community of scientists if they understood completely the laws which regulate the effects of the sign” (Tomaselli, 1999: 134).

¹¹⁰ Each unique *pairing* (of signifier/signified) *is the sign*. There may be many different signifiers for the same signified, each pairing *constitutes the sign*. “The *signifier* or *representamen* is the *form* in which the sign appears (such as the spoken or written form of a word) whereas the *sign* is the whole meaningful ensemble” (Chandler, 2004: 36 – original emphases).

¹¹¹ Though this can only happen if the culture has a use for dogs (Tomaselli, 1996: 30).

Signs are arbitrary, though some are less so than others. The letters d, o, g only articulate the concept dog through social convention, in a specific social context. Dogs wouldn't mind if we called them 'tigers'. Yet a realistic image of a dog is a less arbitrary signifier for the concept; it is more motivated.

Arbitrariness and sign motivation and constraint is measured by Peirce in one of his semiotic 'typologies'. An *iconic* sign is motivated; it has a direct resemblance to the thing it represents. Icons "have qualities which 'resemble' those of the objects they represent" (Chandler, 2004: 39). In an iconic image, the signifier is the arrangement of colour and shape on a flat surface; the signified is the concept aroused by the depictive signifier. The sign is the recognition of the physical characteristics of representation (signifier) with the thing it represents (signified). An *indexical* sign draws attention to its (unseen) referent; it is indicative of the thing it represents. The index's connection with the object it represents is physical, "a matter of fact"; it does not depend purely on an "interpreting mind" (Peirce, 1931-58: 2.92, 298; 4.447). Indices are not defined by similarity or analogy; instead, "anything which focuses the attention is an index" (ibid.: 2.285). Generally thus, indexical signs share a causal relationship with the referent – though media producers employ (unseen) indexical techniques to draw the attention of the audience towards certain phenomena (Tomaselli, 1999: 30). *Symbolic* signs share no commonalities to the thing they represent, except through social convention. As Peirce states, a symbol is "a sign which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object" (Peirce, 1931-58: 2.249). Symbols are unmotivated and arbitrary (Tomaselli, 1999: 31), bearing no physical or causal resemblance to the things they represent. Instead, a symbol is "a conventional sign, or one depending upon habit (acquired or inborn)" (Peirce, 1931-58, 2.297). Words are an obvious example of this type – although onomatopoeia are verbs that *do* resemble the thing they represent; they are iconic.

In fact, the icon, index and symbol are not different types of sign as much as they are different *modes* (Chandler, 2004: 43). That is, these categories are not mutually exclusive, as signs can be any combination of such modalities. Caricature is both iconic and indexical; and traffic lights index a particular traffic scenario (cars must wait here to be processed), while its colours symbolise vehicle manoeuvres (Bignell, 1997: 16). A photograph is generally considered in its iconic capacity, however, the photograph is also an *index* of "the effect of light on photographic emulsion" (Chandler, 2004: 42). Rolls-Royce cars index wealth (one must be wealthy to own one), but also, due to the social usage of the sign, have come to symbolise wealth. The modes of the sign co-exist in hierarchy, in which one mode has dominance over the others. The origin of this dominance is determined by the context of usage (ibid.: 43).

The early Barthes extended Saussure's semiology into the kind of analysis that is produced by contemporary semioticians, presenting a model for reading the texts of popular culture. In *Mythologies*, Barthes (1973) was yet to introduce the now-dominant terms 'denotation' and 'connotation', referring to them instead as language-object (denotation) and metalanguage (connotation), but I will use the terms in my analyses, as is common in contemporary semiotics.

Barthes was concerned with how ideology and myth are deployed in the texts of pop culture¹¹². As such, "Myth is a type of speech"; it is a message articulated by signs, a system of communication (Barthes, 1973, 117). And "myth is a type of speech chosen by history: it cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things" (ibid.). For Barthes, "myths were the dominant ideologies of our time" (Chandler, 2004: 144). Barthes was thus concerned with the deceptively innocent nature of myth. In fact, the role of myth is to legitimise certain social phenomena, to present certain ideas as having their essence in nature (Tomaselli, 1999: 71).

Where a signifier and signified combine to make a sign in the first semiological order, this sign becomes a mere signifier once more in the second order. The signifier elicits a further signified, and when the two are reconciled in the process of interpretation, become a second-order sign. The first order of signification is that of denotation, the second, of connotation. Figure 1 is an adaptation of Barthes spatial metaphor of myth, presented in triangles, to depict the direction of the semiological orders:

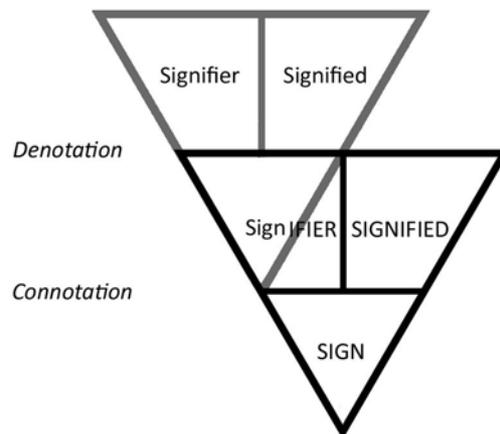


Fig. 1: The semiotic orders (adapted from Barthes, 1973: 124)

The first, grey triangle is the first level of signification. The sign produced is denotative. It also acts as the first variable in the second level of signification, which is the second, black triangle. In an image, the first level of signification is as follows: the arrangement of shape and of colour is the

¹¹² And herein lies a fundamental reason why his thesis was so compatible with the early pioneers of British Cultural Studies, who, in their disillusionment with Marxism in the USSR, questioned why and how the masses were so disposed to political submissiveness (cf. Hall, 1986).

signifier. This produces a signified – a recognition of the object depicted in the image. Together they constitute the sign. The shape of a cat and its black colouring on a flat surface produces the signified: black cat. Once the signified is accounted for (produced by the interpreter), the sign is complete. A black cat is denoted. The second level of signification might be as follows: The sign in the image identified at the denotative level becomes a mere signifier of something else, stripped of its own denotative identity, “reduced to a pure signifying function” (Barthes, 1973: 123). The signifier produces another signified that is much more arbitrary. The marriage of the signifier with the signified produces/connotes the complete sign. The black cat produces the concept (signified) ‘bad luck’ (in Western culture). When the signifier ‘black cat’ is recognised, *interpreted*, as ‘bad luck’, it produces/connotes the sign ‘bad luck cat’ – indeed, bad luck becomes inseparable from the cat.

Let me be very explicit where myth resides in the signifiatory orders. Myth is not the connotative sign; if myth is the ‘message’ yielded by a set of connotative signs, it is in this vein that scholars like John Fiske and John Hartley (1978: 43); Fiske (1982; 1987) and Tomaselli (1999) – and not actually Barthes himself – ascribe myth as a *third* order of signification. As an explanation for the way things are, myth is not a factual system, only a semiological one. The coupling of the connotative signifier and signified seems to emanate from/within ‘nature’, while it is merely the nature of myth and ideology to remain so transparent in its interpretive language of reality (cf. Barthes, 1973). Myth transforms history into nature; “dominant historical processes are made to appear ‘natural’ and ‘inevitable’, even ‘God-given’” (Tomaselli, 1999: 70). As Barthes ascribes, “Semiology has taught us that myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal” (Barthes, 1973: 155). Myth, he continues, “is constituted by the loss of the historical quality of things [ideas]: in it [myth], things lose the memory that they once were made” (ibid.). As Chandler (2004: 145) explains, the function of myth is “to naturalise the cultural”. Despite the transparent operation of myth, its function is not to conceal things; on the contrary, it *talks about* things, but it does so in a guise of purity; “it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification” (Barthes, 1973: 156). Myths “function to hide the ideological function of signs and codes. The power of such myths is that they ‘go without saying’ and so appear not to need to be deciphered, interpreted or demystified” (Chandler, ibid.).

In semiotics, the third order is yielded by the combination of the first and second orders of denotation and connotation (Chandler, 2004: 144). However in practice, the initiation of certain concepts in the second order of signification requires a familiarity and competence in the meaning conventions and mythical codes which characterise, and underpin certain cultures, or interpretive communities (Tomaselli, 1999: 35). Myths “help us to make sense of our experiences within a

culture. They express and serve to organise shared ways of conceptualising something within a culture” (Chandler, 2004: 145). Because the concept of bad luck is only arbitrarily signified in my hypothetical example of the black cat – arbitrary, in that it doesn’t exist in the text denotatively or iconically – it should be understood that connotations are activated by textual readers. In fact, “which codes are mobilised will largely depend on the *triple* context of the location of the text, the historical moment and the cultural formation of the reader” (Storey, 1993: 80 – emphasis my own). Production and consumption of myth depends on a popular cultural repertoire, which is specific to its historical location. As such, the image is not only reliant on a cultural repertoire; it reinforces it as well, in the process of interpretation (Storey, 1993: 80) and interpellation (Althusser, 1971). According to an Althusserian reading, “when we first learn denotations, we are also being positioned within ideology by learning dominant connotations at the same time” (Chandler, 2004: 141). Myth has a hailing function. This is how signs act ideologically. The activation of mythic codes locates us in relation to the text – that is, in interpretation, the manifestation of our cultural repertoire (conceptual map) constitutes our subject position in relation to the text¹¹³ (cf. e.g. Althusser, 1971; Foucault, 1970). Our identity is thus shaped in and by texts. Fiske (1987: 140), with particular reference to televisual codes, describes the subject/reading position as “the social point at which the mix of televisual, social, and ideological codes come together to make coherent, unified sense.” In the interpretation of media material, we are “indulging in an ideological practice ourselves” (ibid.), that is, we locate ourselves politically and ideologically. For Louis Althusser (1971), the construction of subjects in an ideological discourse is the primary activity of the ideology.

Myth is then in the service of the class of society which controls the industrial, commercial and political institutions of society – the bourgeoisie¹¹⁴ (Bignell, 1997: 24). As Tomaselli (1999) explains, popular myth emanates from seats of power, from that section of society which exercises control of the means of production. The political economy of the mass media displays little variation in ownership patterns from the other means of production. This ensures that dominant ideas disseminated within the mass media are in line with the dominant economic elite (Tomaselli, 1999: 72). The popular media has a de-politicising effect on its consumers (cf. Giroux, 2004), who are educated/disciplined (Foucault, 1976) and interpellated (Althusser, 1971) into its mythic practices. The most effective method of the maintenance of power is not that of force, but of ideological captivity – *the elimination of alternative systems of thought*. Thus myth “...is a type of

¹¹³ This was also discussed in Chapter 2.

¹¹⁴ Earlier I mentioned semiotics is often tied to Marxism. In *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844, Marx explains how ‘the state’ is the logical legal, political, economic, and social strategy deployed by the interests of private property; it is an institutional complex that perpetuates existing patterns of ownership, control and power (Marx, 1844/1975).

speech about social realities which supports ideology by taking these realities outside of the arena of political debate” (Bignell, 1997: 25).

It is the task of the semiotician to illustrate the mythical and ideological operations that are being exercised in the production and consumption of cultural texts, and to locate these findings within a historical context. This can be an extremely difficult task, as the point of myth is to conceal its subjective explications of reality.

My semiotic analysis offers a holistic schematic analysis derived from Fiske (1987), in terms of television, and Tomaselli (1999), in terms of the phaneron – “the collective total of all that in any sense present to the mind, quite regardless of whether it corresponds to any real thing or not” (Peirce in Tomaselli, 1999: 56). I will now direct the various theories discussed in this section into a unified model of textual analysis.

The first level of signification is the domain of iconic signs (Tomaselli, 1999: 38). These are the signs that have a direct resemblance to the things they represent. The first order icon is a hypothetical construct only that describes the sign without its cultural, material and historical context (ibid.). This is Fiske’s (1987) level of ‘reality’, a title which refers to the reality of objective perception.

Fiske describes denotation as the object being imaged, and connotation as the manner in which it has been imaged (Fiske, 1982: 91). Denotation must therefore reside in the first semiological order, and connotation the second. This second level of signification is thus the realm of indexical signs, referents that are indexed by social convention. When Fiske refers to connotation as how things are represented – remembering the context is television – he is referring to the technical codes which transmit the “conventional representational codes which shape representation” (Fiske, 1987: 135). That is, the indexical signs which mean something by convention or whose “meaning intercepts a whole range of culturally shaped ways of making sense not derived from the sign itself, but from the way particular societies, groups or classes use, value and encode both the signifier and the signified” (Tomaselli, ibid.). These signs are thus “inherently unstable” (ibid.: 39). Indexical signs draw attention to the things to which they refer (ibid.: 30). This is the second level of signification, the level of representation (Fiske, 1987: 135).

The third level of signification – that of ideology – is where the range of cultural meanings in the second order unite with dominant ways of making sense of the world, ideas on how the world works which seem to emanate in nature. This level “accounts for a comprehensive cultural view of the world, a coherent and structures perception of reality within which a society or group or class make sense of social relations and the way the world is organised” (Tomaselli, 1999: 39). An ideological

third – a symbolic sign – refers to the overarching ideological language that is employed in the articulation of meaning. The third order provides the ideological context whereby second order signs can appropriate first order ones. Examples of third order signifieds are “individualism, patriarchy, race, class, materialism, capitalism...” (Fiske, 1987: 135) “...masculinity, femininity, freedom, individualism, objectivism, Englishness, and so on” (Chandler, 2004: 145).

The model of semiotics outlined here will be used to analyse the signs of Shakaland – both those on-site as well as its representation in the tourist brochure which advertises it. In the next chapter then, I present a semiotic analysis of the Shakaland tourist brochure (Part I), before a semiotic consideration of the participant observation phase of my research (Part II). As stated above, a smaller number of texts for analysis means that the analysed texts are investigated in richer detail, and this is the case here.

Chapter 5: Results

Part I: The Strategies of Semiotics

The meaning of x exists in “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment” (Hall, 1997: 44). I argued that tourism locates ‘place’ as something to be consumed. This discursive formation annexes the interpretive terrain whereby ‘place’ was articulated in pre-capitalist contexts. ‘Place’ is the totality of its constitutive ‘statements’; its meaning exists in every statement absorbed or engaged by a discursive subject. These statements may not even be directly related to the place to be consumed. By this, I mean that the construction of place may and does exist in many other discursive orders triggered in semiosis; the discourse of the ‘global South’ carries its own discursive conventions, as does the sign ‘Africa’, the sign ‘South Africa’, and the sign ‘Zulu’ – the symbolic representations of the material, political and ideological entities. ‘Place’ is thus ultimately bound up in the greater societal operations at a particular historical moment. When Urry writes that places are ‘read’ (1995; 2002; 2005), he means that the objects which constitute place are decoded in terms of their discursive functions – in terms of the signifiatory ideas bestowed upon them by the linguistic concepts of the society of which tourism is a major economic practice. It is for this reason that tourists have been perceived as the ultimate semiotician (Culler, 1981). “‘Reading’ nature [like all linguistic activity] is therefore something that is learned” (Urry, 1995: 174).

Large portions of Chapter 2 were dedicated to discussing the above premises. Chapter 3 examined some of the main symbolic relations between the historical Same and Other, with particular reference to nineteenth century Natal. Not only did it describe the epistemological climate in which discourses of the Other arose, it also provided a set of the dominant orders of discourse/mythological signs wherein a cultural village like Shakaland might be toured. What is presented here then is both an in-depth semiotic analysis of a tourist brochure, as well as a broad, albeit necessarily brief media survey, drawn from content analysis. Both of these analyses synthesise mythological concerns into an analysis of *how* the dominant mythical devices are used to constitute place, that is, constitute Shakaland.

The Protea Hotel Shakaland brochure – a semiotic analysis

What follows is a qualitative, interpretive analysis of the official Shakaland brochure¹¹⁵, primarily drawn from semiotics. When conducting a semiotic analysis, it's necessary to break down the sign into workable units of analysis. For this reason, I divide the brochure according to a probable

¹¹⁵ I collected the brochure from the hotel on the 21st June 2010.

reading scenario. I thus present the brochure as: the cover sheet (Fig. 2); over sheet 1, consisting of a photo montage (Fig. 4); and over sheet 2, with a more text-based character, map, tourist symbols and contact details (Fig. 6). Because the following analysis makes constant reference to the text, it was necessary to annotate images over sheets 1 and 2, and these are presented as Figures 5 (over sheet 1) and Figure 7 (over sheet 2).

Because semiotics grants primacy to the interpreter, the results of my analysis can't claim to be 'factual', only the result of my own cosmological orientations of Zulu representation. This is not semiotics' weakness but its strength: its ability to account for multiple interpretations. However, my analysis can be compared with the summary of the main representative codes/interpretive conventions for representing the Zulu I presented in Chapter 3.

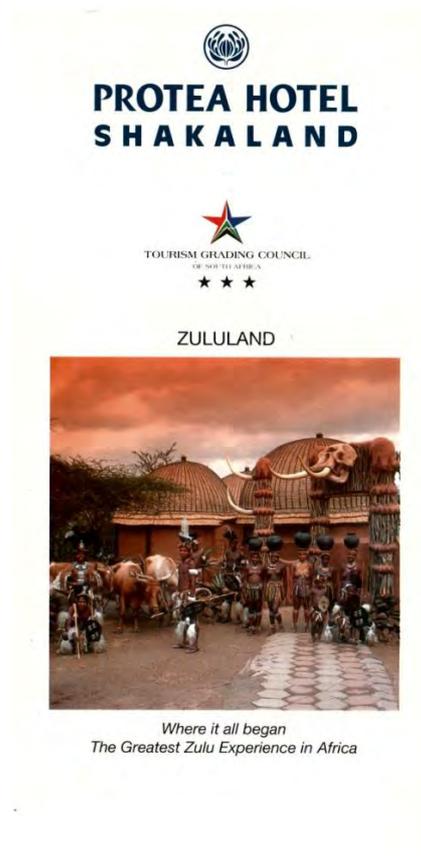


Fig. 2: Shakaland Brochure Cover Sheet

Cover Sheet (Fig. 2):

The front cover of the brochure consists of an image, several logos and some text set against a white page. These objects are all vertically centred. This format is used by Protea Hotels on all of their tourist brochures. From top to bottom, their spatial arrangement is as follows: the words "Protea Hotel Shakaland" with the respective logo; three stars associated with the Tourism Grading Council

of South Africa and the respective logo; the text “Zululand”; an image; and a caption in italics, “Where it all began... The Greatest Zulu Experience in Africa” which is also the Shakaland slogan. The page is a thin cardboard with a matte finish, though the photographs have a high gloss finish.

As a semiotician, I’m greeted by a binary set of paradigmatic codes: a clean, neat ‘civilisation’ or ‘modernity’, and a sandy, rustic ‘nature’ or ‘pre-modernity’. These are two paradigms that are constantly grappled with throughout not only the brochure, but the entire cultural village and hotel area itself – the conglomerative pastiche that is Shakaland.

Perhaps it is in the realm of the syntagm that the cover sheet effectively articulates the ideas of a hotel and of cultural tourism. The image alone does not signify cultural tourism; it is only in a syntagmatic consideration that we detect this notion. Similarly, the text is relatively ambiguous as to the type of tourism offered. Considering only the text, the biggest clue as to the type of tourism offered is the line, “The Greatest Zulu Experience in Africa”. There is nothing inherent in these textual signs that signify cultural tourism; the hotel could just be established in the heart of Zululand, yet offer a product like wildlife or scenery. Only in the syntagm, when we consider both text and image, do we appreciate that Shakaland is concerned with the presentation of culture.

This is not necessarily a universal interpretive scenario; another might be that the semiosis of the sign ‘Zululand’ produces the sign ‘Zulu people’ – the land of the Zulus – and thus, perhaps, at the second order of signification, indeed some sort of cultural experience, semiotic thirdness. Or ‘Shakaland’ might produce the sign ‘Shaka’ which might lead to the sign ‘Zulu history’ and ‘culture’. In this scenario, the picture is probably viewed in terms of how accurately/authentically the Zulu are portrayed, *according to the other signs produced by the signs ‘Shaka’, ‘Zulu’, etc. in semiosis*. That is, to what extent, do the signs of the image conform to the set of signs through which, by convention, we know the Zulu by? The signs look real, albeit, in a syntagmatic analysis, the image is perhaps too richly overloaded with such cultural signifiers (that is, belonging to the same paradigm). This is a scenario discussed above as being explained by *postmodern authenticity*, when a representation becomes ‘more real’ than the ‘real thing’, due to the higher proportion of constituting signifiers on display. If the image was taken to signify cultural tourism through the process of semiosis of the interpretants described above, it’s likely that the scene in the image looks ‘touristy’.

At the denotative level of the image, we know that the signifier is the arrangement of shape and colour on the page, the signified is the (conceptual) recognition of the referent depicted by these signifiers, and the sign is the whole of these signifiers and signifieds. Thus at the denotative level the image is comprised of a party of Zulu people (six males, five females and one boy); three brown

bulls; a sandy floor with a tiled pathway; an acacia tree; three columns comprised of bound together sticks with elephant tusks and decorated clay rings and an elephant skull replete with tusks on the archway; three beehive hut-like structures (one of which is only partially visible); and an orange/peach build-up of cloud in the sky. Indeed, it is browns, ochres, olives, terracotta and oranges that dominate the picture, set amongst a vast background of an off-white – the code of the tourist brochure.

The figures are minimally clad – and it is from this that we can infer both gender and social role; males' headdress consists of black or white feather sets; fur cuffs at the elbow, wrist and knee; cowhide drapes at the waist; a knobkerrie, spear and shield; or a slight variations on the above combinations. Despite this extensive set of signifiers of native-ness, the foremost figure nonchalantly wears slops. The female figures are bare-breasted and adorned in colourful beadwork around the neck, waist, knees and ankles. All five of them have black pots above their heads.

The image connotes rusticity – the ground is barren, coarse and sandy with a scrubby thorn tree protruding into the left side of the image, the arches and columns are made out of 'natural', 'unprocessed' timber, with clay (mud) rings, and piles of stones to act as walls and fencing. The iconic, denotative sign of the cattle signifies/indexes that life is still largely based on animal produce or horsepower, strengthening the connotation of rusticity. The grass on the top of the huts is another signifier of rusticity in that it is not a material associated with 'modern' architecture and engineering. Additionally, the sign is produced by signs that are (structured) absent. That is, there are no electricity poles and cables, no lights, no roof tiles, no antennae and other signal transmitters, nor any other iconic sign that would upset the congruity of the sign of rusticity. Related to this is the production of the sign 'the bush'. The setting of the scene does not seem to be urban; although we can't really discern the surroundings, because the huts in the middle ground annex and obstruct the horizon, the setting looks rural because the most prominent signs don't belong to the semiotic paradigm of 'urban'. That is, the signs 'cow', 'hut', 'unclothed woman', and 'Zulu warrior' don't generally belong in the urban environment; rather, they fall under the 'rural', or 'traditional' paradigm. The scrubby Acacia tree in the left of image and the dusty patches of ground in the foreground is typical of the type of flora that one can expect to find in this part of the world, thus connoting the Zululand bush. The colours are mostly what we'd consider appropriate for a palette of 'earth colours'. This paradigm is determined by a set of colours that we – that is, Western, particularly Anglo-Saxon, culture – have given names to, and use to signify 'earth' through

colours¹¹⁶: the browns, ochres, greens, oranges, terracottas, greys, and so on. Thus the colour and hue of the image also signify the connotation of the bush, rusticity, and extra-urban environments.

The above signs don't necessarily translate to a scene that is not orderly and clean. Indeed, many of the formal features of the scene connote quality workmanship, and thus, that the place is safely constructed and offers protection from the forces of nature in which we can infer it is situated. The thatched roofs are neatly finished and trimmed, and the line of sticks constituting the archway is straight and even¹¹⁷. The supporting columns are symmetrical, and strong enough to support the elephant skull (not real, though in the image, one cannot discern this) mounted on top. The constructions look sturdy and of good quality and connote safety.

However, perhaps the most potent influence on sanitising the dirt, bush, and rusticity in the image, is the syntagm and the signs that constitute it. There are two signs which might fix our interpretation of the syntagm. The first is the 3-star symbol and text "**Tourism Grading Council** of South Africa" (original emphasis). The three, small black stars are symbolic for 'comfort' lodging. Of course, this interpretant is only signified by social (that is, tourist) convention; there is no logical or causal explanation for the symbol to mean this, but it is a shorthand that a community (of tourists) uses to communicate its ideas, and acquires its monopoly in this way. In tourist culture then, the '3-star hotel' typically offers a range of modern conveniences and a certain level of 'semi-luxurious' lodging. This includes, in this region at least, swimming pools; bars; television; dining facilities; and commonly, air-conditioned suites and on-suite bathrooms. The other sign in the syntagm is "Protea Hotel". Also an arbitrary sign of course, as all words save onomatopoeia are, but this consideration tells us little. For the South African, the Protea Hotel brand might connote/signify a certain type of hotel, an interpretant likely constructed by our knowledge of the market performance and characteristic of the brand. Any South African with even a vague knowledge of South Africa's hotel industry will surely recall the brand 'Protea Hotels'. Protea Hotels operate not only within all the South African provinces, but further afield in Africa as well, for instance, in Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, among others. Protea Hotels describes itself as comprising of "a full and diverse range of outstanding hotels and resorts offering superior appointments, personalised service and individuality of character" (Protea Hotels website, 2011). The brand is described as "the best strategically located, mid-upper market leading hotel group in Africa, offering a unique service culture" (ibid.). Protea Hotels are aimed at the mid/mid-upper market, while its subsidiary, African

¹¹⁶ Perhaps those peoples living in more temperate locations might have a slightly different set of colour conventions for signifying earth through colour, due to the substantial variations in the appearance of these landscapes.

¹¹⁷ This picket-like arrangement of sticks is purely aesthetic, on closer inspection one can discern that a larger, more solid wooden beam provides this structure with its strength.

Pride Hotels, is its luxury brand¹¹⁸. The tourist is probably not aware of all of these brand technicalities and market presence; what's more probable is that Protea is a brand connoting quality, dependable, middle class, semi-luxurious hotels.

As the brochure navigates the congruity of the paradigmatic codes of rusticity and luxury, perhaps these signs appease the tourist desire to both get 'up close and personal' with the host culture while making as little concession as possible to personal comfort and hygiene during this activity, as has been posited in this dissertation (see Chapters 2 and 3).

Again inside the image, the assembled party look welcoming, inviting; their gaze is directed towards the camera and all are grinning. Through their body position and facial gestures, they hail the interpreter inviting him/her to participate in the destination. They address the interpreter: the subject position of the tourist brochure reader exists as a property of the text; it 'speaks' to the reader in this way – in eye contact, and other *signifiers of address*. The weapons and armour of the males connote war, fighting, killing, death, blood and pain. Yet the indexical sign is not fear, but perhaps an anthropological curiosity. Similarly, despite the presence of several signifiers of 'the wild', these features are tamed, self-contained, and not daunting or repulsive: The skull of the elephant mounted on the arch and the two tusks adorning the wooden columns do not terrify and connote danger, rather they connote the wilderness, establishing a link (like all connotative signs) whereupon a *mythical* commentary on society can be articulated.

Constituted by the connotation of 'wild', 'rusticity' and 'the bush' then, is the myth of nature, and its counterpart, the myth of civilisation. This works on several levels. Firstly, this appeases the tourist desire to 'escape reality' by experiencing zones differentiated from their normal day-to-day activities, and engage an authenticity, where the 'chaos' of the world is put on hold while the tourist participates in the myth of nature. The figures of the image embody this myth of the 'simple life', associated with 'non-industrial' ('working') life, where members of this system are engaged more in the fulfilment of activities directly connected with subsistence or the obligations entailed by their culture and spirituality, than they are with 'work' activities as defined by money economies. Thus while the figures in the image embody this myth, they beckon the tourist to do the same. Thus the myth of the 'simple life' and of 'nature' is an idea produced by modern society – an idea complicit with the fundamental operation of the ideological system in modern Western society¹¹⁹. It is also a strategy that is offered to tourists to 'recharge' in a more relaxing environment than that offered by

¹¹⁸ Protea Hotels have another subsidiary brand called Protea Hotel Fire & Ice! which is its 'lifestyle' brand, described as "urban, contemporary, young thinking and edgy" (Protea Hotels, 2011).

¹¹⁹ See Chapter 2.

the city. Tourism offers routines differentiated from normal day-to-day activities in industrial society.

This is something constituted almost universally by the signs in the image: the pots on top of the women's heads are an index of a daily activity of women – the collection of water. It is also symbolic of a lifestyle still dependant on the natural environment to provide water – that is, the society has not developed to an industrial stage where water is stored in dams and piped into houses. The weaponry and armour signify a safety that is only guaranteed in melee combat, and there is no universal “social contract” in this society. The bulls and elephant tusks signify a closeness to nature and animals – they co-exist in ‘the wild’.

This is also a comment on the past and present myth, where the past is ordered, contained and linear, while the present is chaotic, fragmentary, and persistent. Scholars (see, e.g., Maugham Brown, 1987) have commented on the equation drawn between ‘indigenous peoples’ and the biblical state of nature embodied in the Garden of Eden. The Edenic state is ruled by harmony between man and nature (or in fact, a ‘naivety’ as to the two constructed categories), the idea of living off the land, and an existence revolving wholly around these two ideas. The post-Edenic state characterises the modern society – the invention of taboo, social conventions, society, hierarchy, and the distinction of man and nature. The natives depicted in the image articulate and conform to these myths, and thus bring a timelessness about them: because they have maintained a state of identity from pre-capitalist times, this presents a static cultural entity, one that does not change over time. This is a people who have not evolved from pre-industrial times hundreds of years ago. They live in a time-bubble. When time does not exist, therefore, there is no time. In fact, this is a myth that features prominently for the Zulu and the African people.



Fig. 3: ‘African Time’ Clock

(Source: <http://southafricanfood.ie/store/product/1658/Africa-Time-Clock-S/>)

Figure 3 depicts just one such example. The image is of a well known clock produced in South Africa that trades on the myth of 'African time', the nature of time in a land not governed by industrial time, where time itself is a commodity (conceivable in economic terms). Things get done 'shortly', 'eventually', 'now now', 'whenever', or 'just now'. There is no urgency, as the times depict a schedule where everything is perpetually on hold, where nothing is done in a hurry. In the timeless, Edenic, African society, the complexities of life are negligible, because nature takes care of all one's needs.

As all the needs of these people are satisfied by the abundance of nature, they are not directly accountable for their own wellbeing; they do not have full responsibility over their existence, but rather, are 'parented' by their habitat. These societal members do not have the worries of the tourist, they are not part of the cut-throat, rat race existence associated with the capitalist society. I am demonstrating here how myth works in relation to interpretation of texts.

Perhaps at some point these ideas of living off nature overlap with the concepts of pastoralism and agrarianism, signified by the domesticated bulls and pots of water. Note indexically, we infer the bulls are domesticated by the rope which tethers them, thus signifying their agricultural, working function.

How do these myths operate in our interpretation and in stimulating our interest? As I said, 'the myth' in fact, is a linguistic/symbolic construct embedded in the ideological practices of our own culture; it has its context in the ordering of reality entailed by our own set of ideological beliefs. All of these mythical constructs within the text exist in dichotomies, structured by their opposites (that generally embodied by the tourist): 'the simple life' vs. modern/industrial life; nature vs. civilisation; tribalism vs. liberal democracy; pastoralism and agrarianism vs. industrialism and capitalism; the Same vs. the Other. It is in this context that we argue that the tourism industry relies on the mythical constructs which emanate from a tourist culture, and thus, despite the objects of the gaze in cultural tourism typically being something 'out of the ordinary', it is Western interpretive norms being sold to the tourists.

The brochure claims that Shakaland is "The Greatest Zulu Experience in Africa" – an evocative idea on several levels. Firstly, in the light of this discussion on the sale of myth and thus of Western culture, how can a tourist attraction (the sum of Western mythical representation) be the greatest *Zulu* experience? How is 'great' measured? If in terms of some kind of authenticity (a highly probable scenario), why does a nineteenth-century representation annex the right of contemporary Zulu people (largely living within the parameters of modernity) to experience the essence of what is 'Zulu'? That is, why are nineteenth-century representations of Zulus claimed to embody the very

essence of the Zulu people? Presumably, this supposition draws to attention the Western 'contamination' of the people after the collapse of their independence in 1879; the establishment of labour pools and migrant labour; programmes of education and Christendom; homelands; and urbanisation in the twentieth century. Again this quasi-anthropological assertion on such cultural corruption brings to the fore a failure to acknowledge the very essence of any culture: that is, something that exists not as a bounded entity, but only in (constant) processes of negotiation and rejection with external texts. That is, the popular view of the Zulu identity, employed in tourism, books, film and so on, is an essentialist, static one.

The depiction of a people contently engaged and satisfied with their culture is a far cry from the majority of communities in Zululand, where unemployment, urban migration, crime, HIV/AIDS and other manifestations of poverty are the much more prevalent phenomena. This is a people marginalised on the global economic periphery, a people whose participation in this economy is curtailed by their lack of appropriate skills as a result of over a century of colonial repression.

In fact, the stereotypical essence of Zuluness as presented at Shakaland operates as a permanent front stage (Goffman, 1959) to the 'impoverished' "version" of identity – the backstage – embodied by the majority of communities in Zululand. When tourism operators use South Africa's – or any country's – cultural wealth as a selling point of the destination, there is evidence to suggest that tourists are insulated from the nitty-gritty interaction in the field with real – that is, people who are not performers – native inhabitants, and that they do not look or care for this experience (cf. Dann and Cole, 1976). During the participant observation phase of this study I attempted to establish an understanding of the most popular sights that had been visited in KwaZulu-Natal. I did not get as many responses as I would have liked. Durban was the most prominent answer, but when quizzed further, the Durban beachfront was almost universally listed, and then uShaka Marine World. One party had been to the Drakensberg, and one to the Durban Botanical Gardens. A large group of Russians had come from HluHluwe Game Reserve (about ninety kilometres north-east of Shakaland) en route to Durban. It is my assumption that because Shakaland seemed to be the only specifically cultural product consumed during their stay, that it monopolised the representation of the Zulu. That is, the performances of Shakaland and its performers came to assume the mantle of cultural markers (MacCannell, 1973); the performers and the objects constituting Shakaland become signs of the narrative best associated with the Zulu – what I have presented here following Jeff Guy as the imperial narrative of the Zulu.



Fig. 4: Over sheet 1



Fig. 5: Annotated Over sheet 1

Over sheet 1 (Fig. 4):

The sheet is purely pictorial. If the cover sheet of the brochure familiarises the brochure viewer with the primary concepts of Shakaland, it is likely that the images constituting this sheet are syntagmatically read in terms of ‘aspects of Shakaland’, scenes making up the village. As such, the photos and their interpretation are as follows. Because of space constraints, I am only able to present a very brief interpretation of each. I also refrain from discussing the same mythologies but try to build up the re-presentative repertoire. The images are numbered as detailed in Figure 5.

Image 1:

The top/left-most image, we can infer by the objects located inside, is of a bedroom. It consists of two double beds (one of which is partly cut off in the frame) with white linen, a brown blanket, and a considerable consortium of pillows – in khaki, vermillion and white. In between the beds is a small rectangular table, and one of two slender pillars (the other one is image centre) made of relatively thick rope and what looks like thatch. Two bedside lights flank the bed. A suspended roof-fan spins above the beds. A television set is located on the wall, which is a shade of terracotta and ochre with a spongy finish. Small windows with vermillion blinds are to the left and right of the TV. In front and slightly right of the right side window is a low, small, round table with a light, a

bottle of champagne, champagne bucket, and two champagne glasses. There are two chairs on either side of the table. Below the chairs on the floor is a cowhide mat, which sits atop a terracotta, square-tiled floor. To the right of this is a wooden door, ajar, through which one can see a green outside. The roof/‘upper wall’ (we cannot discern explicitly from the image the room’s architecture) is made of long, slender sticks wrought together. This image is the biggest on the sheet¹²⁰.

The image suggests luxury, and warmth, with its white bed linens connoting cleanliness, delicacy, gentility and serenity, and its gargantuan set of continental and normal pillows connoting comfort, softness and air. The lighting in the room is warm, rich, golden and mellow, it is not the cold, piercing light provided by a compact fluorescent lamp (CFL). The spinning fan is an indexical sign of warmth. The champagne connotes leisure, romance, celebration and independence. The two glasses signify that it should be shared with one’s significant other. The champagne, holder and glasses connote lovers and romance. Through the open door (and the windows), we can see outside. This outside is not one of construction and other chalets, but of greenery, of lawn, bush and rocks. The connotation is that the guests are alone, that the chalets are placed over a considerable area of land, and thus are low density, allowing guests more space and privacy and their own ‘piece of Eden’. Through these modern conveniences, the room retains its ‘traditional aura’ and appeal to Africanness, principally through the elaborate fashioning together of slender saplings into the roof architecture. There is also the cowhide floor mat.

In fact, if we consider the signs syntagmatically and according to their historical function, it presents the kind of cultural pastiche which Jameson (1991) defined as a feature of the postmodern condition, as the paradigms of modernity and tribal architecture continue to constitute the phanerons of Shakaland. There is where Shakaland excels: it fashions signifiers of the culture it sells into a modern, comfortable, appealing experience.

Image 2:

The top, central image is of two structures. The structures appear round – although, despite the clues suggested by the arrangement of shape, colour, and shading of the structures, perhaps the interpretants used when suggesting the roundness of the structures originate from a familiarity with the round beehive hut that these buildings are seemingly ‘styled upon’. The top half of the building is a grey straw, the bottom a smoother terracotta surface. Perhaps then the dynamical interpretant utilises the sense resulting from reading the prior image of the room – the semiotic thirdness of its architectural signs (Tomaselli, 1999: 37).

¹²⁰ Because of space constraints, I'm excluding a discussion of the smaller image in the bottom right corner which focuses on the beds in the bedrooms, as the larger picture features most of these signifiers anyway.

Protruding into the image on the left are the thorny blades of an aloe. The aloe is a prolific plant endemic to this region, dotting the hills of Zululand. We have seen¹²¹ how aesthetically significant signs can become signifiers (markers) of a place, and in turn, in tourism, how sights are interpreted in terms of their construction by their markers. Thus aloes can produce the interpretant Zululand, or Natal, or 'bush', but a consumption of Zululand can also be conceived by the sight of the aloe.

At this stage, we're not sure what the structures are, whether they are the hotel rooms, or serve some other purpose. However, there is a clue which suggests these are rooms, and it is the plaque which read "KwaVulamehlo Village 39 – 33". Now, tourists (in fact any non-Zulu speaker) do and will not know what such a word – 'KwaVulamehlo' – means. However, I argue that that does not matter here; what's important is that the word *sounds* Zulu, or sounds like it could be Zulu. And this is its primary function for the tourist; it means (signifies/connotes) 'Zuluness' for the tourist (its thirdness), rather than its literal meaning ('the place to open your eyes'). Lacey (2009: 79) draws a similar conclusion from the semiotic operation of the word 'Nokia' in the English language. Nokia is a major manufacturer of cellular phones, produced in Finland. Yet Lacey suggests that the signifier 'Nokia' – originally, in the Finnish tongue, signified a dark furry animal which lent itself to the river, Nokianvirta, and the town Nokia – *sounds* 'Japanesy', and thus comes to signify a 'Japanese company' which itself carries the connotations/interpretants of reliability and value for money. The sign changes as the interpretant shifts, though the signifier remains the same. This is the same function fulfilled by the plaque which reads 'KwaVulamehlo'.

The myth of offering an isolated experience that was so prevalent in the connotation of the previous image is not so present here with the juxtaposition of two hotel rooms. The presence of several trees lacing the frame does, though, provide the connotation of outdoors and produces the indexical sign that the structures are at least far enough apart that trees can grow between the huts (structures are several metres apart).

Image 3:

Directly below this image is one of an African woman sitting behind some kind of wooden structure in which straw is being weaved together. Indexically, we can infer that she is engaged in the production of what might be a mat. It appears as if she's sitting on one such mat which has been lain atop what looks like a very dusty, coarse, sandy ground. There is another bundle of thatch behind the woman. In the background there are a series of constructions, and although the camera is not in focus on these things, it appears the materials used for these are ash-block, concrete and corrugated iron. To the woman's left is a ceramic pot. Her gaze is not directed to the camera, but at

¹²¹ See Chapter 2.

a right angle to it. She wears a black shirt and a reddish colour hat with a series of South African flags providing the trim where the hat meets the head.

The environment within which this woman sits and weaves her mat is in stark contrast to that presented by the images of the hotel area and the rooms (and that of the dining room). The terracotta tiles and cement walkways have been replaced by a barren landscape of dust, dirt and general nothingness. The painted, stylised walls of the rooms and the homeliness of the thatched roofs have been replaced by unpainted, un-plastered ash-block and weathered corrugated-iron sheeting. Yet despite this, the woman looks satisfied and content by the richness of her culture, unconcerned with the luxuries demanded by Westerners, perhaps fulfilling the idealist, noble savage fantasy that pre-modern beings are unconcerned with 'materiality' and 'money'. The sign of the woman engaged in her craft is not out of place with the paradigm adhered to by these signs constituting the environment of the image. Yet what if we applied a commutation test by placing this sign within the confines of the signs constituting the first image of the room? Let us perhaps imagine the woman was sitting on one of the chairs next to the champagne in image 1. Of course, this would upset the congruity of the myth offered by the syntagm of the image: the woman is engaged in traditional activities, that sign does not fit with the syntagm of intimacy, comfort lodging and leisure. The weaving woman thus carries a number of interpretants not belonging to the set of interpretants used to understand image 1.

Why is the gaze of this woman not directed towards the camera? Perhaps this is a semiotic strategy used to signify that the woman is unaware of the camera, and thus, that she is engaged in her usual daily activities, that this day proceeds like all the others. That is, her weaving is not put on for show, that she was engaged in the weaving before the camera arrived.

Image 4:

This image sees three smiling African women standing in a line balancing ceramic pots atop their heads. Each is wearing a bright, colourful collection of beaded jewellery, using green, pink, lime-green, red, orange, black, white, blue, purple and lilac. While out of focus, the background is dominated by a wall in shadow. We can also make out perhaps a portion of a roof, though we'd need to use the interpretant gained from inspecting the architecture of the structures as suggested by the other images on the sheet. Lastly, the blur of greens suggests a tree.

Their facial expressions are indexical signs for happiness and satisfaction – they are content in their cultural activities and chores. In fact, what is implied is that the Zulu culture is so rich that it grants to all its subjects a fulfilling life. The same paradigm of gaze is used as image 3, with the women not looking into the camera lens, but almost across picture. Again, this suggests that the women

are acting independent of the camera, strengthening the connotation that Zulu people are happy, fulfilled by their cultural practices. The beads are symbolic signs within Zulu culture themselves in that each colour stands for a certain emotion, but, like the Zulu word used to describe the hotel rooms above, what's important for the tourist is that in totality, the beads are indexical signs of Zulu culture, and one of the more recognisable tropes for the Zulu amongst their global imagery (at least for the females). Like image 3 above then, this image presents Zulu women happily engaged in their domestic chores.

Image 5:

Image 5 refers to the photograph of men stick fighting. This is occurring in centre-shot foreground. The ground is again sand, with some stones sprinkled about. In the middle of the vertical axis of the image runs a semi-rudimentary wooden fence. Above the fence, there are several trees protruding. The trees aren't thick and bushy, they have finer leaves and they look scrubby and thorny. That the two men are fighting is not totally explicit in the image, but is suggested by the indexical mode of several signs: principally the knobkerrie, which is a weapon, and the small objects in the warriors' left hands which presumably are shields. There is also the body language of the figures (also indexical signs): the man on the right looks as if he is about to strike, while the one on the left looks as if he is parrying or even feigning a strike. They are at melee distance to each other, thus in keeping with the tactics determined by their weapons.

The reason I labelled this image number 5 is because images 3, 4 and 5 can be grouped according to their subject matter, or paradigm, and that is they depict cultural activities. Images 3 and 4 depict the activities of females and image 5 of males. They thus present the myth of the heavily patriarchal and gender specific nature of Zulu society, with females tasked with 'administrative' tasks like carrying water and making mats, while males are engaged in the perfection of warfare. This myth, of course, has been used in Western society itself: the belief that women 'belong in the kitchen' or that the woman's role is to merely take care of the domestic needs of children and of their husbands, while men are engaged in economic, military or political practice. As Western society has largely progressed from these attitudes (though not entirely), this is further used to signify a society that has yet to evolve into a modern one.

Image 6:

On the second level of signification, we interpret many of the signs in this image as constituting a dining room, or restaurant: upon a series of rectangular wooden tables, are plates, cutlery, serviettes, drinking coasters, placemats and salt and pepper (dispensers). The chairs around the table are also made of wood, with thick cushion. Through a system of retractable glass doors, the room offers a view of the dam (Phobane) below Shakaland. Directly outside the room are trees which eventually

morph into a blanket of greenery which covers the entirety of the land up until the water's edge. On the far side of the water, the land rises again presumably into a range of hills. The view is cut off by a mural on which are painted scenes of fighting and what could be cooking.

The wooden tables and chairs are consistent with the paradigm that is presented by the view: a scene of nature, that Shakaland is tucked into a small patch of still wild, untamed land. The layout of the room itself, and of the tables, is neat and orderly. Perhaps the historical depictions above the view of the lake serve to remind the tourist (or in fact, structure his reading of the wilderness outside) that the hills outside were once teeming with natives who pursued their existence upon the very earth that the tourist looks upon.

Image 7:

Flanking the right hand side of the over sheet is the second biggest image on the page. It features a large ochre and brown sign which says "Shakaland". Above the letters is a spear. Above the spear are two warriors, one sitting and one standing bearing a knobkerrie and a shield. Below the sign on the reader's left are two Zulu children, a woman and a man, and on the reader's right, there is a child, two women and four men. The men are clad in their skins, and the women in beads. The women on the right are revealing their breasts, while the woman on the left is not. Directly behind the party on right is round, thatched structure on four stilts, perhaps six to eight metres high. In the background, is an extensive thicket of greenery, before it meets a washed out, whitish sky. In the foreground is a patch of coarse gravel, sand and rock, a few tufts of grass and a couple of aloes.

That the women on the right reveal their breasts is a symbolic sign in Zulu culture that they are unmarried/available, though the reader of the brochure would only provide this interpretant if s/he was familiar with such a custom. The environment of the shot, suggested by the thick bush in the background, begs the question: where did these people come from? Perhaps this gives rise to an idea that perhaps these are a people of the forest. Indexically, we might consider this a scenario of an entrance off a road. The 'outlook post', which we might assume the stilted structure to be, also gives rise to this idea of a perimeter.

There are two consistent paradigms being employed in the brochure: nature and luxury, with iconic signs of the Zulu strictly occupying the former, and the tourist, the latter.

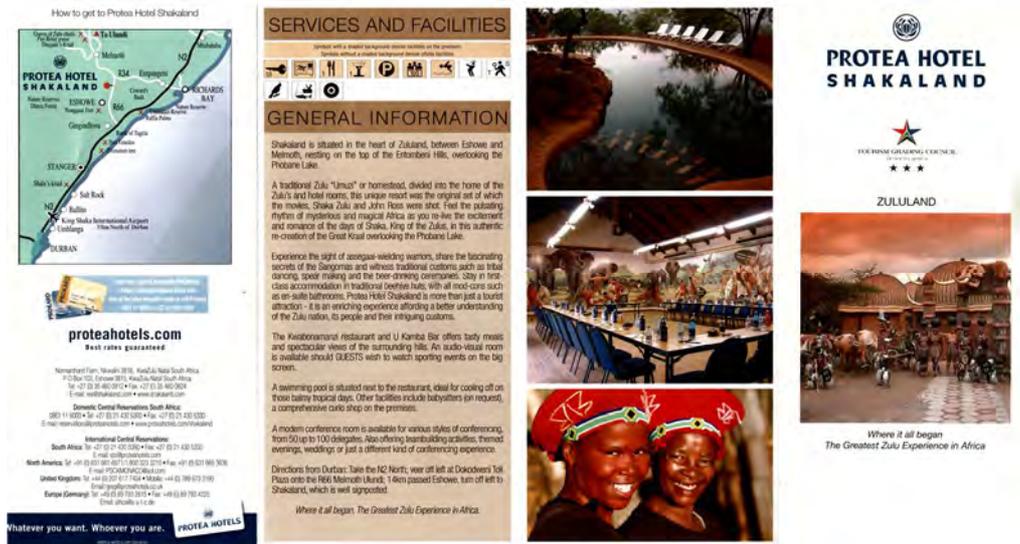


Fig. 6: Over sheet 2



Fig. 7: Annotated Over sheet 2

Over sheet 6 (Fig. 4):

This sheet, which includes the already considered front page, is divided into vertical quarters. The first contains a map and contact details. The second offers some information about Shakaland under the headings “Services and Facilities” and “General Information”. The third contains another three images, and the fourth is the cover page.

Under the heading “Services and Facilities” is a series of symbols which signify facilities on offer at the hotel. Firstly, there are two groups of symbols, a shaded group, and an un-shaded one. The shading is a symbolic sign which signifies which facilities are located on the premises, and un-shaded signs symbolise the converse. Although several signs are arbitrary enough that if one wasn’t familiar with ‘tourist language’, one would be hard pressed to understand what they meant, other signs are slightly more iconic, that is, more resembling of the thing they are representing, to some degree.

The first sign iconically signifies a key with a number (55), but symbolically signifies that there are fifty-five rooms in the hotel. The second sign appears to be of some kind of appliance, looking like

both a television and a microwave. There is some kind of stylised ‘M’ on part of the appliance. Perhaps the South African television viewer of the late 1980s and early 1990s will recall this M as being the old M-Net logo, thus producing the signified ‘television set’ when reading the symbol. If the reader is unfamiliar with the logo, perhaps it is obvious that rooms should have television over microwaves, especially in hotels with dedicated dining facilities. The third symbol contains the iconic signs of a knife and fork. Indexically, the signs indicate an eating scenario, and that there is a restaurant facility on the premises. Similarly with the fourth symbol. Iconically, it signifies a glass with a straw. Indexically, a drinking scenario and a bar facility on the premises. The fifth sign is entirely arbitrary/symbolic. It is a simple ‘P’ within a dark circle. It signifies the concept/interpretant ‘parking’, but only through the societal convention entailed by traffic sign language. The sixth symbol appears like it could be the top of stickmen (commonly used in symbols depicting human activity) with the numerals ‘100’ below in a rectangle. The symbol in fact signifies that the hotel’s conference facility can seat one hundred people. This is an arbitrary symbol, whose connection with the concept it signifies is only through social convention. The last shaded symbol also features a stickman, and two wavy, parallel lines. The pose of the stickman indicates a dive, and the two lines signify water, to a degree, iconically. The sign signifies that there is a swimming pool on the premises.

As stated, the remaining un-shaded symbols are located near to, but not on, the premises. The eighth symbol is interesting: the stickman has a strong iconic modality. However, it’s mainly its indexical modality from which we can produce the correct meaning, principally his stance, and order of his limbs suggests motion. More specifically, it indicates the hitting of a golf ball. As such, the sign signifies golf. Symbol 9 is also a stickman, but holding what appears to be a racket is opposed to a club or bat. There are also the letters ‘T’ and ‘S’ on either side of the figure. The stickman here iconically signifies a tennis player, and the letters are the first and last of the sign we use to signify the game tennis. The next sign is a bird (iconic). Indexically, this signifies bird watching, as there is a causal relationship between birds and watchers of birds – the former ‘causes’ the other. The penultimate sign looks like (iconically signifies) a person catching a fish from a boat. We know that it is the stick figure who has caught the fish because of two indexical signs: one, the strain on the fishing rod, and two, the line and rod both disappear out of the frame at the same direction, indicating that they must be connected. Thus fishing is signified. The last sign is largely iconic, though probably not familiar to all brochure readers. It is an icon of a bowl, and index of the game of bowls.

The heading “General Information” describes Shakaland in text based form. While a short piece, it nevertheless manages to convey the main attraction at Shakaland, as well as its location and provide

directions from Durban. Shakaland, it explains, “is situated in the heart of Zululand”. The language appeals to a Zulu essence, one that can only be found, in the ‘heart of Zululand’. When you visit Shakaland, you’re deep in the land of the Zulu, far removed from civilisation. The brochure uses language associated with nature, and emphasises the site’s correlation with it: “*nestling* on the top of the Entombeni *Hills, overlooking* the Phobane *Lake*” (emphasis mine). Phobane is not a lake, but a dam, however, a lake carries interpretants belonging to the paradigm of nature, while a dam promotes interpretants which belong to the paradigm of civilisation, and thus the former was favoured. The paragraph connotes remoteness, isolation, and its scenic location.

We gain several ideas about Shakaland in paragraph two. We learn that it comprises an area for tourists and an area for the Zulus, thus maintaining some form of segregation amongst the close proximity offered with the Zulu in the syntagm. The text purports to the traditional, and to the authentic. The first sentence offers the film set of *Shaka Zulu* and *John Ross*. Perhaps describing its cultural village as used as a film set creates the idea that the representation is conducted with a greater accuracy, as sets tend to be detailed, thus require ‘more signs’. This would also appeal to the *mediatised tourist gaze*, which prescribes participation in the media event, in the *Shaka Zulu* or *John Ross* series, by experiencing/sharing its physical manifestation amidst a repertoire of symbolic concepts. Next, the text makes an appeal to mystique and to romance: “Feel the pulsating rhythm of mysterious and magical Africa as you re-live the excitement and romance of the days of Shaka...” (ibid). The text seems to offer some kind of African essence, and shuns the banality of the modern urban environment for one which offers magic and myth. In the same sentence, the text offers an “authentic re-creation of the Great Kraal overlooking Phobane Lake” (ibid.). An “authentic re-creation” is an interesting sign, and says much for the version of authenticity that is adhered to at Shakaland. A ‘re-creation’ suggests it is a copy of an original, not the original itself, no matter how accurate the copy is. Whatever authenticity is offered, it cannot be related to the authenticity of objects, because here the object is a re-creation. However, it appeases a constructive authenticity in several ways: firstly, even ‘the real’ Great Kraal (not a re-creation), would need to be circumscribed by language before it could be toured, or else it does not ‘mean’ anything. That is, the ‘official meaning’ is held and imposed by certain groups in society and used to present some kind of reality. Thus any authenticity, is only the result of the consent of groups in power, and not the product of nature. ‘Authenticity’ is, inherently, a social construct, a measurement. Secondly, Shakaland is an authentic expression of tourist enterprises trading on ‘place’ – in this case, on a cultural narrative. There is only one Shakaland, and that is the one nestling on the Entombeni Hills, near Eshowe. Thirdly, an authentic experience is largely the domain of the tourist. The tourist might engage in a very real, authentic, semiotic engagement with the sight, and might deem Shakaland offers authenticity on this level.

In the next paragraph, the seemingly contradictory languages of indigeneity and luxury tourism are again presented. Firstly, “assegaai-wielding warriors”, Sangomas’ secrets, tribal dancing, spear making and beer drinking ceremonies are described. The Sangoma is positioned in the text to ‘hold secrets’ about life that the tourist would do best to investigate. Next, the accommodation is described as “first class...in traditional beehive huts, with all mod-cons such as en-suite bathrooms.” Again, while offering signifiers of ‘traditional Zulu culture’, the hotel reinforces the sanitised, tourist-friendly world of the encounter – a world of mod-cons and comfort. Lastly, the text offers an experience, where perhaps an appeal for an existential authenticity is made through offering an informative, educational product “affording a better understanding of the Zulu nation, its people and their intriguing customs”. That their customs are intriguing again highlights spectacle as well as an emphasis on the out-of-the-ordinary, thus ‘Other’ nature of their culture.

The rest of the text revolves around the restaurant and bar, which offer “spectacular views”; and audio-visual room; a swimming pool; babysitter; and a conference room. Thus in addition to offering an experiential product, Shakaland is a modern tourist facility with an abundance of conveniences to satisfy the tourist. Below a quick explanation of direction to get to Shakaland from Durban, the slogan is again articulated: “Where it all began, The Greatest Zulu Experience in Africa”.

Image 8:

There are three images on the third horizontal quarter of the over sheet. The first one is of the swimming pool that has been described in the symbols and in the text of the second quarter. The pool is not rectangular, but an irregular shape with a dark finish. There is a small section of the pool where the brick trim gives way to a rockery section out of which a small tree is growing. On the opposite side of the pool is a series of six reclining pool chairs. There is a small area of image above the pool in which can be seen several bushes or trees.

Although the image is mainly of the pool, it cleverly captures some of the surrounds as well through the mirror like surface of the pool’s water. And these surrounds are a world of trees and peach coloured sunsets, not a world of skyscrapers, concrete jungles and high-rise skylines. *We are, after all, in Africa.* The rockery feature also connotes this; it is supposed to signify a naturalness to the swimming experience. The irregularity of the pool shape further suggests naturalness; it is not in a rectangular pool meant for training and the expenditure of energy, but for engaging in leisure. The deck chairs are there exclusively for lounging about in the sun, and engaging in relaxing activities of leisure. As a textual signifier then, they connote relaxation, the sun, and lazing about.

Image 9:

The meaning of this photo is only implied in the syntagmatic analysis of its signs: principally a series of table and chairs around in a squared 'U' shape (with another table and one chair situated in the gap of the 'U'). Each seat has placed in front of it, a selection of refreshment, paper and a pen. The room is, of course, a conference room, also described in the preceding text. The room is well lit by fluorescent tubes. It is a large room with a high ceiling. On the walls are grand, elaborate depictions of bands of Zulu warriors in action poses, alongside all elephants, wildebeest, impala, zebra, eagles and lions on plains of grass.

The orderly set up of the tables, chairs and writing implements connotes a business environment. The layout is very neat, with consistency in the manner each seat is presented. The paper and pen are lain with precision and the row of chairs presents a very straight line. Contrary to the warm lights of the hotel room interiors, the light in this conference room is clean, sterile, revealing and sharp. The tapestry-like depictions on the walls seem to portray curious connotations: strangely, the Zulus are not presented as being out of place, rather the sign is compatible with the landscape. The image seems to suggest that Zulu people belong with the other signs. There is also the connotation that Zulu warriors are mighty, that they hunt elephant and lion and prosper in the African wilderness.

Image 10:

The last illustration is of a couple of Zulu women smiling at the camera. The shot is close up. The women seemingly wear dark coloured shirts and the same red hat that was donned in image 3. We are unable to ascertain the location as the background is completely out of focus. The women look friendly and inviting, both smiling and engaging the brochure reader by looking straight into the camera lens. Shakaland is a place where you will find friendly Zulu people contently engaged in their culture.

The left-most quarter of the over sheet includes a map and contact information. I shan't deal with these, as an exercise which labels the modalities of the signs constituting a map are hardly of consequence to this dissertation.

Part II: The Tourist

My semiotic approach to analysing the consumption of place allows a theorising of the objects of the tourist routine, a conceptualisation of the set of meanings that is participated in, in order to become a tourist. This kind of conceptual framework leads me to consider how potholes, gravel

roads, hitchers, domesticated farm animals and the like function under the tourist gaze. What follows is a reflexive narrative based on participant observation research.

To get to Shakaland takes you through the discursive markers which constitute Eshowe, as well as possibly Durban. Durban is marketed as the Gateway City – the portal where West meets a multitude of diaspora associated with ‘African’ and ‘East’. During the British and Irish Lions Tour of South Africa in 1974, the Natal and South Africa Rugby Captain, Tommy Bedford, spoke of – white – Natal as the “last outpost of the British Empire”. This quote gained increasing popularity, though it was to be shelved in the transition to democracy in 1994. Prior to 1994, ‘Bedfordshire’ had also been used as a nickname for Natal in the local press, and indeed for English tourists, “Natal was more British than the United Kingdom” (Harvey, n.d.). The structurally segregated geography of its apartheid cities began to unravel in the final reforms commenced by the Nationalist government and upon the lifting of the Pass Laws in the 1980s, Durban, for a time, experienced the second highest rate of urbanisation in the world (to Mexico City). The signs of Durban today offers only glimpses of its colonial character. Yet with its sprinkling of Victorian and Edwardian relics, modern buildings and skyscrapers, overlaid with signifiers of the ‘modern African city’ and a strong Indian and Pacific/Chinese element, as well as areas of slum invasion, the cityscape’s aesthetic seems to conform to this new semiotic paradigm of the Gateway City.

One doesn’t pass directly through the centre of Eshowe on the way to Shakaland, yet the R66 road (which one turns off for after travelling on the N2 national freeway) winds its way up hills located in the region’s mist-belt, through forest, sugar cane, and fields of the region’s prime commodity – fruit. As such, numerous informal stalls can be found just off the carriageway. Compared to the national freeway, the R66 is in relatively poor condition. It is a route road running through predominantly rural countryside. There is a heavy truck presence¹²² on what is primarily a single carriageway. Perhaps largely owing to the strain on the road (as well as questionable and seemingly irregular maintenance programmes), the route is littered with potholes. I wondered if the same meaning was construed by these holes in the road for tourists hailing from the developed world, as for the locals who have to put up with them day-to-day. Certainly for locals, potholes are a nuisance, a danger, an (indexical) sign of the inability of the South African and KwaZulu-Natal Governments to maintain its infrastructure. Perhaps for the tourist, the pothole produces a different signifier; perhaps one related to the myth of Africanness, as a place battling with development

¹²² Truck traffic is heaviest at nights (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011), which is not to say that their presence was not substantial during the day.

amidst a generally problematic economic and social climate. Perhaps the pothole articulates/produces this myth for the tourist¹²³.

Similarly, after about forty kilometres on the R66, one turns west to travel on a dirt road for a few kilometres. The land here is covered in fruit orchards (mainly citrus). For locals, this road is probably conceived iconically, that is, as a sign of itself, a means to an end – to get places. Or perhaps a dirt road is perceived as an inconvenience, relative to the fact that it does not allow as great a speed as that of a tar road. For the tourist, perhaps the gravel road signifies the myth of the countryside, the farm, a place separated from the urban sprawl of modernity. It is through this mythical signifier then that one must travel to get to Shakaland.

The entrance to Shakaland is marked with a large terracotta wall on which the iconic red and yellow Shakaland logo is mounted¹²⁴. Above this is a spear, and in front are a series of aloes. As the aloe is ubiquitous in this terrain, it functions as an indexical sign of it, and is a common sign within the village. There is also a raised hut on stilts, a few bundles of sticks tied together. There is also some sort of animal hide suspended wooden frame.

Both times I arrived at Shakaland, large luxury coaches were parked outside the entrance. A worker dressed in his skins greeted me at the entrance of a wooden palisade corridor, beating a drum as I passed through. This seemed to use an old indexical signifier that was used in Zulu tribes: when a visitor arrived, a guardsman would beat his drum – if he allowed the visitor to pass of course – to signify the arrival of a guest.

The first activity in the cultural programme is an overview of the layout of a Zulu homestead, using a miniature replica. The guide explains each section of the village and why it has been designed in the manner it has. Normally, these explanations make reference to protection and defence, military tactics and scenarios of invasion. For example, there are reserve, secretly hidden granaries in every Zulu homestead, in the event of an attacking force pursuing a policy of “siege”, or destroying a tribe’s means of subsistence, to starve it. The tourists are also informed that when sitting inside a hut, the females are seated on the perimeter with the males in the middle. This is done in order to protect the (male) warriors from ambushes, where the spears of the attackers would penetrate the grass walls of the hut. Additionally, warrior huts are positioned such that a warrior emerging from his hut has his right hand in a favourable position for melee combat (assuming right-handedness of course). Protruding from the small replica village is a flag consisting of a white rectangle on top of

¹²³ Again, this is only my interpretation. The point is to demonstrate that meaning exists in the mind of the interpreter, and for the tourist - who is constantly on a mission to accumulate the signifiers of the concept s/he is touring - the pothole just might be such a signifier.

¹²⁴ This is the scene depicted by image 7 in the semiotic analysis of the brochure.

a red one. This is supposedly a symbolic sign in Zulu culture, signifying a cultural affair: that boys are fighting for the love of a girl. It is “not the Polish flag” (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011).

Thus war, killing, fighting and love are presented as myth throughout the discussion of the architecture and layout of a traditional Zulu homestead. The myth of patriarchy that is also presented here, is not only construed by the explanation of the use of women as effectively human shields, but also by the guide’s description that each wife must have her own house, and that Zulu males practice polygamy (but that females are sworn to faithfulness to their husbands).

One Australian tourist asked whether this model is abided by in the context of the city – implying that the model probably applies to a rural context. The guide responded that, in the context of a city, the women are in fact left ‘at home’, in order to avoid the very expensive scenario of building homes to accommodate each, an answer which aroused amusement from the tourists – and mumbblings from one about ‘extra-marital affairs’ and promiscuity in city residences. The Shakaland script does not inherently address the congruity between traditional setups and urban ones, and certainly does not delve into the topic of migrant labour and how this has been proven to exacerbate cycles of HIV/AIDS (see, e.g., Louw, 2005), as discussed by the tourists in line with their own semioses.

The main points discussed, therefore, articulate a highly patriarchal society where war is such an ever-present possibility that a ‘secret stash’ of grain must be kept, and that human shields and the possibility of instant military deployments are a necessity. This is a myth that traces its lineage from that of the savage. In terms of re-presentation, these myths signify the pre-modern society, as the modern Western society has (largely) politically, legislatively and culturally ‘overcome’ relations of patriarchy, and sovereignty is – to a large degree, especially amongst liberal democracies – guaranteed through ‘international relations’, supranational regimes and trading blocs, and international law and statutes. To this extent, this myth is employed to posit the Other as ‘backward’, pre-modern and ‘uncivilised’.

In effect, this explanation of the layout of the Zulu village and the reasons that account for this, provide an overall basic summary of, or introduction to, an idea of Zulu life and the environment in which it commences – a context by which the impending village tour might be toured. I have made reference to the function of markers in relation to a tourist site in this dissertation. An important segment of such markers is the terrain of mediated images and the greater discourse of the Zulu people. The next aspect of the tour continues to build markers using clips of the Shaka Zulu series with a new narrative overlaying this brief film, providing further historical context for visitors who

may not know the particulars of Zulu history. Largely, the film investigates the historical details of the person to whom Shakaland owes its name, offering a succinct account of the circumstances surrounding the birth, upbringing and reign of the iconic warrior-king, Shaka. The account hardly satisfies the critical, well-read historian, but succeeds in its interpretive function of providing a brief, easily consumable product which serves to enlighten guests as to the social, political and military events by which the Zulu Kingdom was forged in the early nineteenth century. Like all markers, this provides the contextual backdrop for how the village (which is to be toured after the film) is to be read. In this capacity, I argue that the film largely articulates three major rhetorical devices to be employed by the tourist.

Firstly, there is the continuation of the mythical device of narrative that locates the tribal people as belonging to nature – as opposed to civilisation. This is a common sign in the re-presentation of the Zulu, discussed above. In one of the opening scenes of the film, the then-Zulu King kaSenzangakhona, the father of Shaka, is walking through a crowd with a leopard on his back. The indexical sign is that Senzangakhona returns from the hunt; the symbolic sign is that the life of the Zulu is tied up in the whims of nature. This is further illustrated by a scene in which Senzangakhona, flanked by cascading waterfalls and dense, rainforest-like flora, produces a courting dance to entice a woman he desires, Nandi, Shaka's mother. The scene reads more like that of David Attenborough's filmic capture of birds-of-paradise in New Guinea in the *Planet Earth* (2006) documentaries than any of romance.

These ideas reticulate with the common device of the noble savage, the brutish but benign paragon of the 'natural essence' of pre-industrial man. It comments on the technological progress of societies, locating the people in a primitive, pre-industrial dynamic, one devoid of modernity. I have located the noble savage myth as an ideological device, or literary tool, conceived in a romanticist derived rejection of industrialisation; the noble savage as a symbolic manifestation operating within the episteme of industrialism. What is being shown is not so much an objective, empirically-derived representation of Zulu identity, as much as a re-presentative device drawing on media/linguistic conventions to articulate the modern idea of primitivism, and of neolithic semi-animalism – the asymmetrically defined counterpart of the capital consumer.

The signs which constitute the landscape of the film diegesis are quant, natural, pristine, abundant, and rich. These bisect with the idea of the essence of Africa. This land is populated by small tribal formations of Bantu people. Generally, the film is articulated within the conventions germane to the genres of legend, folklore, epic and biography. Its narrative is littered with the terms 'and so it was', 'destiny' and 'fate', and other such colourful euphemisms, ideas and conjunctives; its technical paradigms connote might, valour, romance and cultural wealth.

This leads to a second sign. The second articulated concept derived in narrative is one of a great man theory. In terms of re-presentation, this narrative has been linked by Tomaselli and Shepperson (2002), to a mythical device linked to market interest. Put more specifically, the invention of the Zulu according to the Western conceptual entity of a great-man theory, forged the mediated reality of the Zulu according to Western interpretive communities that perhaps were less familiar with established narratives in Britain that, probably more frequently, were embroiled in the Anglo-Zulu War. That is, the great-man theory is a conceptual tool which holds currency in Western media and audiences, and can thus be activated to encode meaning. The typical argument against the theory of a great man elaborates on the influence of the institutions contemporary to the Great Man, reducing him from a position whereby his actions determined history, to one where he is a mere product of his society. My present argument is congruent with the likes of Tomaselli and Shepperson (2002): the great man theory is merely a discursive formation, a product of the epistemological dynamics operating in modern society. That is, the idea of the great man is germane to the modern Western media canon. History does not exist ‘in nature’; only in the language which articulates such ideas. As such, the discursive concept of the great man theory is a re-presentative convention that articulates the Zulu within the discursive parameters that are common in Western literature and media.

The reference to Shaka the Great Man is constructed repeatedly in the narrative – it tells us that due to Senzangakhona’s fighting spirit, it is not surprising that he was “destined to father a son whose name would resound in all of Southern Africa – uShaka”; and that Nandi’s “steel and determination she showed in standing up to him [Senzangakhona] would later forge her son into the conqueror of Southern Africa”. It tells us that because of Senzangakhona’s denial of Nandi’s pregnancy, and his prognosis of it being *ichaka*, the stomach beetle, that “so it was, that when her son was born, he was called Shaka, the stomach beetle, and yet he was to make that humble name very great”. When recounting tales of his bullied upbringing the narrator exclaims “it was probably these hardships which drove him along the path to greatness”. We are told he implemented new military innovations in weaponry, battle tactics, and sophisticated psychological and intelligence operations; that he was a tactical genius; and that he was a ‘soldier’s general’, always on the front lines amongst his men. Shaka is named ‘the Black Napoleon’, a military as well as a socio-political genius, creating a strong administration with a built – in a complex of checks and balances. The film ends with the line, “As the Zulu say, *uShaka ngiyesaba ukuthi uShaka*, which translated means: Shaka. I’m afraid to even say his name”. I argue these elements of the film narrative serve to mobilise the myth of the great-man theory, a re-presentative convention through which the tale of the Zulu is easily commodified.

The nature of the colonial ethnography circa nineteenth century Natal is discussed in Chapter 3. Here, I made references to revisionist theory which questions the role played by Shaka according to the popular versions which elaborated on the man in the tradition presented within the above paragraph. The revisionist theory rejects the great man type of theoretical convention commonly employed in most Shakan histories (much to the ire of the IFP and other Zulu nationalist bodies). Chapter 3 also discussed the sources from whence Shaka's fame/infamy arose. Authors like Cobbing and Wright argue that Shaka's military power was only recognised in the last eighteen or so months of his life, when the firepower of the settler mercenaries was employed in the destruction of the Sikhunyana clan. Shepstone posits the military innovation of *amabutho* as Dingiswayo's genius. This existence of a plurality of mythical conventions is not well referenced by 'popular' histories and ethnographies, as those texts are produced within commercial interests. Thus, the discursive conventions utilised at Shakaland continue to utilise the conventions of popular history. This is where its interpretive allegiance/orientation lies.

The third mythical feature that is mobilised in the articulation of the Zulu in this introductory, contextual film is linked with the above code. It is the myth of the close-knit homogenous nation during Shaka's reign. The first half of the film concerns the events and the people involved in the circumstances surrounding the birth, and later, the early life, of Shaka. The Bantu clans during this period are not elaborated on at great depth but from several clues, one gathers a sense of the fragmentary nature of these groups. The narrator informs us that Senzangakhona was leader of a small clan, the Zulu. Similarly, we are told that Shaka and Nandi fled their initial home and sought refuge elsewhere. Shaka, the teen, was "an outcast, always on the run", implying occupation of perpetually temporary abodes within different clans, implying a lack of unity among the population at this time. This is reinforced by the arrival of Shaka to the uMthethwa people, where he "at last had a home where he felt he was welcome."

This is in contrast to the picture of Zululand described in the peak of his military exploits – perhaps most explicitly is the line, "King Shaka was now poised to unite the whole of what was now Natal, and indeed beyond, into a single kingdom – the Zulu Kingdom! – known as 'the people of the heavens.'" This Kingdom was administered by a strong central leadership and intricate state apparatus. To this day, the narrator continues, these social institutions "lives on in the daily lives of Zulu people, proud of their heritage, culture and customs."

Thus resides the myth of the forging of a great close-knit nation out of scattered, anarchic tribes, one which resonates even today. The narrative avoids the territory of the question of willingness for compliance, and of subjugation. The narrative's assertion for a homogenous Zulu identity is dubious in the light my study of the myth in Chapter 3. Narratives which stress a homogeneity of

the Zulu identity, specifically the work of Colenso is a strategic product of those with ties to the Zulu Royal Family. Conversely, of course, the 'essential tribalism' doctrine of Shepstone is indicative of an interest to disempower a strong, central authority. These were two components of a debate which took place in Natal about a hundred and fifty years ago, and I mean not to measure each against the other here. I only wish to emphasise the social and epistemological context of signs that continue to manifest on the culture market today. The European account of the Zulu developed in the nineteenth century seemed to describe a nation content in their cultural practices. It is more likely though that the centralised, centrifugal leadership of the Zulu commanded less autocracy than is usually depicted, with more heterogeneity in the cultural practices of its people than the narrative allows for. Largely, the administrative, missionary, scholastic, epistemological and symbolic endeavours of role players of the Colony of Natal (Chapter 3) constructed the sign of a Zulu Nation. That is, the Zulu nation probably became formalised in such contexts.

These signs then, contribute to the markers of Shakaland, aiding our interpretation of the displays of the cultural village to follow. From here, we are finally ready to enter the Zulu village. At the entrance to the village, the performer assuming the role of gate-guard bellows towards his tribesmen, who return the gesture. Although the tourist cannot understand what is being said, unless s/he can speak Zulu of course, the signifiers 'sound Zulu'. That is, they are stripped of their denotative meaning, and becoming indexical signs of Zuluness. The guardsman and the voice emanating from inside the village could be speaking dada-like nonsense, or perhaps Xhosa or another Nguni language; what matters is a signification that makes reference to a convention of Zuluness. That is, the Zulu language, like many African languages is phonetically significantly different from European languages through its utilisation of percussive click consonants generated by the tongue¹²⁵, a feature noticed by – among others – Charles Dickens and cited above. When 'difference' occurs, it serves as a defining signifier; things gain currency by their difference from other things. This is how Zuluness is re-presented through such discursive transactions.

The tour guide explains the exchange that has just happened and how this relates to etiquette and Zulu custom, and the log-like pole that was barring our entrance prior is lifted. The village tour consists of several 'demonstrations of culture' occurring at a linear sequence of exhibition-like constructions, where each such construction hosts a Zulu 'performer' engaged in a particular activity. These exhibitions are also signs constituting a certain paradigm, and that paradigm is 'domestic and/or communal chores' or 'typical daily activities'. The impression here is that one has walked in on a people contently engaged in their normal daily tasks and activities.

¹²⁵ The letters 'c', 'q' and 'x' are the click consonants in the Zulu language. The phonetics are produced by dental ('c'), alveolar ('q'), and lateral ('x') clicks of the tongue.

The first display is of a woman weaving a mat in a wooden frame. Tourists who viewed the brochure would be familiar with this activity as it is the subject of image 3, discussed in Part I of this chapter. The type of mat that she is making is found throughout the village, and is also sold in curio stores, at the Durban beachfront by informal traders, in flea markets, and so on. It is used for sitting on, sleeping on, as well as as a 'coffin' when there is a death. As such, it comes to function as an indexical sign of Zulu culture on the popular market. Indexical signs are constituted by a causal or physical relation to the thing they represent. Here, grass mats are a result of the enterprise of female Zulu weavers. In such a causal/physical relation, grass mats are an indexical signifier of the Zulu.

The next exhibit elaborates on the process of constructing the shield and the clothes that are worn by the Zulu. The guide explains how hyena, impala, cattle and leopard hide is used for clothing. The tour-guide related the symbolic elements of the shield to our group with a story about Shaka. If a warrior were to lose his shield during a battle, we were told, Shaka would (personally) press a spear against the foot of the warrior, and if the warrior showed pain, he was killed for being weak and a coward. If the warrior did not show pain, he was allowed to retrieve his shield. This signifies the myth of Shaka as a severe, ruthless, dreaded military leader. I argue that this is in line with (is a manifestation of) the myth of Shaka as the black Attila. There is also an emphasis on physical strength and withstanding pain as characteristics of 'true Zulu men'. The Zulu society is posited to be driven by masculinity, by strength and power, where pain is a 'weakness', something that should be eliminated from the gene pool of the Zulu.

From here, we go to the explanation of fighting tactics and battle strategy. The inventions presented here, according to the guide and the script, are technologies conceived by Shaka. There is a Zulu man here clad in leopard skins, who gives a very dynamic, illustrious performance of how the long, throwing and short, stabbing spear is used in combat. The warrior jumps up and about, parries, feigns, strikes and defends, all the while shouting a thundering barrage of cacophonous Zulu. The guide translates what he is doing and saying into English. There is an area here where a number of wooden pegs, several of which have detail carved into them to show they represent people, hammered into the ground. This is used to explain the battle tactics of the buffalo horns formation, by which two flanks of fit, athletic warriors would encircle the enemy, while a body of specialist melee fighters would assume the core of the force and march into battle head-on.

This exhibit raises numerous reactions from tourists. Firstly, the tour-guide's emphatic articulation of the name of Shaka's broad stabbing spear, the *iklwa* (the immediate interpretant), named after the sound it makes when it cuts through flesh, raises reactions and groans of repulsion and disgust (emotional and energetic dynamical interpretants) from the tourists. The word '*ikwla*' is

onomatopoeic, that is, its relation to the thing it represents is iconic; it sounds like the thing it represents. It sounds like the sound produced by the blade of the spear entering and exiting a man's bowels. The tour guide manages to raise further reactions by his explanation of the broader part of the handle as being to twist-and-pull the spear to release it if it has become lodged in a man's gut. There is a focus here on the macabre nature of spear-fighting then, presented nonchalantly by the guide. This exhibit is a favourite photo opportunity for the tourists; they all want their photo taken with the chief, and they want to hold the spear and assume the 'battle pose' (something probably produced in the code of war films).

This exhibition of the military technologies of Shaka is in the vein of narrative that posits Shaka as a military visionary who overhauled the method of combat hitherto employed by Bantu tribes. As I explained above, this narrative does little to acknowledge the alternative explanations of such phenomena, instead opting for one that increases the legacy of Shaka and of the Zulu Nation, the major commodity offered by the village.

The next exhibit is of beaded women carrying pots of water on their heads. I have discussed how the sign of carrying water (as opposed to receiving it through plumbed pipes) signifies the myth of pre-industrial life and a reliance on the offerings of nature for survival. This performance is unique because the women carrying the water are not strictly dressed in 'traditional' attire. Instead, underneath their colourful and extensive beaded jewellery is some sort of Western brassiere, in addition to Western cross-trainer shoes. Nothing is made of these incursions by the tour-guide nor the tourists, though one tourist asked if these performers were 'married' which would explain their concealed breasts. The answer from the tour-guide was affirmative. Exposed breasts are a prominent figment of the re-presentation of the Zulu, strongly defined by the manner in which European society has circumscribed the body, and particularly, defined the mammary gland. Exposed breasts in the context of 'the native' often – that is historiographically – bear the connotations of animality and pre-taboo 'savages'. The exposing of female breasts carries too much symbolic and epistemological baggage for the sanitised, family-oriented environment of Shakaland, where the arbitrariness of social conventions of the presentation of the body are not addressed.

After the guide has completed his description of the activity, the females among the tourists are offered the chance to try to balance the pot of water. One of the male tourists of the Russian party was also keen to give this a go, raising laughter and camera clicking from his compatriots. Our guide shouted out to him, "Is carrying water the job of men?" This highlights the very rigid approach to gender that is articulated at Shakaland, with men and women each having their own non-negotiable cultural duties and roles – the highly gender-based, patriarchal Zulu society articulated at Shakaland. Shakaland offers these kinds of participative moments for the tourist:

moments structured in the script allowing the tourist to ‘really experience’ the cultural activities described, like balancing pots, holding the *iklwa*, and later, drinking the sorghum beer. At this exhibit, we are also shown how Zulu beer is made and how the grain is sieved from the liquid using a hessian sack, where after it is fed to the chickens.

The last exhibits are the huts of the *inyanga* and the *isangoma*, and the beer drinking ceremony. The hut of the *inyanga* (medicine man) and the *isangoma* is an oppressively hot, smokey hut in which male and female tourists are separated, “in line with Zulu custom”. The guide explains several standard routines that are used by the medicine man for some of the more common ailments, and discusses how his reagents are assembled. Of course, these methods and antidotes are derived from the offerings of nature; a far cry from the antibiotics, syringes, capsules and syrups produced within modern, mainstream medicine. The realm of medicine described by the guide and demonstrated by the *inyanga* posits the cause of human ailments as the deeds of spirits, ancestors, and the supernatural, not on fungal and viral infections, cellular and tissue inflammation, and so on. The Shakaland descriptions, in fact, are not dissimilar from one authored by the missionary James Macdonald, which appeared in *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* in 1890:

If the disease happens to be the work of wizards or witches, an entirely different course of treatment is necessary... After the patient has been examined, the following may be taken as a characteristic method of treatment. A small portion of the skin, generally behind the left shoulder, is rubbed by a stone or other rough substance, till slightly abraded, but not bleeding. Then a prepared horn is applied, the magician sucking the smaller end, and forming a partial vacuum under it. The abraded surface bleeds slightly, and on removing the horn, he searches, or pretends to search, the accumulated blood, and presently starts to his feet with an ant, beetle, or other insect in his hand, exclaiming, “There is the disease for you; it is now extracted; the patient shall do well” (Macdonald, 1890: 274).

The world of Zulu medicine is presented as superstitious and naive, where ailments are represented by the simple construction of meaning associated with animals (where beetles are construed as evil). Similarly, the *isangoma* is related by the tale of how she is contacted by her ancestors in a dream whereupon, she undergoes a series of sneezing fits. These manifestations are taken to signify a ‘calling from the spirit world’, a destiny as an *isangoma*. Such is the spiritual connection of the *isangoma* that, our guide tells us, the problem of the client need not be articulated by the client; the *isangoma* already knows what the affliction is prior to the client’s arrival. Thus at the level of mythical commentary, Zulu culture is presented as superstitious, irrational and fantastical. The roots of this sign are derived in the notion of the noble savage of pre-modernity.

Lastly then, the beer drinking. A female performer demonstrates how the beer is made, with the guide typically articulating this to the tourist. Once the beer has been made, the maker takes the first sip to prove that the beer is not poisoned. The chief is next, then the guide, and then it is passed to the tourists. On my first beer drinking ceremony, the tourist to my right approached the beer with hesitation, took a sip and handed me the cup. I then repeated this procedure, handing it to my left. On my second beer drinking ceremony, I was the first receiver of the beer. Having previously 'done my time' experiencing the maize beer, and having not been too impressed with its psychoactive properties (nor its taste), I declined to drink the beer. Unfortunately, I had started a trend without exception, as every other tourist then also declined. These tourists were obviously not too anxious to break down totally the line between modern conveniences, luxury and hygiene, and experiencing the authentic Other. In Chapter 3, I discussed Mhiripiri and Tomaselli's (2004) experience of the same declination of the taste, with the idea of SARS prohibiting many a tourist from divulging. While SARS was no longer a concern in 2010 and 2011, the (Western) idea of hygiene was still present here. Thus the sign of drinking sorghum beer from a communal cup (the immediate interpretant) intercepts the domain – intelligibility – of hygiene and health (the logical dynamical interpretant).

The overall picture that one gleans from the village tour of Shakaland then, is that the Zulu people's existence is closely tied to nature. Many of the artefacts and objects described in the village are derived directly from nature – like the 'skins' worn by the Zulus, which are derived directly from animal hide, not processed and manufactured like cotton garments. Water is provided by rivers, streams and watering holes, not by dams, pumped by windmills or any other 'mechanical' solution to the provision of water. The Zulu are also posited to be superstitious and naive as to the 'true workings of the world', with dreams and sneezes taken to signify a calling from the ancestors that one has a spiritual destiny, and infections believed to have a physical form which can be sucked out of one's body. Then there is the connotation of militarism and an existence ruled ultimately by the blade, and where the threat of war is ever-present enough to require the architectural layout of a homestead is designed with this in mind. Connected with this are issues of power, gender constructions, masculinity and patriarchy, with Zulu males depicted as polygamous, potentially belligerent, beer-drinking indigenes, engaged in alpha-male-ism.

I argue that, while many of the activities cited in the village may have occurred in the 'traditional Zulu society', in the practice of mediated re-presentation, this is not exclusively the origin of such signs: rather, these signs have their origin in the mythical practices of Western society, constructed in their asymmetry from this Western entity. This is indeed then a case of staged authenticity offered to the tourist by Shakaland, as described by MacCannell (1999).

After a short break of about twenty minutes, the programme moves into a session of Zulu dancing. Dancing is a medium through which the narrative of Zulu Otherness has entered the popular market par excellence, and among the most prolific signifiers of Zulu culture. Around 2002, as stated earlier, South African home rugby union games featured a band of Zulu dancers replete in leopard, impala and cattle skins, bone necklaces, and war drums, offer a short war dance after the national anthems were sung, just before the game kicked off. This was supposedly ‘Africa’s answer’ to the New Zealand *Haka*¹²⁶ which was performed by their national team before kickoff.

Within Zulu culture itself, dancing is a language, a form of communication articulating certain themes and messages. Of course, when Zulu dancing becomes commodified – that is, once it has been detached from its cultural context and placed on the culture market – it becomes a different sign. While the form of the dance, the first signifier, may remain the same, the interpretant – and thus the sign – shifts, and the original cultural function is eroded. Instead of representing messages, they represent Zuluness. When such signs enter the market, the signifier is given primacy. That is, the more signifiers to signify the concept of Zuluness, the better. This seems to resonate with the postmodernist conception of authenticity: that the tourist sight is more ‘real’ than the ‘real thing’, that is, *richer in signification*.

The dance performance is the domain of muscularity, power and energy in exaggerated proportions. It is hardly a nimble practice, though it is not necessarily ungraceful. There is recoil and repetition, with foot-stomping and falling to ground. The music is largely percussion based, with vocal overlay. Rhythmically, the dynamic is straightforward, the time signature remaining four-over-four, with strong emphasis on the crotchets. This provides a strong, structured, pounding, almost march-like beat.

The performance space is meant to resemble that of a production for the royal court, as the Chief sits in the middle, signified by his throne and more ornate regalia. He is flanked by his two wives. They in turn, are flanked by a drummer, who stands on their outsides, on a platform that is raised perhaps two metres above the ground. The drummers hold large knobkerrie-like drumsticks in each hand, banging on a large cowhide drum. The chief suitably occupies an idle role in the performance (as do his wives), merely passing gestures that indicate his subjects’ performances please him. The performance area was, typically, sandwiched between the chief’s axis of himself, his wives and drummers, and the amphitheatre which couldn’t adequately seat the burgeoning tourist brigade¹²⁷, a

¹²⁶ A short war dance derived from the tribal customs of the indigenous Maori people of New Zealand.

¹²⁷ On one occasion, perhaps three quarters of the seating area was occupied by the non-English-speaking South Korean contingent.

space where the fifteen or so performers enacted their parts. All the performers were clad in their so called 'traditional' attire that they had all adorned during the tour of the village.

The performers performed a series of dances, culminating in a truly military-inspired performance of the Anglo-Zulu War Battle of Isandlwana. Although I argued that the mythical signs of Zulu dancing shift when they enter a capitalist framework, there are still some degree of iconic and indexical modalities retained. For instance, in the Isandlwana dance, the young warrior dancers produce indexical signs that stand for the English soldiers firing and reloading their Martini Henrys. I enquired as to the origin/context of the dances being performed at Shakaland. These dances, according to Sibusiso (personal correspondence, April 2011), are imported from the different communities from which the performers come from. This seems to imply that dancing is still employed in Zulu communities in KwaZulu-Natal, outside of capital frameworks. Because the performers at Shakaland are not related (save a few of the children who belong to the workers), the members, and thus the dances, all come from different communities. Once a dance has been brought in, it is adapted and choreographed as necessary (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011). These dances thus have organic roots, emanating from Zulu communities, while being adapted to an easily consumable touristic product, employing the cast of the cultural performers.



Fig. 8: "At some point they donned ponchos"

The dances offered by the performers were pretty much identical if I were to compare my two research trips. However, during my first research trip, a strange event occurred towards the end of the routine. At some point during the dancing festivities, the Zulu performers had donned ponchos bearing the national symbol of South Korea (Fig. 8), and its associated colours and other symbolic signs (these were also being worn by members of the South Korean tourist brigade). In terms of the syntagma of these dances, they became anarchic with the insertion of a sign from a foreign paradigm. What we had here was essentially a *commutation test applied in practice*. That is, following the prescriptions of constructivism, in acts of re-presentation, texts are constructed

through a set of signs which signify the meaning of the text. When the performers donned the symbolic signs of South Korea, it played havoc with the semiotic congruity of the text. All sorts of other signs, of course, were produced by the signifier of South Korea: South-East Asian country; Pacific Asia; tiger economy; technological economy; and so on. These signs seemed in stark contrast to the semiosis of interpretants produced by the sign of a 'traditional Zulu': Africa; pre-colonial Africa; tribal; native; primitive; historical; 'backward'; underdevelopment; and so forth.

At the end of the routine, the performance area suddenly became inundated with the Korean members of the audience, who proceeded to demonstrate their own dancing and music routines (Fig. 9). This was a brightly coloured, multi-generational bunch, dressed in some of their own 'traditional' garments. The content was markedly different from what was offered by the Zulus: musically, the tempo had reduced by about forty beats-per-minute, and the time signature had become six-over-eight. There wasn't such an emphasis on crotchets like there were in the Zulu performance, but on establishing a patterned, more elaborate, beat. The sound was more delicate, with metallic objects being favoured over large, confrontational bass-drums. The body movements were also markedly different, with the exuberance and explosiveness of the Zulu dancing being replaced by a more gentle swaying of the knees and hips, as each followed another in a slow, train-like, snaking line around the stage.



Fig. 9: A new set of performers

Until now, the Zulu performers had been passive observers to the goings-on on stage, but then the Zulu performers began to join in as well. This was heralded by one young enthusiastic female performer, before one of the senior South Korean citizens did the rounds whisking all the seated Zulu dancers to their feet. The events unfolding on the stage were, at this point, semiotically at least, quite bizarre.



Fig. 10: Cohesion

The amalgamation of cultural signifiers from contexts separated by vast differences in both time and place, were here interacting in one cohesive semiotic whole; in one textual, postmodern pastiche – “a field of stylistic and discursive heterogeneity without a norm” (Jameson, 1991: 6) (Fig. 10). The Zulu performers danced to the tune of the South Korean tourists, shifting their own dancing moves to suit the tones of the Korean beats. Yet there was also a greater, symbolic element to what was happening here. Throughout the tour, the South Koreans did not speak English, save one who acted as the group’s interpreter for the entirety of the tour. Because the cultural tour is conducted in English, language was a barrier between the tour-guide and the tourists. Yet during this coalesced performance, language was no longer a problem and the tourists were able to interact with the toured. Additionally, the tourists had come here to experience the Other, and in this process of textual subversion, they finally achieved that, more than at any other time in the village; that is, they *became the Other* (cf. Crawford, 1992). For these performative South Koreans, this was an authentic moment in Africa. Here, was not a concern for the authenticity of originals, nor even of constructed signs, but for the allures of ‘textual’ play – of seeking *entertainment* in the experience. This was a moment of post-tourism.

The future of the film set

Before tourism, the site was a film set for *Shaka Zulu*; *John Ross*; and *Ipi Thombi*¹²⁸. After the filming of *Shaka Zulu*, however, the maintenance of strictly a film set became economically unviable. As such, the set was converted into a tourist site, promoted as an educational as well as a conservation site (Tomaselli, *ibid.*). This is not to say that its function as film set is entirely eroded;

¹²⁸ Faure had the set constructed in the district of Eshowe, upon land that was formerly the domain of the homeland of KwaZulu. Locating the set here has been connected to economic and production relations in the 1980s; there was an overabundance of cheap labour, and a reluctance by homeland leaders to impose tariffs – which would repel investment – on film crews operating within their jurisdiction (cf. Hamilton, 1998: 175).

indeed Shakaland still advertises the offer to utilise the *umuzi* for filmic purposes, replete with experienced extras and costumes (Shakaland, n.d.).

I wondered if the set is still used for filmic purposes and broached the subject in an interview with Sibusiso. In fact, there is still a substantial amount of filmic activity that happens at Shakaland, with an extensive Japanese production in the beginning of 2011¹²⁹. There were “two or three” other filmic productions in the year, one of which was a shooting for Kiwi Shoe Polish. For this advert, the producers had apparently required the performers to don both their traditional skins as well as their western clothes. Unfortunately, I have not been successful in previewing this advert, and Sibusiso is unsure if it is released for South African audiences, as he hasn’t seen it on the television (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011).

In 2010, Sibusiso acted in a film that was made about Shaka, by filmmakers he thinks were from Liberia. The film was “a film about Shaka mixed with their stories” (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011). Such a production illustrates a couple of things: The first point is with regard to the sign of Shaka Zulu. Although not explored thoroughly in this dissertation, Shaka has been mobilised by certain groups in Africa as an African military, tactical and political genius, that is, Shaka becomes a mythical signifier for African intellect and thought amongst pro-African thought. Shaka as a sign of an African Renaissance (cf. Golan, 1994). The discourse of Shaka is thus increasingly produced across a pan-African gambit, and this story of Shaka told through a Liberian (or whatever country it was) perspective is an example of such. This is also, secondly, an example of what globalisation theorists refer to as ‘glocalisation’ (cf. Rantanen, 2005), where cultural texts transcend national, political and cultural borders, and become re-interpreted, re-framed, and/or re-contextualised within the governing linguistic concepts of the ‘local’, adoptive culture.

Film and advertisements are not the only filmic products that have been shot here at Shakaland, with several ‘traditional musicians’ (including Johnny Clegg, who filmed a music video here in 2010) employing the set, as well as the Shakaland crew of performers, for their music videos. It appears, however, as if there has been a recent slump with “everybody crying about money” (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011). This is probably related to the current economic depression¹³⁰.

In fact, Sibusiso claims that 2011 has been unlike previous years in that it hasn’t been a busy year. 2010 was “very busy” but, in contrast to what I had initially assumed, not during the World Cup,

¹²⁹ Sibusiso couldn’t recall the name.

¹³⁰ See Chapter 2 Part I for a brief discussion on the depression’s impact on tourism.

with only about three hundred day visitors during the month that the World Cup was hosted (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011). This came as a great surprise to me, as I assumed that an influx of tourists would almost automatically result in most tourist sites and hotels experiencing greater numbers nationally, especially a site which is marketed to be a beacon of the region's cultural capital. I am unable to explain why Shakaland would experience a lull in its tourist numbers during a time when there were three hundred and seventy-three thousand tourists (est., cf. Thornton, 2010) in the country.

An epilogue on the Tourist

According to Sibusiso, about seventy percent of the tourists who come to visit Shakaland are international. Sibusiso believes the country from which most tourists to Shakaland come from is Germany, followed by Australia. In the past, Shakaland has received between two to three hundred tourists in a month solely from Germany. Northern hemisphere tourists come most commonly during the summer months (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011). In 2011, though, it is Australia that has sent the most tourists (ibid.). When Sibusiso began working at Shakaland (around 2000), he believes the Dutch were the most frequent visitors. They have since been overtaken by the Germans and Australians. The French are perhaps the next most prolific, followed by the British (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011). There are also American, Canadian, Japanese, Spanish and New Zealand contingents. Sibusiso explains with great enthusiasm and expression the growing numbers of Chinese visitors coming to Shakaland: "Wow! When they are coming, they are coming!" he explains while banging his hands together to explain that they tend to come in large bunches.

In terms of the local contingent, many of these visitors are government officials and executives, including Bheki Cele and President Jacob Zuma. King Goodwill Zwelithini has also stayed at Shakaland. Generally, government figures like Cele and Zuma stay only for dinner and lodging. It is "very rare" that they experience the cultural tour (Sibusiso, personal correspondence, April 2011). Sibusiso could only recall one time when Zuma and other government officials attended the tour, and this was before Zuma had assumed the office of the presidency in 2009. There are also "many" kids, with a contingent of Vryheid pupils checking out on the morning of the 9th of April 2011. Some of the schools which visit Shakaland are foreign.

Although Shakaland offers cultural tourism, no one expressed a burning desire to learn as much as possible about the Zulu, especially past the Shakaland script. Rather, the tour guide led the tourists (including myself of course) from each exhibit to the next, with the tourists following obediently. The passivity with which the entire tour unfolded compared only to the passivity with

which television viewers engage with the screen. The way the tour cycled between cultural exhibits was reminiscent of the flicking through of channels once some negotiated amount of knowledge had been imparted. Additionally, the interaction between the tour guide and the tourists was almost exclusively dominated by the former; the script is structured as a descriptive explication of the activity unfolding at the relevant activity stall. Sometimes, the tour guide's monologue induced verbal reactions and comments from the tourists – as with the guide's expressive pronunciation of the *iklwa* – but these were directed at their own small, individual parties with whom they had come to Shakaland with. There was hardly any negotiation occurring between tour guide and tourist at all. After the guide has imparted all he can or deems necessary, there is an opportunity for tourist to ask questions. This is not an opportunity that is well utilised by the tourists to engage with Zulu culture as not accounted for by the tourist script. The tourists did not ask that many questions – a protracted silence was the usual response to the tour guides invitation, perhaps one or two brief question maximum might follow, and then the tour was led to the next display. Although the tourists have the opportunity the drink Zulu beer, balance pots on their heads and wield the *iklwa*, these spaces are accounted for in the text; they are structured and routinised spaces for tourists participation, not organic manifestations of the tourist's desire for authenticity.

What can we conclude from my ethnography of these tourists about what this says of the type of tourist that consumes Shakaland? Principally that this tourist is not driven primarily by aims of self-discovery and existential epiphanies, but rather, looks for entertainment; looks for service, or rather, through service, does not want to have to 'look' for things but have them provided; is not burdened by a perpetual quest for authenticity; and does not intend to critically engage the script and/or challenge any of its facets or assumptions.

The comparison between tourists and television viewers has been made by Solange Davin (2005) and I'd suggest it is a model which can be used here. I'll extrapolate just the most pertinent points. Davin's first point is that of backstage spectacle (ibid.: 170). Although, in a different context I have explained Shakaland as a functioning tourist frontstage (exploiting the myth of the native Other) for the backstage found in urban and rural communities, a structural analysis of Shakaland itself reveals that Shakaland is built around offering (a representation of) a backstage – constituted by 'Zulus' engaged in their 'normal daily tasks'. For Davin, this is comparable with the rise of television medical dramas, reality television and other showcases into the realm of the personal and the domestic, as much of soap operas and celebrity shows consist of. Shakaland shares this drive of interest which stimulates the 'genre' of backstage spectacle. Secondly, television and tourism share in the "pedagogy of mass entertainment", where not even history and culture escape annexation by capitalism and consumerism (ibid.: 172). As revealed in ethnography and stated above,

entertainment was the Shakaland tourists' primary concern. But the entertainment, of course, and the entire experience is structured around the articulation of a historical narrative and cultural identity. That is, the product being sold is essentially an informational one. Lastly, television and tourism overlap in their hyper-realism (ibid.: 174). This point makes reference to a notion discussed throughout this dissertation: sense of the encounter in tourism (as in television) is made in terms of previous mediated references. And both film and tourism trade heavily on prior experience: in television, film trades on the conventions of its genre to convey the preferred meaning, and in tourism,

songs, dances, markets, festivals, celebrations...have been re-created, modified, developed, accommodated (and perhaps simply invented), many artefacts large and small - from jewellery to...entire villages...have been redecorated, embellished, transformed, so that visitors can witness and 'absorb the atmosphere' of the unique, 'authentic' culture which they have come to consume (Davin, 2005: 175).

We see examples of this occurring at Shakaland. Firstly, the film *Shaka Zulu* is used to help articulate and sell the Shakaland script. For instance, before the cultural tour begins proper, the tourists are shown a ten minute clip explaining the origins of the Zulu nation and the military might they once commanded, as discussed above. The film is a montage of sequences originally filmed for the television series *Shaka Zulu*. One (American) tourist expressed his delight when he heard that we'd be shown some clips the series, adding he had seen the series when it was aired in the US in the 1980s. Afterwards, he explained that it had reminded him of his childhood, and that he remembered certain features of the series vividly. Thus his experience of other mediated realities, and quite possibly other childhood themes associated with the period that the *Shaka Zulu* series was originally viewed, were being projected onto the experience of Shakaland. Secondly, reference to the film is made throughout the script in Shakaland. For example, the plaque describing a weapons forge in the village does so with the qualifying remark: "this is the forge shaped in a similar form that was used to fashion **"King Shaka Zulu's"** personalised stabbing spears from the movie **Shaka Zulu**" (original emphasis). The narrator in the filmic introduction immediately and parsimoniously lets the tourist know that the village outside was once the site of the series *Shaka Zulu*, as does the tourist brochure. Some might argue that Shakaland qualifies as film tourism, and therefore these arguments correlating tourists and television viewers are irrelevant. I argue that the primary product of Shakaland is not the film, but the script which locates the tourist as the pop-anthropologist, and that these arguments are valid.

One last point to make on the relationship between these tourists and the television viewer concerns the almost universal disposition of the tourist to record the Shakaland script in video and in picture

form. That is, over time, this form becomes more real than the real, unmediated experience of Shakaland they participated in, further blurring the lines between the mediated and the real. Memories probably become constructed in terms of how they are captured in picture and film.

This type of tourist fits not only the profile of the passively engaged television viewer, but of Boorstin's members of the tourist bubble. As Boorstin (1967) contends, the tourist is not concerned with an objective authenticity, but delights in the pseudo-event. This seems to describe the tourists with whom I was assigned on the 'Shaka Programme', who seemed to be driven primarily by a concern for entertainment, and thus the dominant tropes of Zulu identity rooted in this culture of entertainment. Further, the guide seemed to act as Boorstin's surrogate parent, by constantly issuing instructions to the tourist, not only about what is going on in the exhibit, but where to sit (for example in the hut of the *inyanga*, where males and females are to be separated), what to do (as in the stick fighting demonstration, where tourists first watch, and then invited to 'spar'), what to say (how to greet and show appreciation for example), and so forth.

Though the type of tourist I encountered in my own research was driven by the pursuit of entertainment, other tourists have brought different agendas to their experience of Shakaland, as I discussed in Chapter 3 Part II. Indeed, while a group of African American tourists came to Shakaland hoping to engage with their African roots (Mhiripiri, 2008; Mhiripiri and Tomaselli, 2004; Ndlela, 2004), I have also discussed the space of Shakaland in the transition period from Apartheid to democracy as it functioned in the turbulence of regime change, that is, for whites to engage the past of their soon to be rulers. This type of tourist can't really be equated to the type of tourist I encountered during the World Cup I have been describing above, and, instead, is described by more of an existential tourist. Indeed, the existential tourism as described by Wang (1999) and Cohen (1988) refers to a deeper change to a person's outlook on life, and seems to describe these other types of Shakaland tourists that scholars have recorded.

Economists, academics, trade unionists, and lately most furiously, left-wing radical politicians¹³¹ have argued that since 1994, the economic gap between the rich and the poor is growing. This has been the direct result of the denationalising of the apartheid industrial apparatus and the neoliberalising of the country's trade agreements and import and export policies¹³². But as critics of the political economy and neo-colonialism tell us, this merely places power in the hands of capital; that is, power is wielded by big money – the multinational corporation. Can the rise of a culture of

¹³¹ Most recently exemplified by the ANC Youth League's 'mobilisation of the poor' to march from Johannesburg to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to deliver a memorandum demanding the transfer of the country's wealth to the poor (cf. Stolley and Maromo, 2011).

¹³² The most radical reaction of which has been sustained and forceful campaigning for the nationalisation of the country's mines (see footnote 131).

consumerism associated with these global economic and political currents perhaps explain how Shakaland has come to be toured? Although the World Cup certainly did bring to South Africa certain types of tourists, it seems reasonable to suspect that the need to engage with the African tradition as a means to understanding the Zulu of today is not likely to bring South African whites of today to Shakaland on this ground.

The consumption of identity at Shakaland does not strictly take place according to any kind of search for an objective authenticity, unless it is the staged authenticity of the script. However, the staging of this authenticity proceeds according to a very specific set of 'media conventions' as to what constitutes the idea of Zuluness, especially the Zuluness of the Shakan era. These conventions were conceived in the period around the 1820s by the trading, diplomatic and missionary element in the early days of Port Natal, and have been revised and mobilised throughout the colonial, apartheid and contemporary eras. Presently, it is largely an economic agenda through which these signs are articulated. The tourist of Shakaland is not driven primarily by an existential quest for engaging with the Other, but by a participation in the popular cliché of Zulu culture and a quest for textual play. A theory of authenticity thus accounts for the tourist in these ways. Although the romantic gaze is something that is articulated by the hotel (lodging and dining) aspect of Shakaland, this is not a gaze that is dominant in the cultural tourism aspect of the site. The abundance and luxury associated with the hotel then, gives way to dirt, scrub, sand, heat and nature. These signs were prevalent in the brochure, and they materialise in reality. This is used to instigate the anthropological gaze, one of the major gazes inherent to consuming the village. As stated earlier, there are also markers of the film set, which thus detail a mediatised gaze. In both cases, the gaze is realised by an awareness of the sets of discourse which constitute the relevant entities. Yet another gaze that is evidently assumed by the Shakaland tourists is that of the collective gaze, which manifested most completely in a melting pot of cultural signification during the dance described above.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

It is the argument of this dissertation that Shakaland makes use of the dominant narratives of Zuluness that emerged in the early-mid nineteenth century discussed in Chapter 3. The motive for this is fundamentally economic. The reasons for this are as follows.

The first point relates to that of concepts, knowledge, and the relationship between epistemological realities and the world. Modern society's epistemological orientation is driven by empiricism, a view that knowledge exists in the world, existent independently from culture and language. I have contested this, positing that knowledge is the result of practices of a symbolic nature; that language comes first. Thus the knowledge which articulated Zuluness in the pre-colonial era of Natal (and indeed after) was performed in an imperialist and industrial episteme whereby economic motives (and the subsequent ideas of the world which spread from, and are a part of, the system) produced a set of aesthetic and discursive conventions which ultimately came to signify and, once this had gained currency, *circumscribe* (that is, dissect according to the concepts germane to the imposers of language) a Southern African people known as 'the Zulu'. That is, the interpretive community which came into contact with these narratives thereafter *knew of the entity 'Zulu' through the set of signifiers which became cemented as convention*. An arbitrary set of language came to inform society across temporal considerations. Empiricism also had another effect: over time, settler narratives came to be viewed with perhaps more authority, as the set of circumstances underpinning their production were overlooked/watered-down/forgotten/downplayed (often with ideological motivations), and because they were the texts produced first-hand. I have made reference to how modern society has a fetish of the recorded document, and how this is thought to be a far superior device than the transmissions of oral history which are susceptible to the emotional and cosmological whims of the vehicles of such a history.

Empiricism had the dual effect of giving the texts produced first-hand primacy. This was consented, to some degree, by the empirical disregard for the role language plays in structuring relations of power and ideology.

The second point relates to the geography of wealth, referring namely to the global 'north'. It is argued that colonial-style narratives still perpetuate in sections of contemporary society, though perhaps in slightly varied forms. This dissertation has explored how a general sense of nostalgia resulted in symbols and indexes of industrialism and imperialism being mythically rehabilitated as commodity. In such a climate, pieces of colonial narratives re-emerge as such signifiers, catering to this market.

The third point is with regards the nature of economic productions in the contemporary world. Firstly, the nature of the market force, and what this means for discursive entities/disciplines/subjects/et al. like history. I argue that it is the nature of capitalism to transform things into consumable goods. The effect is that disciplines become considered in market terms; their value lies in their ability to be commodified and used to gather capital. As the 'liberalisation of history' commences, certain historical narratives are given prominence over others (based on their ability to render profit). It is in such a climate that I concur with Jeff Guy (1998) that it is the imperial narrative which prospers.

Considering these three points together, it is my conclusion that Shakaland employs the popular conventions of re-presentation that articulate Zuluness in a popular cultural context, and that these interpretive norms are rooted in the epistemologies of nineteenth century colonialism.

Using the contributions made by semiotic studies of tourist sites, the analysis reveals how the processes of tourism are centrally derived by consumption of a set of markers that have been constructed to signify a tourist site. It is as such that we can understand how the activity of tourism comes to be the sale of popular linguistic tropes.

While a discussion of the various markers of Zuluness was largely the domain of Chapter 3, Chapter 5 in using semiotic and content analyses as well as reflexive participant observation – explained how the mythical signs of Zuluness manifest in contemporary popular texts. That is, the chapter demonstrated how the interpretive norms of popular culture can be traced back to their mythical origin.

As such, this dissertation has largely explored how webs of meaning are constructed and articulated across temporal considerations.

Semiotic analyses are usually in-depth studies of a smaller number of texts, rather than a broad scanning of multiple texts limited to a more superficial analysis. This analysis has been no different, with the investigation limited to only one tourist site. This research fits within the canon of Doctoral and Masters dissertations and theses conducted at CCMS at the University of KwaZulu-Natal exploring numerous Zulu and Bushmen cultural villages and tourist/toured relations in KwaZulu-Natal and the Kalahari. This dissertation thus adds to the corpus of these analyses. Future research in this vein might explore how the mythical lineages of 'ethnographic culture' are negotiated at other sites with specific reference to how tourist encounters are made sense of in terms of the discourse of the sight that the interpreter is familiar with.

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Appendix



22 June 2010

Mr K D Tavener-Smith
School of Literary Studies, Media Creative Arts
Faculty Humanities, Development and Social Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Tavener-Smith

PROTOCOL: Cultural Pillaging of the Leisure Class: Expressions of postmodern Zulu identity in contemporary cultural tourism
ETHICAL APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0366/2010 M: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

In response to your application dated 04 June 2010, Student Number: **205512320** the Humanities & Social Sciences Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been given **FULL APPROVAL**.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steve Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES ETHICS COMMITTEE

SC/sn

cc: Prof . K Tomaselli (Supervisor)

cc: Ms S van der Westhuizen