

INDIVIDUALS AND HISTORY



**HERE'S TO THE CRAZY ONES, THE MISFITS, THE
REBELS, THE TROUBLEMAKERS, THE ROUND PEGS
IN THE SQUARE HOLES... THE ONES WHO SEE
THINGS DIFFERENTLY — THEY'RE NOT FOND OF
RULES... YOU CAN QUOTE THEM, DISAGREE WITH
THEM, GLORIFY OR VILIFY THEM, BUT THE ONLY
THING YOU CAN'T DO IS IGNORE THEM BECAUSE
THEY CHANGE THINGS... THEY PUSH THE HUMAN
RACE FORWARD, AND WHILE SOME MAY SEE THEM
AS THE CRAZY ONES, WE SEE GENIUS, BECAUSE
THE ONES WHO ARE CRAZY ENOUGH TO THINK
THAT THEY CAN CHANGE THE WORLD, ARE THE
ONES WHO DO.**

HEGEL ON HISTORY

A history which aspires to traverse long periods of time, or to be universal, must indeed forego the attempt to give individual representations of the past as it actually existed. It must foreshorten its pictures by abstractions; and this includes not merely the omission of events and deeds, but whatever is involved in the fact that Thought is, after all, the most trenchant epitomist.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel on **World Historical Individuals**

Hegel's Lectures
on the Philosophy of History.

1770-1831



Such individuals had no consciousness of the general Idea they were unfolding, while prosecuting those aims of theirs; on the contrary, they were practical, political men. But at the same time they were thinking men, WHO HAD AN INSIGHT INTO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE TIME — WHAT WAS RIPE FOR DEVELOPMENT.

...It was theirs to know this nascent principle; the necessary, directly sequent step in progress, which their world was to take; to make this their aim, and to expend their energy in promoting it. **WORLD-HISTORICAL MEN — THE HEROES OF AN EPOCH** — must, therefore, be recognized as its clear-sighted ones; *their* deeds, *their* words are the best of that time.

IF WE GO ON TO CAST A LOOK AT THE FATE OF THESE WORLD-HISTORICAL PERSONS, WHOSE VOCATION IT WAS TO BE THE AGENTS OF THE WORLD-SPIRIT — WE SHALL FIND IT TO HAVE BEEN NO HAPPY ONE. THEY ATTAINED NO CALM ENJOYMENT; THEIR WHOLE LIFE WAS LABOR AND TROUBLE; THEIR WHOLE NATURE WAS NOTHING ELSE BUT THEIR MASTER-PASSION. WHEN THEIR OBJECT IS ATTAINED THEY FALL OFF LIKE EMPTY HULLS FROM THE KERNEL. THEY DIE EARLY, LIKE ALEXANDER; THEY ARE MURDERED, LIKE CAESAR; TRANSPORTED TO ST. HELENA, LIKE NAPOLEON.

A World-historical individual is not so unwise as to indulge a variety of wishes to divide his regards. **HE IS DEVOTED TO THE ONE AIM, REGARDLESS OF ALL ELSE.** It is even possible that such men may treat other great, even sacred interests, inconsiderately; conduct which is indeed obnoxious to moral reprehension. But so mighty a form must trample down many an innocent flower — crush to pieces many an object in its path.

A More Recent Overview of the Role of Individuals in History: A look into E.H. Carr's *What is History?* (1961)

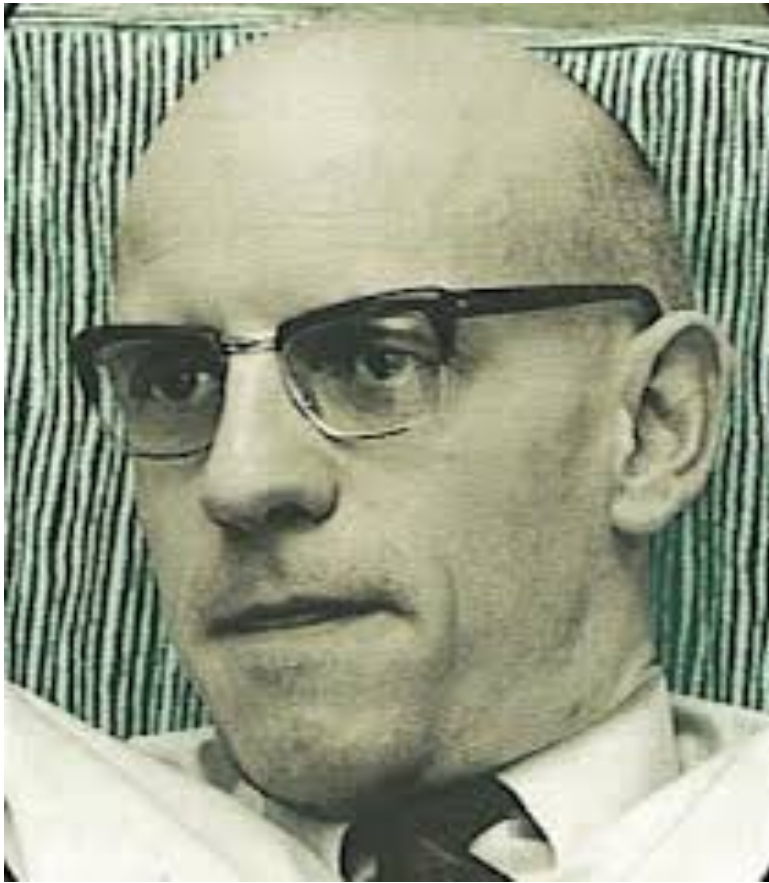
1. Every human being at every stage of history or pre-history is **born into a society** and from his earliest years is moulded by that society. 2. The **cult of individualism is one of the most pervasive of modern historical myths**. According to the familiar account in Burckhardt's *Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, the second part of which is subtitled 'The Development of the Individual', the cult of the individual began with the Renaissance, when man, who had hitherto been 'conscious of himself only as a member of a race, people, party, family or corporation,' at length 'became a spiritual individual and recognized himself as such.' Later the cult was connected with the rise of capitalism and of Protestantism, with the beginnings of the industrial revolution and with the doctrines of *laissez-faire*. 3. **I have nothing to say against the cult of the individual as a protest against the perversion which treats the individual as a means and society or the state as the end.** But we shall arrive at no real understanding either of the past or of the present if we attempt to operate with the concept of an abstract individual standing outside society.

4. The historian will not in ordinary circumstances need to take into account a single discontented peasant or discontented village. But a million discontented peasants in a thousand villages are a factor which no historian will ignore...**All movements have few leaders and a multitude as followers; but this does not mean that the multitude is not essential to their success.** Numbers count in history.

5. Christianity considers that the individual, acting consciously for his own ends, is the unconscious agent of God...**Adam Smith's hidden hand and Hegel's 'cunning of reason', which sets in individuals to work for it and to serve its purposes, though the individuals believe themselves to be following own personal desires, are too familiar to require quotation.** 'In the social production of their means of production,' wrote Marx in the preface to his *Critique of Political Economy*. 'human beings enter into definite and necessary relations which are independent of their will.'

6. **It is hard to believe that any individual willed or desired the great economic depression of the 1930s. Yet it was indubitably brought about by the actions of individuals, each consciously pursuing some totally differential aim.**

Carr's Conclusion: HISTORY, THEN, IN BOTH SENSES OF THE WORD — MEANING BOTH THE ENQUIRY CONDUCTED BY THE HISTORIAN AND THE FACTS OF THE PAST INTO WHICH HE ENQUIRES — IS A SOCIAL PROCESS, IN WHICH INDIVIDUALS ARE ENGAGED AS SOCIAL BEINGS; AND THE IMAGINARY ANTITHESIS BETWEEN SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL IS NO MORE THAN A RED HERRING DRAWN ACROSS OUR PATH TO CONFUSE OUR THINKING. THE RECIPROCAL PROCESS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN THE HISTORIAN AND HIS FACTS, WHAT I HAVE CALLED THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PRESENT AND PAST, IS A DIALOGUE NOT BETWEEN ABSTRACT AND ISOLATED INDIVIDUALS, BUT BETWEEN THE SOCIETY OF TODAY AND THE SOCIETY OF YESTERDAY.



Michel Foucault

1926-1984

Post-humanist Historiography

The anti-humanist or post-humanist work which Foucault engaged with was concerned not to trace the motivations and intentions of individuals but to uncover the workings of discourse over long periods of time. He traces through history the breaks in thinking or ‘discontinuities’ which occur at particular historical conjunctures; thus, he is not concerned with charting the importance of certain great thinkers, or trends in the history of ideas, but rather the moments when there are radical and shocking changes in direction in the way that phenomena are thought about and the ways that events are interpreted.

Foucault was concerned to write about the history of ideas without referring to the sovereign subject – the individual. He tried to move away from the notion of the Cartesian subject, the subject whose existence depends on its ability to see itself as unique and as self-contained, distinct from others, because it can think and reason. By refusing to refer to the subject as a unitary being, Foucault is very much part of post-structuralist thinking, which questioned the very fundamental bases of liberal humanist ideology, rooted as it is in the notion of the individual self with agency and control over itself.

From History to Genealogy

One had to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself, that is to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework. And this is what was called genealogy, that is, a form of history which tried to account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history.

The Order of Things(1966) and the Archaeology Of Knowledge (1969)

Foucault developed the term 'épistémé', by which he meant: the body of knowledge and ways of knowing which are **in circulation at a particular moment**. Foucault suggests that there is a significant break at the inauguration of the Classical (18th century) and the modern periods (19th century), where he claims new ways of classifying and ordering information developed. Thus, **Foucault tried to develop a way of describing events and interpretation without drawing on humanist ideas of the individual**. Many other theorists within psychoanalysis focused on the fractured self, rather than the cohesive self of humanism; others influenced by Marxism examined wider social groupings and institutions rather than the individual, since they considered focus on the individual to be a bourgeois (a particular class's) concern. Foucault, however, tried to theorise without reference to the individual or subject, focusing at this phase of his thinking **on the workings of anonymous discourses** which he saw as operating largely under their own system of rules, outside the influence or control of individuals.

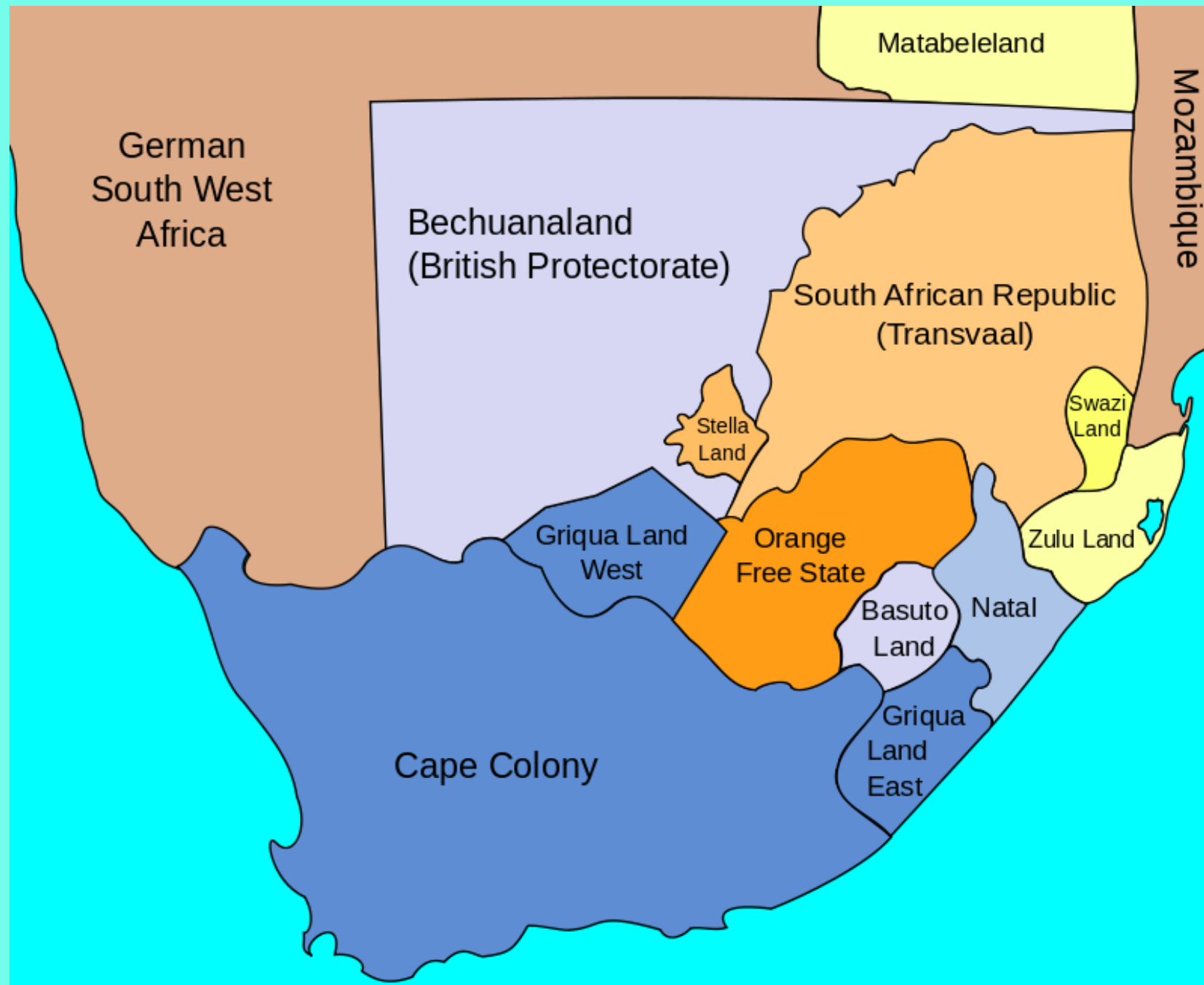
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Truth is of the world; it is produced there by virtue of multiple constraints. . . . **Each society has its regime of truth, its general politics of truth:** that is the types of discourse it harbours and causes to function as true: the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorised for obtaining truth: the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.

Individuals as effects of Mechanisms of Power

The individual is not to be conceived of as a sort of elementary nucleus . . . on which power comes to fasten. . . . **In fact, it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals.**

British Empire and South Africa







BEFORE EUROPEAN COLONIALISM: KHOIKHOI AND BANTU-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES

Before European colonizers arrived, the southern segment of Africa that now makes up the state of South Africa were inhabited by hunting-gatherers and pastoralists from a community called Khoikhoi, called by the colonisers Hottentots and Bushmen, and Bantu (language) speaking communities of mixed farmers (crop growers and pastoralists). The mixed farmers not only owned cattle and sheep but also grew cereal crops and used spears and digging tools with iron tips. Culturally and physically they resembled the people living as far north as the equator. Unlike the hunter-gatherers, they occupied semipermanent villages throughout the year and their political organizations were stronger and more complex. **These Bantu-speaking mixed farmers were the ancestors of the majority of the inhabitants of present-day Southern Africa.**

Why did Europe begin to colonize Africa?

Feudal Europe is engulfed with a major crisis in the 14th century. A major outbreak of bubonic plague wiped out in some areas of Europe almost half of the then extant population. As a response to the crisis the ruling class of Europe looked for solutions outside Europe. Spain colonised the Americas in the 16th century. Sugar plantations were established in the New World. New Spain (Mexico) had a dramatic fall in population from approximately 11 million in 1519 to about 1.5 million in circa 1650. The Spaniards and Portuguese ceased trying to recruit Indians as slave labor in the Western Hemisphere and began to rely exclusively on imported Africans for plantation slaves.

But why Africans as the new slaves? Because Europe needed a source of labor from a well-populated region that was accessible and relatively near the Atlantic trading zone. At the same time this source had to be from a region that was outside the Atlantic trading areas so that Europe could feel unconcerned about the economic consequences of removal of manpower as slaves. Western Africa, where the Portuguese seafarers had established bases served as the source of the first slaves, captured and sent to the “new world.” The Portuguese were the first to carry out the African slave trade.

But why the Portuguese?

EUROPE'S IMMEDIATE MATERIAL NEEDS (LATE 14TH CENTURY ONWARD) ORIGINATED FROM A GENERAL CRISIS IN SEIGNIORIAL REVENUES. PORTUGAL PLAYED A ROLE IN SOLVING THIS PROBLEM BY ATLANTIC EXPLORATION. WHY WAS PORTUGAL, AND NOT THE OTHER STATES OF EUROPE, MOST ABLE TO CONDUCT THE INITIAL NAVAL EXPLORATIONS? ONE OBVIOUS ANSWER IS FOUND IF WE PAY ATTENTION TO ITS LOCATION ON THE MAP. PORTUGAL IS LOCATED ON THE ATLANTIC, RIGHT ABOVE AFRICA. IN TERMS OF THE COLONIZATION OF ATLANTIC ISLANDS AND THE EXPLORATION OF THE WESTERN COAST OF AFRICA, IT WAS OBVIOUSLY CLOSEST. FURTHERMORE, THE OCEANIC CURRENTS ARE SUCH THAT IT WAS EASIEST, ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE TECHNOLOGY OF THE TIME, TO SET FORTH FROM PORTUGUESE PORTS (AS WELL AS THOSE OF SOUTHWEST SPAIN).

During the reign of John II of Portugal (1455 – 1495), in 1486, Christopher Columbus (1451– 1506) presented the King with a proposal to seek a westerly route to India. John II rejected Columbus's proposal. The rejection of Columbus was not because of a return to North African preoccupations. Instead, the king had his own plans; he had sent out emissaries overland to East Africa and India via the Mediterranean, and then in 1487-8 was able to celebrate the triumph of having his subject Bartolomeu Dias (1450-1500) round the Cape of Good Hope. The all-sea route to India was now open.

Vasco Da Gama (ca.1460s – 1524) & Portuguese Exploration

In 1497, five years after Christopher Columbus had crossed the Atlantic under Spanish patronage, Vasco da Gama led another Portuguese expedition that rounded the Cape, sailed along the east African coastline to Malindi (modern Mombasa), and then crossed the Indian Ocean to Calicut, India, returning to Portugal with two of his four ships after an absence of twenty-six months. During the sixteenth century, the Portuguese government sent annual fleets round the Cape of Good Hope to the Indian Ocean. They brutally destroyed the Arab shipping they encountered in the Indian Ocean and began to divert the European trade with southeast Asia from the ancient routes via the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea to the oceanic route via the Cape.

Portuguese Explorations Around Africa, A.D. 1418–1498



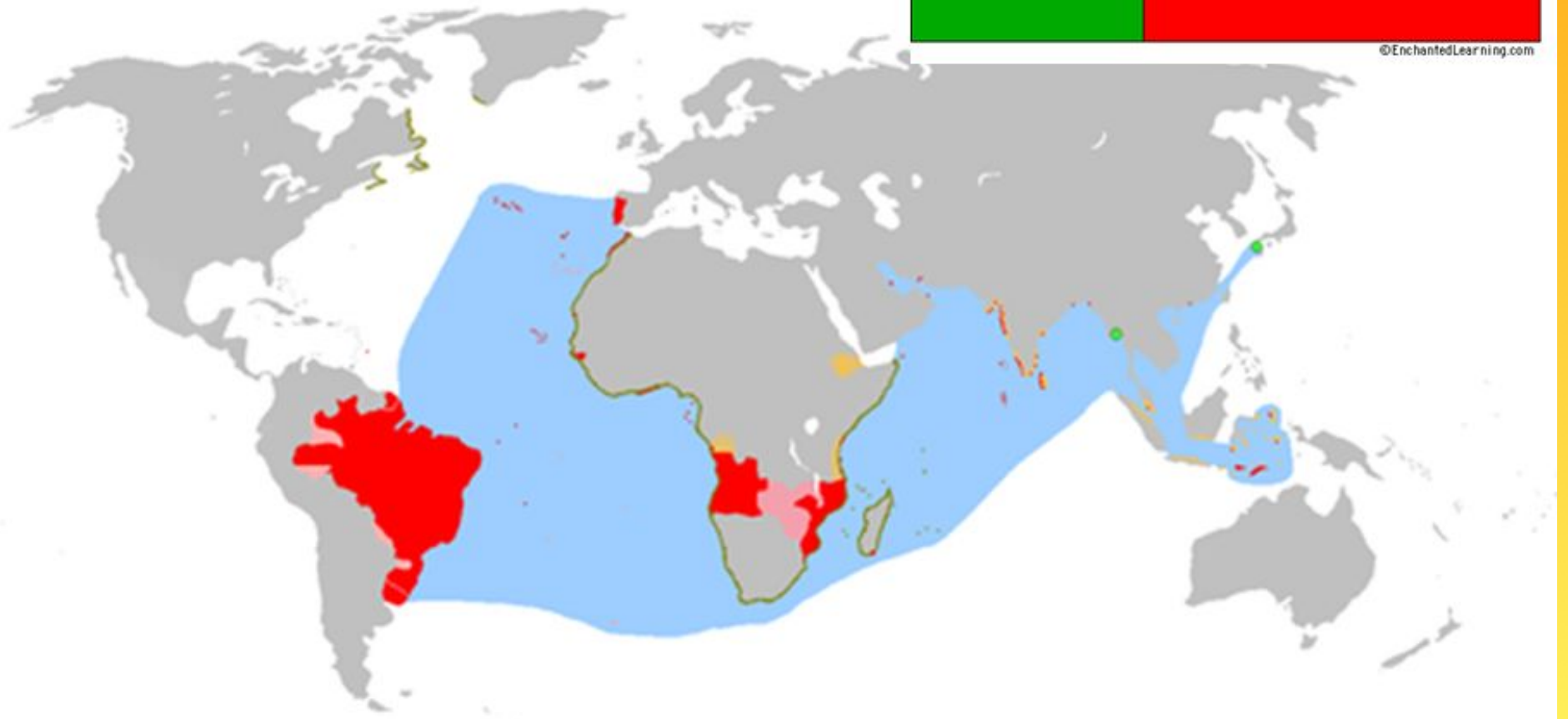
FURTHER GROWTH OF THE PORTUGUESE EMPIRE

During the 16th century, the Portuguese established fortified bases at Goa on the west coast of India, Malacca on the northern side of the strait between Malaya and Sumatra, and Ormuz, gateway to the Persian Gulf. From West Africa, they started the export of slaves to the Americas. **In East Africa, they built forts at Mombasa and Mozambique.** Lured by gold in what is now Zimbabwe (earlier called Rhodesia), they created garrison towns on the Zambezi River and established trading posts in the gold generating area. They also founded *prazos* (great estates) in the Zambezi valley. **By the eighteenth century, though the Portuguese had lost control of the East African interior, they were still exporting slaves to Brazil and North America from the coastal fortress at Mozambique.**

Portuguese Empire 1415-1999

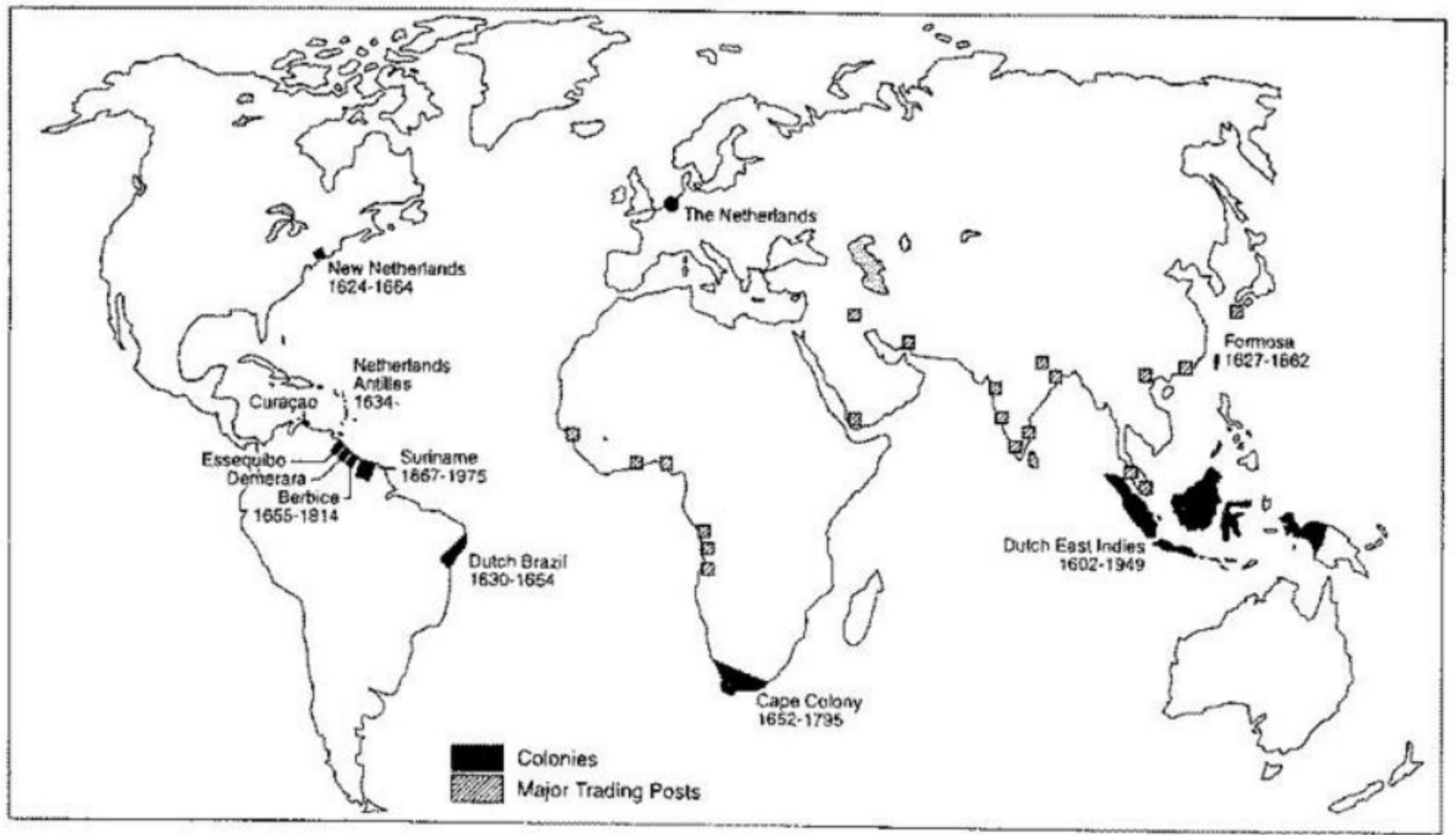


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The Dutch Cape Colony: 1652-1795

By the end of the 16th century, Dutch, English, French, and Scandinavian merchants started using the sea route to Asia. Sometimes they landed on the Cape peninsula for fresh water and bartered sheep and cattle from the Khoikhoi pastoralists in return for iron and copper goods. In 1649, however, Dutchmen who had spent their winter near Table Bay after losing their ship proposed that the **DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY** should occupy the place. Three years later, Jan van Riebeeck (1619–1677) arrived there as the commander of an expedition of eighty company employees. The directors had instructed him to build a fort and supply the Dutch fleets with fruit, vegetables, and meat.



Modern South Africa began as a by-product of the enterprise of these Dutch merchants. In sending Jan van Riebeeck to occupy Table Bay, the directors of the company intended the colony to serve a specific and limited, role as a link between the Netherlands and their eastern empire, centred on Batavia, Java. They had no intention of creating anything more than a small fortified base, where the annual fleets bound to and from Batavia could stop, take in fresh water, fruit, vegetables, and grain, and land the sick for recuperation.



Slave Labor in the Cape Colony

Initially, the company did not envisage the use of slave labor in their Cape settlement. However, van Riebeeck was soon requesting permission to follow the example of the company's settlements at Batavia (colonial Indonesia) and elsewhere in Asia.

In 1658, the company imported one shipload of slaves from Dahomey (in western Africa) and another shipload of Angolan slaves, whom it had captured from the Portuguese. After that, the company-government, the senior officials, and the free burgher community all became dependent on slave labor. The Cape became a slaveholding society.

Colonial Landgrab and the Khoikhoi

By 1713, the indigenous pastoral society of the southwestern Africa started to disintegrate. The Khoikhoi were unable to withstand the invasion of the Dutch East India Company and its settlers. They lost most of their livestock: the records of the company show that between 1662 and 1713 it received 14,363 cattle and 32,808 sheep from the Khoikhoi. Their fragile political system collapsed, and the chiefs had become clients of the company.

In the 1680s, individuals and families had already begun to detach themselves from their society and BECAME SERVANT OF THE WHITE FARMERS. The southwestern Khoikhoi became a SUBORDINATE CASTE IN THE COLONIAL SOCIETY, set apart by appearance and culture from both the Whites and the slaves; technically free, but treated no better than the slaves.

EMERGENCE OF THE TREKBOERS

Throughout the 18th century, extensive pastoral farming, with hunting as a sideline, absorbed the bulk of the increase in the white population. These white pastoralists became known as *trekboers-semi-migrant farmers*. A trekboer was obliged merely to pay a small annual fee for the right to occupy a six-thousand-acre farm. In theory, he was merely a conditional tenant of a "loan farm"; in practice, he was able to treat his landholding as his property, which could be bought, sold, and inherited. Advancing burgher families often made use of a spring and its adjacent pastures without overt opposition and then gradually acquired exclusive control, **reducing the indigenous pastoralists to various types of tenancy and clientage.**

Khoikhoi Resistance

On their part, indigenous hunter-gatherers often raided the cattle and sheep, and sometimes the homes, of the incoming farmers. In

response to that resistance, the farmers formed their one cooperative institution, the commando. The main resistance came from indigenous hunter gatherers (San) and from indigenous pastoralists (Khoikhoi) who had lost their livestock. **During the 1770s, indigenous bands attacked burgher property from bases in the Sneeuwberg Mountains north of Graaff- Reinet. Large commandos, including subjected indigenous pastoralists as well as burghers, retaliated.** In 1774, a commando of 300 men claimed to have killed 503 people; between 1786 and 1795, 2,430 were reported killed. **BY THE END OF THE CENTURY, THE INDIGENOUS HUNTING AND HERDING PEOPLES OF THE WESTERN PART OF SOUTH AFRICA HAD CEASED TO OFFER LARGE-SCALE RESISTANCE.**



Emergence of the Griquas

BEYOND THE TREKBOERS, NORTH AND NORTHEAST FROM THE CAPE LIVED PEOPLE OF DIVERSE ORIGINS: DISPLACED INDIGENOUS PASTORALISTS AND HUNTER-GATHERERS, ESCAPED AFRICAN AND ASIAN SLAVES, BURGHERS OF WHITE PARENTAGE WHO HAD COMMITTED CRIMES, AND MEN AND WOMEN OF MIXED ETHNIC DESCENT. LIKE MANY TREKBOERS, THESE PEOPLE LIVED BY HUNTING AS MUCH AS FARMING. THEY WERE LOOSELY LINKED WITH THE CAPE BY TRADE, BARTERING SHEEP, CATTLE, AND IVORY IN RETURN FOR ARMS, AMMUNITION, AND OTHER IMPORTED COMMODITIES. FORMING FLUID COMMUNITIES, **THEY WERE PENETRATING AND DESTABILIZING THE INDIGENOUS PASTORAL AND MIXED FARMING SOCIETIES BEYOND THE ORANGE RIVER.** BY THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY, SOME WERE BECOMING ORGANIZED AS CHIEFDOMS. AT FIRST THEY CALLED THEMSELVES BASTAARDS, BUT, UNDER MISSIONARY INFLUENCE, THEY WERE BECOMING KNOWN AS GRIQUAS.

ORANGE RIVER GORGE & FISH EAGLE TRAIL

DISTANCE TO ONSEEPKANS

Cape Town
760km
Johannesburg
999km
Durban
1412km
Bloemfontein
786km
Port Elizabeth
1106km



BOTSWANA

ZIMBABWE

MOZAMBIQUE

PRETORIA

SWAZILAND



SOUTH AFRICA

KIMBERLY

BLOEMFONTEIN

LESOTHO

DURBAN

HOPETOWN

VICTORIA WEST

3 SISTERS

BEAUFORT WEST

SPRINGBOK

VANRYNSDORP

CAPE TOWN

GEORGE

PORT ELIZABETH

NAMIBIA

N14

N7

N12

N1

Orange river

Orange river

THUNDER ALLEY

DISTANCE TO HOPETOWN

Cape Town
843km
Johannesburg
602km
Durban
895km
Bloemfontein
265km
Port Elizabeth
639km

THE BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY OVER CAPE COLONY, 1795-1870

In the wake of the French Revolution, Great Britain occupied the Cape peninsula to prevent it from falling into the hands of the French. A British expedition easily forced the capitulation of Dutch officials in 1795, and although the Dutch regained the Cape under the terms of the Treaty of Amiens in 1803, they were ousted again in January 1806. British sovereignty over the colony was confirmed in the eyes of Europe. Black or white South Africans were not consulted prior to the signing of the peace settlement of 1814. In the British perspective of that era, South Africa was still significant as a stepping-stone to Asia. In the late 1860s, South Africa's vast mineral wealth began to be revealed. Then the region became valuable to the British economy.

Powerful White Minority and Racism

In South Africa the white population never amounted to more than about 20 percent of the total. This disparity mitigated the tensions between the white communities. **ALTHOUGH THEY WERE EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN TO OWN SLAVES, THE BRITISH SETTLERS, LIKE THE AFRIKANERS, HAD AN INTEREST IN ACQUIRING AND CONTROLLING INDIGENOUS LABOR.** Like many Afrikaners, too, they experienced the insecurity of life in an exposed frontier zone that Africans considered to be their rightful property. The result was that the British settlers became involved in intermittent warfare, defending and expanding their territory. **THE RACISM THAT WAS PART OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH CULTURE BECAME ACCENTUATED BY THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THEIR NEW MILIEU.**

Initially, the British maintained the Existing System in the Colony

At the Cape, the colonists were subject to a commercial government that practiced slavery and the slave trade. They were conditioned to life as privileged people, distinguished from their slaves and serfs by legal and economic criteria. The Cape slaves experienced a form of subjection that was in many respects harsher than slavery as practiced in the Americas. The indigenous pastoralists fared no better. When they first occupied the Cape Colony, the British regarded themselves as temporary custodians and had no intention of tampering with the status quo.

Despite the British rule, the English language did not emerge as the most widely spoken European language in the nineteenth-century Southern Africa. A dialect of Dutch became widely spoken link language. This dialect originated as a medium of oral communication between burghers and slaves, and it gradually became a distinct language-Afrikaans-which, with English and nine African languages, was later recognised as an official language in postapartheid South Africa in the 1990s.

Anti-Slavery Sentiments in Britain and its Effects in South Africa

When Parliament banned **British participation in the slave trade in 1807**, it deprived the Cape colonial farmers of their customary influx of fresh supplies of labor. They responded by increasing the work load of their slaves and by agitating for greater control of the services of the indigenous Khoikhoi people. After the Napoleonic Wars, **critics were revealing and denouncing the excesses of plantation slavery in the British West Indies**. In response, the British government tried to gain control over the behaviour of slaveowners. **IN 1823 THE GOVERNMENT ASKED GOVERNOR SOMERSET TO APPLY TO THE CAPE COLONY A LAW IT HAD IMPOSED ON TRINIDAD, PRESCRIBING MINIMUM STANDARDS OF FOOD AND CLOTHING AND MAXIMUM HOURS OF WORK AND PUNISHMENTS.**

Slavery in the British Empire and the South African Context

By the late 1820s, laws limited the right of owners to punish their slaves and ordered them to record punishments in special books for inspection by local officials. There was also a **GUARDIAN OF SLAVES** (renamed Protector of Slaves in 1830), who was responsible for administering the amelioration program. Although these regulations were incompletely enforced, they undermined the system. Slave owners resented interference in their customary powers, and slaves became restless and receptive to rumors that local officials and farmers were blocking fundamental change. A substantial slave revolt in the Cape Colony took place in 1808, the year after the abolition of the slave trade. Over three hundred slaves and Khoikhoi from the grain-producing area north of Cape Town marched on the Cape peninsula but were easily defeated by the militia on the outskirts of town.

THE IMPERIAL BAN ON SLAVERY

In 1819 John Philip, a director of the London Missionary Society (LMS), was sent to the Cape by his fellow directors to supervise the work of the mission in South Africa.

In 1826 Philip went to England, where he lobbied the Anti-Slavery Society with the argument that the fate of the Khoikhoi "was bound up with the fate of the slaves" and wrote a long, passionate polemic, exposing the injustices experienced by the Khoikhoi. In July, 1828, the House of Commons passed a motion that the colonial government was to be told to "secure to all the natives of South Africa, the same freedom and protection as are enjoyed by other free people of that Colony whether English or Dutch." In 1833, the reformed British Parliament passed a law emancipating the slaves in the British Empire and providing some compensation for the slave owners' loss of property. After a transitional period during which the former slaves were apprenticed to their former owners, they became legally free in 1838.

IN LIEU OF SLAVERY: NEW FORMS OF LABOR CONTROL

In 1856, the Cape parliament passed the Masters and Servants Act, which made breach of contract a criminal offense and obliged magistrates to impose imprisonment without the option of a fine on workers who refused to work or used insulting language to employers. The British government raised no questions about this act. The British government had never contemplated transforming the underlying structure of colonial society. THE MOST ADVANCED EVANGELICALS OF THE DAY, INCLUDING JOHN PHILIP, DID NOT LOOK TO EFFECT FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES. PHILIP, LIKE OTHER EUROPEANS OF HIS TIME, DID NOT BELIEVE THAT KHOIKHOI WOULD EVER BE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EQUALS OF WHITES.

Emancipation gave the Khoikhoi and the former slaves the same legal status, and officials soon began to refer to them comprehensively as **the Cape Coloured People**. In twentieth-century South Africa, the Coloured People became one of the four main racial categories recognized by the South African government, as distinct from the ruling class, which was deemed to be White; from the Bantu-speaking Africans, who formed the majority of the population; and from Asians, who had begun to be imported from India to Natal as indentured laborers in the 1860s. **By 1870, the traditional culture and social networks of the Khoikhoi had been destroyed by the process of conquest and subjection. Scattered as they were in small groups . under white control, they had no means of contesting the new order.**

An Instance of Dehumanization of the Khoikhoi: The Hottentot Venus



Brought to Europe seemingly on false pretences by a British doctor, stage-named the "Hottentot Venus," Sarah Baartman (1789-1815) was paraded around "freak shows" in London and Paris, with crowds invited to look at her large buttocks.

Today she is seen by many as the epitome of colonial exploitation and racism, of the ridicule and commodification of black people.

The Boer (Afrikaner) Effort to Preserve Autonomy

In the Dutch 17th and 18th centuries the institution of slavery had led to the development of a racial order. The British rulers sought to effect a transition from slavery to formal freedom. Under the British regime, the autonomy of the Dutch settlers was ending. Although English was a foreign language for the Afrikaner population, by the 1830s it alone was authorized for use in government offices, law courts, and public schools. Many Afrikaners (also known as Boers, or the Dutch colonizers) found it difficult to accept these and other changes. DURING THE 1830S, ANTI-BRITISH FEELING WAS WIDESPREAD AMONG ALL CLASSES OF EASTERN AFRIKANERS, AND BY 1840 SOME 6 THOUSAND MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN- ABOUT 9 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL WHITE POPULATION OF THE COLONY-HAD LEFT THEIR HOMES WITH THEIR WAGONS, CATTLE, SHEEP, AND ALL MOVABLE PROPERTY. THE AFRIKANER MIGRANTS-LATER KNOWN AS VOORTREKKERS (PIONEERS)-WERE HOPING TO FIND SOME PROMISED LAND WHERE THEY MIGHT MAKE THEIR OWN ARRANGEMENTS WITH ONE ANOTHER, WITH THEIR SERVANTS, AND WITH THE OTHER INHABITANTS.

THE AFRIKANER GREAT TREK, 1836-1854

Trekking out beyond the colony, the Trekboers hoped to run their own affairs in their own way beyond British colonial limits. Intended to ward off British reprisal they disclaimed the practice of overt slavery.

One of the first settlements they established was in the area called Natal. They defeated the Zulus who were previously inhabitants and rulers of the area in the Battle of Blood River or the Battle of Ncome in 1838.

Following up their victory, most of the emigrants settled in Natal. By 1842, a community of some six thousand men, women, and children had laid claim to almost all of the fertile land between the Tugela and the Umzimkulu rivers in Natal. A committee drew up a constitution and the **NATAL REPUBLIC** was established. By 1843, it was estimated that the African population of the republic had increased from ten thousand to fifty thousand; and still the influx continued. Greatly outnumbered, the emigrants were not able to establish their version of law and order.