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A postcolonial analysis of colonial representations in Triggerfish's animated films *Khumba* (2013) and *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012)

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WSOA 7036 Master of Arts in Digital Animation

A Research Report submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Mater of Arts in Digital Arts: 3D Animation by Coursework and Research Report

DECLARATION:

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Digital Animation at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

_____

Tanya Blaeser

10 August 2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

I would like to truly thank my supervisors Bronwyn Horne and Tegan Bristow for all their patient support, encouragement, wisdom and input. I am especially grateful to Anthony Silverston and Stuart Forrest for participating in the interview for this research, and for sharing their insight. Thanks also to Kevin Kriedemann for arranging this.

Thanks must also go to Katashka Bossert, for editing this paper, and to Brigette and Richard Blaeser, Michael Harper, Clara Blaeser, Natasha Rietiker and Stella Kerr for the emotional support and for encouraging me to complete this colossal task. I would also like to thank Mark and Brandon at The Boiler Room for accommodating my studies. Thanks, praise and glory to God for His love, grace and unending strength.

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INTRODUCTION

Josef Gugler, a professor of sociology, writes about African films and the teaching thereof. He states that:

> When films are used to introduce [people] to Africa, critical examination is imperative - audiences that have little factual information about Africa all too readily assume that fiction and fact coincide (1).

As an audio-visual medium, film plays a pertinent role offering viewers an experience that produces an emotional response; it can be used to create a memorable experience of a people, society and culture. Since there is a history of typically colonial representations of Africa in Western cinema, it is imperative that a response stems from Africa: a remedy that differs from and contradicts these inaccurate and often problematic representations (Gugler 2).

Animation is not a new medium in South Africa. Shanaz Shapurjee conducted an enquiry into the history of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) animation unit. In this enquiry, Shapurjee explores the beginnings of animation in South Africa, and how it was affected by the soci-political circumstances. According to Shapurjee, animation in South Africa, as it emerged in the early twentieth century, was predominantly used for commercials for cinema (41). The modes of production used in South African animation studios, Shapurjee writes, were based on the models of animation developed by European and American animation studios, with Disney Studios being a significant influence, but were frustrated by rudimentary and inadequate technology, and small budgets (38-41).

Triggerfish Animation Studios began in 1996, and created predominantly commercials using stop-motion animation (Profile: Triggerfish Animation...). Their first success with their animation of the South African *Sesame Street*, which won several awards at various international festivals, and helped them grow into what the Design Indaba calls "a major player in the development of South Africa's thriving film industry and one of Africa's most exciting technology companies" (Profile: Triggerfish Animation...). Based in Cape Town, South Africa, Triggerfish is perhaps South Africa's largest computer-generated animation studios, and thus extremely influential in the growth and development of the South African animation industry (Profile: Triggerfish Animation...).

The implications of an animated feature film created in South Africa and representing South Africa are vast regarding the way in which perceptions and understandings of Southern Africa are formed and perpetuated. According to Lee Artz, Professor in Media Studies at Purdue University Calumet, animation has become one of the major modes of communicating with children and entrenching values through illustrated narratives; the representations and images offered by animation are consumed by children and their parents in various places of the world (3). From animated films such as *Khumba* or *Adventures in Zambezia*, children may formulate a lasting understanding of Southern Africa, which, if inaccurate, could ingrain potentially harmful stereotypes.

Holloway, Kane, Roos and Titlestad, in their book *Selves and Others*, highlight the dangers of generalisations and stereotypes regarding cultural representation (205). Although they present the extreme example of the holocaust genocide, they present the argument that:

> History often reveals the appalling effects of generalising... [and] stereotyping cultures or people. To be aware of these processes may be one way of preventing them from having the terrible effects they have had in the past (Holloway et al 205).

Negative stereotyping situates self in opposition to the Other, whereby the Other is perceived to be innately inferior due to their difference (Ramirez-Berg). According to Harth, many negative or belittling stereotypes regarding Africa originated during the colonial era in the justification of colonialism by European colonisers, and also justify inequalities that resulted from prejudices based on these colonial stereotypes (19).

Problematic representations in film, particularly animated film which is commonly viewed by children, could serve to reinforce colonial ideologies. Monika Kin Gagnon, in her thesis *Race-ing Disney: Race and Culture in the Disney Universe*, writes about how perceptions of racial and cultural difference are coded into Disney animated films such as *Pocahontas* (1995), *The Lion King* (1994), and *Mulan* (1998), and the implications of these representations. Gagnon notes that the cultures depicted in the aforementioned films are interpreted from an American perspective and are re-presented accordingly (161). In the film *Pocahontas* (1995), the romantic love story is foregrounded, thus downplaying the violence and exploitation of America's colonial past (Gagnon 4). Gagnon argues the consequence of producing cultural meaning in animated film:

> The legend of Pocahontas, and Disney's rendering of her myth, demonstrate how cultural representations have historically served to legitimate territorial appropriations and sanction the systematic and institutional destruction of Native peoples and their culture (148).

The Lion King (1994), Gagnon argues, perpetuates the typically colonial thinking that likened African people to animals in its use of anthropomorphised animals in a setting void of humans, and depicts Africa as timeless and primitive (4; 143). This, Gagnon reasons, reinforces "historical tropes of colonialism" and racial difference (148). According to Gagnon, through various sites, racism is learned, naturalised and reinforced, with animated films such as *Pocahontas* (1995 and *The Lion King* (1994) being one of those sites (159).

It is therefore necessary to critically analyse influential animated films such as *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia* that are being released in our current climate. Through the analysis of these films, and the discussion of colonialism and neo-colonialism, lessons regarding representation can be learned and applied to future animated films. A detailed critique of these South African animated films is necessary in order to highlight instances of the propagation of colonial ideology so that in future, such propagations can be avoided, and colonial paradigms can be exposed. In doing this, this research aims to contribute to the postcolonial discourse that resists colonialism, and is part of the reconstruction of a South African identity.

The first two chapters of this analysis will serve as a theoretical framework. The first chapter will define colonialism, neo-colonialism and postcolonialism, focussing predominantly on colonialism. Included in this chapter will be examples of common colonial representations. The significance of the museum in the formation of colonial stereotypes and as a reinforcement of the construction of European identity as the binary opposite of the Other will be described. Ania Loomba's writing from the book *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism* will be used in this chapter, which, although pertaining to literary works, establishes theory that can be applied to films such as *Adventures in Zambezia* and *Khumba.* It is necessary to first formulate an understanding of colonial stereotypes, as this will serve as the foundation for the discussions of the films in later chapters.

The second chapter will discuss representation, focussing on colonial representation. *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices* by Stuart Hall will be

frequently referenced as this chapter defines representation and then discusses the concept of a regime of representation, focussing specifically on representations of Africa. Chimamanda Adichie's theory of the single story will be described, as it is pertinent to the analyses of the case studies. The last section of the chapter shall discuss representation and film, and describe some of the recurring representations of Africa. This chapter serves to build on the first chapter regarding colonial representations, and also to establish the significance of representation as it relates to *Adventures in Zambezia* and *Khumba* – the films that are the focus of this research.

The third and fourth chapters will apply the theory discussed in the first two chapters in an analysis of Triggerfish's animated films *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013). The analyses of the films will centre on settings and characters, and question whether there are colonial stereotypes evident in these aspects of the film. These chapters will also highlight where the films repeat the single story of Africa, based on Adichie's concept as discussed in the second chapter.

For the purposes of this research, Stuart Forrest, CEO of Triggerfish Animation Studios, and Anthony Silverston, co-writer of *Adventures in Zambezia* and director of *Khumba*, were interviewed to gain insight into why they chose to make these particular films, and depict Africa in the way they did. The interview also queried whether the plans to grow the South African animation industry in an empowering way included the representation of South Africa in a way that contests, or at least does not conform to, the single story of Africa, or the continuation of the regime of representation. The outcome of the interview will be included in the body text of the four chapters that comprise this research.

The National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) praises the films *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia* as "among the most successful films ever to be made on the continent".

Adventures in Zambezia (2012) is a computer animated film about a young falcon named Kai who travels to the bird city Zambezia where he "discovers the truth about his origins and, in defending the city, learns how to be part of a community" (Triggerfish Animation Studios). The computer-animated film *Khumba* (2013) is about a young zebra who is born with only half of his stripes, who, when he is blamed for the drought by his herd, begins a journey to find a legendary waterhole where he believes he will receive his stripes (Donne). These two films, being screened internationally, are influential in the way that

South Africa is understood by viewers, and yet they have not been adequately interrogated for their use of colonial stereotypes.

This research will question whether there are colonial stereotypes present in both *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2012), and that the films do repeat the single story of an Africa for animals. The final chapter will conclude this research, and will also briefly describe what is being done to produce representations of South Africa that tell stories that deviate from colonial stereotypes, and offer multiple stories differing from the single story.

CHAPTER 1:
Colonialism, neo-colonialism and postcolonialism in Film

In order to conduct a detailed postcolonial critique of the case studies *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia*, it is necessary to establish an in-depth understanding of colonialism and colonial stereotypes imposed on Africa as it relates to film and, more specifically, animation, as well as neo-colonialism in terms of Hollywood's "colonisation" of film. Insight into postcolonial theory is required as it is to be used as the basis from which the critique is conducted. This chapter will serve as a theoretical foundation for the research, and will define, describe and discuss colonialism and colonial stereotypes, neo-colonialism (as it relates to this research) and postcolonialism as a critique of and response to colonialism.

Colonialism:

Colonialism is defined as "the conquest of earth" – the act of Western powers claiming "new territories in order to boost their economic wealth and political power" (Holloway, Kane, Roos & Titlestad 198). It is the expansion of one nation into another whereby the colonising power settles in and occupies territory for the exploitation of resources and for the gain of political and economic power (Boehmer 2). The colonising state assumes authority and attempts to dominate or govern the indigenous inhabitants, usually by force (Boehmer 2). Stam and Spence define colonialism as:

> ...the process by which the European powers (including the United States) reached a position of economic, military, political and cultural domination in much of Asia, Africa and Latin America (109).

Colonialism in the nineteenth century, when not a "brutal exploitation" intent on annulling cultures and people, aimed to bring "civilisation" to supposedly uncivilised countries. Colonisation resulted in an unequal distribution of power where the coloniser took on the "master" role and imposed an acquiescent position onto the colonised. This power imbalance extends beyond material resources into the representation produced, whereby the colonisers depict themselves as "superior" over their "inferior" colony (Holloway et al. 198-199).

The term "imperialism" is frequently used to describe "colonial trade or rule" (Holloway et al 198). Although the terms "colonialism" and "imperialism" are often used interchangeably, imperialism refers more to the political, military and economic control of power and resources (Loomba 11). The imperial country wields power over the colony. While most colonies have formally gained their independence, the inequalities and power imbalances of colonialism are "reinscribed in the contemporary imbalances between "first" and "third" world nations", according to Loomba (12). This is not a direct reign but rather an economic, political and cultural regime.

One of the driving forces behind colonialism was the European concept of "progress", which included capitalism, the mastery of "man over nature" and industrialisation (Loomba 23). European science, reason and technology were all considered as a part of this progress. This obsession with progress was one of the hallmarks of modernity. One cannot overlook modernity when discussing colonialism since the two concepts overlap and influence one another.

Walter Mignolo writes about colonialism and modernity. He argues that colonialism is the darker side of modernity, and also the consequence of it (2). Western modernity, Mignolo writes, finds its origin in the Renaissance (xiv). It was then that, through the writing of history, among other practices, that Europe situated itself as the reference point for all histories, and as the model for all civilisations (Mignolo xiv). It promoted the idea that "European modernity was the point of arrival of human history and the model for the entire planet", according to Mignolo (xiv). Mignolo writes that Western modernity defined itself in binaries, such as the ancient as opposed to the modern (which provided a temporal frame of reference for Western modernity) and the civilised against the barbaric (which provided a spatial frame of reference) (xiv).

Many of the principles and philosophies upon which modernity was founded originated during the Enlightenment (Kando 1996:5). During the Enlightenment, endeavours to discover “truth” through the use of reason, scientific observation and rational thinking were highly regarded and greatly encouraged (Creech 1999:138). These canons of thinking became the foundations of modernism and its informing ideas of truth, liberation, progress, “the new”, reason, logic and Cartesian rationalism (Brown 1996:2; Creech 1999:138). Binary thinking and absolutism were evident throughout the Enlightenment and modernity (Kando 1996:9). Binary thinking refers to a system of reasoning where two elements, components or terms are defined in opposition to one another (Lewis 2007). It divides a concept or

occurrence into two polarised “segmented channels” where one is acceptable or right, and the Other is seen as wrong or as a threat (Simmons 1998:114). Absolutism is “the doctrine of absolute being” (Lewis 2007). Binary thinking was evident in colonialism, as the colonisers defined themselves in relation to the "Other", for example, Europe was deemed civilised and Africa was situated as the binary opposite and thus savage.



Figure 1: Nineteenth-century advertisement for Pears' Soap, Hall, Stuart, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London: Sage in Association with the Open U, 1997, Print (242).

The colonial period extends back to the era of the voyages of discovery, reached its zenith in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and only began to deteriorate as European powers degenerated after World War 2 (Stam & Spence 109). During this time, Europe constructed its identity in relation to the "Other". It is important to note that colonialism was at its peak during the time when film was being established as a storytelling medium, and the early techniques of animation were being explored. Colonial representation was well established before cinema, glorying in the introduction of "civilisation" to the "ignorant" and "savage" (this is evident in **Figure 1**, a soap advertisement that promotes "The White Man's Burden" – the civilising mission), so that when film was developed into a medium of communication, it

inherited an already established institution of colonial imagery (Stam & Spence 110). *King Solomon's Mines* (1950) is an example of a film created near the end of the colonial era, but which relied on colonial ideologies.

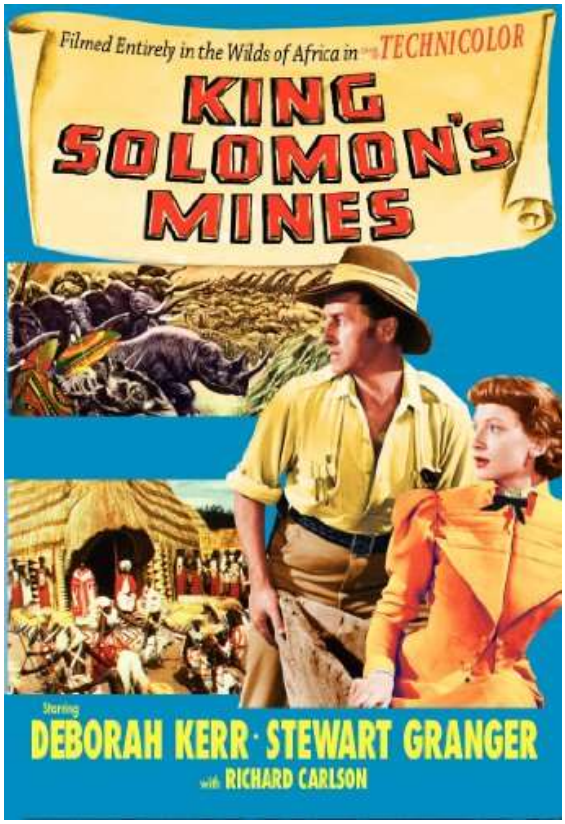

Figure 2: Film poster for *King Solomon's Mines*, *King Solomon's Mines (1950) Poster*, Digital image, *IMBd*, IMBd.com, n.d., Web, 24 Nov. 2016.

> The narrator of the trailer for *King Solomon's Mines* (1950) describes:
>
> Into the strange and wild interior of darkest Africa, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer sent a motion picture company on safari. Here, in its original setting, where no white woman has ever been before, was filmed the story of primitive savagery, of incredible danger. You'll be thrilled with the magnificent love story of the flaming red-head and the handsome...adventurer, as together they fight their hazardous way through a vast land of mystery and excitement, in their relentless quest for the fabulous fortune that rests in King Solomon's mines.

The film boasts a colonial-style adventure set in a vague location in Africa (**Figure 3**), which is described as dark, primitive, dangerous, mysterious and savage (**Figure 3**). This depiction

of Africa and the colonial-style adventure was inherited from the fascination with colonial exploits and the resulting representation that then informed Western perceptions of Africa.

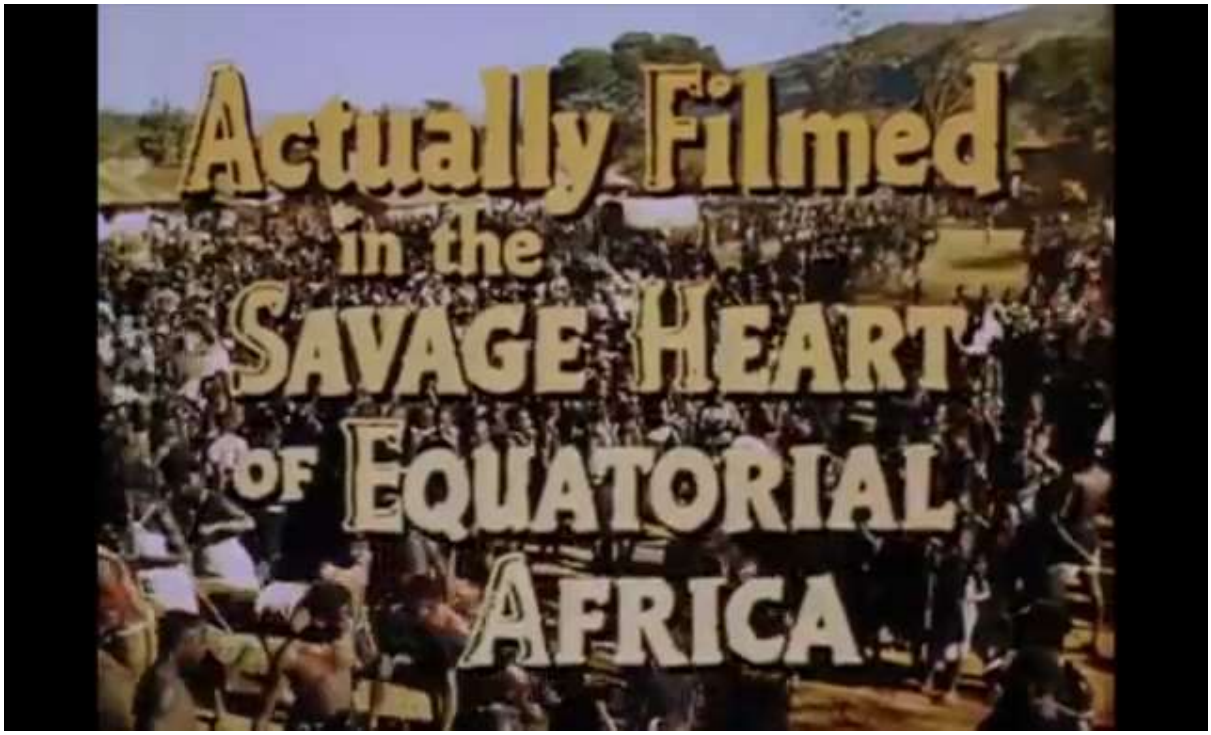

Figure 3: A screenshot from the trailer for *King Solomon's Mines*, *King Solomon's Mines (1950) Poster*, Digital image, *IMBd*, IMBd.com, n.d., Web, 24 Nov. 2016

The museum and photography as a part of colonisation

> Collecting is a form of conquest and collected artefacts are material signs of victory over their former owners and places of origin (Classen & Howes 209).

Constance Classen and David Howes, in their article *The Museum as Sensescape: Western Sensibilities and Indigenous Artefacts*, write about the anthropology of the senses, and how museum displays relate to colonialism. The authors write that in different societies, senses are "constructed and lived differently"; different values and meanings are placed on the different senses, which, in turn, affect the society's world view (Classen & Howes 199). Western museums display visually interesting artefacts, which are to be experienced purely on a visual basis, and if an object is not visually appealing, it is not displayed, regardless of whether the artefact has interesting tactile, auditory or olfactory qualities (Classen & Howes 200). Often, in the artefact's culture of origin, sight was merely one aspect of the object's significance, and even the combined sensory experience of the object held meaning only in its intended social and environmental context (Classen & Howes 200). Western museums were not always exclusively visual experiences; prior to modernity, viewers were able to

handle the artefacts in museums. Classen and Howes offer an explanation of how museums affected European perceptions of different cultures and societies:

> Artefacts from exotic lands offered Europeans the possibility of experiencing a safe but nonetheless potent contact with the “other worlds” from which they sprang. It mattered little in many cases what the actual uses and meanings of these artefacts were in their own societies; what mattered was rather the ways in which they could confirm Western representations of non-Western cultures and serve as a springboard for the Western imagination. Thus, for example, what were perceived as distorted, exaggerated features of native masks and statuary were imagined to correspond to a similarly distorted and exaggerated sensuality. A lolling tongue or bulging eyes on a mask or statue invited commentary on the gluttonous or lascivious nature of the society which produced it....
> Masks, clubs, “idols,” and other characteristic artefacts found in collections fascinated Europeans with their implications of savagery. Touching and holding such “barbarous” objects with their own hands enabled Westerners to vicariously participate in, and confront their fear of, the supposedly brutal lifestyles of “primitive” peoples. (203)

The museum exhibits served to reinforce colonial stereotypes (which will be discussed later on in this chapter).

Europeans considered themselves to be rational and civilised, and thus superior to those deemed as "Other" (Classen & Howes 206). Binary thinking situated this reason and the mind in opposition to sensuality and the body, associating westerners with rationality, and non-westerners with irrationality and the "lesser" senses[1]; non-westerners were regarded as sensual people who lived life of the body and not of the mind (Classen & Howes 206). Emphasis was placed on the non-western societies' integration of the other senses (other than sight) being animalistic. Tactile sensitivity of non-Western people (for example, weavers in India) was associated with the tactile keenness of the blind. This notion was then linked to the idea of darkness. Classen and Howes write:

[1] The "lesser" senses, according to Classen & Howes, were touch, smell and taste; sight was considered to be the "noble" sense (206)

> Similarly to the blind, indigenous peoples were seen as living – both literally and figuratively – in the dark. They were imagined to inhabit dark huts, in dark forests, in dark continents, and to pursue their unenlightened lives in “the gloomy shade” of “absolute barbarism” (207).

In the nineteenth century, sight was associated with scientific practices, thus visual display was emphasised, and museums became places of spectatorship (Classen & Howes 208). Since visuality was emphasised so, visual imagery such as paintings and then photography held considerable authority.

Konkobo asserts that the colonial ideologies underpinning exhibitions, particularly the human exhibits popular in 19th-century France, were adopted into other image-making practises (1094). The colonial imagery exhibited served "primarily to prove to Western visitors that Africans were savages to be civilized by the Empire" (Konkobo 1094). According to Dosunmu (in Gausai 60), photography was used by colonialists to construct and reinforce colonial stereotypes. These photographs (taken by European photographers) alongside other images (such as drawings and paintings) were viewed by Europeans who had not been to Africa, and who therefore constructed an idea of what Africa was like based upon the image-maker's subjective depictions (Dosunmu in Gausai 60). Many of these images depicted Africans as “savage” or “uncivilised”, and since the viewers often had little or no prior knowledge, they believed the images to be containing objective “truth” (Dosunmu in Gausai 60). According to Gaafar (244), colonial imagery of Africans usually held evidence of binary thinking (such as civilised as opposed to savagery) and was often used portray Africa as or to document “Otherness”. Europe, during the colonial era, defined itself, using binary thinking, against the "Other" whereby the Africa was used to establish a definition of savagery against which Europe was defined as civilised; Europe, deeming itself rational, used African ways as an opposition by which the binary of rational against irrational could be expressed (Loomba 45).

Colonialism was responsible for the oppression and negation of people, their identities and their cultures, as well as the dispersion of African people through the slave trade, and the naturalisation of the thought systems that defined “African” as “lesser” or “Other” (Hall 223-224). Both Borthaiser and Nkunzimana (85) argue that one of the effects of Othering was the notion that the Other was incapable of representing themselves (Nkunzimana 85). Ania Loomba argues that "colonialism reshaped existing structures of human knowledge" (53). By devaluing of non-European bodies of knowledge, and promoting

of European works as the ideal and dominant forms of knowledge, Western representations of other cultures were received as having an authoritative voice (Loomba 53). As a result of the West representing the Other, it was implied that the Other is incapable of representing themselves, and were therefore reliant on Euro-American intervention to be represented.

Colonialism could also be described as a process whereby one set of ideologies becomes dominant either through legal or institutional means or through cultural practices (Perry 104). The dominant society pressurises, influences and manipulates the behaviours of the colonised. Therefore, types of creativity are often suppressed as the coloniser strives for "universal social cohesion" (Perry 104). Through the establishment of borders, colonies and countries, colonialism strove to inhibit the mingling of different peoples and establish rigid differences between cultures and races (Mbembe 2007:27). Cultural processes by Africans were greatly impacted by colonialism (Loomba 26). It has been argued that the cultures of those who were colonised are "both the sites of colonial oppression" and "vital tools" for resistance (Loomba 26).

Colonialism according to Ania Loomba

Loomba writes about colonialism and postcolonialism. Although she focuses primarily on literature, the concepts discussed in the book *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism* are applicable to other mediums of communications, such as cinema. Loomba discusses how language and literature, as well as the production of knowledge, help construct binaries (such as Europeans defining themselves in relation to the colonised Other), and how this constructed knowledge was used to aid and justify colonialism.

Loomba defines an ideology as comprised of "mental frameworks, [one's] beliefs, concepts and ways of expressing [one's] relationship to the world" (26). An ideology can be used to gain and maintain power and to "reproduce the interests of the dominant social class" in order to create "subjects who are ideologically conditioned to accept the values of the system" (Loomba 27; 33). An ideology can be used to justify and naturalise inequalities and injustices. In the case of colonisation, colonial ideologies (as will be discussed further in the report) were adopted by both the coloniser and the colonised.

Whilst an ideology is that which characterises a group or nation's way of thinking, knowledge can be used to inform and channel ideologies. Mignolo argues that knowledge is one of the pillars of coloniality (9). According to Loomba, "Knowledge about and power over

colonised lands are related enterprises" (43). The production of knowledge is not neutral and is linked to exercising power. The production and presentation of knowledge has been used as a means of maintaining power and control over a subject, not only during the colonial era, but both beforehand and thereafter. However, since Cartesian thought (promoting rationalism, logic and considering the mind as superior to the body) was prevalent throughout the colonial eras, the use of knowledge to maintain colonial power was even considered more effective (Loomba 43).

Europe during the colonial era conceptualised itself in relation to the "Other" and as the binary opposite to Africa (Loomba 45). The colonised were considered irrational, barbaric and sensual, implying that the colonisers were rational, civilised and self-controlled; the African was deemed lazy and the European was thus hard-working (Loomba 45). Where Africa was considered static, Europe was developing and progressing. These ideologies informing perceptions of Africa (and other colonies) were backed up by supposedly reasonable and rational "knowledge" (Loomba 45). What constitutes knowledge differs across cultures; the knowledge that Loomba writes about is specific to the European concept of knowledge, which includes maps and cartography, museums (as discussed), artworks, image-production, cinema and film, advertising, scientific categorisations and systems, geology, the writing of history and educational systems. "Colonialism reshaped existing structures of human knowledge. No branch of learning was left untouched by the colonial experience" (Loomba 53). This implies that film and cinema, which Loomba argues is part of the process of producing and distributing knowledge, was affected by colonialism, and thus the medium of film had a history of being an instrument of shaping and reinforcing colonial ideologies.

England considered Imperialism to be their "social mission" (Loomba 73). It was believed that by spreading their culture, values and ideologies, among other things, they were benefitting the colonies. Colonialism was regarded, by the English, as a positive force, since the colonists were convinced that they were superior. This notion extended to the realm of literature (the definition of which is very broad and later encompasses film and cinema). Maculay in Loomba (76) sums up the common European conviction held during the colonial era when he comments that "a single shelf of European literature was worth all the books of India and Arabia". African intellectual works were completely disregarded, while Indian literature was only seen as valuable as historical artefacts of a past era. Any contemporary academic works produced by the colonised were overlooked (Loomba 76).

Loomba writes that a pertinent part of colonisation was the process of devaluation of literary works that did not attempt to mimic or replicate the work of the colonial (77). A strong emphasis and large value was placed on English literary and academic work, and it became viewed as the ultimate authority. This belief was imposed upon and adopted by those in the colonies, and as such, people would strive to replicate the English work and mimic the colonisers (Loomba 77). However, Loomba notes that "the process of replication is never complete or perfect; because of the context in which it is reproduced, the original can never be exactly replicated" (78). The mimicked works were somewhat hybrid in nature – never entirely "true" to the colonial authority. Loomba argues that once this is recognised, room for subversion and questioning of the colonial authority is created (78). This implies that, while knowledge can be used for the maintaining of colonial power, the production of knowledge can be used as a strategy to either reinforce or resist colonialism.

Since literature was used in both England and her colonies to assert the authority and "superiority" of European culture and work, the "language, literature, culture and philosophic ideas" of Europe were posed as the dominant, the ideal and the norm (Loomba 80). It could then be argued that this holds somewhat true with the medium of film, whereby Hollywood is presented as the dominant and ideal cinema, to whose format developing cinemas should conform.

"Western notions of Africa have been intimately bound to visual images, especially since the camera first landed on the continent" (Beinart & McKeown 430). By the late 1800's and early 1900's, representation through visual images was one of the prime means of maintaining and justifying colonialism. It could easily be used to subvert truth, and also to mask the brutalities that often accompanied colonialism (Loomba 83).

Colonial stereotypes

A stereotype is a mental image, a belief or a generalisation which conforms to a specific formula, and which has become a convention, or to be commonly accepted as “true” (Lewis). Stereotyping "involves a reduction of images and ideas to a simple and manageable form"; it does not necessarily stem from ignorance or "a lack of "real knowledge"" (Loomba 55). It simplifies information.

Stereotypes were generated during the colonial period by the classification of people. Examples of this include the "war-like Zulu", the "barbarous Turk" and the "mild Hindu"

(Loomba 85). By assigning these "titles" or characteristic to a group of people, divisions could be entrenched, and also roles (agricultural, domestic, military, mining, etc.) could be assigned to these groups and ‘normalised’. People could be forced into such roles and then, since they were undertaking those roles, it was deemed that those people had a "natural affinity" for the task. In this way, the exploitation of people could be "justified" (Loomba 85) Stereotypes also changed to suit the coloniser's agenda (Loomba 85). For example, in South Africa, the "Cape Boys" (members of the Cape Town coloured community) were recruited to assist in the Cape Corps military efforts, but were soon regarded as threatening competition to the white working class, and so they were stereotyped as "uncontrolled drunks" (Loomba 85). Stereotyping was not new to colonialism. It has been used throughout eras to create, emphasise and maintain power differences.

"Effectively, Western cinematic representations of Africa helped to reinforce the dominant Hegelian vision of Africa as a continent with no history and no culture: ...a primitive and incomprehensible ‘Other'." (Murphy 239-240). Representation was one of the strategies employed to maintain and justify colonial rule (Loomba 19).

Holloway et al write about the significance and impact of representation:

> The process of naming, defining, interpreting and representing another culture is often the basis on which colonialism justifies its existence and manages to sustain itself...In writing or speaking about another culture, it is possible to create representations of it that make [ones] domination of that culture seem both logical and appropriate. Often, too, people internalise these representations, and cultures become conditioned to accept their own alleged inferiority" (199).

Africa is often read as a single, homogenous mass of land; this simplistic reading ignores complex distinctions between cultures, peoples, languages, regimes and regions (Sakota-Kokot 164). Colonial depictions of Africa often excluded distinctions and also specific details (such as language, attire and customs) since these were deemed as superfluous and of little interest (Beinart & McKeown 430). This lack of distinction extended beyond merely the differences between peoples; common colonial representations of Africa (such as the film *King Solomon's Mines* (1950)) even blurred the differences between animals and humans whereby wild animals were depicted as to exist alongside savage people (Corces 269). Africa was thus presented as a "vast cultural and geographic

blankness" (Apter & Demissie 561). This notion often still persists from the colonial era, and is evident in contemporary representations of Africa: *The Lion King* (1994) is an example of an animated film that excludes people and their culture, and all evidence thereof, from its depiction of Africa, and depicts Africa as one continuous land, without its complexities. The myth of Africa as a homogenous, continuous mass of land, according to Harth, was used to rationalise the colonial scramble for land in Africa, as well as the division of land into colonies, creating borders where the colonisers saw fit (14). By deeming Africa as homogenous, the colonisers justified their ignoring of the differences between groups of people when dividing the land (Harth14). This myth presented an oversimplified understanding of Africa (Harth 18). The myth depicting Africa as a vast and empty (void of human inhabitants) landscape was one which allowed the colonisers to feel entitled to own the land, as it was then perceived to be open to annexing (Reynolds 61)

There are two dominant colonial stereotypes concerning Africa. These stereotypes will be examined in the analysis of the case studies in the third and fourth chapters. The first dominant colonial stereotype views Africa as a paradise – an idyllic place of beauty - "uncorrupted and untainted by the evils of modernism and modern civilisation" (Nelson 70). It is a romanticised wilderness containing the "original innocence of nature". This image of "the true Africa, undamaged and unspoiled", "untainted" by technological developments, often excludes modern Africans (Nelson 70-71). It is supposedly vast, sparsely populated, with beautiful scenery that alludes to primitiveness and an undeveloped state. This primeval, idealised notion of unblemished nature is charming, and it appealed to many Europeans who were disillusioned with industrialisation at the time (Wilke 288). African cultures and nature were reduced to serve as placeholders for European understandings of "naturalness" (Wilke 290). There is a nostalgia associated with this romanticised stereotype; Europe was believed to have become "over-civilised" and to have lost its connection with nature. Africa was a place of refuge, retreat and revival. It was regarded as quaint in its primitiveness, "noble" in its child-like innocence, and uncorrupted due to its simplistic and backward nature (Loomba46). Robert Nelson states that "fantasy sells"; the Edenic image of Africa is enjoyed and consumed worldwide, most commonly in urban spaces (84). The concept of the safari is an example of this and will be discussed later in this chapter. This research will, in the third and fourth chapters, discuss this idealised and romanticised stereotype of Africa, as it is evident in both *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013).

This romanticised idea of Africa locates Africa as timeless – trapped outside of time (Harth 6). Harth writes about the myth of timeless Africa:

> ... [Africa and Africans] have not changed over time so their behaviors in the present represent a certain "timelessness". Therefore, viewing them now is like stepping into the past. Furthermore, this is not just their past, but a past representative of all of humanity. Thus, they represent an earlier, less evolved form of "civilized" humanity. European colonizers invoked this notion to demonstrate that European civilization was the top of the evolutionary hierarchy (6)

The idea of Africa as timeless also denotes a lack of history, thus implying that African cultures are unchanging and static, rather than dynamic (Harth 10). The concept of Africa having no history also promotes the belief that the colonisers brought history to the continent; it falsely justifies the disregarding of African cultures and history (Hath 11). This stereotype of Africa as trapped outside of time was thus used during the colonial era to reinforce the problematic idea of European superiority (Harth 6).

The second stereotype commonly depicts Africa as a place of "famine, war, poverty and corruption" (Sakota-Kokot 164). Here, Africa is viewed as dark, hostile and impenetrable; it is considered as an uncharted land of mystery: untamed and unknown (Jarosz 106-107). The dark (Africa) is deemed the binary opposite of the light (the West). Darkness, in this stereotype, is associated with a wild, bestial place and people. The wilderness is deemed a cruel, dangerous and primitive place (Wilke 288).

Both stereotypes (Africa as an Edenic paradise and Africa as a hostile, dark, savage land) deem Africa as being primitive. According to Hart, the idea of "primitive" gives the concept of "modern" a basis for comparison, and it is by this comparison that "primitive" is considered to be inferior to "modern" (Harth 10). The idea of Africa as primitive also implies a lack of progress (progress being associated with improvement, innovation and intelligence) (Harth 10). By depicting Africa as primitive, Europe could reinforce their own sense of superiority (Harth 10).

Colonialism in the nineteenth century also naturalised stereotypes that depict Africa as a site of colonial-style adventure (Van Eeden 2006:345). Applying the binary thinking, Africa was associated with the feminine: a "lesser" virgin landscape or body needing to be dominated by the "superior" European male: the conqueror. Many colonial images of Africa

served to "satisfy the perspective of the European male as conqueror – of nature, of the foreign space, of woman" (Wilke 291).

The concept of a safari[2] stems from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when Europeans and Americans would travel to Africa for hunting and recreation (Staples 392). Since the establishment of nature reserves and wildlife parks, and more stringent laws regarding hunting, the safari has become "commodified and transformed into a more benign (but no less significant in its impact on indigenous peoples) form of photographic and eco-tourism" (Staples 392). The safari, considered as an "adventure" of "exploration and discovery" is usually experienced through the means of a camera: the camera is used to document encounters with the African landscape, wildlife, and the people. The photographic and filmic medium has "provided the social and technological means for re-imagining African cultural and natural landscapes in the twentieth century" (Staples 393). Although filmic technology has progressed since the Voyages of Discovery, Staples notes:

> ...The image-making practices of western travellers in Africa remained embedded in nineteenth-century narratives and visual tropes of travel and exploration. Many early twentieth-century cinematic adventures continued to be framed in the heroic mode of mid to late-nineteenth century explorers, scientists, missionaries and others. Sensationalistic tales of adventure and discovery in the British and American press...had solidified the archetypal figure of the “explorer” in the reader’s imagination and perpetuated stereotypical imagery of Africa and its peoples (393).

An explorer-adventurer hero is idealised, and his adventures are documented visually. Stemming from a growing fascination with travel, adventure and exploration (spurred by an increasing volume of visual materials regarding the "explorer-filmmaker"), the stereotype of a "wild", "primitive" Africa ready to be explored has been reinforced (Staples 393). The idea that the explorer or adventurer "discovers" supposedly new territories is a colonial construct, since it overlooks the fact that there were people residing in and familiar with the land before the arrival of the colonial explorers, with established cultures and societies (Konkobo 1095).

[2] The word safari is derived from the Swahili word for journey.

Taylor Swift's *Wildest Dreams*



Figure 4: Screenshot from Taylor Swift's *Wildest Dreams*, "Wildest Dreams", Dir. Joseph Kahn. Perf. Taylor Swift, Youtube. TaylorSwiftVEVO, 30 Aug. 2015, Web, 23 Sept. 2016.

A contemporary example of the image of the idealised heroic adventurer in Africa can be seen in the music video of Taylor Swift's *Wildest Dreams* (2015). The video is set in Africa at the peak of colonialism. In the music video, Africa is depicted as a vast, homogenous, wild land, void of people (except for the colonists), but full of animals, as seen in **Figure 4**. The video romanticises the colonial era, creating what Matt Carotenuto terms "colonial nostalgia". James Kassaga Arinaitwe and Viviane Rutabingwa argue that:

> Swift's music is entertaining for many. She should absolutely be able to use any location as a backdrop. But she packages our continent as the backdrop for her romantic songs devoid of any African person or storyline, and she sets the video in a time when the people depicted by Swift and her co-stars killed, dehumanized and traumatized millions of Africans. That is beyond problematic.

The music video also references the concept of safari, reiterating the stereotypes and representations associated with the safari films, standing "on the shoulders of [over] half a century of Hollywood films set in an Africa full of pale faces" (Carotenuto).

Safari films, finding their roots in safari fiction literature and in the early twentieth century Euro-American fascination with ideas of "adventure", "discovery" and "exploration", increased in production and popularity in the 1920s with the rise motorised travel and more mobile film equipment (Staples 393-394). Safari films have subsequently become a genre of film, which Staples describes as such:

> The journey (or safari) frames the overall narrative structure of films that unfold as a series of sequential (at times disjointed) events along the traveller's route – encounters with African animals and peoples, celebratory scenes of arrival and departure, dangerous crossings and natural obstacles, touristic detours and side trips. Sequences of travel and work are often punctuated by touristic visits to indigenous villages and periods of rest and recreation in safari camps. There is a preoccupation with panoramic vistas and frequent panning of animals and indigenous peoples as if revealed for the first time. Scenes of the traveller's encounters with Africans and natural landscapes are highly variegated, interlacing myriad forms of “first contact” with African peoples, wild animals, natural landscapes and exotic flora... Encounters with indigenous peoples may be suspenseful or serendipitous...Local Africans may suddenly appear on the road, only to be spontaneously enlisted in support of overcoming obstacles along the journey, or they may be dramatically framed in arrival scenes that celebrate discovery and difference. The capture and collection of exotic sequences like these became modern day trophies for traveling filmmakers – precious souvenirs that preserved vivid images of exotic encounters... (394)

In the safari film, local cultures are reduced to spectacles, and the film seeks to create a "primitive", "exotic" and "authentic" documentation of the people and place. The safari film depicts Western culture, technology and ideologies as superior to those of African peoples, and reinforces colonial stereotypes (Staples 394).

Neo-colonialism

> A country may be both postcolonial (in the sense of being formally independent) and neo-colonial (in the sense of remaining economically and/ or culturally dependent) at the same time (Loomba 12).

The term "neo-colonialism" is broad and is used in various contexts, often implying slightly different definitions. The prefix "neo" means new or recent, so the term "neo-colonialism" means "the new colonialism" (Lewis). It is "control by a powerful country of its former colonies (or other less developed countries) by economic pressures" (Lewis). Neo-colonialism is colonialism through indirect means. The term is commonly used to describe the continued inequalities in economic relations between countries resulting from colonialism (Colonialism and Neocolonialism – Boundless...). However, the aspect of neo-colonialism that this research will discuss is the continuation of colonial representations and stereotypes and the domination of Hollywood models of film.

Solanas, Fernando, and Octavio Gettino write about the "Third Cinema" (a term denoting the cinema typically of previously colonised countries that resists colonial power structures, neo-colonialism, and the capitalist Hollywood structure of film) in their article *Towards a Third Cinema*. They write:

> The culture, including cinema, of a neo-colonised country is just the expression of an overall dependence that generated model and values born from the needs of imperialist expression (Solanas & Gettino 268).

Neo-colonialism convinces a dependent nation of their reliance on another nation (whom the authors term as the "oppressor") by persuading them of their "inferiority" (Solanas & Gettino 268). The dependent people then learn to admire those they deem as "superior" and aim to become like their colonisers; creative possibilities become defined in relation to the coloniser. Dependency becomes normalised and people grow unaware of their neo-colonial condition, and thus become unable to confront or challenge it (Solanas & Gettino 269).

Mass communication (such as film) plays a pertinent role in normalising neo-colonial stereotypes (Solanas & Gettino 269). Media (in the form of television and film) often educate children and present them with a culture and world view that can easily be perceived as "real, true and rational" (Solanas & Gettino 269). Since commercial cinema mostly conforms to the model of Hollywood pictures, the structure, language and concepts of Hollywood are presented as the defining basis of what film should be (Solanas & Gettino 269). Most Hollywood films are targeted towards a mass audience and thus many films are made

according to the "Classical Hollywood formula"[3] – a term used by Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson to describe a specific theoretic approach to film history (Bordwell et al xv; Sakota-Kokot 164). The conflict between the hero and villain is foregrounded, and often, in order to create tension and contrast, the settings and characters are stereotyped. The power that Hollywood holds over international cinema, and the understanding thereof, could be classified as a form of neo-colonialism.

It remains a problem that African-made films are often funded by Euro-American organisations, who dictate the subject matter of the film and the ideologies the film presents (Nkunzimana 91). This is frequently due to a lack of support for local filmmakers by government and local businesses, due to the underestimating of the socio-economic impact of filmmaking. Nkuzimana proposes a solution to this, by stating that:

> To counter these shadows of colonial cinema that stubbornly linger in African film-making, the most imperative initiatives are to support and promote the audio-visual, to help the new generation to freely produce films that are adapted to their taste and needs. First, political authorities have to be convinced that boosting this sector is a path to sociocultural autonomy and economic development. Second, though the subversive potential of cinema might fall under suspicion in these young and unstable democracies, a way must be found to restore trust between politicians and film-makers in order to build a space of creative freedom and solidarity for the production of images adapted to the people's reality (91).

Currently, in South Africa, the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) aims to counter this lack of local funding. Its aim is to fund the "development, production, marketing and distribution of [South African] films", increase the number of films produced and consumed locally, and to assist with the training of South African filmmakers (NFVF Overview). Such efforts are necessary in challenging the Neo-colonialism that exists in the film industry.

Postcolonialism:

[3] It should be noted that this formula is not used exclusively by Hollywood filmmakers.

The term "postcolonialism" ("post" meaning "after") means more than the formal transfer of governance. De Alva (in Loomba) states that most colonies, after gaining independence,

> ...established their own nation-states in the image of the motherland, tinged by the local colour of some precontact practices and symbols, framed by many imperial period adaptations and suffused with European ideals, practices and material objects (13).

Although independence had been officially gained, in most instances, colonial values and white supremacy were retained (Loomba 14). The term "postcolonialism" does not describe a specific event (such as the official day of a nation's independence) or what occurs after colonialism, but is rather a process that contests colonial domination and the dominion of Western culture (Loomba 14).

There has been much criticism of postcolonialism (Loomba 20). One of the dangers of postcolonialism is implying that colonialism is the singular history of a people or nation, and that all history revolves around it. It also often falls prey to nostalgia and a longing for the past, overlooking social realities of the present. A tendency to idealise and romanticise pre-colonial history (this "nativism") motivates attempts to regain and recover pre-colonial identities and cultures. This is not the intention of postcolonialism (Loomba 20-21).

Postcolonialism, in this report, refers to the critique of and response to colonialism and the legacy thereof. It is a critique of colonial ideologies (Van Eeden 347). It is not anti-European thought, but is rather the

> ...product of the encounter between Europe and the worlds it once made into its distant possessions. In showing how the colonial and imperial experience has been codified in representations, divisions between disciplines, their methodologies and their objects, it invites us to undertake an alternative reading of our common modernity (Mbembe 11).

The aim of the postcolonial discourse is to highlight the "colonial syndrome" and dismantle it. This research will join the postcolonial discourse by offering a critique of *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013)

In summation, colonialism stereotyped Africa as a single, homogenous place, void of people, which was deemed dark, unexplored (thus requiring exploration by the colonist), wild, dangerous and uncivilised. It was also depicted as a place of "untainted" nature, primitive and idyllic. Colonialism initiated and perpetuated the notion that Africa is incapable of representing itself, but must conform to Euro-American notions and stereotypes. Neo-colonialism exists in various forms and can be seen manifested as dependency on Hollywood film structures and Euro-American ideals and finances.

CHAPTER 2:
Colonial representation in Film

This chapter will discuss representation, specifically colonial representation, and how it relates to film as a visual medium. Much of the theory in this chapter is derived from the writings of Stuart Hall. The single story as described by Adichie will also be discussed.

Stuart Hall, in the book *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* defines representation as ""to present", "to image", "to depict" – to offer a depiction of something else" (6). It can also be used to describe "that which *stands in for* something else" in the way that a leader represents, or "stands in for", his or her people (Hall 6). Representation can also be a method of creating meaning. Language, which communicates this meaning, "operates as a representational system" and is therefore able to construct meaning (Hall 1). Signs and symbols, whether conveyed through visual images (such as film), literature, or auditory mediums, embody "concepts, ideas and feelings" (Hall 1). Meaning, concepts, feelings and even culture are communicated through representation (Hall 4).

> We give things meaning by how we represent them – the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce, the emotions we associate with them, the ways we classify and conceptualise them, the values we place on them (Hall 2).

These things are generated, taught and learned – they are not inherent.

Elements of the natural and material world such as sounds, images, projected light, body language – that which makes up language[4] – Hall states have their significance:

> ...not in what they are, but what they do, their function. They construct meaning and transmit it. They signify. They don't have any clear meaning in themselves. Rather, they are the vehicles or media which carry meaning because they operate as symbols, which stand for or represent (i.e. symbolise) the meanings we wish to communicate. (Hall 5)

[4] Here, the term "language" denotes, quite broadly, the tools of communication.

Representations thus encode concepts and feelings so that the meaning can be decoded in a similar way by others. Representation becomes a way of creating, communicating and circulating meaning (Hall 5). It is the way that concepts are expressed (Hall 16).

Regimes of representation

This section will discuss the concept of a regime of representation as defined by Stuart Hall in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Images are read alongside other similar images, which can serve to both create and reiterate stereotypes. This is relevant to the interpretation of *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013), since any depiction of Africa that they offer is interpreted against a history of representations of Africa and against prevailing stereotypes. Although there is often truth in stereotypes (for example, Thomas Baines' paintings (to be discussed in this section) were documentations of his experiences, and photographs such as **Figure 7** capture what really is in front of the camera's lens), they offer a single-faceted understanding. This section will focus on the history of colonial representation that depicts Africa as a land of many wild animals and beautiful landscape, overlooking other aspects and complexities.

Visual images are one of the most prevalent means of communication in today's globalised world (Hall 5). Images create knowledge and enable it to be circulated. Hall (20) argues that most of "what we know of the world is how we see it represented". Images convey concepts. However, images are not understood in isolation, but are rather interpreted together with other existing images from various timeframes (Hall 232). Meaning is accumulated; while an image may have a specific meaning of its own, it carries a spectrum of accumulated meaning from other images (Hall 232). This "whole repertoire of imagery and visual effects" can be described as "a *regime of representation*" (Hall 232). *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013) thus are influenced by preceding imagery, and the films' meanings are affected accordingly.

In medieval times, the West considered Africa as a mysterious place, since, in Europe, there was little information regarding it (Hall 239). However, it was viewed in a positive light. This positive perception of Africa by Europe changed when European scholars declared the people of Africa to be descendants of Ham[5] – cursed to the role of servants and

[5] According to the Biblical account in Genesis 9, Ham was the second son of Noah and the father of the nation of Canaan. Noah cursed him by saying "Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers" (*New International Version*, Gen. 9.25).

slaves (Hall 239). By the seventeenth century, Europeans associated Africa with the primitive and with nature (either as a paradise or in opposition to humankind and thus to be conquered), and was contrasted against the "civilised" (which was how Europe viewed itself) (Hall 239). This notion was reinforced in the Enlightenment era in Europe when societies and people were ranked on an evolutionary scale spanning from barbarian to civilised, and Africans were labelled as the least evolved and developed (Hall 239). Europeans thought Africa to be "marooned and historically abandoned...a fetish land, inhabited by dervishes and witch doctors" (Mc Cllintock in Hall 239). It was during the peak of the Enlightenment era in the seventeenth century that Europeans began their exploration and colonisation of Africa, and thus representations of Africa as lesser, uncivilised, and even (in some cases) uninhabited, were useful to Europe for the justification of colonisation and the promotion of the Europe's assumed superiority (Delpar 448). By dehumanising Africans, Europeans could justify the capturing of Africans as slaves to serve expanding Europeans settlements (Northrump 191-193). As colonisation progressed, and images from the exploration of the Africa by European explorers were produced and circulated, the representation of Africa was used to justify imperial expansion (Hall 240). Images were also produced of the white explorer adventuring in Africa (such as **Figure 7**), encountering "exotic" people and animals (Hall 240). From the repeated production of imperial imagery, a trope of representation depicting Africa as a primitive wilderness, inferior to Europe, and as a site of colonial adventure (as discussed in Chapter 1), was created.



Figure 5: Herd of Buffalo opposite Garden Island, Victoria Falls, Thomas Baines. 1862-1865, Royal Geographical Society, *The Athenaeum*, The Athenaeum, 28 Dec. 2014, Web, 23 Oct. 2016

Figure 5 is an example of an image produced in the nineteenth century by explorer and painter Thomas Baines, and is an example of a representation produced during colonialism, contributing to this regime of representation. Thomas Baines was a painter who accompanied David Livingstone on his expedition in 1858 (Godby 30). He was commissioned by Livingstone to create:

> ...faithful representations of the general features of the country through which we shall pass", "drawings of wild animals and birds", records of "specimens of useful and rare plants, fossils and reptiles", and drawings of "average specimens of the different tribes...for the purposes of ethnology" (Livingstone in Godby 31).

The intent of Baines' paintings was to further scientific knowledge of the regions of southern Africa, by gathering and recording information; this knowledge was to be used for the purpose of colonisation (Godby 31). Michael Godby writes that

> Baines was obviously predisposed to celebrate the Victoria Falls, and certain other examples of African scenery, with the poetic aspect of his artistic identity, that was more concerned with sensibility than it was with the scientific recording of fact (38).

He depicted a dramatic Africa, focussing on the scenery, and creating imagery that was less scientific than commercial, in which "truth was of less importance than spectacle" (Godby 38). Baines' paintings "invoked the dramatic themes of hunting, the progress of the expedition, and the advance of civilisation", and he idealised the imagery and conformed to existing stereotypes to appeal to the London market (Godby 39). Baines' paintings, such as *Herd of Buffalo opposite Garden Island, Victoria Falls* (**Figure 5**), were read as factual documentations of the land and its flora and fauna, and thus his paintings were an integral part in shaping perceptions of Africa in the nineteenth century, especially that of it being an idyllic, dramatic landscape[6].



Figure 6: Exotic Landscape with Lion and Lioness in Africa, Henri Rousseau, 1903-1910, Private Collection, *The Athenaeum*, The Athenaeum, 20 July 2012, Web, 23 Oct. 2016.

[6] See Chapter 1 for the description of the Edenic stereotype of Africa.

Henri Rosseau was an artist near Paris in the late nineteenth century, who, although was at first deemed incompetent, later became an influential, admired painter (Adams 452). Rosseau never travelled to Africa, and so his impression of the continent would have been formed by that which was documented by colonial explorers. Sooke explains:

> [Henri Rosseau] relied heavily upon a lavish album of 200 illustrations of wild animals published by the Galeries Lafayette department store. His ‘savage’ jungle visions, therefore, were informed by cultivated Parisian life.

His depiction of Africa in **Figure 6** was a representation of other representations, informed by the common perceptions of Africa in the early 1900s and the prevailing stereotypes, rather than first-hand experience of the actual environment. Rosseau's paintings would be read alongside imagery such as that of Baines'. In the same way that colonial representations served to inform his art, his art, in turn, would reinforce and continue the stereotypical depiction of Africa as a wild, primitive jungle.



Figure 7: Hunting Car, 1900, The Explora, Web, 21 Oct. 2016.



Figure 8: A screenshot of the Safari West website,"African Safaris & Pricing - Safari West." Safari West, N.p., n.d. Web, 23 Sept. 2016.

Figure 7, a photograph taken in 1900 and during the peak of colonialism, is an example of the regime of the colonial explorer in a wild, paradisiacal Africa, and depicts three men on a hunting safari in Africa. **Figure 8,** advertising *Safari West*'s tours, is a contemporary example of the continuation of this regime, as it uses imagery that depicts the European explorer in an Africa full of beautiful landscapes and animals, void of people. "Africa" is referred to more commonly in the text than the specific country or region of the safari. In the description of the safari, the landscapes and the animals serve as entertainment for the "explorer's" "exotic" "adventure".



Figure 9: Screenshot of the Zicasso African Safaris webpage, "African Safari Tours," *Zicasso: Handcrafted Travel*, Zicasso, 17 Oct. 2013, Web, 30 Sept. 2016.

Figure 9 is a screenshot of the Zicasso website. The site's description reads:

> An African safari isn't a passive experience. It isn't just about glimpsing wildlife. You're enveloped in *their* world, absolutely surrounded by the drama and charm of the planet's greatest theatre... (Zicasso)

The emphasis on "their" in this text positions Africa as a distinctive "Other". Bruner discusses the notion of "Other" as constructed during the Enlightenment and prevailing through the colonial era, and still persisting today:

> The basic Western narrative of the uncivilised Other is a reflexive image of how the Westerners view themselves, in that the definition of what the Other is specifies what the West is not. The Other is in a more primitive stage of evolutionary development. But along with this narrative and its associated images there is also an admiration for the freedom of the pastoral life, with its

> promise of release from the demands of an unyielding modernity, unshackled from the pressures of time, untied from the dreary routines of civilised life, unburdened from the weight of material possessions. (Bruner 388).

According to Brantlinger, the concept of Other, and the notion that, outside Europe, people were in a more primitive (thus inferior) stage of social evolution – being uncivilised and without culture, was used to justify colonialism[7] (166). Brantlinger writes about the perspective commonly adopted by the upper and middle class Victorians:

> There might be many stages of social evolution and many seemingly bizarre customs and "superstitions" in the world, but there was only one "civilization," one path of "progress," one "true religion." "Anarchy" was many-tongued; "culture" spoke with one voice. (166-167)

The Other was thus seen as lesser to the assumedly superior culture of the West.

Africa is described on this website as "the world's greatest theatre" – a spectacle – for the visitor's entertainment and consumption (Zicasso). The idea of "tailoring your dream safari" places Africa in a passive role, subject to the spectator, existing purely for the enjoyment of the person participating in the safari (Zicasso). According to Van Eeden, a place, setting or location has cultural, political, social and economic implications, and thus gendered constructs of power are identified by the way in which land is represented (347). The idea of Africa described in the Zicasso website overlooks the implications of the place, and sells a subservient understanding of the land. As argued in the first chapter, the culture associated with the safari is a colonial one, which Van Eeden describes as being linked to ideas of exploration, travel and adventure undertaken by white urbanised males (348).

Images are read in conjunction with one another, creating and emphasising stereotypes. While it is true that there are many wild animals and beautiful landscapes in Africa, this is not all there is to the continent. The problem lies in the repetition of this single aspect – the reinforcing of the single story.

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[7] This justified discrimination against those considered Other, since Other was equated with lesser and deemed inferior (see Chapter 1). The concept of the uncivilised Other relates to the idea of the "White Man's Burden", which is a phrase originating from a poem written by Rudyard Kipling, and describes the justification of European imperialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Dictionary.com).

The single story

> *What we know about how to be who we are comes from stories. It comes from the novels, the movies, the fashion magazines. It comes from popular culture. In other words, it's the agents of our imagination who really shape who we are (*Abani*).*

In a 2009 TEDTalk, Chimamanda Adichie speaks of the dangers of a "single story". The "single story" can be defined as a single-dimensional and very limited understanding of a person or people (Adichie). In order to create a "single story", one needs to repeatedly depict one particular, limited aspect of a people or place, which enforces the notion that the depicted people or place are entirely and only that singular aspect (Adichie). Through repetition, the single aspect may come to be perceived as the all-encompassing truth: it becomes a single story. Repeatedly, Africa is represented as:

> a place of beautiful landscapes, beautiful animals, and incomprehensible people, fighting senseless wars, dying of poverty and AIDS, unable to speak for themselves and waiting to be saved by a kind, white foreigner...a place of negatives, of difference, of darkness, of people who, in the words of the wonderful poet Rudyard Kipling, are "half devil, half child" (Adichie).

This representation of Africa, and the repetition thereof, carries a condescending undertone, and can be disempowering.

Representation and the "single story" are closely linked to power – Adichie explains:

> It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power... Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person.

The single story overlooks complexities, dynamics, experiences and other stories and forms flat stereotypes and incomplete understandings (Adichie). It removes dignity and creates power imbalances whereby equality is unrecognisable (Adichie). Stereotypes are problematic not in their lack of truth but in that they are limited, single-sided and incomplete. "They make one story the only story" (Adichie). It is thus important to tell other stories that do not conform entirely to the single story. As Adichie states:

> Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity.

Stories are therefore significant, since they are a powerful medium of representation, holding the potential to shape ideologies, whether good or bad. A story can either reinforce stereotypes or challenge them by offering a different understanding. The concept of the single story relates to the regime of representation; with Africa having been represented as either an Edenic paradise, untouched by people and inhabited by animals, or as a savage, dangerous wilderness of darkness, the concept of the single story is very relevant, as these representations have become the single story of Africa that has been repeated for many decades. Chapters three and four will discuss whether *Adventures in Zambezia* and *Khumba* are reiterating this single story of Africa.

Representation and film

"Representation is made ‘‘real’’ to an audience through the medium of film" (Rekhari 125)

Film is a representational medium (Neupert 532). It consists of images (a series of representations rapidly flashing by, giving the illusion of motion) that present the viewer with an "illusionary time and space" – an "impression of reality" (Neupert 532). This section will refer to narrative film as opposed to documentary or experimental film. It is necessary here to mention that the films *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013) do not strive for realism, although the setting of *Khumba* does attempt a photorealistic representation of the Karoo desert. While the films are fictional narratives, they address real social elements, such as Ubuntu in *Adventures in Zambezia* and discrimination based on difference in *Khumba*. Susan Hayward (in van der Rede) comments on potential problematic outcomes of realism in narrative films:

> Generally speaking, realist films address social issues. However, because the narrative closure of the films tends to provide easy solutions, this form of realism on the whole serves only to naturalize social problems and divisions and not provide any deep insight into causes (19).

A common occurrence, according to van der Rede, is the simplification events or social issues so as to frame them within the format of a narrative feature film (20). Narrative films are, according to Sochack (in van der Rede), "films that tell a story, a fiction about created characters interacting in situations that are plausible once the premise of the tale is established" (20). Narrative films are subjective, and adapt reality to fit into a story and adhere to the constraints of a feature film (van der Rede 20).

It is impossible to represent anything without embedded ideologies; there is no all-encompassing "true" representation (Mboti 318). Film does not (nor does it strive to) represent reality "as it is"; it is, by its very nature, a construction, and is thus tailored by the filmmaker specifically for a chosen audience (Mboti 318). This is particularly true with animation, where every element and aspect of the film is constructed. It does not pretend to be "true" and is thus ‘representational’.

The power of film lies in its ability to construct and convey ideologies; in "showing the world as one wants, or prefers, it" (Mboti 319). In film, the image presented to the viewer is the result of the filmmaker's imagination (Mboti 320). The filmmaker choses to represent objects, characters, settings, scenery – all the elements that make up the film – in a specific way, usually with the purpose of driving the narrative (Mboti 319). Nothing can be represented "neutrally" or void of meaning; every choice of the filmmaker carries inherent meaning. The subject matter is less important than the way in which it is presented (Mboti 320). "The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera" (Lange in Butcher 1). The camera, whether used for photography, film, or a virtual camera in digital environments, forms an important part in the way in which people, objects and places are understood and perceived by others (Butcher 1-2).

Most Hollywood films attempt to hide the fact that they are fictitious constructs (Mobti 327). Hollywood has created

> ...a dynamic history of rules and conventions meant at hiding both narrative construction and cinematic apparatus. We are meant to experience cinematic events as directly as possible, to follow the circumstances of fictional characters as if they were real rather than representations constructed for us by others" (Sobchak & Sobchak in Mboti 327).

The purpose of the film is to entertain the viewer by presenting them with a seamlessly-edited, believable story – with films that the viewer wants to believe to be "true" (Mboti 327). These films ask the viewer to suspend their disbelief for the duration of the film, and so believe that what is being portrayed is "real" (Mboti 327-328). The viewer is not meant to question what they are watching, but rather to believe it. Because of this, such films appear to hold authority over what is "true" and how things should be represented (Mobti 327).

According to some critics, the animated film is the "purest" form of cinema, since every movement is created rather than recorded. For example:

> Bugs Bunny... never existed as a referential being to be photographed. Animation proves the ultimate power of the cinema – to animate, or "bring to life", rather than simply to recreate – but even within the realm of animation there is a wide range of representational styles and options (Neupert 532).

Borthaiser writes that, even though animated films are blatant constructs, often depicting a fantastical, imagined world, they still strongly reflect reality and contain embedded ideologies. Louis Althusser (in Borthaiser) states that "ideology is a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence". Cinema is authoritative in that it presents the viewer with predetermined ideologies; the viewer is positioned in such a way that the perceptions and ideologies posed in the film are depicted as "normal". Kaplan (in Borthaiser) writes that "Hollywood's representations unconsciously reflect or embody the colonial imagination". Storytelling conveys ideologies and legitimatises them; it is necessary to carefully consider the ideologies portrayed in an animated film.

Alongside the fascination with Africa's landscapes, whether jungle or savannah, Hollywood cinema has a tendency to depict the people living in Africa as flattened stereotypes – lacking individuality or characterisation (Hagen 7). Binyavanga Wainaina wrote the satirical article *How to Write about Africa* commenting on the popular ways in which Africa is represented. He writes:

> Always use the word ‘Africa’ or ‘Darkness’ or ‘Safari’ in your title. Subtitles may include the words ‘Zanzibar’, ‘Masai’, ‘Zulu’, ‘Zambezi’, ‘Congo’, ‘Nile’, ‘Big’, ‘Sky’, ‘Shadow’, ‘Drum’, ‘Sun’ or ‘Bygone’. Also useful are words such as ‘Guerrillas’, ‘Timeless’, ‘Primordial’ and ‘Tribal’. Note that ‘People’ means

> Africans who are not black, while 'The People' means black Africans... In your text, treat Africa as if it were one country. It is hot and dusty with rolling grasslands and huge herds of animals and tall, thin people who are starving... The continent is full of deserts, jungles, highlands, savannahs and many other things, but your reader doesn't care about all that, so keep your descriptions romantic and evocative and unparticular. Animals...must be treated as well rounded, complex characters. They speak (or grunt while tossing their manes proudly) and have names, ambitions and desires. They also have family values: see how lions teach their children? Elephants are caring, and are good feminists or dignified patriarchs. So are gorillas. Never, ever say anything negative about an elephant or a gorilla. Elephants may attack people's property, destroy their crops, and even kill them. Always take the side of the elephant... Any short Africans who live in the jungle or desert may be portrayed with good humour (unless they are in conflict with an elephant or chimpanzee or gorilla, in which case they are pure evil). (Wainaina)

These stereotypes are present in many Hollywood films about Africa, such as *Out of Africa* or *The Lion King* (1994), and are reiterated in documentaries such as *Africa* (narrated by David Attenborough)[8]. Hagen (5-6) explains:

> Since the times of Dr Livingstone and Joseph Conrad, Africa's untamed landscapes and exotic wildlife have long been a source of fascination for Western pop culture consumers. Hollywood films accentuate the African landscape through the insertion of detailed shots of the earth and animals combined, most notably, with sweeping long shots of uninhabited terrain. This attention to the environment insinuates a return to nature, a time removed from intellect and ruled by instinct. Democracy and due process do not exist here—only the laws of survival.

The recurring representation of Africa by the West in such a light has reduced the concept of Africa to a few, simplified characteristics, and naturalised these stereotypes (Hall

[8] The description on the IMDb website for this documentary series reads:
"Africa, the world's wildest continent. David Attenborough takes us on an awe-inspiring journey through one of the most diverse places in the world. We visit deserts, savannas, and jungles and meet up with some of Africa's amazing wildlife."
Again, the focus is on the animals and landscapes, continuing the trope of a wild, uninhabited Africa.

249). Stereotypes, as Hall (258) explains, seize select characteristics, and reduce the entirety of the subject into those few traits, and then "exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development to eternity". Stereotyping occurs when there are power differences, and, as discussed in Chapter 1, is an instrument of maintaining and fixing these differences (Hall 259). After the abolishing of colonialism, the regime of colonial representation and the existing stereotypes did not simply disappear (Hall 250).

Animation is a diverse medium. Cholodenko in Wells (*The Animation Manifesto*) writes that "not only is animation a form of film, but film is a form of animation" (96). The term "animation" is derived from the Latin word "animare" which means "to give life to" (Wells, *Understanding Animation* 10). It refers to the "artificial creation of the illusion of movement in inanimate lines or forms" (Wells, *Understanding Animation* 10). It is a highly expressive, dynamic medium that is cross- and inter-disciplinary. It offers a vast collection of possibilities regarding narrative, ways of telling stories, aesthetics and graphic styles (Wells, *The Fundamentals of Animation* 7). Since animation is created rather than recorded, filmmakers can have an immense amount of control over how their films are constructed and the final results. According to Wells (*The Animation Manifesto*), due to the medium's constructed nature and versatility, animation enables "the telling of stories that otherwise have no vehicle for expression" (99).

Adventures in Zambezia and *Khumba* are both digitally animated films that use stylised, caricatured anthropomorphic characters to tell a story aimed at children. The choice to use animal characters in *Adventures in Zambezia* and *Khumba* was a deliberate one. Anthony Silverston, director of *Khumba* and co-writer of *Adventures in Zambezia*, in the interview conducted for the purposes of this research (see Appendix), outlines the practical reasons for choosing to use animal characters rather than human characters. He mentions that animal performance is more forgiving than human performance, since audiences notice mistakes with human performance far more readily than with animal performance (Silverston). This was a necessary consideration since there were many animators on the Triggerfish team with limited experience (Silverston). Another reason was that, while the ages of human characters can be easily determined, the ages of animal characters are more indeterminate, and thus appeal to audiences of a broader age group (Silverston). Animals are also not associated with specific racial or cultural groups, and thus appeal to a more universal audience (Silverston). Stuart Forrest, CEO of Triggerfish Animation Studios, motivates the choice of animal characters:

> For storytellers around the world, animals serve as wonderful symbols and metaphors for human life, that are simple, easily understood, visually interesting and often funny! They also cross cultural barriers, so that the audience doesn't bring preconceptions and prejudices into the characters based along racial lines, but can engage with the issues that are presented free from cultural baggage.

Animal characters also have the advantage of being cute and easily translatable into readily sellable merchandise (Silverston). It is evident, then, that the film's commercial nature and its target audience of international viewers greatly affected this choice.

In the next two chapters, the theory discussed in the first two chapters shall be used to analyse and critique *Adventures in Zambezia* (Chapter 3) and *Khumba* (Chapter 4) by Triggerfish, a South African animation studio. The analyses will question whether the films perpetuate the single story of Africa and continue the colonial regime of representation.

Setting and character will be discussed. The setting of a film is never only a backdrop for the events occurring on screen; setting contributes to the themes, symbolism, characterisation and narrative (Nierop 123). Even when the setting is used for aesthetic purposes, it conveys an immense amount of information, whether literal or figurative. It is associated with the mental state of the character, their development, and the mood and tone of a scene (Nierop 124). The setting of a film can somewhat become a character in a film in that it has a direct influence on the narrative (for example, when a character is battling the elements, attempting to survive in extreme conditions, they are directly affected by their setting) (Nierop 125). The narrative of a story is centred around and told through the characters, particularly the hero, and are thus a crucial element of a film (Kuhn 45).

CHAPTER 3: Analysis of *Adventures in Zambezia*

This chapter will discuss *Adventures in Zambezia*, focussing on colonial stereotypes. The analysis will begin with a brief discussion of the title and the trailer. The setting of the film will be discussed, namely Katungu, Zambezia: the city of birds, and the surrounding areas. The characters that will be reviewed will be the Marabou storks and how they are represented, and Budzo as an embodiment of nature (as opposed to culture).

The film, directed by Wayne Thornley and written by Raffaella Delle Donne, Anthony Silverston, Wayne Thornley and Andrew Cook, was released in 2012 (IMDb). *Adventures in Zambezia* won the award for Best South African Feature Film in 2013 at the Durban International Film Festival, and was nominated for two Annie Awards (IMDb). The coming of age story follows a young falcon named Kai (voiced by Jeremy Suarez) who lives with his overprotective father, Tendai (voiced by Samuel L. Jackson). When he encounters a stork called Gogo and weaver named Tini (who are being chased by Marabous), he hears about Zambezia, a city of birds, and the Hurricanes[9], a group of birds serving to protect the city. After an argument with his father, he leaves for the city of Zambezia: a large baobab tree on an island amid the Victoria Falls. Tendai, concerned about Kai, follows him, and discovers a plot by the lizard Budzo, the villain of the film, to infiltrate the city by working with the Marabou storks, who have been excluded from the city. However, Budzo finds Tendai and captures him.

Meanwhile, in Zambezia, Kai joins the Hurricanes. During the annual spring festival in Zambezia, the Marabous, under orders from Budzo, kidnap the weaver birds and force them to weave a bridge for Budzo to cross the Zambezi river. Kai learns that he was born in Zambezia, Tendai and his mother founded the Hurricanes, and that Budzo was responsible for the murder of his mother. Kai, Gogo and Zoe (a bird that Kai's mother saved), rescue Tendai, but return to Zambezia too late to stop the installation of the bridge, which spans the distance between the island and mainland. Budzo betrays the Marabous, who then fight against the other lizards who are attempting to reach Zambezia. The bridge is broken and Budzo is defeated when he, like the other lizards, falls to his death. The film closes with the

[9] It should be noted that the term "hurricane" is regional-specific, and is used to describe tropical cyclones occurring over the North Atlantic and North-East Pacific ocean (Landsea). Such low-pressure systems occurring over the South-West Indian Ocean (which would be near the eastern coast of southern Africa) is referred to as a "tropical cyclone" (Landsea). The naming of this group of birds after a phenomenon occurring near North America reveals the American influence on *Adventures in Zambezia*.

continuation of the spring festival, and Kai, Zoe and the Marabou Morton being inaugurated as part of the Hurricanes.

Kermeliotis writes that the film is aimed at children aged five to eleven, and promotes the theme of *Ubuntu*, where Kai learns the value of community and team work, and how to live his life through those around him. According to Stuart Forrest, it addresses the theme of reconciliation with understanding from a South African perspective, influenced by our history. Wayne Thornley (in Kermeliotis), says that the film was targeted to audiences both in South Africa and internationally.

According to Stuart Forrest in the interview, *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012), the focus of the third chapter, was originally a story based on the Biblical parable of the prodigal son, but was developed into a story of grace and forgiveness with the central theme of Ubuntu: "that our humanity is only complete when we embrace the concept of inclusivity". Kai, the protagonist, learns the value of team work, and how to welcome those considered as "Other" (Silverston). The film also endeavoured to showcase the natural beauty of the Victoria Falls and the surrounding areas, plus the birdlife of the region (Forrest).

Discussion of the title

The title of the film *Adventures in Zambezia* stems from the name "Zambesia" given to the south-eastern area of Africa during the Victorian era, which today is known as Zimbabwe (IMDb). The Victorian era extended from the 1830s to 1901: the apex of the British Empire which, during that time, dominated over close to a quarter of the world's land and people (Mounfield & Sutcliffe 68-69). The name is associated with nostalgia for the colonial era (Style 74). It is interesting to note that the name of the film came from the name given to Zimbabwe – a former British colony – during the peak of colonialism. The word "adventure" is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as " an unusual and exciting or daring experience", "excitement associated with danger or the taking of risks", or "reckless or potentially hazardous action or enterprise". Africa has a history of being represented as a site of colonial adventure, and associated with safari adventures (as discussed in the previous chapters). The title *Adventures in Zambezia* does not allude to the central theme of Ubuntu, but rather emphasises the concept of adventure, thus reiterating the idea that Africa is still a site for colonial-style adventure.

Discussion of the trailer

The narrator of the trailer for *Adventures in Zambezia* introduces the viewer to the setting with the words, "Far away in the deepest part of Africa..." (TriggerfishAnimation). Africa is referred to as a homogenous place, seemingly unexplored, and equated with a fictitious place with by use of the term "far away". One could ask: far away from where? The narrator of the cinematic trailer also describes Zambezia as a city where all the birds "live together in perfect harmony, safe from the harsh law of the wild". This refers to the stereotype of Africa as a paradise, yet simultaneously a dangerous, wild place. The trailer claims, "Enter a world undiscovered by human eyes...", thus promoting the stereotype of Africa as a place void of human beings, and a site for colonial-style adventure.

Settings

Setting, as discussed in Chapter 2, is a crucial element to a film, especially in animated films where each element needs to be designed and created. It contributes to the themes, symbolism, characterisation and narrative (Nierop 123). *Adventures in Zambezia* is set predominantly in the city of birds (Zambezia, which is a tree jutting from the Victoria Falls), in Katungu (Kai and Tendai's home), an unspecified desert-like location, and in the surrounding areas of Zambezia.



Figure 10: Screenshot of the opening shot of *Adventures in Zambezia, Adventures in Zambezia,* directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

Figure 10 is a screenshot of the opening shot of *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012). The film opens with birds Gogo and Tini fleeing three Marabou storks that are pursuing them. The birds fly into a thunderstorm, which implies that the film is set in a dangerous place. It depicts the dangerous, uncontrollable aspect of nature and introduces the viewer to the notion of "darkest" Africa – a place of danger (described in previous chapters, and mentioned by Adichie as an aspect of the single story of Africa). It is a threatening situation, where Gogo and Tini not only face the menace of their pursuers, but are also fighting against the natural elements.

Katungu



Figure 11: Screenshot of Kai and Tendai's nest, *Adventures in Zambezia,* directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

Katungu (**Figure 11**) is the place where Kai and Tendai live. It is rocky and barren, a desolate place, hostile, harsh and dangerous. Katungu is a vague, fantastical location, set "somewhere in Africa". This conforms to the stereotype of Africa as one homogenous place thereby overlooking complex distinctions between cultures, peoples, languages, regimes and regions (as described in the first chapter by Sakota-Kokot (164)). The lack of specificity of location, and the omission of anything that alludes to human inhabitants, re-presents Africa as what Apter and Demissie describe as "a vast cultural and geographical blankness" (561). The setting is thus depicted as an unchanging nature exclusively for the animals.

Adventures in Zambezia reconstructs the Western fantasy of a primitive Africa, frozen in its natural state, without the troubles of modernity, consumerism and material possessions, where the daily struggle is basic survival (Bruner 388). For example, before Kai leaves Katungu to go to Zambezia, Tendai argues that, "We got everything we need to survive right here." Kai replies, "So that's what it's all about? Just surviving?" This conversation, set in the barren Katungu, implies that the daily routine of Kai and Tendai revolves around basic survival; their lifestyle is primitive.

Zambezia



Figure 12: Screenshot of Zambezia, *Adventures in Zambezia,* directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

Zambezia (**Figure 12**) represents an idealised paradise, in which birds (both predator and prey) live together in an idyllic community. The setting in this case, has been romanticised. The city of Zambezia reinforces the Edenic stereotype of Africa. The first description that the viewer hears before they follow Kai to the city is when Gogo explains: "Zambezia: there's no safer place in all of Africa". This statement, while depicting Zambezia as an ideal safe haven, also implies that there is danger outside the city (which has already been established by the opening chase sequence).

The city of Zambezia has what seems to be a very short history. Although the founding of Zambezia is mentioned (referring to the Marabous' exclusion from the city), no

solid timeframe is given. The Hurricanes, however, were formed by Kai's parents, which gives them a short history of one generation. This lack of history extending beyond Kai's parents' generation, reiterates the concept of an Africa that is timeless.

In the city of birds, one can find traces of the prevailing European notion of "progress" that, as Loomba (23) writes, included the mastery of "man over nature" and industrialisation. The areas outside of the city, however, are described as desolate and dangerous by the characters in the film. The level of "civilisation" maintained in the birds' city include functionalities such an airport, administrative institutions (such as the registration of birds arriving into the city), a beauty parlour, and even a hospital. The animals have a level of technological and institutional development, while human beings are non-existent, thus repeating the single story of an Africa for animals. The entire city is built from wood, clay and grass, and thus the birds' civilisation still maintains a primitive look.

The idea of a single, superior culture is exemplified in the city of Zambezia, where those excluded from the city are deemed uncivilised. As discussed in the previous chapters, the concept of the Other, and the existence of the idea that, outside Europe, people were in a more primitive, thus inferior, stage of social evolution (thus being uncivilised and without culture), was used to justify colonialism (Brantlinger 166). This is evident in the way that the birds of Zambezia treat the Marabous, but also the idealisation of the city and the level of assumed civilisation there.

The predatory nature of animals is not completely addressed. Zambezia becomes an Eden in which a variety of bird species, both predator and prey, live together in paradisiacal harmony, without eating one another. This adds to the idealisation of Africa as a paradise.



Figure 13: Screenshot of Zambezia, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

The Africa depicted in *Adventures in Zambezia* conforms to existing stereotypes (see previous chapters), and would thus be familiar to audiences in that it has been "seen" before. However, by repeatedly depicting Africa as a landscape of animals, and reiterating the single story (as discussed in Chapter 2), Africa is reduced to one simplified, flattened element, and it becomes merely a backdrop, similar to the way that Swift (2005) uses Africa as a simplified backdrop, reduced to a spectacle, overlooking the inhabitants and the complexities of the region (see Chapter 1).

Surrounding landscapes



Figure 14: Screenshot of giraffes, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

It can be argued that *Adventures in Zambezia* takes the viewer on a safari tour of the landscapes. The swooping aerial shot in **Figure 14** is reminiscent of a wildlife documentary. The film is laced with panoramic shots that, while serving the practical purpose of locating the characters in the setting and orientating the viewer, also serve to showcase the beautiful landscapes associated with Africa. Along with the panoramic shots, other animals are occasionally depicted as part of the backdrop – they are not characters within the narrative but serve as a part of the safari experience. Examples of this are the giraffe in **Figure 14** and the hippopotami in **Figure 15**.



Figure 15: Screenshot of Hippopotami in the river, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

Throughout the film, there are no human beings or evidence thereof, and there are no suggestions of anything urban. According to Stuart Forrest in the interview (see appendix), human beings do not exist in the fantastical world of Zambezia. *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) is thus set in an Africa that fits the stereotype of idealised, "unspoiled" nature: an Africa for animals. This stereotype implies that Africa is void of people, and is a place without history, development – a primitive place "marooned and historically abandoned" (McClintock in Hall 239). This Africa without people or history can make no intellectual, historical, technological, political or artistic contribution to the world and is of little significance in this context (Harth 12). This depiction of Africa retells the single story of an Africa full of beautiful landscapes and animals, unspoiled, primitive and paradisiac. The film thus repeats imagery of Africa that continues the regime of representation.



Figure 16: Screenshot of the river, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

Characters

The characters in *Adventures in Zambezia* are all anthropomorphic. The active characters in the film are all birds, with the exception of the villain Budzo. According to Gordon and Vera (4-5), the use of animals as characters alludes to the animal fable, which was used to share moral lessons, philosophies and wisdom. In the case of *Adventures in Zambezia*, the theme is *Ubuntu*[10]. Anthropomorphic characters (examples like Gertie the Dinosaur, Felix the cat, Donald Duck, Bugs Bunny and many others) have been used in animation since its beginning (Gordon & Vera 5). The animals are given human characteristics (emotions, facial expressions, gestures); thus we read the anthropomorphic characters as human; human qualities are projected onto the animals (Gordon & Vera 11).

The characters of the film were predominantly voiced by American actors and actresses. According to Stuart Forrest, CEO of Triggerfish, in his 2013 Net Prophet talk, South African actors and actresses were initially cast for the voice overs for *Adventures in Zambezia*, but since South Africa lacks an established industry of voice acting for animation, the quality of Hollywood voice actors were deemed superior, having existed for close to a

[10] According to Barbara Nussbaum, the word Ubuntu is an Nguni word that expresses "compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining community with justice and mutual caring", and which is used to describe interconnectedness, a common humanity and the responsibility one has to the common communal good (2).

century. The inclusion of international celebrities helped increase publicity, which attracted attention to the South African animation industry. While the choice of using non-local voice actors was a logical one, it arguably implies that Africans are incapable of representing themselves, and thus are reliant on Euro-American intervention. It also could denote that Euro-American culture is the superior and more competent.

Marabou storks

This section will argue that the Marabou storks epitomise the uncivilised "Other" as described in previous chapters as a colonial stereotype and the binary opposite of the civilised European.



Figure 17: Screenshot of the Marabou Storks in Katungu, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

The Marabou storks are presented in the opening shot of the film, before the hero, Kai, has been introduced. In this sequence they are chasing Gogo and Tini in pursuit of the eggs in Gogo's basket. They are depicted as ugly, dramatic, lacking intelligence, unbalanced and quite dangerous. It is their cannibalistic aspect that is first introduced to the viewer. Their villainy, however, is first driven by hunger; the first line said by the Marabous (as they chase Gogo) is, "There's a week's worth of food in that basket". When Cecil's brother dies, Cecil laments that, "He was just hungry! We all are!" The film overlooks the predator and prey

dynamics between the species of birds[11], and, due to the predatory nature of the Marabous (which could be equated with the cannibalistic savage, since they were chasing bird eggs), they are deemed villainous. The Marabous are hungry and driven to criminal deeds (such as conspiring with Budzo and capturing the weavers) predominantly by their hunger, as well as their indignation at their exclusion.

The Marabous are treated with contempt and are viewed as outsiders. The other characters in the film display xenophobic and racist behaviour towards the Marabous. An example of this would be the conversation of the gossip birds. Kai's first exercise as a trainee for the Hurricanes was "Marabou Patrol", which was to ensure that the Marabous stayed away from Zambezia, and keeping the difference and segregation. Their difference is perceived as wrong and their inferiority is innate and fixed. This contradicts the claimed theme of Ubuntu, which of which "the underlying value seeks to honour the dignity of each person" (Nussbaum 2). Ajax, leader of the Hurricanes, states (referring to the Marabous), "Insubordinate thieves! Their kind will never change". They were born as Marabous and thus deemed as lesser by many of the birds, in a similar way that, during colonialism, those native to Africa were considered to be, by nature, inferior (as discussed in the first chapter). The inferiority of the Marabous is inferred in that they were somewhat expendable. In the film, the only death of a bird that is made known is that of Cecil's brother.

[11] For example, falcons (the family that Kai and Tendai belong to) predominantly feed on smaller birds, and Chief Sekhuru is an African Fish Eagle, a predatory bird that, although primarily feeds on fish, is known to eat nestlings, eggs, and some species of waterbirds (Roberts et al 147; 154-160). Marabou storks are predominantly scavengers, but do also prey on other birds (Roberts et al 70)



Figure 18: The outcome of Morton's address to the Marabous, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

The idea of civilisation is mentioned in conversation in *Adventures in Zambezia*. Early in the film, when the Marabous catch up with Gogo and Tini at Kai's home, Cecil claims, "We only want the goodies in that basket. Now if we all go about this in a civilised manner..." to which Gogo replies, "There's nothing civilised about you, you heathen bastards." This statement reveals Gogo's perception of the Marabous as uncivilised, and, since they have already been established as antagonists, the viewer may be led to share her understanding.

The Marabous thus arguably symbolise the uncivilised Other: the savage. According to Konkobo (1096), one of the motivations of the imperial mission was a "moral need to civilise savages", who were considered to be evil and uncivilised. The traits of the savage were reduced to cannibalism, intellectual deficiency and slavery (Konkobo 1097). These traits are all evident in the Marabous. They are depicted as cannibals in that they wish to eat bird eggs, and they are portrayed as of lesser intelligence as they are so easily and readily enslaved by Budzo. Their portrayed lack of intelligence, primitiveness, and inability to cooperate with one another or accomplish anything on their own is evident throughout the film. **Figure 18** serves as an example of this: the Marabous, after Cecil has addressed them, end up brawling, as though Cecil's address was inconsequential; all they were able to understand of his speech was his abuse of Morton, and then copied his violent actions. The other characters in the film also consider them to be of inferior intellectual ability. Budzo calls

them naive, and Chief Sekhuru describes them as unkempt and rude. When the plot to infiltrate Zambezia is exposed, Sekhuru says that they are incapable of "such devious acts", and must therefore be working for someone else, implying that they are unintelligent and thus easily manipulated. Another example is when Tini learns that they were keeping Tendai captive, she exclaims, "You guys are dumber than I thought!" Shortly afterwards, Budzo congratulates the Marabous on capturing the weavers by saying, "Well, well, well...Cecil! I must be honest, I never thought you would actually pull that off." implying that he sees them as incompetent.

According to Brantlinger (166), one attitude towards the savage was that they could be rescued from their savagery and darkness and become civilised. They were to be pitied. The Marabous are depicted in a similar way. At the beginning of the film, after losing his brother, Cecil cries, "...as if we Marabous don't suffer enough". Kai pities them.

The Marabous had to earn their status as birds that could live in Zambezia by helping the other birds stop the lizards from invading the city. Initially it is seen that Tendai (sharing a common view held by the Zambezians) does not see them as birds, but rather as something lesser. Kai challenges this view and argues, "Wait...Marabous are birds too", to which Tendai replies, "Not birds like us". Kai argues that "All of us are important, even Marabous", thus making an effort to equalise, but there still remains the "them" and "us" attitude. The Marabous are not self-sufficient and are thus reliant on the charity of the other birds.

The introduction of the Marabous into the civilisation of Zambezia could arguably be similar to the White Man's Burden (see chapter two) of sharing civilisation with those they deem uncivilised. Brantlinger writes that there was a belief among missionary explorers in Africa that "Africa could be redeemed for civilisation" (179). "To be a Zambezian, I would even take a bath!" Morton declares. Cleanliness has long since been associated with civilisation (which is evident in the Pear's Soap advertisement discussed in the first chapter), so the Marabous' lack of washing depicts them as uncivilised. The Marabous are thus redeemable in that they are willing to accept civilisation. When they are eventually "tamed" by the other birds of Zambezia and are integrated into the city of birds, the civilising mission is fulfilled.

Although the Marabou storks conform to the “savage” stereotype, it can be argued that they serve to illustrate the dangers and harm of marginalising a group of people. In the film, it is because of their exclusion and Othering that they seek retribution, and join Budzo in

his schemes against Zambezia. The film, in this way, highlights the problems of exclusion based on appearance. However, it also reiterates Othering as a normal narrative, which is problematic in that it reflects a distinctly colonial narrative.



Figure 19: Nigel – the final look that the viewer has of the Marabous, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

The last shot of the Marabous (**Figure 19**) is of Nigel, the deranged Marabou, chewing on a plant. The film closes with this last impression that, although the Marabous are accepted into Zambezia as "equals", they still remain somewhat inferior. Even though they join the community, they are still treated with suspicion. Morton joins the Hurricanes, and when Ajax, leader of the Hurricanes, reluctantly officiates Morton's enlistment, he warns the Marabou, "I've got my eye on you," thus showing that the prejudices still remain.

Budzo



Figure 20: The first shot of Budzo, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD

Budzo (**Figure 20**) is the antagonist of *Adventures in Zambezia*, who aims to infiltrate the city of birds, along with his fellow lizards, to eat the birds' eggs. Budzo arguably represents the stereotyped Africa that is, in the words of Edward Long (in Hall 239), "the parent of everything that is monstrous in Nature". The first words spoken by Budzo in the film are, "Death is natural. It is just a part of the cycle of life", which immediately associates him with nature. According to Hall (243), the binary thinking prevailing in the colonial era places culture in opposition to nature, with culture being civilisation, refinement, reason, restraint, intellect, knowledge, and formalised government and law, and nature being everything that is not civilised, being that which is instinctual, emotional, irrational, unrefined and unrestrained. "His/her essential characteristics were fixed forever – eternally' – in Nature" (Hall 243). This notion manifests itself when Budzo speaks about his murder of Tendai's wife. He claims, "It is just what I do. You could say it is my nature. When nature calls, I answer." Budzo cannot change his brutish nature. While the Marabou's savagery was redeemable to some extent, Budzo (as he represented nature) is deemed monstrous and was not redeemable; he has to be completely overpowered and defeated. He is again associated with nature when he confronts Sekhuru. He says, referring to the city of Zambezia, that, "This community is an aberration of nature", implying that the city and nature are in opposition to one another.

Frederickson (in Hall 243) speaks of the savage stereotype applied to slaves in America:

> ...Underneath slaves remained by nature savage brutes; and long buried passions, once loosed, would result in the wild frenzy of revenge, and the savage lust for blood.

The "savage", while being able to give the illusion of civilisation, remains a savage, and their instincts are being kept at bay. Budzo is driven by a savage lust for the eggs in Zambezia, which remains his sole motive throughout the film. He seems to enjoy killing (shown in his lack of remorse for his previous crimes).

Africans, as described by Reade (in Brantliner 184), "...have cannibal minds; they have been accustomed to feed on murder". Cannibalism was represented as the most extreme form of savagery. Budzo aims to feed on the eggs of the Zambezian birds, which is read in the film as a form of cannibalism or murder, and perhaps it is this trait that emphasises his savagery, and, since he is already associated with nature, positions nature as the lesser and the depraved, in opposition to civilisation (Zambezia). This shows underlying binary structure in the film.

Budzo conforms to the stereotype of the devil-like savage (instead of the "noble savage"). He shows no remorse for his actions, and seems to take pride in his villainy. An example of this would be after Budzo had captured both Tendai and all the weaver birds, Tini says to Budzo, "You monster!" to which he replies, "Thank you. One does what one can." Brantlinger writes that a common colonial perception was that "the African" could not be converted due to what was described as a moral deficiency, a stagnant mind and childish passions (179). Budzo embodies this notion in how he displays a lack of moralities (hence his role as a villain) and an inability to be reasoned with, thus being irredeemable. Similarly to the depiction of the Marabous in the film, the representation of Budzo contradicts the theme of Ubuntu, which Nussbaum defines as having the values of:

> seek[ing] to honor the dignity of each person and are concerned with the development and maintenance of mutually affirming and enhancing relationships (2).

Budzo (embodying the savage) is depicted as without empathy, being an irredeemable monster, who is excluded (and this exclusion is never questioned throughout the film). He is neither affirmed nor encouraged, nor is any good attribute spoken of him, and thus his innate dignity is never acknowledged or honoured. Therefore, the depiction of Budzo as a devil-savage serves to somewhat negate the film's theme of Ubuntu.

Conclusion

It is true that there is much natural beauty to be found in various locations around the continent, and stereotypes of idyllic wilderness are not entirely untrue. However, the stereotypes are building on a regime of representation and reinforcing already established stereotypes. As a South African film, and thus a representation created in Africa, this is problematic in that it conforms to colonial stereotypes rather than contests them. Africa, in *Adventures in Zambezia*, is reduced to a series of beautiful landscapes, and it presents Africa as a large game reserve; a primitive wilderness, noble in its underdeveloped state, untainted by modernity and its constraints, where the wild is seen as free from the demands of modern life. Binary thinking is evident in the film. Civilisation (represented by the birds of Zambezia) is placed in opposition to nature (embodied by Budzo), with the former being good in a battle against the latter (evil). The film reiterates the stereotypes and overlooks the complexities of the continent, offering an oversimplified representation of Africa that conforms to the colonial regime of representation.

Conversely, Stuart Forrest (Net Prophet 2013) comments how the film *Adventures is Zambezia* is changing perceptions about Africa. He speaks of his encounters with people who are surprised that such a high quality film has come out of Africa, and that Africans have computers and know how to use them (this belief is a manifestation of the myth of Africa as primitive). The medium of the film, Forrest argues, and its widespread global market, contests the idea of an Africa without people or technology. By producing a mainstream film, South Africa is given a voice in challenging the perceptions of the creative capabilities of the continent, and Forrest hopes to inspire other African storytellers to produce stories for the mainstream market (Net Prophet 2013). However, even though the film's medium of computer animation contests the myth of Africa as technologically and intellectually lesser, the film's visuals represent Africa as a homogenous, primitive, Edenic paradise, which does little to contest existing colonial stereotypes, but instead reiterates them. The next chapter

will discuss the colonial stereotypes evident in *Khumba* (2013), and will the compare colonial representations evident in the film to those in *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012).

CHAPTER 4: Analysis of *Khumba*

Guy Lodge writes, in his review of *Khumba*:

> Nearly 20 years after “The Lion King” made a luminous Disney playground of the African wild, it’s high time the continent responded with an animated vision of its own. Enter perky South African effort “Khumba,” which remedies the romanticization to some extent with its textured savanna landscapes and stony skies, but doesn’t take the regional authenticity much further than that. With a brashly Hollywood-flavored voice cast and a self-borrowing scripting assist from “Lion King” writer Jonathan Roberts, this tale of a half-striped zebra finding his place in the animal kingdom aims squarely for international crossover appeal... [It] limits local color to amusing sideshow attractions: a goofy herd of slanging Afrikaner springbok here, a deranged pack of dassies (rock rabbits to non-natives) there. Even Bruce Retief’s chipper score features only mild, marimba-laced intrusions of ethnicity.

This chapter will discuss Triggerfish's animated film *Khumba* (2013), concentrating on colonial stereotypes and contradictions thereof evident in the film. It will focus on setting and character, utilising the theory discussed in the previous chapters.

The 2013 film *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston, is a coming-of-age film about a young zebra who journeys across the Karoo in order to find a magic waterhole. The film starts on the day of Khumba's birth. When the other zebra see that Khumba (Jake T. Austin) was born with only half his stripes, their superstitions lead them to blame his lack of stripes for the lack of rain. Time passes, Khumba grows, and the drought worsens. Khumba is continuously mocked and ridiculed for being different from the other zebra. Khumba's mother, Lungisa, tells her son of the legendary waterhole where the first zebra got their stripes, with the intention of helping Khumba embrace his difference. Khumba, however, misinterprets her message and, after Lungisa dies, he leaves the zebras' enclosure in search of the magic waterhole with nothing but a memory of a map that the mantis drew for him. He teams up with a wildebeest named Mama V (Loretta Devine) and an ostrich, Bradley (Richard E. Grant). Meanwhile, a half-blind leopard called Phango (Liam Neeson) picks up Khumba's scent and begins following him. Khumba, Mama V and Bradley arrive at Ying's Animal Sanctuary, where Khumba is almost captured by humans in four-by-fours, but is rescued by a riverine rabbit, who directs the trio to the Black Eagle. They journey to the

Black Eagle, who tells Khumba where to find the waterhole, but warns him that it is also Phango's cave. In the meantime, the zebras are forced to leave their enclosure to search for water. Khumba arrives at Phango's cave, after parting ways with Mama V and Bradley at the abandoned farm, but, at the edge of the waterhole, he hesitates, having finally come to accept and embrace his difference. Phango and Khumba fight while the cave collapses and the mountain splits, forming a waterfall. Phango falls to his death, but Khumba survives, and he, with the other zebra, learns to live alongside the other animals at the newly-formed waterhole.

Khumba was released internationally in 2013 and sold in over thirty different languages (Mallory). The translation and dubbing into different languages, Anthony Silverston (director of *Khumba*) notes in the interview, would change the way that the characters are depicted, thus resulting in a different understanding of the film. This chapter will be referring to the English version of *Khumba* (2013). The name "Khumba" means skin, as the character Lungisa explains in the film. The very name of the main character draws attention to the idea of race, especially since South Africa has a history of racial discrimination, which still remains a relevant topic today. The theme central to the film is difference (including, but not limited to racial difference), and Silverston (in the interview) indicates that it is intended to pose the question of "how many stripes make a zebra?"

Silverston mentioned in the interview that he was inspired by the quagga-breeding project, in which a system of evaluating the number and colour of the animal's stripes was used to determine how close to the quagga the animal was (Silverton). This inspired the choice to use zebra characters is the film to illustrate the themes of race, difference and the construct of Othering (Forrest). The film also addresses self-acceptance, whereby the protagonist Khumba learns to accept his difference.

Discussion of the trailer

Similar to the trailer of *Adventures in Zambezia*, the trailer for *Khumba* begins with the narrator setting the scene as "deep in the heart of Africa" (TriggerfishAnimation). This describes a very vague location, and refers to the continent as a homogeneous entity, overlooking distinctions and complexities. This implies that specificity is unnecessary, and reiterates the colonial stereotype that oversimplifies any understandings of the complexities of African cultures, negates the necessity for specificity and more detailed insight, and

perpetuates the notion of Africa as being, in the words of Apter and Demissie, a "vast cultural and geographic blankness" (561).

The narrator continues, saying, "He will discover a vast, beautiful world, filled with new friends...and great danger" (TriggerfishAnimation). The word "discover", which Lewis defines as to "see for the first time", is a typically colonial term, alluding to so-called discovery and exploration of the African continent by male European explorers (Van Eeden 343). The term "discover", commonly used when referring to colonial-style adventure, is problematic in that it overlooks the residence of people in the region before the arrival of the European explorer, and is thus, Van Eeden argues, an exercise of white privilege (353). The trailer refers to this colonial construct without critiquing it, but rather using it as a selling point. Later on in the trailer, the narrator claims, "Experience the adventure of a lifetime on the wildest safari ever" (TriggerfishAnimation). The trailer for *Khumba* thus sells this notion of Africa as a site of colonial-style adventure by advertising it as a safari.

The trailer, already having referred to Africa as singular, vague, and homogenous, and a place unexplored and needing to be "discovered", advertises it as a place of danger. Callender writes that safari films "visualised Africa for European audiences" and invited them to:

> Africa the sinister, the mysterious, the unknown...Africa the land of savagery and dangerous adventure...where nature is without mercy and deadly beasts of the jungle are supreme (30).

Considering that there is an established colonial notion of Africa as a place of darkness and danger, the use of the word "danger" in this trailer is thus associated with the existing stereotype of Africa as a savage and dangerous place, which Callender describes (30). The trailer therefore promotes a stereotyped depiction of Africa.

Khumba as a safari film

> The world only has one role for Africa – as a destiny for other people's expeditions (Hall in Van Eeden 343).

Van Eeden writes that travel, exploration and discovery were means by which the West celebrated and justified imperial power and control in the nineteenth century (352). The safari embodies these elements, and advertises an "adventure" of "exploration and

discovery" (Staples 392). *Khumba* (2013) conforms to Amy Staples' description of the safari genre of film. Staples argues the early safari films were used to distribute and normalise the notion of a primitive and exotic Africa that exists to serve as a setting for colonial-style adventure (393). Staples describes it:

> The journey (or safari) frames the overall narrative structure of films that unfold as a series of sequential (at times disjointed) events along the traveller's route – encounters with African animals and peoples, celebratory scenes of arrival and departure, dangerous crossings and natural obstacles, touristic detours and side trips. Sequences of travel and work are often punctuated by touristic visits to indigenous villages and periods of rest and recreation in safari camps (394)

The film *Khumba* is framed by Khumba's[12] journey to the magic waterhole, and the sequence of events that subsequently unfold. He encounters other African animals (such as the Afrikaans springbuck), and there are scenes of arrival and departure (such as his arrivals at and departures from Ying's Animal Sanctuary, the Black Eagle's mountain and the Abandoned Farm), which are celebratory in nature. For example, the meerkat family welcomes Khumba and his companions to Ying's Animal Sanctuary in a celebratory manner where they enjoy a respite from their journey. There are dangerous obstacles, such as the humans trying to catch him, the scorching heat from the Valley of Desolation, and, of course, the imminent threat of Phango. Staples continues her description:

> There is a preoccupation with panoramic vistas and frequent panning of animals and indigenous peoples as if revealed for the first time. Scenes of the traveller's encounters with Africans and natural landscapes are highly variegated, interlacing myriad forms of “first contact” with African peoples, wild animals, natural landscapes and exotic flora... Encounters with indigenous peoples may be suspenseful or serendipitous... (394).

The film contains many panoramic shots that showcase the Karoo's beautiful landscape, and documents Khumba's (the traveller's) encounters with the land's flora and fauna (such as **Figure 21**). In this way, *Khumba*, like Swift's *Wildest Dreams* reiterates the

[12] Khumba, having a distinct American accent, could arguably represent the Euro-Armerican hero typical of a safari film.

colonial stereotypes characteristic of the safari film, and perpetuates the stereotype that depicts Africa as a site of colonial-style adventure.



Figure 21: Screenshot of Khumba admiring the plant and insect life of the Karoo, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD.

Van Eeden writes that "colonialism consistently rendered Africa as a vast arena dedicated to western adventure, leisure and entitlement, which turned Africans "into extras on their own continent, into stage props that do not matter in the great undertaking being performed by Europeans"" (Pieterse in Van Eeden 352). This is evident in *Khumba* whereby the landscape serves as a backdrop for Khumba's adventure, with emphasis placed on showcasing the flora and fauna. The other animals that Khumba and his companions (being voiced by distinctly Euro-American voice actors) encounter have little significant character development, and serve to facilitate Khumba's undertaking (his journey to the magic waterhole), thus conforming to Pieterse's (in Van Eeden 352) description of colonial renderings of Africa. The safari as colonial-style adventure, Van Eeden argues, is founded on the principle of white privilege, and uses words such as "adventure" and "discover" (which overlooks the land's inhabitants), and involves an exercise of power over the land and assumes cultural and racial authority (353).

Settings

This section will discuss the setting of the film *Khumba* (2013) in relation to colonialism and the resulting stereotypes, as described in previous chapters. The events of the film *Khumba* (2013) unfold in the Karoo in South Africa. Unlike *Adventures in Zambezia*

(2012), which offered a more generalised and vague setting, *Khumba's* setting is distinctive and highly detailed, with realistic site-specific flora and fauna. This specificity of the location conforms less to the colonial stereotype of Africa as a homogenous mass of land, where distinctions are overlooked (as discussed in the first chapter). However, although *Khumba* is set in a specific and distinct South African setting, there is an overruling emphasis on landscapes, with many panoramic shots showcasing scenery, which repeats the single story (Adichie) of Africa as a timeless spectacle of landscapes and animals.

The film *Khumba*, unlike *Adventures in Zambezia*, which opens with a dramatic thunderstorm, opens with shots of the sky, and then pans to foreground the mantis character. The viewer follows the mantis through a section of the Karoo and into the Zebras' enclosure. This sequence serves as both an establishing of the scene, as well as a showcase of the Karoo's scenery. The narrating voice (Khumba) introduces the setting as "the Great Karoo Desert". Unlike *Adventures in Zambezia (2012)*, which uses an image of a savannah landscape – **Figure 22** – (which Wainaina situates as a stereotypical and repeated depiction of Africa) to introduce the viewer to an unspecified location (thus reiterating the colonial idea of Africa as a single, continuous place), the opening of *Khumba* refers to a specific location in South Africa, offering a less stereotyped introduction, and bringing the attention to the specificity of place. However, the opening of *Khumba* (2012) does not offer a depiction of Africa (or South Africa) that deviates much from the single story of Africa. Hagen writes about typical Hollywood depictions of Africa:

> Since the times of Dr Livingstone and Joseph Conrad, Africa's untamed landscapes and exotic wildlife have long been a source of fascination for Western pop culture consumers. Hollywood films accentuate the African landscape through the insertion of detailed shots of the earth and animals combined, most notably, with sweeping long shots of uninhabited terrain. This attention to the environment insinuates a return to nature, a time removed from intellect and ruled by instinct. Democracy and due process do not exist here—only the laws of survival (5-6).

Khumba (2013) contains evidence of these elements described by Hagen (5-6). The opening sequence of the film accentuates the Karoo landscape, and throughout the film, there are many panoramic and scenic shots, with great emphasis placed on vast, uninhabited landscapes. The film does contain evidence of human inhabitation, but the emphasis is on the beautiful, detailed Karoo landscape, with close-ups (such as **Figure 21**)

and panoramic shots (**Figure 23**). The theme of survival is introduced (which, as mentioned in the first chapter, is strongly associated with colonial imaginings of Africa), and the specificity of place is somewhat nullified with Khumba's narration situating the Zebras' enclosure as being "in the middle of nowhere".



Figure 22: The introductory shot of Katungu, *Adventures in Zambezia*, directed by Wayne Thornley (2012; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Universal Sony Pictures, 2013), DVD.



Figure 23: Screenshot of Seko overlooking the landscape, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

The film ends with the end of the drought and a new waterhole forming as a result of Khumba and Phango's encounter. Almost all the characters that Khumba, Mama V, and Bradley encountered on their journey are shown to be living in harmony, and many of them

are playing a celebratory game of football. The final shot (**Figure 24**) shows an idealised and paradisiacal view of the new waterhole, where the animals live "uncorrupted and untainted by the evils of modernism and modern civilisation", in a romanticised wilderness containing the "original innocence of nature", undamaged and unspoiled" by technological developments, and excluding modern Africans (Nelson 70). It can therefore be argued that the final impression of the film is that of the Africa as an idyllic paradise for animals, thus perpetuating the colonial stereotype of an Edenic Africa.



Figure 24: Final shot of the film, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

Skeletons



Figure 25: Screenshot of an animal skeleton, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

The film contains both the stereotype of an Edenic Africa, as well as Africa as a dark place of danger and mystery (as described in the first chapter). The impression of danger is evident throughout the film, where skulls and skeletons litter the landscape. In the opening sequence, there is a shot of a foregrounded skeleton (**Figure 25**), and the mantis flies through the eye-socket, drawing the viewer's attention to the skeleton. Khumba's narration during this shot is, "Surviving in these parts isn't easy. You need to be tough, and flexible; adapt or die". This immediately sets the scene in a place, similar to Hagen's descriptions, where "attention to the environment insinuates a return to nature, a time removed from intellect and ruled by instinct" (5-6). It introduces the viewer to a primitive environment, harsh, where nothing else is possible beyond basic survival. A skeleton speaks of death, and the recurrence of these skeletons could aid the perpetuation of the colonial stereotype that deems Africa a place of death and danger, without hope. While this may have been intended as a foreshadowing of the danger of Phango in the Karoo and his threat to the protagonist, the colonial era normalised the myth that Africa is a place of death, poverty, danger and starvation; since the film is set in Africa, it is easy to associate the repeated imagery of the skeletons with this existing colonial perception (Harth 10). Harth writes about the problem of the existing colonial myth deeming Africa as a hopeless place (10):

> The Hopeless Myth evidences itself when Westerners, usually government leaders and media opinion-makers, decide that Africa is not worth their time, Africa is a lost cause, or Africa cannot be a valuable part of global decision-making.

The film, by repeating this motif of death, thus references the colonial idea that Africa is primitive and dangerous, and this could serve to ingrain the colonial perception of Africa as a cruel, dangerous, hostile and impenetrable place, still wild (Wilke 288).

Ying's Animal Sanctuary



Figure 26: Screenshot of Khumba's first view of Ying's Animal Sanctuary, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

When Khumba and his companions arrive at Ying's Animal Sanctuary (**Figure 26**), they are met by the animals living in the sanctuary, which includes a family of meerkats. The sanctuary is like a paradisiac Eden, since it has water and beautiful vegetation. The meerkats welcome Khumba and company by saying, "Welcome to Ying's Animal Sanctuary..." The youngest son comments, "take refuge in this man-made... (his sister nudges him)... natural water-hole, where all your worries of Phango are far from your mind." This comment is significant in that it highlights the constructed nature of the game reserve, and the fact that such places, along with the concept of the safari, are man-made constructs. However, this is as far as any critique of the safari in the film extends. As mentioned previously, this lack of further commentary on the concept of the safari could serve to normalise the colonial safari narrative.

The human presence



Figure 27: Screenshot of road works, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

During their journey across the Karoo, Khumba, Mama V and Bradley encounter elements marking human presence. **Figure 27** shows a tar road and power lines. This contradicts the stereotype of an Africa whose inhabitants are primitive and without technology. The cones and road signs show that the road is under construction work. The animal trio also camp at the rest area of the workers. A primitive place would not have established infrastructure (such as the railway in **Figure 28)**, thus the film hints at South Africa's urban areas. The very presence of this construction implies that there is economic activity, and speaks of South Africa building towards a future, rather than being stranded in time, as colonial perceptions assumed (Harth 10). This film, unlike *Adventures in Zambezia*, somewhat contradicts the perception of Africa as being static as opposed to developing (a colonial myth outlined by Harth (12)). While *Adventures in Zambezia's* setting conforms to and perpetuates the idea of Africa as a place purely of idyllic scenery, romanticised and unblemished nature, primitive and without industrialisation (as argued in the previous chapter), *Khumba* (2013) alludes to the presence of industrialisation and progress far more than the film *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) does. However, this is only suggested in the film, and a larger percentage of the film depicts a more primitive Africa.

Progress during the colonial era became a concept associated with improvement (Harth 12). The colonial stereotype situating Africa as without progress implies that Africans lack innovation and are thus behind Euro-American standards (therefore lesser) (Harth 12). This myth can serve to rationalise the exclusion of African countries from global processes, as Africans are deemed (by this myth) as incapable, due to their primitiveness, of

technological, political, artistic and historic contributions, but instead are subservient to Euro-American economies as exporters of cheap labour and raw materials (Harth 12). The myth of a primitive Africa implies that Africans lack intellect and are incapable of having or working towards goals, and cannot improve (Harth 12). While the presence of human activity in *Khumba* does less than *Adventures in Zambezia* to perpetuate the notion of a primitive Africa, the buildings present (such as the Abandoned Farm in **Figure 29**, and the farmhouse at Kaalgat **Figure 28**) are derelict and in a state of disrepair. This disrepair could serve to detract from the contesting of the myth of primitive Africa, since disrepair connotes deterioration rather than improvement.



Figure 28: Screenshot of Khumba, Bradley and Mama V passing Kaal Gat, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD



Figure 29: Screenshot of the Abandoned Farm's farmhouse, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

Characters

As with *Adventures in Zambezia*, the characters in *Khumba* are anthropomorphic, and thus human qualities are projected onto the characters.

The main characters of *Khumba* (2013) were voiced by American actors, while South African actors were given minor roles, such as the springbok and the gemsbok. By casting celebrities, the film was able to draw more attention internationally, promoting the South African animation industry. However, this also could imply that South Africa is incapable of representing itself, or that Euro-American representations bear more authority than those of South Africa. According to Brantlinger, the Other is lesser, without culture, and culture has a singular voice; in this instance, the Euro-American is implicated as the single voice of superior culture (166-167).

The Zebra

The filmmakers of *Khumba* chose to use an anthropomorphised zebra as the main protagonist of the film since, according to Anthony Silverston (director of *Khumba*), as a metaphor, it "provides a visual analogy and is not restrictive to one race or another" in dealing with the film's themes of racial prejudices and exclusion based on difference. The Zebra are neither black nor white; the ambiguity is intentional, and the viewer is left to decide.

The zebra are represented as being superstitious by believing that "no stripes, no rain". The origin of this superstition is never addressed, not the reasoning behind it, since the film focuses rather on the impact that this superstition had on Khumba. By leaving this unaddressed it could potentially serve to reinforce the impression of Africa as a place of irrationality and superstition.

The Human characters



Figure 30: A screenshot of the human characters obscured behind cameras, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

According to Anthony Silverston and Stuart Forrest in the interview, the choice to include human characters in the film was to make the film as believable as possible by having the animal characters existing alongside the humans. Forrest says that "humans in the world of Khumba are always a felt presence, but they are never seen, which represents the way that human ideologies are wistful and more abstract than the on-the-ground realities of the animal world".

Throughout the film, there is continuously evidence of human activity, and reminders of a human presence, such as the road-works, the abandoned buildings, the rubbish dump where the wild dogs scavenge, the railway tracks and, of course, Ying's Animal Sanctuary. Although the human presence is frequently suggested, the humans themselves are not shown on screen. The only time the viewer "sees" the human characters (the human characters are never actually seen since they are always obscured either by camera lenses or their 4x4s' tinted windows) is in the setting of a photographic safari. The safari, considered as an "adventure" of "exploration and discovery" is usually experienced through the means of a camera: the camera is used to document encounters with the African landscape, wildlife, and the people (Staples 392). At Ying's Animal Sanctuary, the human characters arrive for "the show" (as one of the meerkats calls it), and they are obscured by their excessively large camera lenses (**Figure 30**), emphasising the fact that they are on a photographic safari. This obscuring dehumanises the humans, and since their behaviour is quite wild and erratic, they are depicted as more animalistic than the animal characters.

Although the filmmakers mentioned in the interview that they chose to keep the humans faceless to avoid cultural prejudices that could detract from the film's themes, the wild, erratic behaviour of the humans aligns with Shaka's description of colonial depictions of Africa in colonial cinema, whereby "Africans are constructed as savage and bestial people always on the verge of slippage into barbarism in the slightest absence of colonial authority" (8). The humans display bestial properties in their "hunting" of Khumba. The colonial narrative of the hunting safari is referenced here in a humorous manner, with direct reference to the hunting in **Figure 31**, where a gun slides dramatically out the window and darts Bradley.



Figure 31: Screenshot of the humans' gun, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

The scene at Ying's Animal Sanctuary is meant to be humorous, offering a somewhat satirical view of the safari adventure experienced through the lens of the camera. However, the concept of the safari is a colonial construct (as established in previous chapters), and this is not addressed in the film. The scene has little consequence in the narrative (besides perhaps hastening Khumba's departure from the sanctuary), and serves a more comical purpose. While the humans' antics are exaggerated to being laughable, neither their actions nor their framing in the safari setting are questioned. Considering the history of representation depicting Africa as a site of colonial adventure, and that the only time the humans are seen is in this safari setting, this could serve to normalise the safari narrative and the stereotype of Africa as a site of colonial-style adventure.

Phango



Figure 32: Screenshot of Phango, *Khumba*, directed by Anthony Silverston (2013; Cape Town: Triggerfish Animation Studios/ Cinema Management Group, 2013), DVD

Phango (**Figure 32**), a leopard who terrorises the animals of the Karoo, is the main antagonist of *Khumba* (2013). He, like Budzo from *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012), embodies characteristics of the savage stereotype. Savagery was associated with danger (as discussed in the first chapter) and with "extreme cruelty" (Konkobo 1099). Phango expresses the aspect of danger as he is a threat to the protagonists, and the aspect of cruelty by eating his prey with their heart still beating. Like Budzo, he displays a lust for blood, and which conforms to Brantliger's description of the savage stereotype as having a cannibal mind and feeding on murder (184). Phango also is remorseless, taking pride in killing his clan out of greed and in his cruelty of eating his prey with a heartbeat, indicating the supposed moral deficiency that was associated with the concept of the savage (Brantlinger 179). Binary thinking is also evident in the "good versus evil" plot, whereby Phango is an irredeemable evil, and the other animals are thus, in contrast, good or redeemable. There is no good in Phango, which conforms to the absolutism and binary thinking evident in the colonial era.

Conclusion

Silverston states in the interview that the wide range of reviews of the film showed how differently people received and understood the film. For example, critic Simon Abrams described it as "blander-than-bad", "disastrously uninspired", and "formulaic", while Miriam Bale of the *New York Times* calls it "delightful". This chapter has argued that there are many colonial stereotypes evident in *Khumba* (2013). The film, while having human presence that

hints at a level of urbanisation (an aspect which is commonly excluded from representations of Africa, according to Butcher (2)), still presents an Africa full of animals and landscapes, and conforms to the genre of the safari film. In the lack of critique of the idea of the safari, it reiterated the narrative of Africa as a site of colonial adventure. The film *Khumba* (2013) therefore continues the regime of representation portraying Africa as a land for wild animals and of spectacular landscapes.

CONCLUSION

There is a long-reigning regime of representing Africa as a homogenous mass of scenic landscapes: a continent for the animals, stuck in a primitive time with no history or future, and a site of colonial-style adventure. This research has argued that both *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013) perpetuate this concept, which finds its roots in the colonial period, and still prevails. However, while both films contain colonial stereotypes, repeating the single story of Africa, *Khumba* (2013) contains elements that subtly contest these colonial stereotypes, offering aspects that are distinctly South African.

The first chapter discussed colonialism and colonial stereotypes. It discussed that colonialism aimed to bring civilisation to "lands" deemed by Europeans as uncivilised, and resulted in a power imbalance that situated the coloniser as superior and the colonised as inferior and lesser. Africa can to be perceived by the European as a simplified, homogenous land, timeless and thus primitive. Europe either viewed Africa as an idyllic land of pristine nature, or as a mysterious place of darkness and danger. These stereotypes still persist today and are perpetuated through media.

The first chapter also discussed the concept of the safari, which relates to the argument in the fourth chapter of *Khumba* (2013) as normalising the safari that reduces Africa to a mere site for colonial adventure, open to exploration and discovery by the European adventurer. The colonial stereotypes deemed Africa as of little consequence globally, being primitive and lacking innovation.

The second chapter discussed representation, with emphasis on colonial representations, and how it relates to film. It described how images are interpreted against existing images to create a regime of representation, in which the way an image is perceived is affected by a history of image-making. This was deemed relevant to the interpretation of the films *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013) in that there is already a regime of representation of Africa as an exotic place full of animals, being uncivilised, uninhabited, a site of colonial adventure, and an Edenic paradise, "untainted" by modernism or industrialisation, and the films are thus viewed within an established history of colonial representations.

The concept of the single story is that, when a single aspect is repeated, and other aspects excluded, the repeated aspect is assumed to be the entire truth, rather than merely

an aspect (Adichie). The problem with having only a single story of a people is that it creates a default position towards them, and when it is a patronising one (such as is the case with the single story of Africa as a place of catastrophe, "beautiful landscapes, beautiful animals, and incomprehensible people, fighting senseless wars, dying of poverty and AIDS, unable to speak for themselves and waiting to be saved by a kind, white foreigner"), it offers a single story in which an African is entirely different from the Euro-American, completely Other, and inspires "no possibility of feelings more complex than pity, no possibility of a connection as human equals" (Adichie).

The third chapter discussed the film *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012), highlighting colonial stereotypes and stereotypical depictions of Africa. The film offers a repetition of the single story of Africa, without anything to contest the existing stereotypes. Considering the regime representing Africa as a vague place of landscapes, this film merely serves to reinforce the idea stemming from the colonial era of Africa as primitive and inconsequential. Since this film was created in South Africa, it is problematic that it reiterates these colonial notions, since it is more likely to be received by global audiences as a somewhat accurate representation, similar to the way that Thomas Baines' paintings, although painted in an idealised and stereotyped way to cater for the London market, were read as factual documentations of the landscapes he painted (Gidby 39). Instead of deviating from or contesting colonial stereotypes, *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) reinforces them.

The third chapter also argued that the Marabou storks embodied the savage stereotype and the uncivilised Other. The problem with the concept of the Other is that it creates distinctions between "us" and "them" (in this instance Euro-Americans and Africans), and it foregrounds difference in a negative light, thus deeming the Other as lesser (Harth 19). The Marabous only became acceptable once they were a part of the civilisation (which is a European construct) of Zambezia, thus reinforcing the colonial notion of the uncivilised Other and of the associated inferiority of being outside civilisation. The binaries of "them" and "us", uncivilised and civilised, nature and culture, evil and good were not only present in the Marabous but also in Budzo, who embodied the idea of nature versus culture, and the concept of the dangerous savage. The conditional acceptance of the Marabous into Zambezia, and Budzo's irredeemable nature both contradict the film's theme of Ubuntu

The film *Adventures in Zambezia* reiterates colonial ideologies concerning Africa, and, instead of using the film as a tool to contest these ideologies, or offer an alternative non-stereotypical story of an aspect Africa, the film conforms to the representations that

reduce Africa to a homogenous, uninhabited land of landscapes and animals, thus implying that it is of little global concern or consequence.

The fourth chapter discussed *Khumba* (2013) and argued that Khumba, while containing elements that did not conform to colonial stereotypes, could serve to normalise the idea of Africa as a place of colonial-style adventure. The problem with the safari narrative is that it romanticises the colonial narrative, thus overlooking the complexities and consequences of colonialism, and offering no critique of or response to the effects of colonialism and the remaining stereotypes. While the film's trailer sold the film as a safari, and marketed the idea of an undiscovered Africa (with Africa being unspecified), the film *Khumba* (2013) offered an interesting juxtaposition of elements contradicting colonial stereotypes alongside stereotypical aspects. The presence of humans offered the viewer a less paradisiac representation, and contests the notion of an Africa without people and as a place of landscapes and animals, while at the same time, the film's emphasis on landscape and scenery, its imitation of the safari genre of film, and the fact that the main characters were animals in Africa, reiterates colonial stereotypes. However, the history of colonial representation influences the meaning offered by the film, and since there is a long history of visual imagery depicting Africa in a way that conforms to colonial stereotypes of the continent, this could override the subtle contradictions of colonial stereotypes in the film, thus offering a story that fits into the single story as described by Adichie.

It should be noted that both *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013) are commercial films aimed at international audiences. Forrest, in the interview, referring to the films created by Triggerfish, states that, "We’re making stories for the world stage, and so there will be some similarities with other films that have worked internationally...", and he mentions that stereotypes are immediately identifiable by audiences and use the audience's preconceptions to streamline the relay information. The single story is familiar to international audiences, particularly the representation of Africa as an idyllic landscape (having a long history of representation, and having appeared in animated films such as *The Lion King* (1994) and music videos such as Swift's *Wildest Dreams* (2015)); it could be speculated that perhaps *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012) and *Khumba* (2013) included colonial stereotypes in order to present international audiences with a representation that they are familiar with in an attempt to appeal to a larger audience.

Responding to the regime of colonial representation

Both Forrest and Silverston, in the interview conducted for this research, believe that the South African animation industry has a responsibility to be sensitive to the politics of colonial representations of South Africa. Silverston comments:

> Creating any media to be consumed by children holds a great level of responsibility and there are a number of areas we as creators need to be sensitive to. These include everything from imitable behaviour to representation, which is only now being highlighted as an area of growing importance in the global entertainment industry. This is fantastic as Triggerfish's vision is to bring a fresh voice to the global industry and we are well-placed to do so.

The solution to the withstanding colonial stereotyping is complex and layered, and there is no singular solution. As Forrest notes in the interview, "a condescending sensitivity can be itself a colonial representation". Chimamanda Adichie argues that stories are extremely significant in challenging potentially harmful flat stereotypes. Stories have been the site of disempowerment and discrimination, but they can be used to "empower and humanize" (Adichie). A multiplicity of stories can offer a more rounded understanding, where different aspects of the multi-faceted continent can be portrayed. I believe that it is through the frequent telling of a wide range of local stories that colonial stereotypes can be challenged. No one story can encapsulate the entirety of a people or place. As Silverston says in the interview, "It's like the question of how many stripes make a zebra – how far do you have to go to make the scene or the film truly representative of South Africa? I don't think you can ever represent an entire country in one movie..." The answer then lies in rather producing multiplicity of representations, created with an awareness of the prevailing regime, and therefore able to offer stories that do not conform to this, offering different perspectives and understandings.

Silverston states that "the best way to address representation is to get more diverse voices into the key creative positions". The Story Lab is an initiative undertaken by Triggerfish, alongside the Walt Disney Company and South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry, aiming to develop and explore the ideas of African storytellers (Szalai). The Story Lab received close to 1400 entries from across the continent, of which eight stories were selected to undergo development: four for feature films and four for television series (Bremmen). Stuart Forrest, prior to the selection of the entries for the Story Lab, said that

Triggerfish were "not looking for another Lion King or simply stories about animals in Africa" (Szalai). He spoke of Triggerfish's aim of the Story Lab, saying:

> We're looking for a lot of different kinds of stories and stories that are different from what we're used to seeing. We encourage originality. Africa has a lot more stories to tell, and we like to break the stereotypes (Szalai).

Initiatives like The Story Lab are imperative in contesting colonial stereotypes and offering the world different understandings of Africa. As Adichie argues, it is imperative to tell a multiplicity of stories not conforming to the single story, so as to create "a balance of stories" (Achebe in Adichie).

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APPENDIX

An Interview of Anthony Silverston and Stuart Forrest on Representations in Triggerfish's Animated Films Khumba (2013) and Adventures in Zambezia (2012)

INTERVIEW OF STUART FORREST:

1. **How was the concept for *Adventures in Zambezia* born, and what inspired it?**
   We wanted to tell a story that celebrated Southern African beauty in a way that hadn't been seen before. The birdlife of the Zambezi River Valley is exquisite and seemed like a wonderfully rich world to place a story in, especially with the thundering waterfalls. We wanted to tell a story that showed an alternate African reality—an African city, rather than a village, so we decided to make the city a central theme. Then we wanted to tell a story that embraced the beauty of Grace and forgiveness, as illustrated in the biblical parable of the prodigal son, and as felt deeply by the transition from apartheid to a democratic South Africa. And we wanted to illustrate the concept of Ubuntu: that our humanity is only complete when we embrace the concept of inclusivity.

2. **How was the concept for *Khumba* born, and what inspired it?**
   We live in a highly polarised country, where the concept of White and Black are exaggerated because of the legacy of colonisation and the oppression of apartheid. Khumba is a story that asks: What is White and what is Black? Anthony has a background in genetics, and he was intrigued by research that postulated that the Quagga is not a distinct species to the Zebra, but is merely a zebra with a different skin colour. This inspired his thinking about how we create artificial distinctions in order to validate our opinions of the "Other". Khumba (which comes from the isiXhosa word for skin) is born with markings that defy his heritage, and his herd is immediately sceptical. Khumba grows up different, but he needs to embrace his difference in order to be of value to the community. The message goes beyond racial polemics, it applies to all of those who grow up "different" – be it sexual orientation, gender bias, or any other culturally manufactured "normality".

3. **Why were these particular themes chosen for each production?**
   With Adventures in Zambezia, the original investors had wanted to tell a story of grace and forgiveness—inspired by the Biblical stories and the concepts behind the TRC, and so it evolved from there.

4. ***Adventures in Zambezia* is set in fantastical location somewhere in Africa. Why did the writers choose to not situate the story in a real place?**
   It is by its nature a fantastical film and so, while we were inspired by a very real place, Victoria Falls and the surrounding valley, as storytellers we were engaged in a flight of fancy, as it were – after all humans don't exist at all in the world of Zambezia and the Baobab tree is impossibly large. We wanted to be influenced by the real world, but ultimately to create a self-contained, fantastical world.

5. **In the design of the story and characters, why where animal characters chosen over human characters?**

For storytellers around the world, animals serve as wonderful symbols and metaphors for human life, that are simple, easily understood, visually interesting and often funny! They also cross cultural barriers, so that the audience doesn't bring preconceptions and prejudices into the characters based along racial lines, but can engage with the issues that are presented free from cultural baggage.

6. **In *Khumba* the main characters are zebra, and in *Adventures in Zambezia* they are birds. Why where these specific animals (birds and zebras) chosen to represent the personalities in the stories?**
   For *Zambezia* there were interesting dynamics having predators and prey among the birds, living together and having to ward off an even greater predator. We also felt it would be visually interesting, offer opportunities for great action and would be something that would help the film stand out in a very crowded animation market. For Khumba, as described above, the concept of what makes a zebra a zebra was central to the theme of understanding how accepting your own difference is key to overcoming the pressures from your community who want you to conform to their models.

7. **In *Khumba*, why were the tourists represented as human characters?**
   The world of Khumba is littered with human debris, but the humans themselves are conspicuously absent. We wanted to transcend cultural prejudices and have the audience engage with the issues we were presenting: of what makes a person white or black, and why this affects their assumptions about the characters they're engaging with. Humans in the world of Khumba are always a felt presence, but they are never seen, which represents the way that human ideologies are wistful and more abstract than the on-the-ground realities of the animal world.

8. **How do you feel the films represent an understanding of Southern Africa?**
   I was born and raised in South Africa and so, in making a film about talking animals, I wanted those animals and their landscapes to be familiar to me. For *Zambezia*, there were several Zimbabweans on the team and Victoria Falls offered the natural drama and grandeur we were looking for. In term of the landscape, I don't think we consciously had an understanding to represent. It simply served as a beautiful inspiration for a fantastical story. I think where we were conscious of drawing out an understanding was in the notion of forgiveness and reconciliation and that South Africa had been a pioneer in this area. We couldn't help but be influenced by that and in one way it's expressed in the idea in the film that the Zambezian birds cannot call themselves Zambezians (with the high ideals that it stands for) without forgiving and welcoming back the marabou storks who then proved themselves by helping to defend against the leguaans.

   For *Khumba* – the underlying themes of skin colour, cultural connotations, definitions of what makes us who we are, and contempt of that which is different are the things that make the story thematically rich, and they are issues that every South African who is searching for an authentic way to engage with their community is asking every day.

9. **In your opinion, how does Triggerfish's depiction of Africa in *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia* differ from the Africa portrayed in Disney and Hollywood films?**
   We're NOT Disney and we're NOT Hollywood. We're making stories for the world stage, and so there will be some similarities with other films that have worked internationally, but ultimately we've tried to be authentic to our own themes and the stories we feel we want to share with the world.

10. **Both *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia* have been accused of containing colonial stereotypes in their depictions of Africa. Do you think this is valid, and why do you think this is a criticism of the films?**
    Stories use stereotypes in order to paint out secondary characters without too much painful exposition, using the audience's preconceptions to give colour and depth to characters who only have a few speaking lines. This is what makes genre films successful—they're immediately accessible to those who understand the tropes of the genre.

11. **Do you feel that the South African animation industry has a responsibility to be sensitive to the politics of colonial representations of South Africa and African subjects? Please expand on your answer.**
    The short answer is Yes. But as with any discussion around the complexities of Africa-in-context, the answer has layers—a condescending sensitivity can be itself a colonial representation. Primarily, the animation industry is in the business of selling entertainment to a paying customer, and we must be sensitive not to bring our personal agenda into play, where it does not enhance the story or drive the story forward. Story is King, as they say. However, part of storytelling that resonates with an audience is where the writers have brought real, thoughtful debates to the audience in a way that is accessible to them, and one of our primary visions at Triggerfish is to recalibrate South Africa in the eyes of the international viewer—to subvert stereotypical notions about Africa as savannah and Acacia trees and to show that there is more to this 52-country continent than the international audience may be aware of. We also want to move away from any hint of naval-gazing parochialism and suggest that we can tell entertaining, universal stories on the world stage with the best of them. In *Zambezia* we were specific in tackling reconciliation as something we as South Africans can offer the world – of course told in an allegorical, fantastical way--and we continue to look for ways to bring our personal stories to the world wrapped in a vivid and engaging package.

INTERVIEW OF ANTHONY SILVERSTON:

1. **How was the concept for *Adventures in Zambezia* born, and what inspired it?**

   I was not there at the time, but a married couple from America had moved to South Africa to make an animation movie. They approached a studio (Character Matters) who then produced what turned out to be a promotional trailer for the movie before Triggerfish took it over.

   A lot of the people working at the studio were Zimbabwean (including Mike Buckland who then became the 3D lead at Triggerfish), so when an initial concept for an animated feature was brainstormed, the group thought it would be great to showcase their place of birth and the natural wonders of Victoria Falls, including the rich bird-life of the area which inspired the characters.

   The parable of the Prodigal son was decided as the story to tell. However, since that particular parable did not have a structure that fit a full length feature, when Wayne Thornley the director came on board, he dug into the theme of the story to find what the parable was actually about and then focussed on that message rather than the plot. He saw it as a story about "grace" – when someone is rewarded even when it is perceived that they do not deserve it - and hence arrived at the story point where the hero Kai welcomes the Marabous to Zambezia even though they had betrayed the rest of their fellow birds.

   The initial concept was a little different and it evolved as is always the case over the years of development, but it was always about a child returning home and reuniting with his father who had a different world view to him.

2. **How was the concept for *Khumba* born, and what inspired it?**

   The idea for Khumba filtered through from a number of places over the years. At its heart, it's a personal story. A lot of the thematic and emotional side of it was purely from my own feelings of not fitting in growing up and wanting to change. I realised I was gay at a young age but desperately wanted to be 'normal' and have had to go through a long journey to accept myself the way I am – and realise that it was in fact my difference which has helped me become the person I am.

   When I was a kid, I remember visiting the plaque at Rhodes Memorial in Cape Town that explained the story of the quagga: the half-striped zebra which was being bred back from extinction on the slopes of Table Mountain. This fascinated me on a number of levels and stuck with me.

   Many years later, I was working in Canada (as a scientist in a genetics lab) and found the question of what it means to be South African came up quite a lot for me. People were surprised I was white and I found it weird having to explain that not everyone in Africa is black. And no, I was South African – not British or Dutch. Obviously there are differences in each specific racial group and at home in South Africa, it is sometimes the differences which are obsessed over (much like the zebras in Khumba's fence), but meeting other South Africans over there highlighted some of the things that united us in our "South African-ness" irrespective of skin colour.

The idea of a zebra as a metaphor for some of these questions about identity interested me, but the quagga was even more intriguing because it is a zebra that *looks* different and is therefore called something different even though it's not. When doing research into the quagga-breeding programme, I found that they had a system of counting stripes and assessing the colour of the stripes to decide that they had recently in fact been able to breed back what they considered to be a "quagga-like" animal. I wondered how they might feel about being called that. I met with the founder of the programme shortly before he died and initially planned to do a more explicitly educational animation short in partnership with Iziko museums. The more the story expanded, and along with the input of my co-writer, Raffaella Delle Donne, we found that the entertainment aspect of the story soon overtook the educational and I am pleased that the plaque at Rhodes Memorial now features a special Khumba-themed explanation about the quagga and that one of the foals was named Khumba.

3. Why were these particular themes chosen for each production?

Zambezia ended up being about isolation (exclusion) versus community – the hero Kai growing up alone with his father and then trying to integrate into the city and work in a team. These themes resulted from working out practical story problems in trying to get a working script but it was only when we decided to focus on the idea of Ubuntu when the film really got a thematic heart. The idea is that you are not defined in isolation ("no bird is an island") but instead are defined by the community in which you exist. And a truly inclusive community needs to even welcome those that are thought as 'other,' which was an ideal which Kai brings to Zambezia. The leguaans also feel excluded but are irredeemable as characters whereas the Marabous were open to change. These ideas of inclusion and exclusion are obviously issues that South Africa has a history with and it was perhaps a sub-conscious plea to continue working together towards creating a truly rainbow nation.

With *Khumba*, it's easy to focus purely on the surface black/white debate which was and is topical in SA – and globally - but there are a lot more levels regarding identity and self-acceptance that are slightly more personal. A central question of the movie was "how many stripes make a zebra?," which is a bit of a dig at people feeling the need to box or label one thing with a name. Obviously it's important to identify with a group – I am a gay, white, South African – but I didn't necessarily see myself as fitting into and with *everyone* in any of those separate groups. I figured that this was a universal feeling that anyone in the world who didn't feel 'whole' could relate to, though.

4. *Adventures in Zambezia* is set in fantastical location somewhere in Africa. Why did the writers choose to not situate the story in a real place?

Animation does not need to be restricted by reality – which is one of the joys of the medium. Reality can be heightened or pushed and pulled to suit story. *Zambezia* is in fact based very much on the real Victoria Falls and the Zambezi River Valley. The fantasy aspect of a utopian bird island was introduced as a way to work with all the story elements. The very first writer set the story on an island in Lake Kariba, but we felt this was not very visually interesting, so when Andrew Cooke came on board, he suggested the massive baobab tree on the edge of the falls which gave it a lot of vertical area to play with – useful when dealing with birds!

For *Khumba* I really wanted to draw on the real world places because the Karoo was somewhere I experienced – and loved - as a child. Even so, we had to push certain real-world settings such as the Valley of Desolation for entertainment value – otherwise the chase would have lasted 2 seconds ;)

5. In the design of the story and characters, why where animal characters chosen over human characters?

Zambezia was about birds because birds are interesting, colourful and had not been done in an animated film before (we started before knowing about the *Rio* movies). *Khumba* was about a half-striped zebra for the many thematic reasons stated above, so that dictated the story.

In terms of the business aspect of animated feature films, animals do work for a number of reasons:

- They appeal to a wider age group as their ages are more indeterminate. Humans are more recognisable as a specific human age and therefore might not appeal to children older than them.
- They do not have to be a specific race, so are more widely relatable to anyone around the world as children of any race or culture could still identify with them.
- They are cute and do have the potential to make toys and merchandise more easily than humans.
- Human performance in animation can be a lot more challenging to get right because the audience can recognise a bad human performance much more easily than a made up animal one. Lip syncing with beaks for example was a challenge but could still be more forgiving for animators without a huge amount of experience – which in our case, was most of the team!

6. In *Khumba* the main characters are zebra, and in *Adventures in Zambezia* they are birds. Why where these specific animals (birds and zebras) chosen to represent the personalities in the stories?

As explained above, the zebra works on a number of metaphorical levels. It provides a visual analogy and is not restrictive to one race or another. The question of whether a zebra is black with white stripes or white with black stripes – and what that even matters - for example is an interesting debate for parents to discuss with their children after watching the movie.

7. In *Khumba*, why were the tourists represented as human characters?

I wanted the animals to be as real as possible for children watching it and so it helps for them to live in the 'real' world where humans do exist alongside animals. Luckily the Karoo is mostly uninhabited so the characters could travel through it only seeing traces of human life.

Having the tourists (and game rangers) as animals would have broken the rules of the world. At the same time, I didn't want to break the spell of watching talking animals who would then have to engage with humans, raising questions in the audience's mind of whether they could understand one another because they'd be speaking the same language. I found a happy medium by making them faceless cameras or growling mechanical cars that behaved more like animals than humans.

8. How do you feel the films represent an understanding of Southern Africa?

It's hard to know what children will take from the movie versus what their parents might. Obviously there were some interesting politic analogies that could be made with the zebras segregating themselves from the world (which could be interpreted as white people living in

gated communities protecting themselves from the outside), but they are also a superstitious herd that blame an unusual birth for all of their woes regarding the drought – which is something that has happened in traditional African cultures. So are the zebras black or white? You choose :)

From reading various reviews that ranged from 0 to 80%, I realised the exact same movie can represent a *very* different understanding to different people depending on their own perceptions or level of understanding of the film. Some saw what the film was trying to do and commended it, others saw it as a cliché and ripped it apart. I feel like it has both these elements and so if you want to look for the cliché or stereotype you will find it. The springboks for example are perceived by some as a good example of South African humour, others might see it negatively. I know how much more "South African" it actually was in early versions, so I see it as one version of that. It's like the question of how many stripes make a zebra – how far do you have to go to make the scene or the film truly representative of South Africa? I've always seen *Khumba* in context of a slate of films at Triggerfish. In *Zambezia* we first tried an entirely South African voice cast. It didn't work and eventually the few remaining voices were replaced by celebrities because they were in key roles, so for *Khumba* I purposefully left South African voices in the more minor roles so that the American voices were instead replaced by celebrities. I think the springboks and gemsbok give an extra flavour of authenticity even if the whole cast is made up of different accents. The translation into different languages also means that the characters will come across differently to the different people watching in their own language. I don't know for example how the isiZulu version dubs them.

I don't think you can ever represent an entire country in one movie, but I am glad that some children's first cinema experience across the world was of one of our movies rather than an American one.

People who know the Karoo landscape have appreciated the accuracy of the plant life and I'm pleased that audiences around the world have been exposed to some of the magic I experienced as a kid visiting the Karoo. Besides the animals that exist there, it comes into the lighting and other aspects of the film too – all of which hopefully inspire more people to see it for themselves.

9. In your opinion, how does Triggerfish's depiction of Africa in *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia* differ from the Africa portrayed in Disney and Hollywood films?

For *Zambezia*, we wanted the film to be "pan-african" since birds do migrate and are not limited to one setting. For *Khumba* I wanted to capture the specificity of the Karoo. The bigger studios might have similar intentions for their movies (*Lion King* vs *Madagascar*).
It's hard to define the difference exactly, but I think there is one. Perhaps some of it is purely based on the difference in budget (we work with a tiny fraction of the budget of US studios). Everything we do is a little more rough and ready, less moving cameras and fewer crowd shots to reduce render times and other technical difficulties. But more than that, I think there is a difference in the visual aesthetic, the pace of editing and choices of voices and music. All of these combine to give a different 'feel'. I think it's a more authentic one, but perhaps that is because we've come from these places rather than visited for a couple week's research trip.

10. Both *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia* have been accused of containing colonial stereotypes in their depictions of Africa. Do you think this is valid, and why do you think this is a criticism of the films?

To some degree, the Marabous in *Zambezia* always represented the colonial stereotype for us and we were ok with that.

There might well be some perceived stereotypes even if it was not the intention. Sometimes complex issues end up being simplified throughout the lengthy process of trying to tell a cohesive story that appeals to children as well as adults. The end result can also be interpreted in any number of ways depending on the filter which each audience applies.

Both films were made by a team that was majority white so this does also play a role in the end result. This is a challenge faced by the industry globally – most key creative positions are held by white males (Cartoon Brew had some interesting stats about the animated films made in 2017 – of the 62 films, one was directed by a woman, 3 had a female co-director and one was by a Latin American male, the rest were white male). So the challenge to create a more diverse voice is greater than ours alone and is something we are looking at ways to address as this is one way to create a more diverse "non-stereotypical" voice. The 2015 Triggerfish Story Lab was a conscious step in that direction as is our upcoming Animate Africa initiative.

11. Do you feel that the South African animation industry has a responsibility to be sensitive to the politics of colonial representations of South Africa and African subjects? Please expand on your answer.

Yes, I do think it is important, and we have turned away many scripts which we feel were not sensitive to various issues whether it was colonial politics or some other subject. We have also turned away scripts which might have specifically addressed important issues, but which we felt were not marketable because they came with too much of an agenda. This might be less important when a niche audience is involved, but the films we create at Triggerfish need to get as wide an audience as possibly in order to recoup the high costs involved and therefore entertainment factor is large.

Creating any media to be consumed by children holds a great level of responsibility and there are a number of areas we as creators need to be sensitive to. These include everything from imitable behaviour to representation, which is only now being highlighted as an area of growing importance in the global entertainment industry. This is fantastic as Triggerfish's vision is to bring a fresh voice to the global industry and we are well-placed to do so. Ultimately our agenda is not to portray the complicated and nuanced politics of our country, but if for example race does come into a story then we need to be sensitive to how it might be perceived and we have already sent stories back into development for this reason.
When human characters - and therefore skin colour - are involved, then everything does need to be examined a little more closely as to how it might be perceived. We have some human-led stories in the pipeline.

The best way to address representation is to get more diverse voices into the key creative positions. Animation is still a very white-male dominated industry globally, and South Africa is still extremely new to the arena so it will still be a few years before the students coming out of the local animation schools are more representative of the country's demographic.

As a company we can have a strategy to address the imbalance. We did a continent-wide call for writers (the Story Lab) and have begun the process of looking at a long-term strategy to help train up more historically disadvantaged individuals into the industry.

CONSENT FORMS

Consent form

I voluntarily Anthony Silverston agree to participate in the formal interview for Tanya Blaeser's MA research report titled "A postcolonial analysis of colonial representations in Triggerfish's animated films *Khumba* (2013) and *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012)".

I understand that the interview methods will involve a formal interview conducted via email.

I grant permission for the interview to be included in the appendix of the research, which will be published by the University of the Witwatersrand and subsequently be available both online and at the library. I give permission for Tanya Blaeser to use the data from the interview in her research report.

I understand that the interview is not anonymous, and that my name will appear in the research report.



Research Participant

01/02/2017

Date



Signature of Researcher

01 March 2017

Date

Consent form

I voluntarily STUART FORREST agree to participate in the formal interview for Tanya Blaeser's MA research report titled "A postcolonial analysis of colonial representations in Triggerfish's animated films *Khumba* (2013) and *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012)".

I understand that the interview methods will involve a formal interview conducted via email.

I grant permission for the interview to be included in the appendix of the research, which will be published by the University of the Witwatersrand and subsequently be available both online and at the library. I give permission for Tanya Blaeser to use the data from the interview in her research report.

I understand that the interview is not anonymous, and that my name will appear in the research report.

Stuart Forrest SFoNV

Research Participant

13 Feb 2017

Date

Signature of Researcher

01 March 2017

Date

Participant Information Sheet for the MA research project, "A postcolonial analysis of colonial representations in Triggerfish's animated films *Khumba* (2013) and *Adventures in Zambezia* (2012)".

Dear Participant,

My name is Tanya Blaeser, and I am an MA student in Digital Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand. The research I am conducting aims to identify and critique colonial and neo-colonial stereotypes in Triggerfish's animated films *Khumba* and *Adventures in Zambezia*.

By consenting to participate in this research project, you will be agreeing to a formal interview. The questions and responses will be communicated via email, and will not be anonymous.

Since this is a research project for academic (and not commercial) purposes, there is no financial gain in participating in this interview. However, your input will be credited both in the works cited section, as well as in the body text.

This research report will be published by the University of Witwatersrand, and the completed interview will be included as an appendix. As such, it will be available as a part of the research report both online and at the University of the Witwatersrand Library.

Please note that you are under no obligation to participate. You may choose to decline this offer. No penalty or loss of benefits will be enacted if you so choose.

You are allowed to withdraw from this project at any time and no penalty will be incurred on you.

You may request a copy of the research report once it has been completed.

If you have any further questions, please contact me or my supervisor via email.

Researcher Contact Details
Tanya Blaeser
tnblsr@gmail.com

Supervisor Contact Details
Bronwyn Horne
bronwyn.horne@wits.ac.za