

The Arrival of Grey: A re-evaluation of George Grey's governance at the
Cape of Good Hope, 1854-1861

Thomas Keegan: KGNTHO001

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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<u>Prime Ministers</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>	<u>Secretary of State for War and the Colonies/ for the Colonies (the latter term used as of June 1854)</u>		<u>Governors at the Cape</u>
Lord John Russell (Whig)	30 June 1846 – 21 February 1852	3 rd Earl Grey July 1846- February 1852		Henry Pottinger 1847
14 th Earl of Derby (Conservative)	23 February 1852 – 17 December 1852	Sir John Pakington February 1852- December 1852		Sir Harry Smith 1847 – 1852
4 th Earl of Aberdeen (Peelite-Whig)	18 December 1852 – 30 January 1855	Duke of Newcastle Dec 1852 – June 1854		Sir George Cathcart March 1852-May 1854 (appointed by Earl Grey, left the shores of England before Earl Grey's removal)
3 rd Viscount Palmerston (Whig)	6 February 1855 – 19 February 1858	Sir George Grey, 2 nd Baronet June 1854- Feb 1855		Charles Henry Darling (Acting) May 1854 – December 1854
		Herbert February 1855	John Russell Feb-July 1855	Sir George Grey December 1854- August 1859
14 th Earl of Derby (Conservative)	20 February 1858 – 11 June 1859	Molesworth July 1855 - Nov 1855	Labouchere Nov 1855-Feb 1858	
		15 th Earl of Derby/Lord Stanley (son of 14 th Earl of Derby) Feb 1858 -June 1858		
3 rd Viscount Palmerston (Liberal)	12 June 1859 – 18 October 1865	Bulwer-Lytton June 1858 - June 1859		Sir George Grey 1860-1861
		5 th Duke of Newcastle June 1859 – 7 April 1864		

Not scaled accordingly, although rows do align adjacently (i.e. if the beginning of George Cathcart's governance overlaps with Earl Grey, he was employed by Earl Grey)

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An Introduction

Many historians judge the mid-19th century as a period ‘characterised by liberal reform and the ascent of the “imperialism of free trade”’.¹ It was a period in which greater responsibility was placed on colonists, particularly through the granting of representative and responsible forms of government. The exact timeframe in which such developments emerge is somewhat debatable, and differing approaches have thrashed out attempts to map the rise of liberal, decentralising ideologies within the British Empire. Vincent Harlow believes that this ‘liberal tendency’ can be seen as early as 1783, when Ireland is granted brief legislative independence.² To Maya Jasanoff, this year is also important. The loss of the American colonies in 1783, and possibly the Irish rebellion taking place within the same year, led to a ‘clarified commitment to liberty and humanitarian ideals’.³ However, at the same time, Britain also apparently understood the American Revolution as a consequence of too much liberty, which ‘enhanced the taste for centralised, hierarchical government’.⁴ As is widely argued, the French revolution and the wars that followed entrenched a conservative reaction that lasted until the 1820s. Indeed, C.A. Bayly argues that ‘the British empire from 1780 to 1830 represented ... a series of attempts to establish overseas despotisms... These colonial despotisms were characterised by a form of aristocratic military government supporting a viceregal autocracy, by a well-developed imperial style which emphasised hierarchy and racial subordination, and by patronage of indigenous landed elites’.⁵ From the 1820s (Bayly argues from the 1830s), more liberal ideas began to predominate, based on assumptions of ‘free trade’, the ‘civilising mission’, and the economic and cultural upliftment of people in the empire, blacks and whites. Many connect the antislavery agenda to this political trend.

However, while for colonists the mid-nineteenth century was an era of ‘liberal reform’, for various indigenous peoples, it was a harsher period, as the rise of settler power in places like South Africa and New Zealand adjacently involved the conquest of natives – a process legitimized by reference to the ‘civilising mission’ – a reference that was oftentimes

¹ Bayly, Christopher Alan, *Imperial Meridian: the British Empire and the World, 1780-1830*, (London: Longman, 1989), pg 8

² Harlow, Vincent, ‘The New Imperial System, 1783-1815’, in *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, vol ii, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), pg 129

³ Jasanoff, Maya, *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary War*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), pg 12

⁴ *Ibid*, pg 13

⁵ Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, pgs 8-9

subversive, as seen in the Cape in the 1850s. Between 1839-1841, Herman Merivale, sitting as undersecretary of state for the colonies ‘where he attempted to turn his theoretical musings into practical advice’⁶, had delivered a series of lectures in which he argued that British colonisation, and the subsequent treatment of native peoples, could follow one of three trajectories – extermination, insulation, and amalgamation. While voicing displeasure with the former two possibilities, which were respectively seen as unsavoury and ineffective, Merivale advocated the latter option. These were beliefs that were evidently shared by other British political figures in this time. As British colonies attempted to try and incorporate native peoples into their cultural, religious and economic systems, the ‘civilising’ mission became somewhat significant. While this ideology was stressed into the 1850s, Britain fought numerous battles across the world (including the Eighth Xhosa War of 1850-1853, the Crimean War of 1853-1856, the Indian Revolt of 1857, the Anglo-Persian War of 1856-1857 and the Second ‘Opium War’ of 1856-1860, to name but a few), flexing its military might in an attempt to consolidate its global domination. As such this was a complex period in which contradictory ideologies intermingled. This thesis centers on this ambiguous period. At its core stands George Grey, Governor of the Cape of Good Hope between 1854 and 1861.

George Grey is often seen as an enigmatic personality, and the nature of his character varies across numerous historical works. If one, for example, were to rely on Henderson’s *George Grey, Pioneer of Empire in the Southern Lands*, one would be introduced to Grey as a great civiliser and visionary, a ‘child of the nineteenth century renaissance’ with ‘unbounded faith in the possibilities of human nature, his deep and lasting sympathy for the masses of the people, and his splendid devotion to the welfare of the native races in the Southern Hemisphere.’⁷ On the other hand, if one were to follow Peires’ train of reasoning, one would come across a character with a ‘dark, even a sinister side’ – a ‘selfish, vindictive, and even

⁶ Guy, Jeff, *Theophilus Shepstone and the Forging of Natal*, (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2013) pg 163

⁷ Henderson, George Cockburn, *Sir George Grey, Pioneer of Empire in Southern Lands*, (London: E. P. Dutton and Co. Inc., 1907), pg 4. Similar descriptions of Grey can be found include Milne, James, *Romance of a Pro-Consul: The Personal Life and Memoirs of the Right Hon. Sir George Grey, K. C., B.*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1899), Reese, William Lee and Reese, Lily, *Life and Times of Sir George Grey, K.C.B.*, (Auckland: H. Brett, 1892), Stanford, Walter, *The Reminiscences of Sir Walter Stanford* (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 1958-1962), pg 102, Brookes, Edgar Harry, *White Rule in South Africa, 1830-1910: Varieties in Governmental Policies Affecting Africans*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1974), Bohan, Edmund, *To Be a Hero: A Biography of Sir George Grey, 1812-1898*, (Auckland: Harper Collins, 1998), and, to a degree, Williams, Donovan, ‘The Indian Mutiny of 1857 and the Cape Colony Part I: Sir George Grey (A Reassessment). Troops and Horses,’ *Historia*, Vol.32, No. 1 (May, 1987), also seem to defend Grey

paranoid individual’.⁸ Grey thus stands as a multitude of fictional personalities – an interesting case study from which to observe trends of historiographical analysis. Addressing the subject of Grey, **chapter 1** of this thesis attempts to provide a broad outline of his character and relationships, addressing various anecdotes concerning Grey’s life, in an attempt to provide a foundational understanding of a major character in imperial history.

This thesis does not simply revolve around Grey, however, for it attempts to look at the place of the Cape within the broader imperial, political landscape of the British Empire at this time. In 1848, prominent politician Sir William Molesworth depicted the government of the mid-nineteenth century empire as ‘an ever-changing, frequently well-intentioned, but invariably weak and ignorant despotism. Its policy varies incessantly... it is everything by turns, and nothing long; Saint, Protectionist, Freetrader, in rapid succession; one day it originates a project, the next day it abandons it, therefore all its schemes are abortions... witness the economical condition of the West Indies, the frontier relations of the Cape of Good Hope ... and the pseudo-systematic colonization and revoked constitution of New Zealand’.⁹ The mid-nineteenth century was indeed a period of oscillation within British politics, with various Prime Ministers and their respective cabinets arriving and departing at frequent intervals; the 1850s alone saw no less than five prime ministers and ten secretaries of state for the colonies. While many, such as Jasanoff, Bayly and Galbraith, have attempted to explain the rise of ‘liberal’ policy within the British Empire, these act to simplify the state of British politics. In the 1840s and 1850s, at the very least, there was constant political upheaval, and numerous policies were sought after at different times. With this instability, one can imagine how the attitude of the Home Government in the early 1850s could differ distinctly from that expressed by the late 1850s – this the period of George Grey’s governance at the Cape of Good Hope. This thesis considers this as a period of great change, both political and social, in the Cape.

⁸ Peires, Jeff, *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7*, (London: James Curry, 1989), pg 46. Similar descriptions of Grey can be found within the works of Dalton, B., J., *War and Politics in New Zealand 1855-1870*, (Sydney, 1967), Ward, Alan, *A Show of Justice: Racial ‘Amalgamation’ in Nineteenth Century New Zealand*, (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1974), Wards, Ian, *The Shadow of the Land: A Study of British Policy and Racial Conflict in New Zealand, 1832-1852*, (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1968), Clark, Manning, *a History of Australia*, Vol. 3, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1973), Mathie, Nerina, ‘George Grey’s Federation Policy 1854-1859’ (MA thesis, UCT), Mostert, Noel, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa’s Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People*, (London: Pimlico, 1992) to name a few.

⁹ Galbraith, John, S., *Reluctant Empire: British Policy on the South African Frontier, 1834-1854*. (Berkeley: California U.P., 1963) pg 70

Understanding this is as a period of political fluctuation, one can see a similar trend at the Cape in the middle years of the century. This thesis' scope begins from the late 1840s, with the appointment of Harry Smith, to the time of George Grey's departure from the Cape in 1860. The various governors of the Cape in this time differed – governors such as Harry Smith, brought into the Cape in 1847, George Cathcart, arriving in 1852, and George Grey, 1854, were stylistically dissimilar, and they brought different opinions and policies to bear. Despite these differences, all three governors were given room to implement their own independent ideas. **Chapter 2** of this thesis attempts to compare these governors, with the aim of explaining how such differences were allowed, even encouraged, by the Home Government. One such comparison is that of the simultaneous governorships of Smith, governing at the Cape, and George Grey, governing in New Zealand. These two men concurrently governed their respective regions in the late 1840s and early 1850s. Both governorships were in fact somewhat similar – both the Cape and New Zealand were caught up a constitutional debate, with both governors delaying their respective constitutions, and the settler populations of these two areas voiced frequent criticisms of their governors, who were deemed autocratic, nepotistic and self-interested. However, despite such similarities, Smith was eventually recalled, while Grey received hearty commendations. This chapter looks at why this was the case, arguing that it was Smith's failure to make responsible, independent decisions that in the end cost him his employment, while Grey's confidence and decisiveness endeared him to his superiors in a period when transoceanic correspondence was sluggish.

Thus while, in some sense, political turbulence in the Cape echoed similar political fluctuations in Britain, it is argued that independence and individualism, on the part of the Cape governors, was at this stage endorsed. While historians such as Kirk, Peires, Weldon, Rutherford and Mostert, to name a few, often depict figures such as Smith and Grey as highly manipulative, 'autocratic' governors, I argue that, in the Cape at least, such governors were given leeway to imbue their own ideas and impose their own decisions. Grey had long governed with a certain degree of independence, which he had been allowed in his earlier governmental stints in Australasia, and he arrived at the Cape with this understood rubric of governance. This would change with the election of the Conservative ministry in 1858, after which Grey was fired for taking such independent measures, effectively ignoring numerous commands. This change of expectations regarding the nature of Grey's role as governor, and

the resulting trying relationship between Grey and his Conservative authorities, is discussed in **chapter 9**, as it connects to Grey's departure from the Cape.

Chapter 3 attempts to look at the various representations made of Grey by various British politicians and figures before his arrival at the Cape. During his various stints in Australasia, Grey gained a reputation as a 'native specialist'; Merivale, for instance, described him as 'a man of singular and approved ability in dealing with savage races'.¹⁰ Such perceptions were common at the time, and have influenced many, such as Henderson, who represented Grey as a man exercising a 'splendid devotion to the welfare of the native races in the Southern Hemisphere'. Grey was indeed a renowned figure, and his appointment reflects the extent to which the Cape had at that point become an area of major concern for the Colonial Office.

Grey has long held the reputation as a 'humanitarian', 'philanthropic' and 'benevolent' governor. **Chapter 4**, in part, addresses such contemporary allusions, discussing the way in which such depictions have influenced various historical accounts of Grey. Recent historical work has criticised Grey's treatment of Australasian natives, but this criticism has been even more evident within historical works examining his treatment of southern African indigenous peoples. South African historical works have, in the words of Leigh Dale, 'come much later, if even more forcefully' in promulgating negative views of Grey's record in this regard.¹¹ Partially as a response to this debate surrounding Grey's 'humanitarian native policy', this chapter attempts to directly compare Grey's depictions of natives from Australasia with those from southern Africa. Here differences do seem to arise – for instance, Grey himself wrote numerous works on the nature of Maori culture, and while he learnt a fair amount of the Maori languages, he neither wrote about nor learnt the language of any southern African native culture. Theories surrounding the reasons for this are discussed in this chapter.

At the beginning of his Cape administration, Grey was given leeway to implement his policies, many of which are discussed in **chapter 5**. Here I also examine the way in which he initially represented southern African natives upon arrival. Such representations were somewhat injurious, and, as Grey was surely informed by existing beliefs upon arrival, to some extent these reflected the views that the Cape population held towards Africans. Serious

¹⁰Mathie, Nerina, 'George Grey's Federation Policy, 1854-1859' (MA thesis, UCT, 1946), pg 53

¹¹Dale, Leigh, 'George Grey in Ireland: Narrative and Network', in Lambert, David and Lester, Alan, eds, *Colonial Lives Across the Empire: Imperial Career in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pg 150

questions are also thus raised regarding the accuracy of Grey's supposed empathy for native races – a theme that also carries itself across in the chapters preceding and succeeding this.

Grey's Cape policies were in fact criticised by many Cape figures as hasty and belligerent – a sure way to incite Xhosa resistance. Despite this, by the end of Grey's government, the Xhosa had been subjugated, their long-drawn-out resistance to European encroachment suppressed. Grey's 'success' in subjugating the Xhosa originated not only from his own policies, but were the culmination of the policies of his predecessors, while he also capitalized on the infamous and mystifying Xhosa Cattle-Killing, which stands as one of the most influential events in the history of South Africa. This was essentially a millenarian movement, wherein thousands of Xhosa died following the prophecies of numerous prophets who circulated the belief that if their people killed their cattle and refused to plant seeds, the European population would be driven out of southern Africa by Xhosa ancestors. In the ensuing bedlam of famine and frenzy, 40,000 Xhosa died, and thousands more were forced to find labour in the Cape Colony in exchange for mere sustenance. This is a topic that has met with vast historiographical conjecture; a discourse to which numerous historians have added their thoughts. Indeed, fascination with the phenomenon is demonstrated not only in academic circles, but, additionally, within a vibrant public and literary discourse. An overview of various academic debates surrounding this event is thus discussed in **chapter 6**, as a preface to the discussion on Grey's role in and reaction to this movement that takes place in **chapter 7**. This event has sparked numerous criticisms of Grey, for, while he did next to nothing to aid these starving people, he also passed numerous laws in an attempt to completely subjugate these by now desperate people whilst publicising the idea that the Cattle-Killing was an orchestrated attempt by Xhosa chiefs to provoke war. While historians such as Peires and Hodgson have stamped their authority on this topic, this particular chapter looks at the way in which Cape society judged Grey's measures. Here part of the discussion revolves around the degree to which Grey and his administration manipulated public opinion, artfully using media in such a way as to perpetuate representations of Xhosa as a 'barbaric' and 'warmongering', 'uncivilised' people who had to be educated on the habits of hard work and industry for their food, and to what extent the Cape population perpetuated and elaborated such ideas themselves.

This thesis also attempts to discuss the nature of Cape colonial, white elite society at this time.¹² By and large, the Cape public, as argued in this thesis, accepted Grey's version of events, and many seemed to celebrate the subjugation of the Xhosa. There were some instances in which colonists attempted to aid the starving Xhosa, and some were even vocally opposed to Grey's punitive measures. However, when one compares the level of public criticism that Grey received with that received by Smith and Cathcart, both of whom received virulent public criticism during their governorships, the amount of such opposition was indeed minimal. **Chapter 8** argues that this was a period of social transition for the identity of the Cape's elite. For one, this was a period in which scientific enterprise boomed at the Cape, and this chapter investigates the extent to which Grey, as an individual with an apparent interest in promulgating scientific endeavor, played a role in this.

McKenzie has critiqued the failure of historians to 'view their national histories within the broader cultural framework of British imperialism'¹³, arguing that 'The British Empire was connected by a vast circuit of constantly moving personnel... While the tyranny of distance was by no means overcome, the imperial network was above all a network of information. It was held together by the movement of people and paper: publications from throughout the empire, private letters and endless official documentation.'¹⁴ While the Cape thus existed within a broader framework of imperial, scientific initiative, it also judged itself as 'wild' and 'unrefined' when compared to European standards. The *Cape Argus*, for instance, complained that 'Whenever anything has appeared of the Cape [in Britain], it has generally been accompanied with something about Kafirs and Kafirland, or a wild beast hunt in the bush.'¹⁵ This chapter discusses the extent to which the Cattle-Killing and the subsequent subjugation of Xhosa peoples impacted on notions of Cape civility, reinforcing ideas of Cape development in accordance with idealised European notions of civilisation and social advancement. In a sense, Grey's efforts to 'civilise' the Cape – an effort not only confined to the civilization of native peoples, but to the Cape Colony itself – paralleled a similar effort by the Cape colonial population, who viewed their own colony as somewhat backward and unrefined, in need of intellectual and cultured growth. It is partly due to this synchronised effort that Grey was so popular at the Cape, with prominent Cape figures extolling his

¹² The availability of sources dictates the fact that focus on such a group is both practical and pragmatic

¹³ McKenzie, Kirsten., *Fear and Loathing in the Empire: Scandal and the Colonies: Sydney and Cape Town, 1820-1850*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2004), pg 6

¹⁴ Ibid, pg 7

¹⁵ *Cape Argus*, 30 December, 1857

government. While Saul Solomon admired Grey as a ‘man of the people’, John Fairbairn ‘believed that neither Grey nor his policy could be easily destroyed’, while Rutherford claimed that his eventual departure from the Cape ‘endangered the peace of South Africa’.¹⁶

Constraints and Difficulties

Various themes and spheres of investigation have failed to find space in this thesis. For one, Grey’s relationship with the administrators of Natal and the Zulu kingdom, and his role in policy-making relating to this region have been ignored, although they are both important and interesting. Furthermore, while Grey’s relationship with Free State and the Sotho has been discussed in chapter 9, albeit briefly, his relationship with the Transvaal has found no space in this thesis – again, due to space constraints. Again, when discussing Cape culture at this time, focus has been given to white imperial elite society, a limitation accruing as a consequence of source availability.

¹⁶ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 425

Sir George Grey Timeline¹⁷

1812: Born in Lisbon, Portugal

1826: Enters Sandhurst Royal Military College

1830-1836: Serves in military for six years in Ireland

1837- 1839: Leads two expeditions in Western Australia. Publishes *a vocabulary of the dialects spoken by the aboriginal races of S. W. Australia* as well as *Journals of two expeditions of discovery in the North-West and Western Australia*.

1839: Marries Eliza Spencer

1841: Has a son who dies at five months old. Grey appointed governor of South Australia

1845: Appointed Governor of New Zealand

1848: George Grey is knighted

1853: Publishes *Ko nga moteatea, me nga hakirara o nga Māori* (The songs, chants and poetry of the Māori)

1854: Leaves New Zealand abruptly. Appointed High Commissioner of South Africa. Publishes *Ko nga mahinga a nga tupuna Māori* (The deeds of the Māori ancestors).

1857: Publishes *Ko nga waiata Māori* (songs of the Māori) and *Ko nga whakapepeha me nga whakaahuareka a nga tipuna o Aotea-roa* (proverbial sayings of the ancestors of New Zealanders)

1859: Fired but immediately reappointed as Cape governor.

1860: Separates from his wife.

1861: Leaves South Africa and donates over 3500 volumes to the South African Public Library. Is reappointed Governor of New Zealand.

1868: Grey fired as governor of New Zealand. Grey goes to England, where he becomes a Liberal politician, ultimately failing to enter Parliament. Then returns to New Zealand.

1877: Becomes Premier of New Zealand.

1879: Resigns as Premier.

1887: Donates 8000 volumes to Auckland Public Library

1893: Re-elected to the House of Representatives

1894: Leaves for England, where he spends the rest of his life

1895: Resigns his seat on House of Representatives

1898: Dies on 19 September and is buried in St Paul's Cathedral

¹⁷ Influenced hugely by, and oftentimes mirroring that shown at the Auckland City Libraries' website – accessible on <http://www.georgegrey.org.nz/SirGeorgeGrey.aspx>

Painting the Picture of a Complicated Character

While this thesis does not attempt a purely biographical study of George Grey, it would perhaps be interesting to discuss his character, adding an amount of depth to our understanding of the man. This short chapter will thus devote itself to discussing Grey's character, whilst refraining from delving into historiographical representations, which, along with other fields of investigation, will be saved for later chapters. It is important to note that most of Grey's private papers were eventually destroyed by his niece, and as such, Grey remains today something of an unknown quantity.¹⁸

George Grey can be understood as an intriguing character; one capable of extreme mood swings and genuine unpredictability, with a penchant for the melodramatic. Grey was, at times, exuberant and boisterous. In Milne's *The Romance of a Pro-Consul*, Grey shares a memory of when he 'used, when in England, to visit the Duke of Newcastle... I was there, a member of a party, on a wet day when we were cooped up in the house, unable to find occupation. Towards afternoon, everybody in despair, I proposed, "Why not have some cock-fighting?" Not the illegal cock-fighting of course, but the nursery-style, where you have your hands tied in front of your knees and try to turn an opponent over with your toes. My proposal was received with delight, and I suppose half a dozen of the leading men of England, were that afternoon kicking their heels in the air.'¹⁹ This particular statement, whilst laying bare a certain element of Grey's character, also demonstrates the social standing that George Grey held with a number of high-end Whig and Liberal politicians within British society – a fact that should be remembered as this thesis progresses.

George Grey counted a number of famous figures as his close friends. According to Grey himself, Olive Schreiner once told him that he was the only Englishman living with whom she would like to shake hands.²⁰ Other figures with whom Grey seemed to keep constant correspondence were Robert Moffat, David Livingstone, Charles Darwin, Joseph Hooker, Florence Nightingale, John Barrow and Thomas Babbage, amongst others.

There are also a number of instances that suggest a certain liberalism in Grey's perception of the world, and this, in turn, has shaped representations of the man, although such

¹⁸ Weldon, Gail, *The Interaction Between the Missionaries of the Cape Eastern Frontier and the Colonial Authorities in the Era of Sir George Grey, 1854-1861*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 1984), pg 17

¹⁹ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pg 119

²⁰ *Ibid*, pg 17

representations will be discussed later. Grey himself speaks of his experience of school as one which was ‘insupportable to me’ due to the ‘the playground walls, the being shut in from nature, the walking in line at exercise... It was like keeping a boy’s spirit and imagination in prison, instead of allowing them free communion with the world around.’ The fact that these representations come from Grey’s own mouth may do harm to the objective sincerity of this imagery, although Grey’s pride in this image tells us of his agreement with these sorts of characterisations. It was for these reasons, according to Grey, that he ran away from school at a young age, travelling from Guildford to Eastbourne, whilst sleeping in the open.²²

After running away from school, Grey found himself under the tutelage of the liberal idealist Richard Whately, an eccentric character in his own right.²³ Indeed, it seems as though Grey took on a number of Whately’s traits, and Leigh suggests that Whately may have been a distant relative of Grey’s.²⁴ It is said that, similarly to George Grey, Whately loved to argue, and was extremely stubborn in his views, often leading to personal conflict. He is also said to have been a man of high intellectual standards, holding a professorship of political economy at Oxford University, and was versed in the art of ‘punning’. He also wrote a number of books such as *Elements of Logic*, *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Bonaparte* and *On some of the Difficulties in the Writings of St Paul*. Whately was sympathetic to the Irish people during the Irish Famine, as George Grey was, and was said to have been tolerant of a number of religions, albeit those deserving of the ‘civilized’ mantra, as, again, George Grey seemed to be. He also seemed to be a Whig man, appointed as Archbishop of Dublin by the newly formed Whig administration, and in 1840 he apparently recommended to John Russell, secretary of state of the colonies at the time, that George Grey be given a position in some capacity²⁵ (Grey was subsequently appointed Governor of South Australia in 1841). While limitations disallow an in-depth examination of Whately within this dissertation, all points of comparison between the two figures suggest that Whately was important in shaping the life and character of the young George Grey.

²² Ibid, pg 22

²³ Grey is said to have spent a holiday with Whately after running away from school – Rees and Rees even suggest that the two had ‘constant intercourse’, although evidence does not seem sufficient to solidify this concept. (Dale, Leigh, ‘George Grey in Ireland: Narrative and Network’, pg 166)

²⁴ Dale, Leigh, ‘George Grey in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa’, in Hulme, Peter and McDougall, Russell, *Writing, Travel and Empire: Colonial Narratives of Other Cultures*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), pg 20

²⁵ Dale, ‘George Grey in Ireland: Narrative and Network’, pg 166.

Grey appears to have been an intelligent man with a certain amount of open-mindedness, although his various policies across his areas of governance tend to do damage to this reputation. Grey, for instance, had an objective viewpoint of language as a constructed social phenomenon. As High Commissioner of the Cape of Good Hope, he rather poetically stated in his address to the Assembly that:

*The very language we speak fails to utter fully the emotions of our hearts; we feel its feebleness, we strive to give utterance to the thoughts and aspirations which burn within us, and we strive in vain; we find that we can but inadequately express ourselves in such words as our language supplies... of the hundreds of millions of human beings, how few understand the language in which we express ourselves, and how soon will that language itself, by insensible degrees, fade from the earth, and be lost to man! Day by day a language is fretted away, and new words and phrases are woven into it to repair the wasted parts, until in a few centuries, a language is so wholly changed, that even an Englishman now finds it difficult to understand the verses of Chaucer, formerly, from his perfect knowledge and command of our language, styled 'that well of English undefiled.'*²⁶

While Grey's personality suggests an open-minded, liberal figure, according to Dale, 'The historiography of George Grey too often turns to personality to explain invasion, duplicity, annihilation and assimilation'²⁷. At the heart of the ambiguity inherent across different historical works depicting Grey stands our attempt to consolidate Grey's written personality with his oftentimes brutal actions and policies, although this will be discussed later. Grey was, evidently, impressively articulate, and this would help help him throughout his years of governance, which often relied on promulgating certain ideas, perspectives and policies in written form. Grey was also considered fairly manipulative by his contemporaries – a characteristic bolstered by his art of articulation and inherent creativity. As Henry Labouchere, secretary of the colonies from 1855 to 1858 was to state, 'Nothing can be more ingenious than the number of arguments Sir George Grey deduces from the same premises of fact.'³⁰ Edward Eyre, lieutenant-governor of the province of New Munster was to claim that Grey operated 'with such distortion, some absolute untruths, great rancor, malicious

²⁶Kerr, Donald Jackson, *Amassing Treasures for All Times: Sir George Grey, Colonial Bookman and Collector*, (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006) pg 157.

²⁷Dale, 'George Grey in Ireland: Narrative and Network', pg 175

³⁰CO 48/385: comment on dispatch No.212, Grey to Labouchere, 30 December 1857.

insinuations, sinister suggestions – all calculated to impress a person at a great distance unacquainted or only partially acquainted with the facts.’³¹

Although Grey developed fiery relationships with individuals, as we shall see shortly, he seemed at times to be patient, calm and tolerant – underlining his extreme eccentricity. An interesting debacle occurred when in 1846 Grey, upon opening a parcel of books that had been sent from England, found that someone had slipped in a piece of correspondence sent from Charles Darwin to John Stokes, the captain of the *HMS Beagle*, in which both Darwin and Grey had sailed, albeit at different times. Grey and Stokes had an unpleasant history,³² and within this piece of correspondence, Darwin seemed to ridicule Grey. Grey sent a calmly worded response, to which Darwin, ‘much mortified’, replied, ‘assuring Grey of his high opinion of him (“Your account of the aborigines I have always thought one of the most able ever written”) and enclosing a message from Stokes, who promised to locate the ‘mischief-maker’ responsible for slipping the damaging correspondence into Grey’s mail’. Although Grey’s response to this has, according to the Auckland Library, been lost, Darwin’s reply praised his ‘admirable spirit’ in reacting to the occurrence, and correspondence between the two continued in the years to come.³³ Darwin obviously became a fan of Grey’s works, which shall be discussed in proceeding chapters, recommending Grey’s *Travels in North West & Western Australia* to a John Lubbock.³⁴

As mentioned, Grey’s moods are said to have fluctuated between depression and elation.³⁵ One example of how this affected his relationships was that of the friendship between Grey and the bishop of Cape Town, Robert Gray. For a while after George Grey’s arrival at the Cape, he and Bishop Gray seemed to spend hours together debating various topics, and the two were seemingly quite fond of each other, holding a number of similar philosophies in regards to policy-making. But this, like many of Grey’s relationships, soon turned sour. In August 1858, Bishop Gray appointed deacon John Eedes to Beaufort. Sir George annulled

³¹ Gump, James, ‘The Imperialism of Cultural Assimilation: Sir George Grey’s Encounter with the Maori and the Xhosa, 1845-1868’, *Journal of World History*, Vol.9, No.1, pgs 91-92

³² Stokes had been official British surveyor in South Australia, and had mocked Grey for proposing that a specific piece of land was suitable for colonisation. Stokes and Grey had also previously met on the *HMS Beagle*, the ship on which Grey had first arrived in Australia.

³³ Auckland City Library, George Grey Collection, GL D8.2, Charles Darwin to George Grey, 13 November, 1847, retrieved from: <http://www.georgegrey.org.nz/TheCollection/CollectionItem/id/28/title/letter-to-sir-george-grey-from-charles-darwin.aspx>

³⁴ Darwin, Charles, *The Correspondence of Charles Darwin, Volume 12, 1864*, eds. Frederick Burkhardt, Duncan M. Porter, Sheila Ann Dean, Paul S. White, Sarah Wilmot (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pg 288

³⁵ Rutherford, James, *Sir George Grey*, pg 102

this arrangement ‘on the grounds that his formal approval as Governor had not been obtained’.³⁶ The Bishop’s wife, Sophy, thought George Grey’s ‘conduct about Mr Eedes going to Beaufort is not only so uncalled for – an aggression – but it is altogether so mean and little in the excuses he gives for it that it can be nothing but a determination to pick a quarrel to try his power’.³⁷

The Bishop was also outraged, and wrote to Dean Douglas, another individual who had also previously quarreled with Grey, stating that ‘I quite concur in all you say of that proud, mean, overbearing man. This is the return he makes for the services which I am now rendering him... As it is, the governor might at any moment throw me over and leave me with expenses which I could not meet. He would then affect great indignation and say I had no reason for my expectations of funds.’³⁸

The Bishop had good grounds to be frustrated. George Grey had previously brought forty-two native ‘lads’, including two sons of Moshoeshoe, to the Bishop’s house – unannounced. This proved to be a great source of irritation for the Bishop, given the fact that he had ‘never authorized him to make such a promise’.³⁹ Subsequently, the Bishop represented George Grey as a ‘proud, overbearing man ... given to tantrums if opposed’.⁴⁰ By all accounts, Grey liked to be in control of things, as evident in his policies as well as his interactions with others. Dalton, for one, claims that Grey was driven by a ‘ruthless egotism to which he would sacrifice anything and anybody’.⁴¹ John Blades Currey, working under Grey at the Cape, would remark that ‘he [Grey] required implicit obedience. As long as you were what he called “one of his fish”, he would look after you, but he had no more than once told me if his fish got into another man’s pond he had done with them.’⁴² It seems as though George Grey did, at times, let his ego dictate his actions.

Another debacle, involving the enigmatic Edward Wakefield⁴³, as shown by Rutherford, offers another fascinating anecdote. As shown later in this thesis, George Grey faced intense

³⁶Gutsche, Thelma, *The Bishop’s Lady*, (Cape Town: H. Timmins, 1970), pg 168

³⁷Ibid, pg 169

³⁸Ibid, pgs 169-170

³⁹Ibid, pg 170

⁴⁰Weldon, Gail, *George Grey and the Xhosa: Fact and Opinion*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1993), pg 36

⁴¹Dalton, B., J., *War and Politics in New Zealand*, pg 259

⁴²Currey, John Blades, *John Blades Currey, 1850-1900: Fifty Years in the Cape Colony*, (Johannesburg: Brenthurst Press, 1986), pg 115

⁴³Wakefield was a prevalent and influential British politician in this period, particularly vocal and active in Australasia and Canada, and was indeed a somewhat eccentric human being. In 1827 he was imprisoned for

public criticism in New Zealand when attempting to delay the incoming constitution. In early 1853, Edward Gibbon Wakefield arrived in New Zealand, eager to offer his aid to Grey. Earlier in his career he had helped Charles Metcalfe deal with public agitation in Canada, which had itself faced heated constitutional debates, and Wakefield soon started to communicate with Grey upon his arrival in New Zealand. On 9 March 1853, Wakefield wrote a letter to Grey describing the ‘difficulties in the way of your establishing the new constitution with advantage to the country and credit to yourself’, in reference to the intense public debate within the region, and even offering his services in ‘smoothing your path’.⁴⁴

Grey, detesting the interference of others, saw this letter as an attack on his aptitude and competence. He refused to admit a heated social climate, replying that ‘I think whoever has informed you that any differences exist between myself and the inhabitants of this country generally, has misled you’. Grey continued his attack on Wakefield by suggesting that ‘my actions and intentions have been so often misrepresented by a few persons who (you must pardon me for saying so) have I think been invariably friends of yours, and acting with you, and have at least in some instances been assisted by your published letters’.⁴⁵

Wakefield, likewise, saw these replies as attacks on his own self, and laid siege to Grey’s reputation, fueling the image of Grey as a power-hungry despot throughout the local media. Within a week of Grey’s reply, Wakefield wrote to the *Wellington Independent* claiming ‘from long habit and too much impunity in the indulgence of an arbitrary despotism, he [Grey] has become really unable to comprehend either the means, or the necessities, or even value, of popular government.’⁴⁶ To Lyttelton he voiced his opinion that ‘So far, the Constitution Act has proved a great evil... We should have been better off without it, if instead of it, Downing Street had sent us out a just man for Governor.’⁴⁷

Despite this seemingly burnt bridge, Wakefield then asked Grey to keep him informed as to when the elections would take place. Grey chose to ignore him. Offended, Wakefield then once again wrote to the *Wellington Independent*, and claimed that ‘Sir George Grey’s

kidnapping, in an attempt to wed a 15 year-old wealthy heiress, luring her ‘away from school by a false message saying her mother was dangerously ill. She was subsequently deceived by Wakefield into marrying him, with the story that her father had desperate money troubles and that the marriage was the only means of solving them.’ (Fairburn, Miles, ‘Wakefield, Edward Gibbon’, in *the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, Vol 1: 1769-1869*, edited by Oliver, W. H., (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1990))

⁴⁴Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 157

⁴⁵Ibid, pg 258

⁴⁶Ibid, pg 259, referencing *Wellington Independent*, 19 March 1853

⁴⁷Ibid, pg 259

personal rudeness towards me ... ill becomes him, who was once my attached pupil in a school of colonial policy, and who is indebted to me principally for having lifted him from obscurity to his position as a ruler of this country'.⁴⁸

In the eyes of certain blue-blooded aristocrats, Grey was an unrefined figure. Barbarina Grey, who lived in Cape Town with her husband, and the stepsister of Earl Grey⁴⁹, an important character within this thesis, voiced her opinion that she didn't think 'Sir George grows upon one except in a public point of view. He has a passion for making jokes & what he imagines to be funny remarks, & they are melancholy to a degree, the ADCs look ready to cut their throats when he begins to be droll.'⁵¹ She also claimed that Earl Grey would be 'disappointed' by the character of George Grey if he met him⁵², despite the probability that these two had already met.

The emerging image is that of a somewhat confident, perhaps even arrogant, at times egotistical and individualistic persona, who tended to oscillate between emotional states. Peires believes that 'Beneath the polished veneer of charm and intelligence, there lurked a deeply insecure personality, which was selfish, vindictive and almost paranoid.'⁵⁴ Indeed, only individuals with deep-set insecurities would react so heavily in the face of criticism.

Weldon makes an interesting point when she alludes to the fact that Grey took laudanum medication for an injury in the side of his stomach, an injury he had gained adventuring in Australia that he constantly referred to. Laudanum contained opium, and so there exists a possibility that Grey was addicted to his medication, which would, in turn, provide a potential reason for his evident mood swings.⁵⁵ Indeed, Rutherford points out that Grey is said to have 'made a highly suggestive remark when he reportedly said that, when one felt downhearted, a little medicine would always set you right.'⁵⁶ Such abuse of medication was indeed common in this period and this suggestion should be taken seriously as a possible cause for Grey's unpredictability of behavior.

⁴⁸Ibid

⁴⁹ Earl Grey's brother served as naval commander of the Cape of Good Hope and South Coast Africa Station in this period

⁵¹ Harrington *My Dear Maria : the Cape Letters and Journal of Barbarina Charlotte, Lady Grey, 1857-1860*, (Cape Town 1997), pg 10

⁵²Ibid pg 53

⁵⁴ Peires, Jeff, *The Dead Will Arise : Nongqawuse and the great Xhosa Cattle-Killing movement of 1856-7*, (London: James Currey, 1989), pg 46

⁵⁵Weldon, *George Grey and the Xhosa*, pg 178

⁵⁶Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 102

Individualism and Responsibility: Comparing Grey's Government with those of Smith and Cathcart

Arriving at the Cape in 1854, Grey brought with him a style of governance that was wholly different to those who preceded him. While Sir George Cathcart, the man whom Grey succeeded, sought to allow the Xhosa a degree of cultural independence, Grey attempted to diminish this. Cathcart, had, in the early 1850s, proposed a policy whereby the chiefs would be allowed to rule themselves within their own cultural framework, albeit whilst being kept in line through the presence of European agents. This stood in stark contrast with the machinations of Grey and Sir Harry Smith – while Grey's assimilationist ideals supported a set of policies that in their very essence necessarily opposed those of Cathcart, Smith is perhaps rightly notorious for his antagonism in attempting to assert a sense European superiority and dominance, aimed at 'frightening off' any ideas of Xhosa resistance and independence. Indeed, Smith is often regarded as a bellicose figure – many have lambasted him for being hostile and belligerent, in a sense bullying Africans into subservience.

Both Smith and Grey were headstrong and bullish, and both attempted to force Xhosa into British cultural contours. However, unlike Smith, for Grey it was through gradual exposure that natives would be brought under colonial control. Upon his arrival at the Cape, Grey made it a point to limit the expectations put upon him by stressing that his assimilationist policy was not to be rushed. He stated on 8 June 1855, to Lord John Russell, secretary for the colonies at this point, that:

To gain influence over all tribes included between the present north-eastern boundary of this colony and Natal, by employing them upon public works, which will tend to open up their country; by establishing institutions for the education of their children, and the relief of their sick... to attempt gradually to win them to civilization and Christianity, and thus to change by degrees our at present unconquered and apparently irreclaimable foes into friends who may have common interests with ourselves.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, (London: George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1855), No 20, Grey to Grey, 22 December 1854. Emphasis added

Similarly, Cathcart, according to a Captain Hugh Robinson, was perfectly willing to take as much time as necessary to gain an amount of peace and security on the eastern frontier.⁵⁹

Thus, in comparing the policies of Grey, Smith and Cathcart, one is able to see differences in approach. The question here is how such differences in policy can be explained in such a short space of time.⁶⁰ What was the Home Office's stand on this, and to what degree were these line of policies accepted, or indeed promoted? Here, notions of 'individualism' and 'responsibility' are relevant as subjects of analysis.

Harry Smith: Belligerence, Annexation, and the Question of Responsibility

In discussing the differences that existed in these different sets of policies, we should start with Smith, who, appointed in 1847, was the first of the three to govern the Cape. Smith was a legendary figure in the British Empire. His military record was staggering,⁶¹ and most recently he had been praised by the Home Government for bringing the Indian Punjab under British rule. His triumph in India brought him a knighthood, a doctorate from Cambridge, and personal congratulations from Queen Victoria herself.⁶² Indeed, Earl Grey and Russell, after meeting with Smith, were of the opinion that he was 'by far the fittest person' to be tasked with bringing peace to the war-ravaged Cape frontier.⁶³ Outgoing Governor Pottinger, acting as a stop-gap until Smith's availability for the position at the Cape,⁶⁴ had himself announced that 'the very prestige of Sir Harry Smith's name ... will awe the Kafirs into instant submission'.⁶⁵ And this viewpoint was echoed throughout the Cape population. Smith's first entry into Grahamstown, according to Mostert, 'was the greatest celebration the town had ever known. Triumphal arches and every means of decoration and salute that could be devised adorned the streets.'⁶⁶

Recent analysis of Smith, however, is not so generous, for Harry Smith holds a place as one of the most villainous characters within South African history. He was, by all accounts,

⁵⁹ Mostert, Noel, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People*, (London: Pimlico, 1992), pg 1145

⁶⁰ Smith was employed in 1847, Cathcart in 1852, and Grey in 1854.

⁶¹ Serving in South America, North America, various parts of Europe, Asia, and, of course, South Africa

⁶² Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 5

⁶³ Mostert, *Frontiers*, pg 930

⁶⁴ Smith had been desired as Governor of the Cape in 1846' but, as Smith was still needed in India at this point - Benyon, John, *Proconsul and Paramountcy in South Africa : the High Commission, British Supremacy, and the Sub-Continent, 1806-1910*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1980), pg 21

⁶⁵ Benyon, *Preconsul and Paramountcy*, pg 53

⁶⁶ Mostert, *Frontiers*, pg 932

incredibly belittling and aggressive in his interaction with the native chiefs.⁶⁷ Soon after arriving at the Cape in 1847, Smith announced himself as the ‘Paramount Chief’ and ‘father’ of all the Xhosa. Smith believed that ‘The Kaffir, like every other barbarian, is a desponding creature; and, when, once subdued, easily kept subordinate.’⁶⁸

On a number of occasions Smith presented himself as an overly antagonistic bully. Upon his arrival on the docks at Port Elizabeth, he was greeted by hundreds of individuals who gathered to hear him speak. One of these was said to be Chief Maqoma of the Ngqika Xhosa – a general who had fought against Smith to great avail in the Sixth Frontier War of 1835. Upon seeing Maqoma, Smith apparently glared at the chief whilst half drawing his sword from his scabbard. After the speech, Maqoma was summoned by Smith and ordered to his knees. Smith lay his boot onto Maqoma’s neck and is claimed to have said, ‘This is to teach you that I am come hither to show Kaffirland that I am chief and master here.’ Later, in an incident wherein Chief Sandile offered to shake Smith’s hand, Smith ordered that he kiss his boots instead. He was also said to have torn up a piece of paper, symbolizing the treaty of 1835, in front of a gathering of Xhosa chiefs, and thereafter ordered these chiefs to once again kiss his boots.⁶⁹

However, in some sense, Smith was acting in accordance with instructions – a fact that is often overlooked in South African histories. Upon arriving at the Cape, Smith was informed by Colonial Secretary Earl Grey that he was expected to ‘act upon the instructions which had originally been given to Sir Henry Pottinger ... as to the policy that should be adopted, in order to prevent, if possible, a recurrence of the calamity which had just been experienced.’⁷⁰ *The substance of these instructions was that, experience having demonstrated the futility of treaties with the Kafirs, no more were to be made’.*⁷¹ And indeed, the instructions which had

⁶⁷ Smith had been involved in Cape affairs during the 1830s, where he had first commanded colonial forces during the Sixth Xhosa War of 1834-1836. Smith was thereafter appointed governor of the Queen Adelaide Province, between the Kei and Keiskamma rivers. . In 1835, the Xhosa king Hintsa was captured during the Sixth Frontier War and was shot on the orders of Smith when attempting to flee captivity. Hintsa became a martyr and Smith the villain within the collective Xhosa commemoration of this event. Smith’s already tarnished reputation amongst the Xhosa deteriorated to an even greater extent by the manner in which he confronted their peoples. The Province was soon abolished, and Smith was subsequently appointed in India. As such, upon his arrival as governor at the Cape, Smith was already despised by the Xhosa chiefs.

⁶⁸ Keegan, Timothy, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 1996), pg 219

⁶⁹ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 5-6

⁷⁰ Smith was employed soon after the closure of the ‘War of the Axe’ – the Seventh Frontier War

⁷¹ Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell*, (London: R. Bentley, 1853), pg 201, italics not present in original

originally been given to Sir Henry Pottinger were of a similar mold; Earl Grey had signaled to Pottinger that ‘the welfare of our uncivilized neighbours, and not least the welfare of the colonists, *require that the Kaffir tribes should no longer be left in possession of the independence they have so long enjoyed and abused*’.⁷² These instructions insisted on a generally aggressive stance in which dominance was to be asserted. This is not to demote Smith as an agent in this matter. Of course, this line of policy suited Smith – who was, at heart, a military man and an acclaimed general. At this juncture, Earl Grey, the Prime Minister John Russell, and his colonial officials believed that the best way to provide a modicum of security to the Cape region was through simple and immediate enforcement of superiority.

This was a somewhat hurried, ‘fix this now’ type of approach, and it is clear that a demonstration of power was demanded in Earl Grey’s instructions to Smith. Smith was working within a rubric under certain expectancies, which he maintained in his aggressive communications to the Xhosa chiefs. However, as these instructions suggest, this was not meant to antagonise the Xhosa into military resistance. At this stage ‘bark’ rather than ‘bite’ was seen as the best method through which control could be gained over the native ‘insurgents’. However, these hostile methods of imposition meant that this policy was half-cooked. Smith’s aggressive posture, far from intimidating the Xhosa into a state of inaction, would in time spark militaristic resistance. It was under the governorship of Smith that the violent and drawn-out War of Mlanjeni erupted, lasting between 1850 and 1853.

While much has, up to this point, been made about the fact that Smith fitted in with Earl Grey’s ideas concerning the Cape, it is important to understand that Smith had an extraordinary amount of space to implement independent policies. In 1847, for instance, Smith re-annexed the area between the Keiskamma and the Kei rivers, a region that would now be called British Kaffraria. In addition to the annexation of British Kaffraria, one year later Smith annexed the area between the Orange and Vaal rivers, home to a large number of Boers, in an area that would now be labeled the ‘Orange River Sovereignty’. He evidently also weighed up the possibility of annexing the area north of the Vaal, home to Pretorius and the Transvaal Boers, although this option was later dropped as a feasible policy. Smith’s annexation of these regions was met with a certain amount of hesitancy by the Colonial

⁷² Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, pg 217, emphasis added

Office, which was keen to minimize the administrative costs of the Cape. In assessing these acts, Earl Grey referred Smith to ‘previous declarations of the determination of Her Majesty’s Government, to encourage no extension of the British dominions in Africa; but it proceeded to express a sense of importance of allowing a free development of his [Smith’s] plans, and a readiness to believe, on his authority, the necessity of departing from our general line of policy in this instance’, as long as the new territories provided for their own defence and paid for their own affairs.⁷³ As such, at this early juncture, both annexations were allowed, even if not particularly favoured.

In addition to this, a greater necessity for responsibility was made essential when the Home Government decided that all those who would have previously been appointed as ‘governor of the Cape of Good Hope’ were henceforth to be entitled ‘high commissioner’. This had practical implications. The high commissioner was no longer tasked with the governance solely of the Cape of Good Hope, but had the ability to preside over areas external to Cape boundaries. The newly revised title had particular repercussions for British Kaffraria, which sat right outside the borders of the Cape Colony. Officially it was decided that the region would be termed a ‘Protectorate’, rather than the alternative ‘Sovereignty’. With this latter form of annexation, all legal processes would have had to fall within the confines of Cape legal policy, thus limiting the freedom with which the high commissioner could impose his authority on the area, whilst making administration of these areas more costly with the appointment of magistrates, establishment of courts and other similar institutions. As a Protectorate, martial law could be imposed.

Smith’s annexation of large tracts of land, and the way in which it was accepted by the Home Office, points to the degree to which he was given free license in his government of the Cape. While Earl Grey, requiring a hasty conclusion to ‘native difficulties’, informed the manner in which Smith was to govern the Cape, Smith was allowed a great measure of space to implement his own ideas. As argued, these annexations, and the fact that Governors would now have greater control as High Commissioners, necessitated a great degree of responsibility. It was imperative to have a high commissioner who took matters into his own hands, in a manner that was both responsible and highly practical.

⁷³ Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell’s Administration*, pgs 207-208

However, in 1853, Harry Smith was fired. As this thesis argues, Smith failed to take responsible and immediate action in the face of numerous crises. Interestingly enough, at this time, George Grey, sitting as Governor of New Zealand, faced a number of difficulties akin to Smith. But while Smith was fired, however, Grey was decorated for his perceived accomplishments in New Zealand. When faced with difficulties, Grey was seen as stern, practical and confident, while Smith was seen as evasive, compromising and unsure. Through further investigation we can perceive how ‘responsibility’, ‘practicality’ and ‘independence’ were important and necessary characteristics for governors in New Zealand and the Cape, who worked on the fringes of the British Empire. This idea is important, for Grey was to be fired towards the back end of the 1850s for governing with *too much* independence.

Howling Winds: Comparing the Concurrent Governorships of Smith and Grey in the Face of Public Criticisms

I. Smith

The late 1840s, and particularly the early 1850s, was a period in which public criticisms were robust, both within the Cape as well as in New Zealand. The theme of public disillusionment and the pressure for representative government in this period in the Cape, for one, has been covered to a great extent in works that aim to investigate this theme within this region. Great works, such as Hattersley’s *The Convict Crisis*⁷⁶, Leggasick’s *The Struggle for the Eastern Cape*⁷⁷ and Le Cordeur’s *The Politics of Eastern Cape Separatism*⁷⁸, are just three such compositions that provide a canopy of historical investigation on the nature of public movements that stressed the desire for representative government. At this time, the Cape population attempted to paint Cape authorities as autocratic in order to propel their arguments for self-representation. Public movements came from both the western and eastern divisions of the Colony, although both areas focused their criticisms on different points of argument.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Hattersley, Alan Fredrick, *The Convict Crisis and the Growth of Unity: Resistance to Transportation in South Africa and Australia, 1848-1853*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1965)

⁷⁷ Legassick, Martin, *The Struggle for the Eastern Cape 1800-1854: Subjugation and the Roots of South African Democracy*, (Sandton: KMM Review Publishers, 2010)

⁷⁸ Le Cordeur, Basil Alexander, *The Politics of Eastern Cape separatism, 1820-1854*, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1981)

⁷⁹ Those residing in the east and those residing in the west faced different realities; towns such as Grahamstown were in essence frontier towns, while Cape Town and its surrounding areas was expanding in its role as an economic pivot within the broader British Empire. As such, the western districts had naturally developed a greater degree of infrastructure. While the eastern districts felt that the west was getting preferential treatment, in terms of road construction and port development, much of the western ‘middle-class’ also

During Smith's tenure, the 'Convict Crisis' fiasco broke out – Hattersley's *Convict Crisis* has dealt with this particular topic well. In 1849 it was discovered that the Home Government was intending to send a ship – the *Neptune*, housing a number of convicts – to the Cape. This generated a huge amount of public criticism from the Cape population, who feared that the importation of convicts would degenerate the status of their colony, and soon popular newspaper editors such as John Fairbairn, editor of the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, started to rouse public agitation against this scheme. Mass meetings were held, protest escalated, and after months of organised resistance, the *Neptune* departed from the Cape shores, without having landed a single convict, on 21 February 1850.⁸⁰

As this thesis will argue, it was the way in which Smith dealt with such 'civil crises' that frustrated the Home Government, for, in the face of this public campaign, Smith evaded responsibility. It appears as though Smith had not even initially informed Earl Grey of the issue, for Earl Grey mentions that he had first heard of the occurrence from 'other quarters'.⁸¹ As a result, in a dispatch to Prime Minister John Russell, Earl Grey voiced his frustration with Smith for his lack of communication.⁸² It appears as though Earl Grey was also of the opinion that Harry Smith failed to prepare the Cape population for the reception of these 'convicts'. He claimed that Smith could have easily represented such individuals as 'general peasants', who, during duress of the Irish potato famine, 'had committed depredations, which, though they could not be passed over without punishment, yet implied little moral degradation. This circumstance of their being so different a class from ordinary criminals ...

projected their angst through the discourse of misrepresentation. The Cape Town Municipality, for instance, criticised the Legislative Council as a poor representative of public interests, claiming that the Council itself was comprised of a number of wealthy individuals who restrained local economic rejuvenation by prioritizing global markets over those more local. Harry Smith and his influential Colonial Secretary, John Montagu, the latter of whom was in charge of both road building and the Legislative Council, essentially became symbols against which public resistance claimed legitimacy.

⁸⁰ Five thousand individuals attended the first anti-convict meeting on 31 May, 1849. All those attending this meeting were asked to 'sever all relations with anyone assisting in the landing or employment of convicts' – banks and insurance offices were asked to cut business with anyone who would not sign a pledge, while butchers and bakers were asked to stop deliveries to such individuals. Churches also offered prayers for the movement. Another mass meeting was scheduled on the 4th of July, the anniversary of the declaration of American independence. Obviously this was a date riddled with symbolism and metaphor, and outlined the broader intentions of these individuals to bring about representative government. Protest soon escalated, and 'From 10th October the *Commercial Advertiser* was publishing the names of all those who were continuing to have business relations with any department of government. The *Cape Town Mail* and other popular newspapers followed Fairbairn's lead.' (Hattersley, Alan Frederick, *The Convict Crisis and the Growth of Unity* pgs 45- 59)

⁸¹Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell*, pg 210. He claims to have heard the news via Cape Newspapers and the Admiralty at the Cape

⁸²*Ibid*, pg 212

seemed also to remove all just grounds for their reception in the Colonies to which convicts are not usually sent.’⁸³ Clearly, as the citizens of the Cape had reacted angrily to the importation of such individuals to the Cape, Smith had managed the situation abysmally. Smith’s decision not to land the convicts in the face of public criticism was seen by Earl Grey as most ‘inadvisable’, as well as morally reprehensible. As these ‘peasants’ had remained on the ship, where they were ‘endangered by such protracted confinement’,⁸⁴ subjected to inadequate food supplies and inadequate health care, Grey was of the opinion that it was ‘utterly impossible that you could fail to adopt some course or other for the immediate relief of these unfortunate men’.⁸⁵ The onus was surely on Smith to represent these individuals as victims rather than culprits, and, indeed, to take it upon himself to come up with a plan, rather than wait for orders. Importantly, it could take months for dispatches to commute between Britain and the Cape, and Earl Grey constantly made reference to the extent of time that passed between each dispatch between the Cape and Britain, underlining his frustration with Smith’s lack of initiative.⁸⁶

Additionally, during this public fervour, four members from the Legislative Council resigned in 1850, no longer able to defend their association with Smith and his associates, leaving the Council void and unable to fulfill its legislative duties. This event once again shows the extent to which Smith was hesitant to take immediate and improvised action. Indeed, months passed until new members were sought, and when new members were found, they were seen as close allies of Smith and his administration. In the maelstrom of public criticism it was decided that representative governance would be implemented at the Cape in 1852. However, with the Legislative Council in chaos, the appropriate measures could not be passed. This led to further criticisms from the public, who sought clear and tangible results. Defending himself to the Home Office, Smith’s colonial secretary, John Montagu, sent forth a number of dispatches that he had originally received from Smith, showing that the governor had ordered that ‘the important Ordinances directed by Her Majesty to be matured and passed for

⁸³ Ibid, pg 213

⁸⁴ Ibid, pg 218

⁸⁵ Ibid, pg 217, emphasis added

⁸⁶ Ibid, pg 468-469

introducing representative institutions into the colony, *will not be entered on until after the termination of hostilities with the Kafir tribes*'.⁸⁷

In the face of such evidence, Earl Grey continued to voice disappointment with the fact that Smith 'did not think it expedient to attempt filling up the vacancies thus created, or proceeding with the consideration of the ordinances... The course thus taken by the Governor did not meet with our approbation; and Despatches were addressed to him, explaining fully our views upon the subject'.⁸⁸ Smith's apparent inability to govern practically and responsibly saw to the appointment of two assistant commissioners, Major W. S. Hogge and C. M. Owen, the former of which reported, in 1852, that Smith was misrepresenting the state of affairs within the Cape.⁸⁹ Smith was sacked in 1852.

It appears as though Smith's failure to control the native population was not the direct reason for his axing. While it was a costly affair, Earl Grey himself had stated that the 'authors of resistance to the Government' had contributed greatly to the outbreak of the War of Mlanjeni.⁹⁰ He understood that the Colony, in the milieu of public dissent, would have appeared weakened and disorganized to the Xhosa enemy. Furthermore, Earl Grey, in one of his correspondences to Russell, included a dispatch which had been received from Cape Bishop Robert Gray, who had felt it necessary to alert the Home Government on his thoughts on why this war broke out. The fact that Earl Grey felt it necessary to include Bishop Gray's representations suggests that he was, at the very least, influenced by these opinions, or that they were important enough to at least take heed of. Within this dispatch, Bishop Gray firstly made reference to his opinion that Smith's behavior had no effect in bringing about the war. While there were 'features in our Cape boarder policy of which I [Gray] cannot approve', he felt that the war 'had not been brought about by any oppression on the part of the Government'. 'We have not interfered with the government of the Chiefs more than was absolutely necessary,' he claimed, and neither Smith nor his policies could be held at fault. Robert Gray attributed its commencement to four main causes. Firstly, he claimed that 'the Chiefs' power was gradually fading away', and that the war was a response to this. The second cause was that the practice of cattle thieving had been severely hindered by the Cape

⁸⁷ Newman, W. A., *Biographical Memoir of John Montagu: With a Sketch of Some of the Public Affairs Connected with the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, During His Administration as Colonial Secretary, from 1843 to 1853*, (Cape Town: A. S. Robertson, 1855), pg 381

⁸⁸ Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell*, pg 232

⁸⁹ Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, pg 241

⁹⁰ Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell*, pg 225

authorities, suggesting that the war broke out due, perhaps, to Xhosa desperation. Thirdly, Gray claimed that the stress brought on by recent drought drove many Xhosa to war. Fourthly, he claimed that the chiefs were aware of the 'internal divisions' within the Colony, as well those between the English, Dutch and 'coloured races', the latter perhaps referencing the Kat River Rebellion.⁹¹

In reference to colonial insurgence, Earl Grey seemed to sympathise with Harry Smith, making reference to the 'trying and anxious nature of the position in which, by the violent proceedings adopted at the Cape, you found yourself placed'.⁹² Indeed, as this thesis will argue, the views of colonists often held little sway in influencing the way in which the Home Office judged its colonial governors. Despite all this, the tones inherent in Earl Grey's writings indicate a sincere irritation with Smith, and it is clear that, at least to some extent, governance at the Cape required decisive action. While Smith showed intense, perhaps excessive confidence in taking up measures to 'deal' with the Xhosa, his approach was counter-productive when dealing with the Cape colonial population.

2. Grey

In concurrence to the above events, George Grey, the focus of this thesis, served as governor of New Zealand. He faced similar circumstances to those of Smith whilst in New Zealand, which itself was caught up in a constitutional broil, albeit centering on the introduction of responsible, rather than representative, government. Grey had a number of conflicts with the population of New Zealand, becoming a symbol of autocracy during his governorship, in a similar vein to that of Smith, and, similarly, George Grey found himself in the center of public debate entwined around the topic of representation. But in similar circumstances, how did Grey and Smith fair in contrast to each other?

In New Zealand, most of Grey's public troubles revolved around the fact that he did attempt to stamp his own authority over the incoming constitution, and, as such, representations of Grey as an authoritarian were not without some truth. Debates over the implementation of a representative government had existed as far back as 1839, when the powerful New Zealand Land Company had laid down a proposal for representative government. Later, in 1846, the first New Zealand Constitutional Act was passed, but this was delayed for six years by Governor Grey, who argued against the division of New Zealand into separate Maori and

⁹¹ Ibid, pg 256-257

⁹² Ibid, pg 224

European districts, which the original constitution seemed to advocate. Interestingly, this Act seemed to encourage Maori independence, contrasting the policy that Earl Grey had communicated to Smith within the same period. Decades later, Grey was to claim that he had been quite anxious about the future prospects of the Maori natives, who would have had no say over the policies implemented in New Zealand.⁹³ Despite this later claim, the eventual constitution that Grey brought about in 1854 failed, still, to allow Maoris to vote, as the franchise was based on freehold or leasehold titles, which Maoris were not entitled to, and no electorates were established in predominantly Maori lands.

Interestingly, while Harry Smith was later to be hauled over the coals for delaying the implementation of the Cape constitution, Grey's same decision was approved by the Home Government. While Disraeli was 'appalled' by Grey's actions, he simultaneously extolled Grey's 'discretion and abilities', highlighting a certain amount of faith that he held for the man. Grey held such an influence over the Home Government that the future Duke of Newcastle, at this time Lord Lincoln, spoke of his view that, in light of George Grey's opinions, the original Act should be repealed instead of simply suspended.⁹⁴ And indeed, as discussed, Earl Grey actively encouraged personal endeavor. As Collier shows, it was 'Earl Grey's despatch (of December 23, 1846) [that] left to the Governor the discretionary power of fixing the date at which he should promulgate the new charter'.⁹⁵ Earl Grey claimed that the Suspensory Act was 'founded almost entirely on the recommendations of Captain Grey', who 'thoroughly understood the position and interests of the Colony of New Zealand'. In fact, George Grey was knighted the year after his decision to suspend the New Zealand Constitution.⁹⁶ Grey's governance of New Zealand thus stands as an interesting case study when compared to Harry Smith, for both individuals took somewhat similar paths of action, in terms of suspending incoming changes of constitution, although the reputations held of them by the Home Government differed notably. Clearly it was the character of the governor, particularly his degree of responsibility and confidence, that assuaged Russell and Earl Grey.

Grey had his own idea of what the constitution should entail, and was given the space to enact these changes. As Rutherford points out, Grey's constitution, which operated in the interim, diverged quite heavily with that which had been proposed. To Grey, Provincial

⁹³ Collier, James, *Sir George Grey, Governor, High Commissioner and Premier: an Historical Biography*, (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1909), pg 52

⁹⁴ Ibid pg 58

⁹⁵ Ibid pg 52

⁹⁶ Ibid pg 58

Councils seemed very important. Grey ‘deliberately brought them into existence first, and postponed summoning the General Assembly until the local governments were in full working order’.⁹⁷ For the population, however, this was symptomatic of Grey’s despotism. Individuals such as a Mr. Merrivale perceived this act to be ‘a serious error’, carried out in accordance to a particular strategy to give Provincial Councils ‘the start in action, and time to acquire an independent hold on popular opinion’.⁹⁸ When Grey decided to allocate massive amounts of colonial revenue to Provincial Councils in late 1853, public agitation flared. As such, charges of misrepresentation and nepotistic governorship resonated within both New Zealand as well as the Cape. A Mr. Sewell represented this particular decision to implement Provincial Councils as an aberration of constitutional justness, claiming that:

*I think the governor from long habits of despotism has become utterly insensible to constitutional Government, and that he does what he thinks for the best without a thought or care whether he keeps within the law or not... He never means to call the General Assembly together... He is supreme Despot, and as he has ridden over and demolished one Constitution... and a dozen Acts of Parliament relating to Constitution and Land, so now he means to complete the cycle of his sins by destroying the vital principle of the new Constitution, the responsibility of the Central Executive to the Representative Legislature.*⁹⁹

Indeed, the public regarded the administration as ‘a badge of political servitude’ and ‘the last relic of official mistrust’.¹⁰⁰ In 1848 it was claimed that Grey’s administration was ‘more absolute than that of any other dependency of the British Crown, with the exception of Norfolk Island’.¹⁰¹

Additionally, the agent of the Canterbury Association, Mr. Godley, censured a Dr. Munro for abetting ‘the infliction of a most serious and irreparable injury upon the colonists’ for accepting a seat in the Legislative Council – the issue of seating on the Legislative Council thus offering another example of similar circumstances with the Cape. He also was to denounce what he termed the ‘anti-colonial policy’ of Sir George Grey.¹⁰²

⁹⁷Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 253

⁹⁸Ibid, pg 254

⁹⁹Ibid, pg 260

¹⁰⁰Ibid, pg 254

¹⁰¹Collier, *Sir George Grey, Governor, High Commissioner and Premier*, pg 76

¹⁰²Ibid pg pg 76

Despite all this, Grey's conflicts exerted no influence on the way that British political figures judged his administration. Little mention is made of this public agitation within the correspondence flying forth between Earl Grey and George Grey. Clearly, British officials, or, at the very least, Earl Grey, partially understood the way in which public symbols were, and are, crafted, altered and changed in order to fuel or justify public arguments. We find a similar situation at the Cape, where British officials prized official, 'qualified' representations, presented by figures such as Montagu and Robert Gray, over those made by colonial populations. Clearly, civic movements for representative or responsible governance were on the move throughout the Empire, and this was a fact that was understood by British politicians in this time. The Home Government, it can be argued, was aware of colonial, public criticism as an almost natural progression of colonial society. What is interesting here is the different assessment attached to Smith and Grey's governorships. Both were allowed independent measures, but while Grey seemed confident and self-assured, Smith did not.

'Boots' Cathcart and the Idea of Individualism

After Harry Smith was axed, Cathcart, who had been aide-de-camp to Wellington at Waterloo,¹⁰⁴ was appointed as High Commissioner of the Cape of Good Hope during the ongoing War of Mlanjeni. Cathcart was a 'striking-looking' man, tall and slender, and appeared, at all times, in military-style hip-high boots, so much so that he was nicknamed 'Boots' Cathcart. Rumours were spread which claimed that he even slept in them.¹⁰⁵ Cathcart was a humble and likeable character, a military man, having been stationed in a number of corners of the world. Upon his appointment, he 'did not fail to point out my own inferiority, in respect of the advantage of experience, to Harry Smith, as well as the circumstance of my being junior to General Somerset, whose practical experience and local knowledge must be valuable, and would probably be lost by my appointment'.¹⁰⁶

Once again, Cathcart's governance highlights the extent to which governors at the Cape were given space to make independent decisions and implement autonomous policies. All this is

¹⁰⁴Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, pg 242

¹⁰⁵Mostert, *Frontiers*, pg 1150

¹⁰⁶Cathcart, *Correspondence of Lieut.-General the Hon. Sir George Cathcart*, pg 1

ratified within Earl Grey's correspondence to Cathcart. All previous attempts to subjugate the Xhosa had hitherto failed, and Cathcart was thus given free licence in molding frontier policy:

*the object of paramount importance to which your attention must in the first instance be directed, is that of bringing to a close, at the earliest possible period, by the complete subjugation of the hostile kaffirs... When this has been effected, the measures to be adopted for the purpose of guarding against the recurrence of a similar calamity will require your most careful and deliberate consideration. The events of the last twenty years too clearly demonstrate the absolute necessity of a revision of the system of policy hitherto pursued on the Cape frontier.*¹⁰⁸

This 'most careful and deliberate consideration', could be carried out in a fairly independent manner, for Cathcart was to:

*exercise the fullest and most unlimited discretion in recommending for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government the course which may appear the best to your own judgement, without regarding yourself as in any degree bound by the instructions which have been given, or the views which have been expressed by myself or by preceding Secretaries of State, to former Governors at the Cape.*¹¹⁰

As mentioned, while Smith seemed hasty and bullish in his native policies, Cathcart exuded patience.¹¹² However, while Mostert claims that Cathcart's policy, which 'was to take time ... was hardly what [Earl] Grey had in mind',¹¹³ this thesis would argue that it was exactly what Earl Grey had in mind, inasmuch that it reflected an amount of independence and autonomy on the part of the governor, who was to help 'revise' the system of policy used at the Cape. While Lieutenant-Governor Darling diffused the situation in Cape Town and its surrounding areas,¹¹⁴ Cathcart attempted to deal with the urgent situation in the east, ravaged by war and

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, pg 216

¹¹⁰ Ibid, pg 217

¹¹² Mostert, *Frontiers*, pg 1145

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ Due to thematic constraints to this thesis, Darling is not discussed. However, he is an interesting character – while Cathcart focused on the frontier war, Darling was left to deal with the constitutional clamor, and it was Darling who was to give Earl Grey 'all further details, together with the debates and minutes, and explain his own views relative to the subject.' (Cathcart, *Correspondence of Lieutenant General, the Hon. Sir George Cathcart*, pg 6). Unlike Montagu and Smith, Darling was continuously respected by the local population. During his tenure, 'petitions, memorials and addresses praising him arrived from throughout the colony.' (Keegan,

insecurity. One major question was whether or not it was expedient to keep both the Orange River Sovereignty and British Kaffraria as annexed areas. Earl Grey brought up the discussion of abandoning British Kaffraria, a topic which was highlighted within his first official dispatch to Cathcart as Governor of the Cape of Good Hope.¹¹⁵

However, annexation of British Kaffraria, at least, was unlikely. Earl Grey very much believed in the process of civilization as one that stressed a moral obligation on the part of Britain to ‘uplift and protect’. This is perhaps one reason for his admiration for George Grey, for the two held extremely similar views for the treatment and ‘upliftment’ of native peoples. Earl Grey believed that ‘The authority of the British Crown is at this moment the most powerful instrument, under Providence, of maintaining peace and order in many extensive regions of the earth, and thereby assists in diffusing amongst millions of the human race the blessings of Christianity and civilization.’ If Britain abandoned her colonies, Earl Grey was certain that natives would rise up against western intruders, resulting in a ‘fearful war of colour’, taking place in a number of what would be former colonies¹²², in which European colonists would eventually overcome the natives ‘by waging against them a war of extermination, to which they would be driven in self-defence, and in which they would suffer as well as inflict infinite misery... For my own part I confess that I should grieve to think that the ultimate occupation of Southern Africa by a civilized population was only to be accomplished, like that of North America, by the gradual destruction of the native races.’¹²³

Britain, as the ‘leading’ light of civilization, self-assertively boasting both a complex moral and scientific understanding of reality, had an obligation to ‘do the right thing’, using its power for ‘constructive growth’. This mode of thinking evidently incorporated itself into the question of Eastern Cape abandonment. To Earl Grey,

Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order, pg 242) Darling intelligently crafted an image of himself that appealed to a large portion of Cape Town’s population, distancing himself from the previous administration by claiming that he represented: ‘native or permanently settled colonists...who feel that true social prosperity depends upon something more than the rapid accumulation of wealth as contradistinguished from those who merely regard the colony as a convenient and profitable trading station, to be deserted when their purpose of achieving independence is attained...’ (Kirk, T. E., *Self-Government and Self-Defence in South Africa: the Inter-Relations between British and Cape politics, 1846-1854*, (PhD thesis, Oxford University, 1972), pg 467). He also openly criticised figures that had played prominent parts of the last administration, particularly John Montagu, creating a foil against which his popularity could flourish.

¹¹⁵Cathcart, *Correspondence of Lieutenant General, the Hon. Sir George Cathcart*, pg 217

¹²² Mostert, *Frontiers*, pg 909

¹²³ Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell*, pg 253

*If colonists of European descent are to be left unsupported ... they must also be left to the unchecked exercise of those severe measures of self-defence, which a position of so much danger will naturally dictate. Experience shows that, in such circumstances, measures of self-defence will degenerate into indiscriminate vengeance, and will lead to the gradual extermination of the less-civilized race. To avert this result (which has hitherto been the aim of our policy), and, by the enforcement of order, to provide for the civilization and conversion to Christianity of these barbarous tribes ... is a high and nobler object, well worthy of considerable sacrifice on the part of the British people.*¹²⁴

What is so interesting here is that Earl Grey stressed the notion of ‘native upliftment’ as the primary reason to maintain British Kaffraria. As there was a perception that a number of wars had been the result of uncontrolled Eastern Cape settlers, the abandonment of this annexation was unlikely – in the face of this, firmer control was in fact necessary. It is no surprise that Cathcart opposed abandonment,¹²⁵ writing to John Maclean, Cathcart aired his views that ‘Military control not colonization is the principle of policy which has induced me to advise the retention of Kaffraria as a separate Government.’¹²⁶

Here it would be useful to introduce John Maclean, an important figure in this period. Maclean had been appointed Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria by Cathcart, and Cathcart’s correspondence makes clear the important role that Maclean played during his tenure. Maclean was Cathcart’s right-hand man; the two had similar visions of intended policy, and Cathcart thought that it ‘would be superfluous in me to point out to you Maclean’s great merits as a head of the commissariat establishment’ further claiming that he ‘derived a comfort and advantage from his [Maclean’s] presence’.¹²⁷ Maclean was also an important figure in the eyes of the Home Government; he had independent correspondence to the Home government, and Cathcart relied upon him to inform them on ‘all important events’ in British Kaffraria, including ‘the measures we have taken for a prompt adjustment of all claims of Government, and settlement of expenses chargeable to the imperial treasury’.¹²⁸ Under Cathcart, Maclean had a fair amount of freedom and independence in undertaking policies and implementing plans of action. He single-handedly held meetings with Xhosa chiefs, and his personal interpretations, as just argued, were held in high regard by many

¹²⁴ Cathcart, *Correspondence of Lieutenant General, the Hon. Sir George Cathcart*, pg 217

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, pgs 25-26

¹²⁶ GH 30/4: Cathcart to Maclean, 19 January, 1854

¹²⁷ Cathcart, *Correspondence of Lieutenant General, the Hon. Sir George Cathcart*, pg 367

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, pg 366

imperial figures. However, this was not to be the case under George Grey, who demanded from his inferior officers utter obedience and subscription to his own ideas and opinions.

Cathcart was also tasked to provide insights into whether or not the Orange River Sovereignty was to be kept under British protection.¹²⁹ Relations between Moshoeshoe and the Orange River Sovereignty were bumpy at this period, and the two groups were in constant conflict. The Sovereignty was a thorn in the heel of British administrators, and the region often needed aid from the Cape during its many conflicts with the Sotho people. During one such conflict, Cathcart felt obliged to send 2 000 troops to the Sovereignty – this occurring during the already taxing War of Mlanjeni. Once again, this act was very much an autonomous decision, as Cathcart wrote to the Home Government stating that ‘I hope that this new expedition upon which I am about to embark will meet with the approval of Her Majesty’s government’.¹³⁰ In the end, it was decided that the Sovereignty be given independence, with the signing of the 1854 Orange River Convention. Cathcart seemed to share the Home Government’s opinion, and voiced happiness with the fact that the ‘foolish Sovereignty farce is at length over.’¹³¹

Cathcart had been asking for his recall home in the months prior to his departure from the Cape, and he particularly wanted to spend time with his daughters. Sadly, his services were required elsewhere in the Empire, and in 1854, the Home Office recalled him to serve his Empire in the Crimean War. He was to tragically die a few months later on the battlefield, in the Battle of Inkerman in Russia, on 5 November, 1854. In his place, Darling, appointed as Acting-High Commissioner, opened the first Cape Parliament later that same year, and in late 1854, Sir George Grey subsequently replaced Darling.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, pg 137

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, pg 142

¹³¹ *Ibid*, pg 358

Sir George Grey – Context and Reasoning for His Introduction

Grey was the first British governor of the Cape who did not have experience as a primarily ‘military man’. Whereas previous Governors such as Harry Smith, George Napier, Henry Pottinger and George Cathcart had all won commendation through military endeavour, Grey gained reputation through his policies and public appeal in South Australia and New Zealand, particularly in relation to native interests. The arrival of a man who was not versed in the ways of military-styled governance was in fact desired by the Cape population in this period. There was an understanding even in the public domain that, given the constant wars taking place in the Cape, a change in approach was needed. On 12 February 1853, a letter from E.R. Bell to the editor of the *Graham’s Town Journal* was published, in which the belief was stated that the natives ‘wink at each other when they prostrate themselves as *children* and call the Governor their *father*... The Kaffirs are too cunning an enemy to be met by Tyro-Governors... few Governors consult the experienced – they trust to military knowledge and prowess of British troops... I call upon any man possessing common sense and experience whether he has any confidence in the peace which is about to be consummated with the natives?’¹³⁴ This change came with the appointment of the illustrious George Grey, who was an apparent expert in dealing with native peoples. Grey had first made a name for himself during his government of South Australia, a post to which he held from 1841, as well as his governance of New Zealand, between 1845 and 1853.

In this period there was a clear movement of governmental persons and policies between India, the Cape and Australasia. In Australia and New Zealand in the 1840s there had been strong popular agitation, as in the Cape, for responsible government. Figures like Grey, Montagu and Darling, the latter of whom had come from socially tumultuous Jamaica,¹³⁶ had past dealings in these matters. These figures also tended to employ ‘constructive’ policies revolving around civil improvement. On the other hand, there were also prominent Cape figures that had gained experience in India. While those from Australasia were often adept at civil development and more intricate political or public manoeuvrings, many like Smith and Pottinger had adapted to militarily-focused environments. Governors such as Smith had been

¹³⁴ *Graham’s Town Journal*, 12 February, 1853

¹³⁶ There had been recent slave emancipation within the West Indies, and the major problem there lay not with native warfare but with social adaptation

brought in to implement their highly praised style of governance that had been evolved within the Indian circuit, and perhaps their inability to adapt and evolve to social currents was their failure. While Smith and Pottinger had failed in their attempt to appease Cape colonists, Grey succeeded somewhat, although many at first believed that he, too, was too forceful with the natives in his attempts to implement his style of 'indirect' control, as shall be seen.

George Grey was held in high regard by a number of British figures within the upper echelons of British society. Merivale¹³⁷ represented Grey as 'a man of singular and approved ability in dealing with savage races'.¹³⁸ John Russell and Earl Grey were themselves avid appreciators of George Grey. In reference to Grey's earlier governance of South Australia, Lord John Russell claimed that 'In giving him the government of South Australia I gave him as difficult a problem in colonial government as could be committed to any man, and I must say, after four or five years' experience of his administration there, that he has solved the problem with a degree of energy and success which I could hardly have expected from any man'.¹³⁹

Furthermore, in reference to Grey's governance of New Zealand, Earl Grey claimed that:

*the contrast between the state of things at the end of 1850, and that which the present Governor found on his arrival at the end of the year 1845, is so marked and gratifying, that it is difficult to believe that so great a change should be accomplished in the short space of five years... It is to the Governor, Sir George Grey, that New Zealand is mainly indebted for this happy alteration in its conditions and prospects. Nothing but the singular ability and judgement displayed by him during the whole of his administration ... could have averted a war between the European and native inhabitants of those Islands. It would have been one of the same character with that which has been raging so long at the Cape of Good Hope.*¹⁴⁰

Earl Grey continued to paint an emotive picture, claiming that a 'mortal struggle' would have ensued, culminating in either the abandonment of New Zealand or the extermination of the native peoples with even the 'slightest error of judgement' on the part of George Grey.¹⁴¹ It was not through force, but through tact, that Grey was believed to have extended an

¹³⁷ Permanent under-secretary of state for the colonies between 1848-1859, Drummond Professor of Political Economy at Oxford University, and prominent historian

¹³⁸ Mathie, 'George Grey's Federation Policy, 1854-1859', pg 53

¹³⁹ Collier, *Sir George Grey, Governor, High Commissioner and Premier*, pg 24

¹⁴⁰ Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration*, pp 136-137

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, pg 137

‘unbounded influence ... over their [the Maoris’] minds’ despite the imposition of a number of ‘unpalatable’ regulations over them.¹⁴² Earl Grey mentioned a number of examples in which he made clear his belief that not only did the natives accept George Grey, but actually felt a deep ‘affection’ for him as a ‘friend’, and even as a ‘father’.¹⁴³

In recent times, many have attempted to show that this was not the case¹⁴⁴ – that, in fact, Grey misrepresented the atmosphere within New Zealand, which was nothing more than a ‘manufactured triumph’, wherein Grey ‘contributed to a growing unease amongst the Maori chiefs’, resulting in, for instance, fighting on the west and east coasts of North island amongst land sellers and landholders.¹⁴⁵ But, despite this critique, Grey was at least able to influence the Maori chiefs to voice positive exonerations of him. Upon his later re-arrival as Governor of New Zealand in 1861, Grey was met with high praise from the Maori chiefs; while the Ngatitamainu tribe claimed ‘O Governor, I salute you, who come hither from our gracious Queen, whose affection ever continues towards the evil-doing race, the foolish race, the race with whom wisdom hath not dwelt. O Governor, I salute you’,¹⁴⁶ the Ngatiapa Tribe offered ‘Salutations to you ... Friend, we are glad that Governor Grey is coming back to his first place, because he is the only man we know, and his policy is clear’.¹⁴⁷ The Ngatiterau tribe also wrote to Grey, who they claimed was ‘The friend of the Potatau. Great is my love for you; great is the joy of my heart at your return.’¹⁴⁸ In light of these public statements, it is no wonder then that Grey received praise from colonial figures such as George Barrow, who stated in 1855 that ‘If you succeed with the Natives here in any degree approaching to what you have done in New Zealand, what a glorious triumph it will be after all that has been said about the impossibility of doing anything with them.’¹⁴⁹

Barrow was one of many. It seems that George Grey and then influential politicians James Stephen and John Russell were on amicable terms, as George Grey is said to have listed John

¹⁴² *Ibid*

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, pp 138-139

¹⁴⁴ Critics of this representation are Ward, within *Show of Justice*, Gump, in *The Imperialism of Cultural Assimilation*, and Sinclair, Keith, in *The Origins of the Maori Wars*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1961), just to name a few

¹⁴⁵ Gump, *The Imperialism of Cultural Assimilation*, pgs 96-97

¹⁴⁶ Sir George Grey Collection, South African Library, - *Native Addresses of Welcome to Sir George Grey* (Auckland: [s.n.], 1861), pg 13

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pg 9

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pg 12

¹⁴⁹ Gump, *The Imperialism of Cultural Assimilation*, pg 1

Russell as one of the three characters who had the most influence on his life,¹⁵⁰ and had, whilst adventuring around Australia, christened a mountain range in Western Australia after Stephen. He had also christened another range as the Lyell range, after English geologist Charles Lyell, an indication of his admiration for the pursuit of knowledge and scientific enquiry.¹⁵¹

Additionally, Lord Stanley depicted Grey as a man with ‘energy, capacity, and circumspection in the conduct’ of his dealings.¹⁵² Grey was, without a doubt, a man who was held in high esteem by many; his appointment, like Smith’s, underlines the fact that the Cape was seen as an important piece in the British imperial jigsaw, a detail that, when referencing this period, is perhaps under-emphasized in broader British imperial histories.

This can be seen as a period in which the ‘education of the natives’ and the act of civilisation in general was pushed by political figures such as Newcastle and Earl Grey. Indeed, as Earl Grey’s mentioned announcement that ‘*to provide for the civilization and conversion to Christianity of these barbarous tribes ... is a high and nobler object, well worthy of considerable sacrifice on the part of the British people*’ pointed towards a desire to civilize the Xhosa, Grey was an obvious choice for the crucial position of governor the Cape; a land where the British had long faced stark resistance from indigenous tribes. Indeed, Newcastle was another individual who seemed to hold George Grey in high stead, and, undeniably, the two seemed to have a close friendship, as shown through an earlier anecdote.¹⁵³

The relationship between these two figures is of interest, as it was the Duke of Newcastle who re-established Grey’s post in the Cape in 1859 after the strings had snapped between Grey and the Conservatives, resulting in Grey being fired ion the midst of an incredibly tumultuous relationship between the two parties. Preceding Grey’s first appointment in 1854, the Duke of Newcastle applauded Grey for the ‘energy and steadiness of purpose which distinguish the full career ... in New Zealand affords a just hope ... that the permanent interests of another extensive and increasingly important Colony will surely advance under your government’.¹⁵⁴ In fact, in March 1854, Cathcart, creating a committee for the ‘religious

¹⁵⁰Kerr, *Amassing Treasures for All Times*, Conclusion. The other two were Archbishop Richard Whately, his mentor as mentioned, and Thomas Carlyle

¹⁵¹ Collier, *Sir George Grey*, pg 19

¹⁵²Ibid, pg 27

¹⁵³ Pages 11-12 of this thesis

¹⁵⁴Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 291

education and moral improvement of the natives’, referred them to ‘certain despatches from the Governor of New Zealand, which, though not practically applicable to the circumstances of this locality and native people, had been communicated to me by your Grace [the Duke of Newcastle] as of analogous import’.¹⁵⁵

Grey’s arrival at the Cape came on the back of a virulent political scuffle. Indeed, his departure from New Zealand was highly controversial and in many ways reflects his character. Grey had wanted to leave New Zealand in 1851, due to the fact that he had received only one break of three months in England during his twelve years of colonial service. On top of this, his wife, Lady Grey, was reportedly unhappy in New Zealand, and George Grey’s mother, back in England, was unwell. He informed Earl Grey that he expected to be relieved shortly, having perfected the plan for the new constitution and thus sorted the affairs of New Zealand so that they might now be safely entrusted to any ‘man of fair ability’. But relief did not come. And so, in July 1852, he requested eighteen months leave of absence.¹⁵⁶

Newcastle saw Grey as a great mediator between European and native interests and wanted to retain him in New Zealand should these interests observably collide. He allowed a year’s leave, ‘upon the condition that he does not avail himself of it till the Act conferring the New Constitution has been brought into full operation – and not even then if there should be any symptoms of dissatisfaction amongst the Natives caused by the changes of the form of Government’.¹⁵⁷ Grey then left before his time was up, and ‘he was expressly charged with having left the Colony prematurely’.¹⁵⁸ His act had the Home Government up in arms. Grey’s image was attacked by powerful figures such as Sir John Pakington, Sir Charles Adderley and Lord Lyttleton, all Conservatives, whilst he was defended by then Under-Secretary, Sir Frederick Peel and his friend and Secretary of State and the Duke of Newcastle; who, despite refusing to speak to Grey out of anger,¹⁵⁹ used his mother’s illness to help defend Grey’s actions.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, Grey’s mother had been extremely ill, and had sadly died before Grey had reached England. Despite his actions, the sheer nerve of which should not be under-

¹⁵⁵ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No 12, Cathcart to Newcastle, March 14, 1854

¹⁵⁶ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 252

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, pgs 252-253

¹⁵⁸ Collier, *Sir George Grey, Governor, High Commissioner and Premier*, pg 91

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, pg 94

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, pg 91

appreciated, Grey was soon given the position of High Commissioner of the Cape of Good Hope.

*An Ocean of Wisdom? : Comparing Sir George Grey's Representations of
Australasian and Southern African Indigenous Cultures*

While Grey's apparent accord with Maori chiefs thus magnified his image as a subtle and discrete 'conductor' in the eyes of the Colonial Office, the extent to which these allusions can be deemed realistic or genuine has been queried by a number of historians. As mentioned, Earl Grey felt obliged to applaud George Grey for his seeming ability to extend an 'unbounded influence ... over their [the Natives'] minds' despite the imposition of a number of 'unpalatable' regulations placed on them, and while Merivale represented Grey as 'a man of singular and approved ability in dealing with savage races', Grey's private secretary in New Zealand felt the urge to resign from his position due not to 'the mere peril and care and worry of the life', but because he felt 'vexed by some things the Governor had done lately in the South', and because he 'thought we were not as straightforward in our dealings with the Maori as we should have been. I was very unwilling to be an agent in a policy against which my private conscious revolted.'¹⁶³ As we shall see later, such ambiguities existed in the minds of the Cape population itself, where there seems to have been an understanding of the underhanded and perhaps malicious policies taking place, which George Grey skilfully downplayed by promulgating the morally justifiable civilising process.

In many ways, Grey stands as one of the most ambiguous characters of the mid-nineteenth century. It indeed seems fair to state that his governance over the numerous areas over which he presided, namely several parts of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, have been represented in different lights by many historians. As Leigh Dale points out,

it is important to acknowledge that there are subtle but significant differences between the views in the various southern colonies with which Grey was associated: in Australia, Grey's popular reputation is that of an explorer (of Western Australia) and the brilliant young statesman on the rise (in South Australia), although there has certainly been criticism. In New Zealand it seems that regard for and interest in Grey, strong until the more general revisionist mood of the 1960s and 1970s which affected school curricula and popular forms of representation, coincides with the general scholarly scepticism already remarked on. In

¹⁶³ Dale, Leigh, 'George Grey in Ireland: narrative and network', pg 150

*southern Africa the scholarly challenge has come much later, if even more forcefully, but much of the apparatus through which Grey has been revered seems to remain intact.*¹⁶⁴

The ‘apparatus’ that Leigh refers to here is perhaps Grey’s written legacy, which Leigh refers to, perhaps rather cynically, as ‘the textual webs that he himself spun, late in his life, to defend and to define his reputation as the greatest imperial administrator of the Victorian age’.¹⁶⁵ I would argue, however, that these so-called ‘webs’ were not just retrospective efforts of justification, which they probably were, but find life within our interpretations of his written accounts, particularly in his views relating to native cultures, which seem empathetic, and at times protective. Alongside this there are also numerous criticisms of Grey’s mistreatment of native peoples. As such, the dichotomy between Grey’s written works and his oftentimes brutal and underhanded policies is central to the debates and representations surrounding Grey. This seeming contradiction between Grey’s written words and actions have caught many within the web that Leigh refers to – such as Sinclair, who states that ‘To those who have studied [Grey], his conduct is a never-failing source of astonishment. Such a mixture of greatness and pettiness, breadth of intellect and dishonesty, is rarely met with.’¹⁶⁶ Indeed, it is apparent that morally inclined historical discourses seem to be informed either by his seemingly empathetic interest in native cultures, and indeed his perceived kind treatment of natives, particularly Aborigines and Maoris, or by his brash and heartless treatment of natives, particularly, although not limited to, the peoples of Southern Africa. The latter of these two trajectories has been adopted in the majority of more recent works.

While there is insufficient space in this thesis to delve into the various historiographical representations of Grey’s governance over New Zealand, it is perhaps necessary to point out that many, such as Dale, Ward, Gump and Sinclair,¹⁶⁷ amongst many others, criticise the extent to which Grey’s governance in New Zealand was truly ‘liberal’ or ‘protective’ over the rights of natives. However, on the other hand, even the often cynical Peires accepts the belief that ‘in contrast to his policy at the Cape, he [Grey] refrained from interfering too aggressively with Maori chiefs or Maori law’.¹⁶⁹ It is believed, for instance, that in an effort to assure the Maori of their rights to land, Grey set up a system whereby land sales would be discussed at Maori tribal meetings. These meetings would have to agree to the sale of land

¹⁶⁴ Dale, ‘George Grey in Ireland: narrative and network’, pg 150

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, pg 175

¹⁶⁶ Sinclair, Keith, *A History of New Zealand*, (London: Penguin Books, 1959), pg 33

¹⁶⁷ Ward, within *Show of Justice*, Gump, in ‘The Imperialism of Cultural Assimilation’, and Sinclair, in *Origins*

¹⁶⁹ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 51

before purchases were pushed through. Such ambiguities stand in contrast to more recent South African histories, which paint Grey's treatment of South African natives in an overwhelmingly and increasingly negative light in the post-Apartheid era of colonial reflection.

Thus, before turning to Grey's governance of the Cape, it would perhaps be useful to investigate the ways in which George Grey represented natives and their cultures. Were there differences in the way in which he represented different peoples, and if so, why did these exist?

Grey in Australia – understanding Grey's early collection of knowledge, with particular reference to native cultures

Grey's interest in native cultures began early on whilst adventuring across Australia, orchestrating two expeditions into the region in his mid-twenties. The first of these was conducted in north-west Australia, and was carried out with the aim of finding a fabled river that was said to have run through the region and out into the Indian Ocean.¹⁷¹ On this journey, Grey himself nearly died, after being speared in the hip by an Aborigine. The party, experiencing mass flooding, was eventually saved, picked up by the *Lynher* and the famous *HMS Beagle*.¹⁷² For the second expedition, Grey and his party landed at Bernier Island, where they were met with gale winds upon a waterless island. In a long, convoluted effort to reach safety, Grey and his party eventually had to walk to Perth, surviving with the help of an Aborigine, who, knowing the region, was able to supply them with various scraps of food and muddy water. It was on these expeditions that Grey started to learn the Aboriginal Noongar language. Thus began George Grey's study of native languages and customs, the pursuit of which has been given much academic focus and stands as a central point from which many judge him.

¹⁷¹ Interestingly, here we are given an early indication of Grey's individuality and single-mindedness in a letter written from Grey to undersecretary for the colonies, James Stephen. Within this letter Grey states his opinion that 'the Society had taken to progressively debase his original conception and diminish his role to the point where he was now a mere agent of the society, in an expedition which I never contemplated undertaking and does not hold out to me any such prospect of such results, as those the hope of obtaining which have been my sole motive from the beginning of the affair.' In reference to this Cameron states that Grey was surely 'caught up in the RGS [Royal Geographical society] politics, and subordinated to the ambitions of its president Sir John Barrow', within Cameron, J., M., R., 'George Grey goes exploring: the interplay of personalities, politics and place'. *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, 78 (June 1992), pg 63

¹⁷² This was in 1837, one year after Charles Darwin departed the ship.

Immediately after these journeys, Grey was given a position as resident magistrate of Albany, Western Australia, although he soon returned to his home in England. On his return Grey published *Journals, a Vocabulary of Aboriginal languages*, along with a pamphlet entitled *Report on the best means of promoting the civilization of the aboriginal inhabitants of Australia*, a revised edition of which was published as an appendix to *Journals*.¹⁷³ These works were greeted with reverence by a number of scholars across the Empire, with particular attention given to Grey's tone of compassion for Aborigines. Within *Journals*, Grey, while careful 'not to assert that the natives have been treated with wanton cruelty', did not hesitate to state 'that no real amelioration for their condition has been effected, and that much of negative evil and indirect injury has been inflicted on them'.¹⁷⁴ In this work Grey also recounted a story of an Aboriginal man who had been taken in by white patrons. Here, according to Grey, the man faced two choices: 'he could either have renounced all natural ties and have led a hopeless, joyless life amongst the whites, ever a servant, ever an inferior being; or he could renounce civilization and return to the friends of his childhood, and to the habits of his youth'. The man chose to return home, and to this Grey clearly and proudly states that 'I think that I should have done the same.'¹⁷⁵

The very same work, however, contains chapters such as that entitled 'Evil Effects from Their Ferocious Customs Remaining Unchecked', wherein Grey argues for the incorporation of Aborigines into colonial society. This is important as it exemplifies Grey's avid advocacy of policies of racial and cultural amalgamation – 'the systematic assimilation of the [native] to a Western cultural ideal, as well as their rapid incorporation into the labour force'.¹⁷⁶ It was around this time, too, in 1840, that Grey wrote a report to Lord John Russell, in which he 'argued that the only way to save native peoples from extinction was to wean them from their tribal customs by bringing them under British law, making them Christian, educating their children in boarding schools and employing the adults among the white settlers'.¹⁷⁷ In many ways Grey was a product of his time, and his 'assimilationist paradigm, consistent with the

¹⁷³ Dale, 'George Grey in Ireland: Narrative and Network', pg 167

¹⁷⁴ Grey, George, *Journal of Two Expeditions of discovery in north-west and Western Australasia during the Years 1837, 38, and 39*, vol. 2 (London: T. and W. Boone, 1841), Chapter 16

¹⁷⁵ Dale, 'George Grey in Ireland: Narrative and Network', pg 167

¹⁷⁶ Gump, 'Imperialism of Assimilation', pg 89

¹⁷⁷ 'Grey, Sir George (1812–1898)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/grey-sir-george-2125/text2691>, published first in hardcopy 1966

views of his compatriots James Mill, Charles Trevelyan, and Thomas Babington Macauley, constituted part of a transnational discourse in the nineteenth century'.¹⁷⁸

In proposing this line of theory, Grey believed that the complete overhaul of chiefly authorities was necessary in 'liberating' 'ancient races' from cultures which acted as 'strongholds of murder and superstition'. To Grey,

*To believe that man in a savage state is endowed with freedom of thought or action is erroneous in the highest degree. He is in reality subjected to complex laws, which not only deprive him of all free agency of thought, but, at the same time, by allowing no scope whatever for the development of intellect, benevolence or any other great moral qualification, necessarily bind him down in a hopeless state of barbarism, from which it is impossible for man to emerge, so long as he is enthralled by these customs.*¹⁷⁹

And, to Grey, it was the role of the European to uplift these natives from their 'dark culture'. Grey was very much influenced by his theories, centring on the need for 'upliftment' and cultural change, and as such he constantly represented all symbols of cultural stability within native cultures as backward, malicious and malevolent. George Grey would thus, within his governance of both Australasia and South Africa, treat chiefs with disdain, seeing them as culprits in enforcing cultural primitivism. There are a number of examples that point towards the fact that Grey often applied a huge amount of pressure on chiefs. Gump shows that, in order to 'pre-empt a native combination in New Zealand', Grey had arranged for the capture of the neutral Ngati Toa chief Te Rauparaha in 1846 and imprisoned him without trial for eighteen months. This humiliating assault – the captors had trapped Te Rauparaha in his own house and subdued the aging leader by grabbing his testicles – destroyed Te Rauparaha's *mana* (prestige).¹⁸⁰ Grey would only eventually release the chief after his subjects agreed to let him take three million acres of their land for colonial settlement. Similar treatment of Xhosa chiefs, as discussed later, show an undeniably similar trend.

The line of policy proposed within these publications and reports so impressed John Russell, then secretary for war and the colonies, that he appointed Grey as the Governor of South-West Australia. During this time, Grey involved himself readily in the pursuit of knowledge

¹⁷⁸ Gump, 'Imperialism of Assimilation', pg 93

¹⁷⁹ Grey, George, *Journal of Two Expeditions*, vol. 2, pgs 217-218

¹⁸⁰ Gump, *Imperialism of Assimilation*, pg 96

over native cultures, where ‘he made a careful study of the dialect spoken by the aborigines of the South-Western district. He there compiled a brief vocabulary of it, which contains over 120 words, and he prefixed to it a synopsis of the grammar.’¹⁸¹ In Albany, West Australia, he commenced a record of his travels that was published in 1841, entitled *Journals of Discovery and Exploration in Western and North-Western Australia*. The title formed two substantial volumes, the second of which concerned itself with the natural history of Western Australia, as well as the culture, social structure and dialects of the native peoples within this area, whilst the first of these volumes involved itself in a number of peculiarities, housing, for instance, poetic descriptions of the way in which albatrosses fly.

During Grey’s time in Australia, he made a concrete effort to understand and personally record the culture of natives and their customs. And indeed, this was a trajectory that he continued within his governance of New Zealand. Grey’s life in New Zealand is a focus in this chapter, for it was this arena that catapulted Grey to the enjoyment of great reverence among many in the Home Government, as has been shown, which in turn led to his appointment as Governor of the Cape. Comparisons between the ‘Maori’ and the ‘Kafir’ will thus be compared.

Comparing Grey’s allusions to the ‘Maori’ and the ‘Cafre’

This thesis suggests that there were apparent differences between Grey’s representations of the natives of New Zealand and South Africa. There are numerous reasons for this. Firstly, I would like to suggest that Grey played a different role within the pursuit of knowledge of natives of the Cape and those of Australasia. His relationship with the different native peoples simply existed on different terms. At the beginning of Grey’s governance of New Zealand, colonial understanding of the Maoris was fluid and in its infancy. When he arrived in 1845, there were only four publications in existence that attempted to communicate an understanding of the Maori language to a European audience,¹⁸⁴ and Grey had in his possession the three most recent of these.¹⁸⁵

This was indeed a period in which scientific intrigue was booming. As Bayly argues, ‘there were three broad stages in this construction of professions and systematic knowledge. The

¹⁸¹Collier, *Sir George Grey*, pg 14

¹⁸⁴Kerr, *Amassing Treasures for All Times*, pgs 174-175

¹⁸⁵*Ibid* pg 76

first saw the rapid accumulation of huge archives of data about natural phenomena¹⁸⁶ to which one could surely place newly ‘exposed’ indigenous cultures. While much of this first ‘stage’ took place in earlier centuries as Europeans explored the world, the fact that New Zealand had only recently come under British occupation meant that it existed as an exciting and open field of investigation, a land from which an avid scholar could gain much reputation by tapping into such untouched archives of natural data.

Indeed, ‘By the 1840s, when the railway, the telegraph, and the steamship had hugely improved the global exchange of information, fixed scientific bureaucracies were coming into being. Professional scientists and scientific departments of government became increasingly prominent.’¹⁸⁷ Simply put, George Grey, a man who considered himself a scholar, an intellectual, and perhaps even a natural scientist, found himself governing over an untouched area, in a time when scientific pursuit was gaining a huge amount of traction. It is Grey’s work on Maori culture that has led to depictions such as that made by Stocking, who claims that Grey was ‘one of the more perceptive ethnographers of his day, and author of some of the most influential ethnographic work of the century.’¹⁸⁸

And so, as in Australia, Grey personally attempted to learn the multiple languages of the region, doing so under the tutelage of indigenous supervisors such as WiremuMaihiTeRangikaheke, Pirikawau and TeAtiawa¹⁸⁹. Chief Pirikawau even eventually accompanied Grey to England and South Africa.¹⁹⁰ As Donald Kerr, long-time rare books librarian in the Grey Collection at Auckland City Library points out, ‘Grey’s Maori-language manuscript collection exceeds 9 800 pages, numbers 147 separate works, and is collated into 102 bound volumes’.¹⁹¹ Additionally, he ordered the translation of English novels, such as Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, into Maori as part of his assimilationist campaign.¹⁹² Of course Grey was not alone in this pursuit and collections were often sent to and fro between Grey and other enthusiasts. Many of these were missionaries, such as German J.F.H Wohlers, Presbyterian missionary James Duncan and Reverend Robert Maunsell, all of whom sent

¹⁸⁶ Bayly, Christopher Alan, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), pg 313

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, pg 315

¹⁸⁸ Stocking, George W., Jr., *Victorian Anthropology*, (New York: Free Press, 1987), pg 81

¹⁸⁹ The first of whom were chiefs and the last a star pupil in a local school

¹⁹⁰ Kerr, *Amassing Treasures for All Times*, pg 76

¹⁹¹ Ibid pg 77

¹⁹² Ibid

Grey their collections,¹⁹³ although Duncan was of the opinion that these works were probably ‘already preoccupied in your [Grey’s] collection’.¹⁹⁴ This circulation helped create an industry for books printed in Maori languages, and as such one can say Grey played quite a large role in opening up the field of Maori investigation to European scholars. Simply stated, this was an exciting time in the study of indigenous New Zealanders, and Grey was at its centre.

Grey himself published a number of works focused on explaining Maori culture. Some of these illustrate a fascinating empathy with this native culture. His work *Konga Moteate*, was ‘a monument ... to shew in some measure what the country [New Zealand] was before its natives were converted to the Christian faith’.¹⁹⁵ Doubts do exist about the extent to which these works were actually carried out by Grey, and to what extent they existed as creations of his interpreters. However, the fact remains that Grey at the very least put his name on the covers of these works, a feat that he failed to replicate in South Africa. Furthermore, one could argue that the style of writing present within these works replicates that found within his other works. Additionally there is a debate regarding his mastery over the Maori language, although, as Dale correctly points out, ‘the printers’ copies of texts in Maori held in the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town show detailed corrections in Grey’s handwriting, including occasional additions of paragraphs or verses’.¹⁹⁶

Grey spent a great amount of time amongst the Maori as he attempted to record Maori tales and poems from the perspective of the Maoris themselves, although these were of course filtered by his own perspective. When amending the proposed constitution of New Zealand, Grey even claimed that he preferred the company of Maoris to other Europeans when in the process of drawing up a replacement document. For this, Grey ‘went up into the mountains between Auckland and Wellington, camped up on Ruapehu, in a little gypsy tent, and set to the task. A few Maoris accompanied me ... nobody else, for I could not have drawn the constitution with a cloud of advisors about me’.¹⁹⁷ Grey’s fascination with native languages served both a personal and administrative role in New Zealand, as he himself emphasises. Writing on his arrival in New Zealand, Grey claimed in his 1854 work *Polynesian Mythology*

¹⁹³ Ibid pgs 78-79

¹⁹⁴ Ibid pg 78

¹⁹⁵ Ibid pg 89

¹⁹⁶ Dale, ‘George Grey in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa’, in Hulme, Peter and McDougall, Russell, *Writing, Travel and Empire: Colonial Narratives of Other Cultures*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), pg 21

¹⁹⁷ Dale, ‘George Grey in Ireland: Narrative and Network’, pg 163

& Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealanders As Furnished By their Priests and Chiefs, that he

*soon perceived that I could neither successfully govern, nor hope to conciliate, a numerous and turbulent people, with whose language, manners, customs, religion, and modes of thought I was quite unacquainted. In order to redress their grievances, and apply remedies which would neither wound their feelings nor militate against their prejudices, it was necessary that I should be able thoroughly to understand their complaints; and to win their confidence and regard it was also requisite that I should be able at all times and in all places patiently to listen to the tales of their wrongs or sufferings, and, even if I could not assist them, to give them a kind reply, couched in such terms as should leave no doubt on their minds that I clearly understood and felt for them, and was really well disposed towards them.*¹⁹⁸

Many of the meetings taking place between Grey and the Maori seemed to revolve around the process of Grey's education, instead of around issues of political conflict, at least not explicitly. This can be said to contrast to South Africa, where, as we shall see, Grey's meetings with the Xhosa and Sotho were often business-like, formal and strict, revolving around themes of subjugation and control.¹⁹⁹

While one could attribute a certain amount of empathy to these words, Grey was by no means exempt from Anglo-centric opinions. While, on an individual level, Grey understood the extent of suffering that many of these cultures and human beings experienced, he saw these cultures as naïve and uncivilised, and thus spent a certain amount of effort in 'adapting' them, as many of his policies show, while simultaneously recording them for both romantic and academic reasons. That Grey saw these cultures as, in a sense, 'lesser', is quite clear. He claimed that Maori 'traditions are puerile; that the religious faith of the races who trust in them is absurd is a melancholy fact'. He also directly compared the Maori belief system to that of the Aztecs, who he claimed sacrificed millions of human beings, including 'a frightful list of children murdered under the system of infanticide'.²⁰⁰ Here Grey created an emotive

¹⁹⁸ Grey, George, *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealand Race: as Furnished by their Priests and Chiefs* (London: John Murray, 1855), page 2

¹⁹⁹ This is not to say that Grey's meetings with Maori chiefs were reciprocal or pleasant. But some of these meetings at the very least seemed to revolve around the idea of reciprocation, which, as we shall see, was never really the case in South Africa

²⁰⁰ Grey, *Polynesian mythology*, Preface

picture of brutality and destruction, which he deemed to be inherent in these cultures. In his, *Poems, Traditions and Chaunts of the Maoris*, Grey included a number of Maori poems and tales, but once again made a point not to go too far in presenting an overly favourable account of these peoples. In this work, he stated that ‘Lest this selection of poems should be regarded as placing the character of the natives in too favourable a light, it is right to state that one very numerous class of poems has been altogether omitted as unfit for publication. Indeed the poems now published should perhaps be regarded as a selection embodying the best Maori poetry.’²⁰¹

Unlike many others, Grey believed that these natives were intelligent human beings who had simply not yet undergone a process of cultural evolution. Indeed, he claimed, ‘It must further be kept in mind that the native races who believed in these traditions or superstitions are in no way deficient in intellect, and in no respect incapable of receiving the truths of Christianity.’²⁰² Such representations further consolidated and justified his policy of assimilation. For him ‘the poetry of a savage race, whose songs and chants, whilst they contain so much that is wild and terrible, yet at the same time present many passages of the most singularly original poetic beauty’.²⁰³ To Grey, Maori culture, while savage, had some aspect of beauty, and thus Maoris were surely subjects worthy of both education and scientific investigation. To Grey, policies aimed at cultural upheaval were not simply politically motivated; it seems as though he saw the ‘enlightenment’ of these people through a theoretically humanitarian ideology that was quite prevalent within this period.

In the Cape, Grey’s interest in the culture of native peoples took a vastly different angle. He had somewhat romantic connections with Maori culture, to which he dedicated hours upon hours of investigation, and while he continually stressed its subordination to British culture, he showed a degree of empathy when representing these peoples. It is understandable how Grey’s creation of knowledge must have led to feelings of power or ownership, and with it, a sense of responsibility towards Maori culture, for the connection between engrossment, authority and responsibility can be considerable.

However, there was a marked difference in the circulation of knowledge relating to native culture in the Cape and in New Zealand. In the Cape, at the time of Grey’s arrival, there were

²⁰¹ Grey, *Poems, Traditions and Chaunts of the Maoris*, Preface

²⁰² Grey, *Polynesian mythology*, Preface

²⁰³ Kerr, *Amassing Treasures for All Times*, pg 89.

already hundreds of works in circulation that aimed to inform upon the nature of natives, as missionaries had attempted to place the indigenous people from a much earlier period. These works included those which were translated to and from the series of native languages, as well as those which acted as dictionaries. Grey did indeed start tapping into this collection, although he undoubtedly did not feel a sense of ownership or any responsibility for a culture onto which Europeans had already attached a slew of representations.

This is not to say he did not involve himself in this academic realm of enquiry. In South Africa, Grey's pursuit of knowledge was as spirited as ever. In true George Grey fashion, he collected works such as Reverend J. C. Wallmann's *Vocabular der Namaqua-sprache*, encompassing a vocabulary of 1424 Nama words.²⁰⁴ 'Some eighty-five books and manuscripts were received from almost as many individuals. They ranged from spelling and alphabet books, catechisms and dictionaries to New and Old Testaments, histories, and official reports.'²⁰⁵ Many of those offering Grey access to their collections were missionaries such as John Beecham of the Wesleyan Missionary House, who claimed 'I am so happy that I have it in my power to supply you from my own library with a copy of Michell's *Sechuana Grammar* ... a copy of the Kafir New Testament ... [and] copies of the *Mandingo Grammar and Gospels*', and William Ashton, member of the London Missionary Society, who forwarded Grey a copy of the *Bible of Holiness (Bibela ea botsepho)* – which was in fact the first African language item he received at the Cape.²⁰⁶ But despite this collection, the perhaps more emotive connection that Grey had made with the Maori simply failed to equate to his ideas of Cape native groups. Indeed, even while at the Cape, George Grey's philological interest in Pacific languages did not die, as he sent out requests to a number of individuals, often missionaries, whilst reaffirming his interest in New Zealand cultures. Indeed, between 1858 and 1859, Grey collected 294 printed books and manuscripts pertaining to Pauan, Fijian, Rarongan, Tongan, Samoan, Tahitian, Marquesan, Hawaiian, and Dayak languages, which now sit in the Auckland Library Collection. He in fact published *Ko nga waiata Māori* (the songs of the Māori) and *Ko nga whakapepeha me nga whakaahuareka a nga tipuna o Aotea-roa* (proverbial and popular sayings of the ancestors of the New Zealand race) in 1857, while governor at the Cape. Grey never fully learnt any African language, and while Grey claimed that his learning of the Maori language was due, in part, to the administrative

²⁰⁴ Ibid, pg 114

²⁰⁵ Ibid

²⁰⁶ Ibid pgs 113-114

advantage it gave him, in South Africa, he utilised the numerous individuals who could already speak these languages, such as Charles Brownlee, as agents amongst the Xhosa.

In comparison with his interest in Maori culture, he maintained a somewhat distanced, impersonal, pragmatic affiliation towards African cultures and their languages. Here reference must be made of Wilhelm Bleek, the man that Grey employed to study the languages and customs of southern Africans. While Grey indeed received a number of catalogues, works and theories from individuals such as David Livingstone²⁰⁷ (amongst many, many more), Bleek's appointment was an attempt to create a new space within the study of indigenous, Southern African cultures – a space that George Grey could associate himself with.

Bleek's appointment in South Africa sharply contrasts with Grey's personal endeavours in New Zealand. Bleek has been the subject of investigation by historians such as Andrew Bank²⁰⁸ and Lewis-Williams.²⁰⁹ What is so interesting here is the fact that Bleek is often seen as the antithesis to George Grey, despite the fact that both shared a passionate interest in and even somewhat similar attitudes towards natives – Thornton even going as far as saying that 'Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* serves as a metaphor for the pairing of Bleek and Grey. Where their shared intellectual interests took Bleek into the ethereal realm of northern scholarly discourse, Grey instigated some of the most brutal colonial subjugations of the southern hemisphere.'²¹⁰ The way in which Bleek has been imagined can be associated with the ambiguity present within numerous representations of George Grey – but while Grey was in the position to implement policies that abided by his theoretical framework, Bleek was not.

Bleek was hardly a modern thinker on the question of race, however. He continually alluded to his belief that the San, for one, existed somewhere on the spectrum between advanced animals and lesser forms of human beings. 'We have now two Bushmen with us,' Bleek wrote to George Grey, 'an old one and a young one, and they are constantly chattering in

²⁰⁷ Ibid, pg 121

²⁰⁸ Within, for example, Bank, Andrew, *Bushmen in a Victorian World: The Remarkable Story of the Bleek-Lloyd Collection of Bushman Folklore*, (Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2006)

²⁰⁹ Lewis-Williams, D., 'The Ideas Generally Entertained with regard to the Bushmen and their Mental Condition' in P. Skotnes, ed., *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1996)

²¹⁰ Hall, M., 'The Proximity of Dr. Bleek's Bushmen' in Skotnes, Pippa, *Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*, (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1996) pg 1

their monkey-like speech.’²¹¹ ‘Take note of the seating position of the Kaffir,’ Bleek advised a contemporary, ‘with his legs stretched out... This ape-like negro in Malay dress will appear strange to you.’²¹² When learning the language of the San, Bleek even evidently sought the help of zoologists ‘for information or a book on the sounds made by apes: a description of the sounds and how they are produced. He specifically wants to know whether apes also make click-sounds with their tongues and lips, and how they make those sounds.’²¹³ Given the fact that Bleek, in his PhD thesis of 1851, had written that ‘Language is the outward appearance of the spirit of nations; their language is their spirit and their spirit their language’, and, again, that ‘The mental characteristics and the form of a nation’s language are so intimately intertwined that given the one, it must be possible to deduce the other in its entirety’²¹⁴, Bleek’s utter dehumanisation of such ethnicities becomes glaringly obvious. Of course, Bleek, like so many others in this time, staunchly advocated the arguments of Charles Darwin, but, while Grey at least argued for a degree of intelligence inherent within Maoris, his lead source of fresh enquiry into indigenous South Africans denounced even the humanity of many natives, within the viral discourse of evolutionary theory and scientific justification.

Compared to his depiction of Maori culture, there are far fewer instances when Grey outwardly offered some form of positive ‘praise’ for Southern African native culture. However, mention must be made of the fact that while Grey was able to develop romantic notions of Maori culture within free modes of writing that allowed, even encouraged, romanticisation, the only examples we have of Grey’s perception of indigenous Southern Africans are those suggested within his official correspondence, which were, for the most part, quite formal. As we shall see, such writing existed in a highly tumultuous context, in a time synonymous with warfare and the infamous Cattle-Killing. Here Grey advocated the belief that these peoples were conniving and bloodthirsty as a means of justification for his actions, but this shall be discussed in upcoming chapters.

However, while these pieces of correspondence are our primary source from which we can glean Grey’s ideas and opinions, representations made by Grey within the latter parts of his life suggest a similar trend. Later in his life, Grey once again represented Southern Africans as ferocious and warlike, claiming that, in the Cattle-Killing, ‘a quarter of a million of

²¹¹ Bank, Andrew, *Anthropology, Race and Evolution: Rethinking the Legacy of Wilhelm Bleek* (Unpublished paper, UWC, 1999), pg 15

²¹² *Ibid*, pg 26

²¹³ Bank, Andrew, *Bushmen in a Victorian World*, pg 39

²¹⁴ *Ibid*, pg 19

Kaffirs, a large proportion of whom were busy acting upon the advice of the prophetess ... were destroying their cattle and produce, and looking forward eagerly to a triumph over the whites'.²¹⁵ Grey's alienation from Southern Africans thus lived on into his old age, and it is perhaps as a response to this that Dale alludes to 'the textual webs that he himself spun, late in his life, to defend and to define his reputation as the greatest imperial administrator of the Victorian age'.

Grey came to the Cape with a preconceived understanding that these natives were 'brutish' and 'militaristic'; representations formed from the viewpoint of Cape colonials who had for decades fought fierce and bloody battles against an alienated foe. The Home Government had also been clear as to what Grey should expect when arriving at the Cape – after all, the famous Pottinger and Smith could not halt the flood of warfare emanating from an indigenous group that was perceived to be tricky and militarily capable. Those indigenous to the Cape region were seen as one of the most ferocious and savage groups throughout the Empire. George Grey himself was to claim in the latter part of his life that in a conflict between the 'Maoris', 'Aborigines' and 'Kaffirs', the latter would win, as they were, due to 'particularities of environment', believed to be the most agile of the races, and 'Neither the Maoris, nor the Australians, worked in iron weapons, while the Kaffirs did.'²¹⁶ As shall be mentioned, Grey immediately apprehended danger from indigenous peoples on his arrival at the Cape, a representation that was surely spurred on by the opinions of those in the area, both within the Cape and the northern Boer states, who felt that war with the Xhosa and Sotho was a recurring inevitability.

In a sense, Grey's governance of the Cape, and his representation of natives therein, was informed by his intense competitiveness. As shown, Grey was highly self-confident, and seldom took orders or advice from others, and an intense competitive edge was inherent within his character. In many ways, Grey's collection of knowledge was informed by this. He wanted to be a recognised collector of knowledge, as his collections suggest, and thus he went about collecting information on the Cape native peoples, even involving himself in fresh enquiries through Wilhelm Bleek. However, as suggested, the form that this enquiry took was essentially different across the two areas at opposite sides of the Indian Ocean. Grey's treatment of both the Xhosa and the Maori can be explained by both Grey's alignment to a

²¹⁵ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pg 144

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, pg 82

sense of British cultural superiority and through his fierce competitiveness, as Grey was driven to find a solution to the apparently difficult Cape question that had been the bane of so many acclaimed figures. But what was this solution, and how did it find form?

George Grey at the Cape

While much has been made of Grey's 'assimilationist'²¹⁷ agenda, such categorisation must be questioned. As mentioned earlier, Grey thought it expedient to 'attempt to gradually win them [the Xhosa] to civilization', 'by slow degrees'. Such quotes seem to suggest that assimilationist ideals were indeed sought after - after all, true assimilation and the process of cultural amalgamation, by necessity, take time.²¹⁸ Indeed, Grey himself questioned previous policies in which the Xhosa, amongst other groups, were allowed independence. He criticised the fact that, previously, 'There was no bond of unison between the Kaffir chiefs and the Government; they, isolated with their retainers, lived secluded in their territories, kept down by an armed force, watching every movement they made... The best hope that presents itself to my mind for the future is that our adopting of the Kaffir system of polity into our own.'²¹⁹

Grey simultaneously urged a policy of rapid European immigration. He was to complain about the fact that the colony was 217,700 square miles in extent, 'yet it contains but 248,625 inhabitants (only 101,291 are Europeans)... I think it is hopeless to expect that a population in this state ... could, if unaided, successfully defend themselves against such a race as the Kaffirs ... a powerful, thoroughly organized, and military nation as the Kaffirs are, must, if left in such a condition, be expected every few years to break into war, and it is certain that until the colony of the Cape of Good Hope contains an infinitely denser population than it does at present it cannot protect itself against such a war'.²²⁰ While policies aimed at assimilation were stressed, of primary concern was not only the incorporation of natives, but additionally, the incorporation of more Europeans into the Cape. Before the native peoples of South Africa could be 'civilised', the Cape itself had to undergo a similar process. One can hold Grey's attempts to federate South Africa's various British and Boer states and colonies, as shall be more fully discussed later, to this agenda. Proposing this federation, Grey was to reiterate his belief that 'nothing but a strong federal Government, which unites, within itself,

²¹⁷ Here I include apostrophes with the understanding that the term 'assimilationist', as an abstract understanding, can imply numerous meanings with numerous definitions attached to its usage. Apostrophes will no longer be used when referring to the term, although this understanding will remain intact

²¹⁸ Even with the awareness that 'assimilation' can refer to forceful incorporation – even forceful assimilation requires a degree of infrastructural development and, with it, time

²¹⁹ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No 12, Grey to Labouchere, October 18, 1856

²²⁰ *Ibid*

all European Races in South Africa, can permanently maintain peace in this country',²²¹ thereby enforcing white cohesion and white consolidation of power and, indeed, identity, rather than a mutual inclusion of both Africans and Europeans.

Of particular relevance here is Grey's anxiety about the place of the Mfengu as reliable instruments in frontier defence.²²² In some ways the place of the Mfengu provides a symbol for the perceived process of 'civilization'. As they were already on agreeable terms with Cape colonials, it is of interest that Grey, with all the importance he ascribed to his assimilationist agenda, ostracized, rather than embraced, this group. Grey claimed that

*'The general impression is that the Fingoes feel, and much over-rate, their strength, and undervalue our power. That their young men are becoming haughty and insolent; that they are now a source of danger rather than of strength to us; and that if immediate steps are not taken to remedy the state of things, disasters must be speedily anticipated.'*²²³

Essentially Grey believed that this 'Fingoe threat' had arisen due to the fact that previous governors had trusted such a population in the preceding decades, claiming

*I believe that difficulties such as these would be found, from all history, invariably to have arisen wherever a country, finding itself unequal to defend its own frontier, entrusted the defence to it to semi-barbarous allies... Great prudence on our part may undoubtedly overcome even these serious difficulties; but that the frontier of this colony is at present very weak.*²²⁴

Here the fault lay in the fact that such people were given too much freedom – indeed, to Grey, there was a laxity in the system in which the Mfengu were controlled. He thought it was

an invariable rule in the case of barbarous tribes, that if a tribe has been in a state of slavery, and is then redeemed from it, that there is extreme difficulty in managing them, for their

²²¹ CO 48/389 (66) Grey to Stanley, 9 June 1858,

²²² The Mfengu were a particular ethnic group, nowadays intermarried into Xhosa and Zulu cultures, who had been allies with the Cape Colony since 1835, after apparently fleeing from Shaka during the Mfecane. This latter point is criticised by historians such as Stapleton and Webster, who argue that the Mfengu were not an independent ethnic group, but merely Xhosa defectors.

²²³ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No 23. Grey to Grey, 29 January, 1855

²²⁴ *Ibid*, No 18, Grey to Grey, 12 December, 1854

*chiefs having lost their authority there is no power which they recognize and obey, and the young men who have been brought up in submission finding the reins of discipline relaxed, are almost certain to become more than ordinarily presumptuous and overbearing, and having no superior authority to repress them, are very difficult indeed to control.*²²⁷

Through such descriptions, Grey's particular brand of 'assimilationist' ideology becomes starkly apparent – here assimilation, an abstract term by nature, stood as a form of strict control and direct colonization, perhaps removed from the theorized process of enlightenment and intellectual upliftment that this trajectory of policy seemed to imply. Within this discourse of threat and conflict, and despite Cathcart's departing words to Grey that 'I now leave the colony in a state of perfect repose and security, and with every prospect of a permanent peace and increasing prosperity',²²⁸ the Mfengu now stood alongside the Xhosa as hostile adversaries.

Grey, newly arriving at the Cape, did not have vast experience of Cape affairs, and relied on the representations put forward by other Cape personalities, who for years had developed and absorbed various opinions of African peoples. Needless to say there was a pessimistic atmosphere of fear and insecurity in many sectors in the Cape, a colony that had faced numerous frontier wars. That Grey relied on the representations forwarded by others is fairly clear. For example, on 12 December 1854, just a few days after his arrival, Grey stated that 'Lieutenant Colonel Maclean is of the opinion that the hostile plans the Kafirs have in view are, for the present at least, checked',²³⁰ while a few days later, on December 19th, 1854, Grey wrote, 'I regret to inform you that I have received from the Lieutenant General commanding the forces, a report that contains very unsatisfactory intelligence. The Lieutenant General states ... that an immediate outbreak is determined upon', and, in the face of such evidence, Grey agreed 'to comply with the General's wishes by detaching three hundred men to the frontier'.²³¹

Again, on 30 December, Grey made reference to a dispatch from 'a gentleman ... of calm judgement and of very great experience', who stated 'that the native tribes had formed a confederacy for mutual aid in the event of another war; now I hear, what more than ever confirms me in that opinion, viz., that Moshesh was sending into Kreli's country a certain

²²⁷ Ibid, No 20, Grey to Grey, 22 December, 1854

²²⁸ Ibid, No 13, Cathcart to Duke of Newcastle, 17 May, 1854

²³⁰ Ibid, No. 18, Grey to Grey, 12 December, 1854

²³¹ Ibid, No. 19, Grey to Grey, 19 December, 1854

mixture of Kafir corn and meat, prepared by the native doctors, and to be eaten by their people'. Within this correspondence, Grey also mentioned correspondence received from the Cape missionary Calderwood, who wrote 'I hear now, the Kafirs will make a strong effort ... to get their country [the Amatolas] back, and that if not they will fight'. It is clear that such representations affected Grey, and, in the face of such evidence, he claimed that 'in conjunction with the Lieutenant General, [I will] make preparations against any outbreak which may take place... I still hope that, if the existing state of peace can be prolonged for a few months, I may be able to adopt measures of the nature I have already detailed, which may altogether prevent a war, or at least diminish the number those who engage in it.'²³³

It appears as though Grey chose to ignore Maclean and allowed himself to become swayed by opinions which seemed to promote the prospect of conflict. For many historians, such as Peires, Rutherford, Mostert and Weldon, to name but a few, the anxiety expressed by Grey here are clear indications of his manipulation; such articulations unmasking Grey as a sly and purposefully melodramatic character. According to Gail Weldon, for example, when Grey first arrived at the Cape, he set out to convince British politicians 'that troops should be retained at the Cape at a time when the same Colonial Office was hoping to reduce expenses at the Colony', in an attempt to make his job easier at the expense of the Home Government, for whom the extended deployment of troops threatened severe financial consequences.²³⁴ Indeed, when emphasizing the threat of the Mfengu, Grey asserted the necessity of introducing 5000 pensioners onto the frontier, in order to secure the Colony.

Peires claims that 'Grey's major concern was not so much deciding on a course of action ... but in finding the means of paying the bill for the expensive measures which he contemplated'.²³⁶ According to Peires, Grey 'continued to harp on the danger of war until the money was safely in his treasury'.²³⁷ This is an opinion that Mostert takes up, claiming 'Grey was as sceptical of the war threat as Cathcart might have been, given the sources of it, but he nevertheless used it as a means of wringing from London the money and support he required for his ever-burgeoning vision of an expanding South Africa'.²³⁸ Dale additionally claims that Grey's 'basic *modus operandi* was to use his dispatches to exaggerate his difficulties and

²³³ Ibid, No 21, Grey to Grey, 30 December, 1854

²³⁴ Weldon, Gail, *The interaction between the missionaries of the Cape eastern frontier and the colonial authorities in the era of Sir George Grey, 1854-1861*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1984), pg 91

²³⁶ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 55

²³⁷ Ibid, pg 56

²³⁸ Mostert, *Frontiers*, pg 1171

thereby increase his resources of money and military manpower allowed to him...His highly sophisticated rhetoric lost its power as Colonial Office staff became increasingly skeptical of his accounts, and he was twice recalled for disobedience...'²³⁹

Grey would not have had the overarching view and experience within the Cape to omnisciently comprehend or realize whether or not such representations he was confronted with were truthful. Indeed, the dispatches quoted were sent between 12 December and 30 December, mere days after arriving at the Cape,²⁴⁰ and, never having visited the frontier, it is doubtful that Grey would have been unaffected by local representations, or have been able to gain an adequate understanding of the complex Cape environment to 'mastermind' this tacit conspiracy. However, it does appear as though Grey, at the very least, got caught up in such romantic and exciting 'truths'. So, for instance, while Grey did mention Calderwood's notion that 'I hear now, the Kafirs will make a strong effort ... to get their country [the Amatolas] back, and that if not they will fight', he failed to mention the fact that, on the whole, Calderwood's dispatch had actually been quite positive.²⁴¹

However, while it appears as though, to some extent, Grey allowed himself to be swept up in the action-orientated representations of conflict and impending doom, the belief that he was the primary agent in deviously arranging for the introduction of frontier forces is more obviously questionable. While at first the Home Government would facilitate Grey's portrayals by embracing his narrative,²⁴² it would soon question Grey's outlook when John

²³⁹ Dale, 'George Grey in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa', pg 20

²⁴⁰ Such representations were to continue for a few months afterwards, but the fact that such ideas were promulgated immediately must point towards the fact that Grey was informed on these to a large degree

²⁴¹ Here Calderwood stated 'I have now ... spent nearly two months entirely amongst the Fingoes ... met and conversed ... with very many hundreds of the people, and not a single circumstance had come under my notice to create even suspicion... Nothing could exceed the excellent and friendly feeling manifested wherever I went, with one exception.' Present within *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No 23, Grey to Grey, 29 January, 1855

²⁴² When George Grey was first appointed of the Cape, the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies was held by another man with the name George Grey (a cousin of Earl Grey's, no relation to the governor), who himself was to state that 'Her Majesty's Government have learnt with great concern that circumstances had arisen to cause some serious apprehensions of a renewal of hostilities on the eastern frontier of the colony, but they trust that the opinion which you express in the latest of your Despatches... I have to assure you of the cordial approval of Her Majesty's government of the general plan which you desire to pursue... any proposal....you may feel it your duty to make, will receive the immediate and careful consideration of Her Majesty's government.' *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No. 4, George Grey to George Grey, 12 March, 1855

Russell, former prime minister, became secretary of state for the colonies in February 1855.²⁴³ Russell would immediately write to Grey, claiming:

*I derive a more favourable impression of the present condition and future prospects of the Fingoe population than you appear to have done at the date of writing your Despatch... unfounded suspicion on the part of the European population should be steadily discouraged. You will, therefore, impress upon the Government officers acting in the frontier districts that when rumours of an unfavourable character are communicated to them or suspicious circumstances come to their knowledge, it will be their duty to make immediate inquiry into the grounds of suspicion, relying as little as possible upon hearsay evidence ... to discountenance feelings of mistrust which too readily lead to those very acts of an unfriendly character, which but before only existed in surmise.*²⁴⁴

Some reference has been made of the Earl Grey–John Russell administration and their refusal to robotically accept the views of the Cape population, and this refusal is once again apparent in this case. This very dispatch in fact changed the tone of Grey’s correspondence. Indeed, in his next dispatch, Grey made mention of his previous allusions to potential native conflict, ‘which then appeared imminent’, and made no further mention of it. Indeed, after Russell’s reply, Grey no longer stressed the anxiety of war, speaking instead about how ‘the employment of the Kaffirs on public works are succeeding so well’,²⁴⁵ ‘the readiness of the natives of Kaffraria to submit themselves to European medical treatment’,²⁴⁶ and the progress of industrial schools, which at this time were beginning to be built,²⁴⁷ as will be discussed shortly. This is not to argue that Grey never again made such claims, but, until the Cattle-Killing movement broke out, Grey’s claims were always made with a modicum of ambiguity. So while Grey did make mention of his concerns over frontier rumours in some dispatches over the next year or so,²⁴⁸ especially as it became clear that his immigration policies were

²⁴³ If confused, refer to Table 1 at the beginning of this thesis

²⁴⁴ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No 7, Russell to Grey, 26 May, 1855

²⁴⁵ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented July, 1855)*, (London: George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1856), No 1, Grey to Russell, 11 June, 1855),

²⁴⁶ *Ibid*, No. 2, Grey to Russell, 14 July, 1855

²⁴⁷ *Ibid* No. 3, Grey to Russell, 17 July, 1855

²⁴⁸ Here I refer directly to *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented 6th June, 1856)*, (London: George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1857), No.1, Grey to Grey, 8 February, 1856; *ibid*, No. 9, Grey to Labouchere, 24 April, 1856; and *ibid*, No 10, Grey to Labouchere, April 30, 1856

failing to elicit results, many of these simultaneously expressed a certain amount of reservation about such rumours, if still stressing the need for frontier security. In addition to this, many other dispatches were sent around the same time which expressed explicit doubt.²⁴⁹

It is important to note that the Home Government agreed to the assimilationist policy outright. As argued, similarly to Cathcart and Smith, the early period of Grey's governance was characterized by the encouragement of individuality and responsibility. Interestingly, while Russell questioned this anxiety, he nevertheless agreed to support Grey, claiming he would 'do all in my power to forward your design', agreeing to devote himself to bringing pensioners into the Cape, despite the fact that he believed 'that in British Kaffraria you will find it difficult either to stock the country with emigrants or to procure from our limited body of pensioners a sufficient number of men fulfilling your conditions, and willing to embrace the prospects you hold out to them'. On top of this, Russell voiced his opinion that 'So far as the interests of the empire are concerned British Kaffraria might be abandoned and the Eastern districts of the Cape colony left unprotected, without injury to the power of the United Kingdom and with considerable saving of its finances.'²⁵⁰ Despite this, Russell nevertheless, respecting Grey's plans, agreed to spend £40,000 per annum on the Cape, in order to help Grey to implement such policies – it is thus clear that Russell was the main agent in allowing the implementation of these policies, rather than Grey and his manipulative correspondence. One could mention, however, that as Molesworth estimated that the Cape had received an average of £500,000 pounds per annum between 1848 and 1850²⁵¹, this amount of £40,000 seemed comparatively little.

One can understand how important the issue of expenditure was to Britain given the fact that Russell agreed to this relatively small sum, despite the fact that, for him, Grey's period of governance of the Cape was of immense importance to the future of the Colony. Russell made mention of his belief that

if we succeed [with your policies], we secure the colony of the Cape from invasion, we civilize savage tribes, we open a vast territory to the influence of Christianity, we give an example of an African nation adopting the peaceful habits and social improvements of a

²⁴⁹ Here I refer to *ibid* Grey to Labouchere, No. 23, July 1856, No 26, Grey to Labouchere, August 18, 1856, and Grey to Labouchere, No 7, September 20, 1856

²⁵⁰ Government House. 1/51 D. 26 Russell to Grey, 3 June, 1855, housed in Cape Town Archives

²⁵¹ Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire*, pg 63

*European community. If we fail, the parliament of the United Kingdom will give up its work in despair; border wars will be perpetuated, and the Cape colony, even with assistance of Her Majesty's troops, will find it difficult to bear the cost and repel the danger of repeated incursions of savage tribes.*²⁵²

Even though it could be argued that £40,000 was a small sum in the context of the time, Russell received much criticism for allowing even this amount to be distributed. As a response to Russell's decision, major Conservative figure Charles Adderley wrote a rather emotive letter to the *Times*, in an act intended to rally up public criticism towards the Whig administration, claiming:

It is in vain that the most vigilant guardian of the public purse watches...I confess my own desertion now, unable to do more than publish the danger I can no longer have any chance of effectively meeting...a 'first' Vote of 40,000 l., to enable Governor George Grey to carry out his scheme of settling the frontier with military pensioners...a scheme of notorious and proved absurdity, the same Governor having been the actual agent of its previous failure in the scene of his former Government

Here Adderley also referenced Fox's 'Six Colonies of New Zealand' which itself argued that Grey's pensioner villages in New Zealand, in the words of Fox, 'proved costly failures, affording a most decided warning against the continuance of the experiment or its renewal elsewhere.' 'Will it be pretended', Adderley continued, 'that these experiments will be made at the expense of the Colony? So did Sir G. Grey pretend, in the case of New Zealand. Is it 'civilization' quackery? We have already jobbed 'humanity' almost to the extinction of moral as well as material prosperity in South Africa', a colony that he claimed was 'already half-lost.'²⁵³

This is an important document as it illuminates the fact that many in Britain questioned the efficacy of George Grey's policies taken up in New Zealand at the time of their conception, whilst highlighting an awareness that Grey could oftentimes be manipulative and misleading

²⁵² *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No 9, Russell to Grey, 3 June, 1855

²⁵³ *Cape of Good Hope: Copies of further Papers with reference to the Recall of Governor Sir George Grey from the Cape of Good Hope etc. etc.*, (s.i. June, 1860), pg 8, Enclosure 1 in No. 2, Adderley to the Editor of the *Times*, August 1st, 1855

within his representations. Despite this, Russell obviously held a certain degree of trust in the man, effectively risking his reputation in assisting Grey.

This attack by Adderley was indeed somewhat directed at Grey's Cape policies, for the Cape, as New Zealand had, seemed to Grey as an ideal spot for European immigrants. For Grey, an increased European population would not only secure the frontier, but would revitalize the Cape economy through agricultural endeavour. He also hoped that a burgeoning farming population would necessitate a larger native workforce, and, with a focus on building schools and churches in rural villages, Grey hoped that such areas would act as direct theatres of conversion for the Xhosa. And while Grey had to claim money from Britain in implementing such schemes, he was of the opinion 'that the increased revenue which will be yielded by the population which you introduce will far more than defray the interest of that debt'.²⁵⁵ Such an economic turnaround was Grey's promise of compensation.

However, this immigration policy failed to elicit results. As Rutherford points out, '5000 pensioners, if they had been forthcoming, would with wives and families have represented some 20 000 or 25 000 persons... where was the land to come from?... British Kaffraria's 3050 square miles already carried in 1855 a population of over 100 000, or 33 persons per square mile ... even with modern techniques this country in 1921 only supported from 7.5 to 31.9 persons per square mile according to fertility and improvements ... South Africa was not New Zealand [which had higher rainfall]'.²⁵⁶

One of the major issues arresting the success of this policy was the very fact that the Cape frontier had a notorious reputation as a hostile and dangerous environment. Eventually Grey would desperately push England to have a more active role in enforcing it, but it seems as though the number of individuals willing to come to the Cape was so small that any effort at encouraging this policy was almost pointless. In July 1855 Grey petitioned Molesworth, claiming

I think it would be very great advantage to the colony if even the small number who have volunteered were permitted to come here... We already have a village completed, for one hundred men. If that was occupied, the news that they have done well in South Africa, would

²⁵⁵ *Cape of Good Hope: Copies of further Papers with reference to the Recall of Governor Sir George Grey from the Cape of Good Hope* – Enclosure 1 in No. 3, Extract from the Speech of the Governor upon Opening the Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope, on 13 March, 1856, pg 16-17

²⁵⁶ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey, K.C.B.*, pgs 4-10

*be conveyed by the pensioners, by letter, to all the pensioner districts in England... I am sure that if the real state and prospects of the frontier of this country were made known there would be no difficulty in inducing persons to emigrate here. It is most unfortunate for the frontier that its true position is unknown, and I was very sorry, from the remarks I saw in the military newspapers, to find how little the future prospects of the pensioners in this country are understood.*²⁵⁷

Indeed, it seems as though bringing in enough pensioners to fill a village of 100 was at this point a tough task, and in giving life to frontier rumours of war and native disobedience, Grey might very well have shot himself in the foot, creating a ‘whirlpool’ in which rumours, themselves necessitating military reinforcements, simultaneously discouraged immigration onto the frontier. Other issues were present – for instance, these allocated plots for each family were small. Such pensioners would also have had difficulty finding employment, as employment opportunities were limited to those found within a five-mile radius from their home. Furthermore, the cottage would become his only after seven years of service – if he were to die before that time, his family would be evicted, and a new family moved in. All of this could not have sounded very tempting for the speculative immigrant.

These difficulties did not subside, and eventually Grey’s superiors, in 1856, introduced a German population in the form of the Anglo-German Legion, in an attempt to give life to this scheme. This legion consisted of individuals who had been subscribed by the British to fight in the Crimean War. The war had ended in February that year, and this group had continued to sit on the British payroll. The introduction of these legionnaires contrasted with the compliant pool of immigrants that Grey had envisioned. However, whilst Grey had asked for 8000 legionnaires, fewer than 2500 arrived.

An arriving array of soldiers meant that measures had to be introduced to ensure a degree of civility in the area – after all, these individuals were introduced not just to defend the frontier, but to promulgate the civilizing process. As such, Grey decided that they would have to be married, which would hopefully instill a sense of discipline and duty in them. But most of these soldiers were not married – while some German Legionnaires were married ‘as soon as

²⁵⁷ Grey, George, *Correspondence between his excellency Sir G. Grey, K.C.B., and Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the colonies : on the affairs of the Cape Colony, Natal, and adjacent territories : 1855-57* (Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1857), 17. No.13, Grey to Molesworth, 7 December, 1855

they had put out to sea',²⁵⁹ Henderson claims that of the 2,300 that arrived in the Colony, 1,930 of these were males, while only 330 were female.²⁶⁰

Far from inducing a civilized environment, many of these legionnaires disrupted the area. While the majority of them did not cause disturbances, there was a sizeable minority which 'accustomed to war from their youth [were] driven to the most horrific deeds by their warlike characters and their insatiable thirst for blood'. Even their fellow Legionaries admitted that 'within all the German settlements, we have had several cases where unarmed [Xhosa] have been cruelly murdered by these evil-doers... The Xhosa accused the Germans of carrying long sticks to abduct Xhosa women, and sexual abuse by the Germans...seems to have occurred.'²⁶² Apparently they were indeed fairly disorderly. The *Cape Argus* was to state that by March 1858, 'The German Legion has got pretty deeply into the books of the merchants.'²⁶³ Grey himself even made reference to the fact that 'Unfortunately they [German legionnaires] were not accompanied to this country by so large a population of women and children as you were led to expect; and they were thus placed in a position most trying to discipline.'²⁶⁴ HE further claimed 'A state of society was thus created on the frontier of a dangerous kind; and it became hopeless to think ... of preserving a healthy state of morality or discipline.'²⁶⁵ Grey was so frustrated that these legionnaires had come without wives that he called for more German peasants to be introduced, although the most the Colonial Office could agree to was to send out a mere 153 Irish women to marry the thousand plus who were yet single.²⁶⁶ This was in 1857, when expenditure was becoming a critical topic of debate in British parliamentary circles, and when John Russell was no longer secretary of state for colonies.

One must question the decision to reinforce the frontier with a greater European presence in the face of Grey's reputation as a 'civiliser' and 'native uplifter'. Such a policy underlined

²⁵⁹ *Government Gazette*, 31 July, 1857

²⁶⁰ Henderson, *Sir George Grey, Pioneer of Empire in Southern Lands*, pg 176

²⁶² Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 287

²⁶³ *Cape Argus*, March 30, 1858

²⁶⁴ *Cape of Good Hope: Copies of further Papers with reference to the Recall of Governor Sir George Grey from the Cape of Good Hope* – Enclosure 1 in No. 3, Extract from the Speech of the Governor upon Opening the Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope, on 7 April, 1857, pg 17

²⁶⁵ *Ibid*, – Extract from the Speech of the Governor upon opening the Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope, on the 10th of March, 1858, pg 18

²⁶⁶ Tankard, Keith, 'Political and Economic Machinations: A New Look at Sir George Grey's Plans for British Kaffrarian', in *New Contree*, No. 42, 1997, pg 85

Grey's mistrust of the 'loyal Mfengu', and one would expect, given Grey's reputation, that this group would be at the forefront of any such assimilationist agenda. In some ways, the difference between South Africa and New Zealand becomes clear here – while in New Zealand, Grey was able to meet and communicate with the Maori chiefs, at the Cape, the Xhosa and other African groups were seen as distanced, and were indeed ostracized, and it is easy to comprehend how Grey's negative perception of them was informed by toxic reports and an air of distrust that permeated the Cape social atmosphere. Grey constantly referred to letters and dispatches received from numerous agents, such as Maclean, Brownlee, and especially Lieutenant-General James Jackson,²⁶⁷ leader of the Imperial Army in southern Africa, and he himself was often far removed from the happenings on the frontier.

Furthermore, it was simply impossible to 'assimilate' native peoples through a mere flurry of friendly gestures, given the complex relationship between Cape Europeans and Africans. It was perhaps naïve to believe that groups such as the Xhosa could simply be charmed into subjugation, as many British politicians believed the Maoris had been, and a greater military presence was essential in carrying out what Grey had been employed to accomplish. Despite Britain's attempts to aid Grey in carrying out this policy, to the best of its military capability at this time, given various other issues across the British Empire, immigrants were simply not compelled to settle onto the frontier, and it was thus unlikely that subjugation of the Xhosa would have been possible if it had not been for the eventual Cattle-Killing calamity, as shall be discussed.

Mountains and Roads: How Smith and Cathcart Paved the Path for Grey

As seen, to Grey, a greater European contingent at the Cape would ease the process of native 'assimilation'. Grey had let known his intentions to 'educate' the Xhosa from the start of his governance, stating his desire:

To gain influence over all tribes included between the present north-eastern boundary of this colony and Natal, by employing them [natives] upon public works, which will tend to open up their country; by establishing institutions for the education of their children, and the relief of their sick ... to attempt gradually to win them to civilization and Christianity, and thus to

²⁶⁷ A man who constantly reiterated the need for more troops amidst war-riddled rumours, and a man who Grey clearly trusted, giving him control over the Anglo-German Legion in one last failed attempt to give order to their ranks

*change by degrees our at present unconquered and apparently irreclaimable foes into friends who may have common interests with ourselves.*²⁶⁸

In line with this, Grey soon implemented a policy aimed at establishing a network of roads and the development of civil institutions such as hospitals and schools throughout British Kaffraria, in an attempt to consolidate cultural control over the area.

Before Grey, Cathcart, Smith and Montagu²⁶⁹ had all played leading roles in constructing numerous roads across southern Africa. The late 1840s and 1850s stands as an important period in which Xhosa independence was crippled, and road-building played a massive role in this. In many ways, Grey's 'success' in undermining Xhosa independence rested on previous policies of infrastructural development – it is thus necessary to incorporate an element of context to this process, albeit briefly.

First and foremost, the clearing of Xhosas from the Amatola mountain range was important in this period. Cathcart, during his tenure, was to succeed in securing the Amatola Mountain Range, an act that would, in the subsequent few years, prove to be vital in the subjugation of the Xhosa. Interestingly enough, Cathcart seems to have adopted this plan from Smith. William Ross King, a soldier who served under Smith, gives us an insight into Smith's thinking while he was still High Commissioner of the Cape:

*The Commander in Chief [Smith] on the 16th December [1850] marched all the troops in Albany and British Kaffraria to the Amatola Mountains the object of which was to make such a demonstration as might overawe the Gaikas without resorting to force which was to be carefully avoided.*²⁷¹

According to King, once full-out war broke out, Smith, upon 'reaching King William's Town...immediately issued a proclamation calling on the colonists to rise en masse and assist

²⁶⁸ *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented May 31, 1853)*, No 20, Grey to Grey, 22 December, 1854

²⁶⁹ Montagu is perceived as one of the major figures in the construction of roads in the mid-19th century Cape. As late as 1841, W. L. Sammons, editor of *Sam Sly's African Journal*, stated that 'You must find your own way into the interior of Africa without guide posts or signposts.' (Newman, W., *Biographical memoir of John Montagu*, pg 231) Under Montagu's tenure, the hard road across the Cape Flats, Montagu Pass, Mostert's Hoek Pass, Michell's Pass, Bain's Kloof Pass, Houw Hoek Pass, just to mention a few, were built, all aiming to provide a web of inter-connectedness across many areas of the Cape.

²⁷¹ King, William Ross, *Campaigning in Kaffirland*, (London: Saunders and Otley, 1853), pg 11

troops to expel and exterminate the Gaikas from Amatolas at all hazards'.²⁷² The foundations Smith put in place in securing the Amatolas had a massive impact in forever changing the military situation at the Cape. Cathcart, too, saw the importance in securing this area, claiming that 'the peace of the [eastern] community demands their [Xhosa's] permanent expulsion from the strongholds which they have hitherto possessed in the Amatola Mountains'.²⁷³ To Cathcart:

*Reason and experience prove that the expulsion of warlike hostile neighbors from locations which are mountainous, and replete with natural strongholds, can lead to no real benefit, unless those locations be occupied, and the possession of them permanently held when gained; for the moment they are left unguarded or unoccupied, the expelled tribes will return and reoccupy them, with increased power of tenacity derived from experience in war.*²⁷⁴

After thousands of Xhosa were driven out from this 'natural fortress', efforts were soon made to consolidate this region. Cathcart's efforts to strengthen the area saw to the establishment of Queenstown, as well as the introduction of bodies aimed to consolidate the area, such as the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police.

Such projects made it easier for Grey to consolidate control over such areas, and, upon arrival, Grey attempted to link various towns and extend existing road networks. Thus he extended the policies that John Montagu implemented from the 1840s, and these two decades of construction culminated in the subjugation of the Xhosas towards the end of Grey's tenure. However, whilst Montagu had been a proponent of enforced convict labour, Grey promoted system of paid labour in an attempt to familiarise natives with British concepts of currency.²⁷⁵ As Mostert argues, 'This mirrored a similar policy in Australia where Grey had set Aborigines to work on public roads with a sliding scale of pay to encourage them to greater effort, and to instill material ambition.'²⁷⁶

Grey's rapid road-building scheme included the partial reconstruction of the road from King William's Town to Queen's Town, as well as the construction of a new road linking

²⁷²Ibid, pg 14

²⁷³Cathcart, George, *Correspondence of Lieutenant General, the Hon. Sir George Cathcart* pg 57

²⁷⁴Cathcart, George, *Correspondence of Sir George Cathcart*, pg 43

²⁷⁵Hofmeyr, G. S., 'King William's Town and the Xhosa, 1854-1861: the Role of a Frontier Capital During the High Commissionership of Sir George Grey', (Unpublished, MA thesis, UCT, 1981), pg 93

²⁷⁶Mostert, *Frontiers*, pg 1166

Grahamstown to King William's Town.²⁷⁷ This same year saw the completion of a road from King William's Town to Dohne, whilst the construction of the Windvogelberg road, which was to link Queen's Town to Grahamstown and King William's Town, was also commenced. In 1856, a new line between King William's Town and East London was commenced.²⁸⁰ Thomas Bain, a stalwart in the construction of roads throughout South Africa, was involved in the planning and building of many of these roads.

While Grey recommended to Maclean that 'a maximum of 950 Xhosa be employed on public works' for this scheme to find fruition, by the end of 1855, this exceeded a mere 500.²⁸³ But as we shall see, with the coming of the Cattle-Killing in 1856, these numbers would shoot upwards as 28 892 Xhosa registered for service in Brit Kaffraria in 1857²⁸⁴; as a result, while the road being constructed from King Williams to Grahamstown had but 162 workers in December 1852, in August 1857, this number would shoot up to 615.²⁸⁵ Mention must be made of the fact that towards the end of Grey's governance at the Cape, many of these projects were marginalized, as shall be discussed later.

In addition to road construction, Grey offered grants to missionaries, to be used on Xhosa educational schemes. Grey was an avid supporter of cultural reformation via education. 'He established the principle, new in African education, that the government might pay teachers' salaries.'²⁸⁶ As Weldon claims, 'Grey's financial support and encouragement led to the establishment of industrial schools not only at Lovedale and Healdtown, but also at Salem, Lesseyton, D'Urban, Shiloh and Goshen.'²⁸⁷ Other schools built in this time included those at Mount Coke, Grahamstown and Peelton.²⁸⁸

However, according to Bishop Henry of Grahamstown, by 1859, many of these schools still had low attendances, and thus had not been very effective²⁸⁹, although Lovedale perhaps

²⁷⁷ Although this particular road was delayed and only opened in July 1859

²⁸⁰ Hofmeyr, 'King William's Town and the Xhosa', pg 101

²⁸³ Ibid, pg 93

²⁸⁴ Ibid, pg 98

²⁸⁵ *King William's Town Gazette*, 10 January, 1857, 12 September, 1857, as correctly cited in Hofmeyr, 'King William's Town and the Xhosa', pg 94

²⁸⁶ Wilson, Monica, 'Co-Operation and Conflict: the Eastern Cape Frontier', in Wilson, Monica, and Thompsom, Leonard eds, *History of south Africa to 1870*, (David Philip, Cape Town, 1982) pg 261,

²⁸⁷ Weldon, Gail, *The Interaction Between the Missionaries of the Cape Eastern Frontier and the Colonial Authorities in the Era of Sir George Grey, 1854-1861*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 1984), pgs 80-91

²⁸⁸ Wilson, Monica, 'Co-Operation and Conflict: the Eastern Cape Frontier', pg 261

²⁸⁹ CO 48/400 Bishop Henry of Grahamstown to the Duke of Newcastle, 15 July 1859

stands as an exception to this.²⁹⁰ While Salem, during the course of 1855, saw an average number of pupils present on each day numbering around thirty-eight,²⁹¹ by the first half of 1857, this number had decreased to thirty-two.²⁹² In 1859, this number sat at around thirty-three, and here there was apparently ‘reason of complaint that no power is possessed by the principal of compelling the continuance of pupils for a fixed period under instruction. The short time that some remain with us, and the flimsy pretexts under which the boys are taken away’ were seen as ‘evils causing useless expenditure and annoyance’.²⁹³ There were also complaints of inadequate resources, and those supervising the Healdtown school complained of a lack of suitable workshops.²⁹⁴ These institutions were brought about with the aim to promulgate settled farming, with ploughs and irrigation furrows being introduced. Once again, this policy mimicked that which was introduced by Grey into South Australia, although, ultimately, as Collier argues, there, too, such schools were ineffective.²⁹⁵ Furthermore, these schools struggled to find funding – although Grey had been given \$40,000 per annum for such policies, he had spent this on other areas (such as road construction), and these schools often had to find private funding, and Grey had to use £6,000 of his own money for their support.²⁹⁶

Grey’s policies were very obviously influenced by his theoretical agenda, and he, believing that certain cultural structures inhibited civilization amongst various native peoples, attempted to overhaul Xhosa political and foundations. To Grey, the Xhosa had a political structure that allowed the abuse of, and, indeed, maintenance of power. For Grey, the labelling of witchcraft, for example,

subjects a person found guilty of it to torture and death, and the total confiscation of his property. No sooner, therefore, does a person grow rich, than he is almost certain to be

²⁹⁰ In fact, many famous South Africa figures and been affiliated with the school, including personalities such as Steve Biko, Thabo Mbeki, historian George M. Theal, Tiyo Soga and Chris Hani

²⁹¹ Thirty-four of these were African, the other four were ministers’ children. Cape of Good Hope - Reports upon the progress of the Native Industrial Institutions, established at Lovedale, Salem and Heald Town, in the Divisions of Victoria, Albany, and Fort Beaufort [G, 7. –‘56] [II], W Shaw to Rawson, Secretary to Government, 27th December 1855

²⁹² *Cape of Good Hope: Reports of the Native Industrial Schools at Salem, Heald Town, and Lesseyton, for the Year 1858*, (Cape Town : Saul Solomon, 1859) B. J. Shaw to Rawon, 17 January, 1859

²⁹³ *Cape of Good Hope: Reports of the Native Industrial Schools at Salem, Heald Town, and Lesseyton, for the Year 1859*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1860) Impey to Rawson, 9 January, 1860

²⁹⁴ *Cape of Good Hope: Reports of the Native Industrial Schools at Salem, Heald Town, and Lesseyton, for the Year 1858* (Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1859) B. J. Shaw to Rawson, 17 January, 1859

²⁹⁵ Collier, *Sir George Grey, Governor, High Commissioner and Premier*, pg 26

²⁹⁶ Henderson, *Sir George Grey, Pioneer of Empire in Southern Lands*, pg 136

*accused of this offence, and is, at least, stripped of all he possesses. It is impossible that people subjected to such a system can ever advance in civilization... they are almost certain ultimately to be stripped at the caprice of the chief and his counsellors.*²⁹⁷

Grey went about trying to create a new system in which chiefs would lose unrestrained autonomy. Pushing this agenda, Grey divided British Kaffraria into eight divisions, with an elected European magistrate appointed to each, who would act as legal adjudicator, replacing the place of the chief in this practice. Additionally, chiefs would receive incomes from the Cape Government, and it was hoped that this would make the chiefs dependent upon the Cape government. Chief Mhala, for instance, was paid 96 pounds per annum.³⁰¹ The main aim of this policy was to create a dependence on the Cape government, and caused quite a disruption within Xhosa politics. As a response to Sandile's apparent agreement to this proposal, Maqoma asked Sandile if he knew that he was about to become a full-blown British subject.³⁰² He also told Maclean that he would accept the offer if he no longer had to involve himself with Sandile.³⁰³ The Cape administration would indeed see Sandile as an 'easy target', as this thesis will continue to argue.

Contemporary Criticisms of George Grey's Policies

As has been seen, John Russell questioned the feasibility of Grey's frontier-related immigration policies – criticisms which, with time, seemed justified. In addition, many also questioned Grey's policies in regards to native control. To many, these policies seemed naive – simply expecting the Xhosa to be 'awed', or subtly and blindly led into a process of acculturation underlined a flawed and ignorant understanding of the convoluted and complex context of native resistance at the Cape. In essence, Grey's initial policies were regarded by many as hasty and bullish. They mirrored Smith's in a number of ways, and it was believed that there was a distinct possibility that they may be met with a similar reaction.

²⁹⁷ *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented July, 1855)*, No. 9, Grey to Molesworth, 18 December, 1855. These views had been shared by Harry Smith himself when he attempted to ban witch-hunting, as shown in Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, pg 221

³⁰¹ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 191

³⁰² Grey Collection, South African National Library, Cape Town, G.11.c.20, Encl.8 to No.46, Brownlee to Maclean, 6 December 1855

³⁰³ *Ibid*, Encl.7 to No.46 Brownlee to Maclean, 18 October 1855

Chief Commissioner Maclean, for one, voiced extreme doubt over Sir George Grey's envisioned policy. Maclean's anxiety was aimed 'not as regards utility, but as regards safety ... even should the seeming consent of the chiefs be now obtained'.³⁰⁴ To Maclean, the native was 'proud of his race, which he considers pure blood, and superior to others, [and] is therefore eminently national' and 'suspicious',³⁰⁵ therefore unlikely to simply accept these measures without resistance. To Maclean, Grey's policies had a green tinge, born out of ignorance, reflecting a lack of experience of Xhosa–British relations, and he criticized these policies as a 'work of theorists in Cape Town'.³⁰⁶ Such policies were seen as especially ignorant given the fact that Cathcart had promised the Xhosa chiefs that they would, in future, be able to govern their own people by their own laws.

While Charles Brownlee, Xhosa mediator and highly acclaimed Xhosa Commissioner, was to state his belief that 'the presence of European magistrates to act as assessors and advisers, would be disliked and objected to',³⁰⁹ Sir William Molesworth, Secretary of State for the Colonies at the time, claimed that Grey should perhaps have started out with the 'loyal Mfengu', rather than launching straight into the Xhosa culture,³¹⁰ an interesting assessment given Grey's views of this group. As Molesworth had claimed, 'G. Grey's hopes are founded upon his New Zealand experience of the Maoris, but the conditions of the South African problem are quite different from those of the New Zealand one.'³¹¹

Whilst such policies were perhaps somewhat utopian, Grey governed in a period that gave him huge advantages. While the Cattle-Killing is often dated to 1856 and 1857, as early as August, 1855, Brownlee was to claim that 'the speedy adoption of His Excellency's schemes seems to me, for the present, greatly to depend on the *lung-sickness*'.³¹² Additionally, in December that same year, Maclean claimed that 'The prevailing cattle sickness will probably so far reduce the number of cattle in British Kaffraria, that that advantage which the chiefs

³⁰⁴ *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented July, 1855)*, Enclosure 2 in No. 9, Maclean to Grey, 4 August 1855

³⁰⁵ Wentzel, Jennifer, 'Refashioning Sub-National Pasts for Post-National Futures: The Xhosa Cattle Killing in Recent South African Literature' in Carvalho, Susanna and Gemenne, Francois, eds, *Nations and Their Histories: Constructions and Representations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pg 224

³⁰⁶ Price, Richard, *Making Empire: Colonial Encounters and the Creation of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth-Century Africa*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pg 274

³⁰⁹ *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented July, 1855)*, Sub-Enclosure 1 in Enclosure No. 3 in No. 9, Grey to Molesworth, November 18, 1855

³¹⁰ Weldon, *George Grey and the Xhosa: Fact and Opinion*, 44-45

³¹¹ Rutherford, James, *Sir George Grey, K.C.B., 1812-1898: a study in colonial government*, pgs 304-305

³¹² *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented July, 1855)*, Sub. Encl. 3 in Encl. 3 in No. 9, Brownlee to Maclean, 10 August, 1855

and councilors derived from this barbarous mode of administering justice are likely for some time to be so far diminished, that the present moment presents a most favorable opportunity for introducing a new system for the administration of justice amongst the Kaffir populations.³¹³ While both figures had thus previously denounced Grey's policies, as the lung sickness disease began to spread, these policies became more and more credible as possible agents of native transformation.

In some sense, Grey's policies did seem a bit naïve, although he lacked the vocal belligerence of Smith. Grey's policies were not particularly original, but he governed in a time where the Xhosa were in a particularly weak state; driven from the Amatolas, their cattle stricken by lung sickness, the Xhosa were truly feeling the stress of European imposition – to such an extent that these policies were met with no real resistance. For Cape colonials, the focus on consolidating the Amatola mountain range perhaps stands as Smith's greatest legacy, for, although finished off by Cathcart, it was he who began the process of its conquest, scattering and unsettling the Xhosa in the process. Despite all this, we do not have the luxury of hindsight in judging how effective Grey's policies would have been, for in 1856, the infamous Xhosa Cattle-Killing would forever change the shape of Cape history.

³¹³ Ibid, Enclosure 1 in No. 9, Grey to Molesworth, December 18, 1855

The Xhosa Cattle-Killing – Remembering the Inconceivable

The various debates surrounding the Cattle-Killing make it a hugely convoluted topic. George Theal referred to the movement as ‘an event more astounding than anything in the pages of the wildest romance’.³¹⁴ Sheila Boniface Davies, in her PhD thesis, states that

*it is perhaps unsurprising that over the years this very real catastrophe has captured and held the South African literary imagination. But whether writers are drawn by the narrative eventfulness and ‘extraordinary’ aspects of the movement; the literary components such as those usually associated with classical Greek tragedy; the political and historical ramifications; or the gaps in the archive, the Cattle-Killing has proved fertile ground for storytellers. Even a cursory overview of the approximately sixty creative accounts, written over the course of more than a century, discloses interpretations from a broad range of subject positions and ideological perspectives.*³¹⁵

And indeed, this topic undoubtedly holds a strong presence in South African historiography.³¹⁷ As an event of central importance to this period, it would perhaps be useful

³¹⁴ Theal, George McCall. *South Africa: The Cape Colony, Natal, Orange Free State, South African Republic, and all Other Territories South of the Zambesi* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1894 [3rd ed]), pg 277

³¹⁵ Davies, Sheila Boniface, ‘History in the Literary Imagination: The Telling of Nongqawuse and the Xhosa Cattle-Killing in South African Literature and Culture, 1891–1937’, (Unpublished PhD thesis, 2010)

³¹⁷ Authors include as Peires in, for instance, *The Dead Will Arise*; Stapleton in ‘They No Longer Care for their Chiefs’: Another Look at the Xhosa Cattle-Killing of 1856-1857, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24, 2, 1991; Price in *Making Empire*; Zarwan in ‘The Xhosa Cattle Killings, 1856-57’, *Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines*, XVI (3-4), 1976; Majeke, Nosipho, in *The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest* (Johannesburg: Society of Young Africa, 1952); Wilson in ‘Co-operation and Conflict’; Mndende, Nokuzola, in *The Prophecy of Nongqawuse: a White Man’s Lie about the Xhosa Cattle Killing, 1856-7*, (Cape Town: Dept. of Religious Studies, University of Cape Town, 1997), Weldon in ‘The Interaction between the Missionaries of the Cape Eastern Frontier; Theal in, for example, *Compendium of South African History and Geography* (Lovedale: Institution Press, 1877, 3rd ed, rev & enl [1874]); Rutherford in *Sir George Grey*; Lewis in ‘An Economic History of the Ciskei, 1848-1900’ (PhD, University of Cape Town, 1984); Dowsley in ‘An Investigation into the Circumstances relating to the Cattle Killing Delusion in Kaffraria 1856-67’ (MA, University of South Africa, 1932); Thorpe in “Religious Response to Stress: The Xhosa Cattle Killing and the Indian Ghost Dance.” *Missionalia* 12, no. 3 (November 1, 1984); Crais in *The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865*, (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1992); Mostert in *Frontiers*; Bradford in, for example, ‘Through gendered eyes: Nongqawuse and the great cattle-killing’, (Unpub. UWC, 2001), or Bradford, Helen, Akukho Ntaka Inokubhabha Ngephiko Elinye (No Bird Can Fly on One Wing): The ‘Cattle-Killing Delusion’ and Black Intellectuals, c1840–1910, *African Studies*, 67:2; Ashforth in ‘The Xhosa Cattle Killing and the Politics of Memory’, *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Sep., 1991), Wentzel in *Bulletproof: Afterlives in Anticolonial Prophecy in South Africa and Beyond*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009); Hofmeyr, in *King William’s Town and the Xhosa*; Moorcroft in ‘Theories of Millenarianism Considered with Reference to Certain South African Movements’, (B.Litt, Oxford, 1967), McArthur, Aaron, ‘The Colonial Dynamic: The Xhosa Cattle Killing

to look at a number of existing arguments and attempt to place them within the context of this thesis.

The Cattle-Killing movement itself took place roughly between 1856 and 1858, in which a great many Xhosa killed their cattle when seemingly following prophecies made by a 13-year-old girl named Nongqawuse³²⁰. Nongqawuse, supported by her uncle Mhlakaza,³²¹ himself an acclaimed Xhosa ‘seer’,³²² and a counsellor to the Xhosa Chief Sarhili, claimed to have come into contact with fallen Xhosa ancestors, who told her that if the Xhosa killed all their cattle and destroyed their grain, ‘On the promised day, which was to be marked by a blood red sun that would rise and set in the East, multitudes of healthy animals would replace the slaughtered beasts, choice corn would fill the storage pits to overflowing and the ancestors would rise from the dead. All who did not obey the spirits’ injunctions, both black and white, would be obliterated in an apocalyptic storm.’³²³ The number of Xhosa that died during this movement, primarily of famine, is up for debate. One of the agreed upon numbers, however, is 40 000, as the *Cape Argus* estimated in 1858.³²⁴

This was truly a determining period in which Xhosa resilience to the process of ‘Anglicisation’ was weakened considerably due to the widespread famine and resulting death of millions. It was hugely influential in the ‘breakdown’ of independent Xhosa society.³²⁵ Hand in hand with the clearing of the mountainous Amatola region, it stands as perhaps the greatest reason for Grey’s ultimately ‘successful’ native policy, for it brought a greater reliance on British societal concepts of currency and labour for many Xhosa. Many found

and the American Indian Ghost Dance’, *Psi Sigma Siren*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, Article 2, 2012, amongst many, many others who I do not wish to neglect or disregard.

³²⁰ While most historians claim she was 16, Fynn’s report in *Cape of Good Hope Report and Proceedings of the Government Commission on Native Laws and Customs*, Cape Town, 1883, G. 4-183, No 4968 claims she was 15 when she was arrested in 1858.

³²¹ Jeff Peires argues that Mhlakaza was, in fact, Goliath, the former companion of Archdeacon Merriman of Grahamstown. Goliath had been ‘released’ due to his ‘indolence’. Peires argues that Goliath, now Mhlakaza, was so upset with this that he decided have his revenge. However, Sheila Davies dispels this myth within her essay, ‘Raising the Dead’, within the *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2007

³²² Brownlee, *Reminiscences*, pg 126

³²³ Davies, Sheila Boniface, ‘History in the Literary Imagination: The Telling of Nongqawuse and the Xhosa Cattle-Killing in South African Literature and Culture, 1891–1937’, (PhD, Cambridge University, 2010), pg 4

³²⁴ *Cape Argus*, 3 March, 1858. Peires in ‘The Central Beliefs of the Xhosa Cattle Killing’, *Journal of African History*, 28, 1987, Stapleton in ‘They No Longer Care for Their Chiefs’: Another look at the Xhosa Cattle-Killing of 1856-1857’, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 24, No2, 1991, pg 383, and Davies ‘Raising the Dead’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2007, pg 20, to name but a few, all use this number.

³²⁵ Of course, in assuming a breakdown one would assume that Xhosa culture had, or has had unchanging, definite properties, rather than seeing it as a society which shifts to certain circumstances, as all cultures do.

themselves forced to seek employment within the Cape borders in order to survive, allowing easier implementation of Grey's policies of road construction.

Before moving on, there are issues with the term 'Cattle-Killing' that must be discussed. The term itself has been criticised by those such as Jeff Guy, who argues that it 'conflates, distorts and simplifies' the movement. Indeed, Guy asks why the label 'Cattle-Killing' has even been considered when the movement³²⁹ clearly included the destruction of crops, the loss of which was far more influential in bringing about mass starvation in this period than that of cattle.³³⁰ It could perhaps be argued that the term 'Cattle-Killing' depicts the Xhosa as brutal, animalistic and primitive, and, in a way, places cattle as the victims, whilst the Xhosa are seen as instigators. As Guy argues, the term does indeed simplify the narrative. As Bradford rightfully contends, the term can be considered androcentric in the way that it values the loss of male-owned cattle as more destructive to that of grain, which was the product of female work in the fields, thereby possibility moderating female influence in the crisis.³³¹ While there are indeed issues with the term 'Cattle-Killing', issues are to be had no matter what term one uses; words and phrases are always going to simplify a complicated issue. This thesis will use the term 'Cattle-Killing', despite its issues, as it is one that is familiar to many.

Due to the tragic nature of what is termed the Cattle-Killing, much debate has naturally gone into placing responsibility for its occurrence. What makes the Cattle-Killing so intriguing is the fact that it is very difficult to attribute causation to its onset. As Ashforth claims in his article, 'for the historian trying to fathom what really happened in this clash of divine inspiration and material reality, and why so many people followed this young girl's prophecy to their perdition, life is tough'.³³² Of particular intrigue is the question as to whether or not this movement existed as a purely political ploy, planned either by Grey or by the Xhosa chiefs, or if its spiritual, prophetic aspects were the underlying factors in driving it onward. Some argue that the movement started as a practical reaction against a contagious cattle-disease (bovine pleuropneumonia) a disease that Peires claims was brought to the Cape in

³²⁹ I am aware that the term 'movement' may imply an orchestrated 'plan of action', which, it is contested, was not the case. Perhaps another word would be more apt, although the term 'movement' may suffice, as long as one is aware of the complications arising from the use of this term.

³³⁰ Guy, Jeff, 'A Landmark, Not a Breakthrough', *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 25, Issue 1, 1991, pgs 229-331

³³¹ Bradford, Helen, 'Women, Gender and Colonialism: Rethinking the History of the British Cape Colony and Its Frontier Zones, C. 1806-70', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 37, No. 3, 1996, pg 361

³³² Ashforth, Adam, 'The Xhosa Cattle Killing and the Politics of Memory', pg 582

September 1853 by a Dutch ship transporting Friesland bulls to Mossel Bay.³³³ This idea is backed up by the fact that many contemporary figures made mention of the disease before the crisis began; on 17 February, for example, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* made reference to ‘Putrid Fever known here as Lung Sickness’, which to Fairbairn stood ‘in the presence of Science up to this hour, as great a mystery as Potato rot, the Vine blight, or the Cholera’.³³⁴ Cobbing suggests that Cape authorities had planned famine during the War of Mlanjeni by destroying crops and resettling Xhosa in ‘barren’ lands to the east of their former fertile Amotola mountain territory. This, coupled with the severe draught of 1854–1855, led to a severe shortage of crops. Hand-in-hand with this, Cobbing suggests that it was the lack of crops, and not cattle that killed so many Xhosa³³⁵ – a statement that, in itself, is probably correct.

There are also questions centred on the uniqueness of this movement. In context, this movement is not as unique as many historians may imply. Some, such as A.E. du Toit, argue that the Cattle-Killing was a singular event.³³⁶ It was unique for the lasting effect it had, but there were obvious links between, for instance, the ‘War of Mlanjeni’ (1850-1853) and the Cattle-Killing. This war had been fuelled at least in part by the ‘prophet’, or ‘war-doctor’ Mlanjeni, who, around 1850, foretold that European bullets would not harm Xhosa warriors if the Xhosa went to war with the Cape.³³⁷ It was at this time, too, that Mlanjeni also prophesised that if the Xhosa people killed all their dun-coloured cattle that the Europeans presiding in Southern Africa would leave. The response to Mlanjeni’s prophecies was sensational, and many argue that they played a massive role in causing this war.

Russel Viljoen also shows that, in 1788, a similar millenarian movement took place amongst the Overberg Khoikhoi. Here, the movement based itself on the belief that the world would end later that year, and, as such, believers were instructed to kill their white cattle whilst burning their European clothes and planning an attack on the Swellendam Drostdy.³³⁸ Such prophecies were a particular reaction to the slow, inexorable imposition of European dominance, and while the Xhosa existed as a different ethno-cultural group, their later

³³³ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 70

³³⁴ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 17 April, 1855

³³⁵ Cobbing, Julian, ‘Review of ‘The Dead Will Arise’’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 20:2, 1994, pgs 339-341

³³⁶ Du Toit, A., E., ‘The Cape Frontier, 1847-1866’ in *Archives Yearbook for South African History*, 1954, pg 99.

³³⁷ Peires, Jeff, ‘The Central Beliefs of the Xhosa Cattle-Killing’, *Journal of African History*, 28 (1987), pg 46

³³⁸ Viljoen, Russel, Making Sense of the Khoikhoi Cattle-Killing of 1788: an Episode of Millenarianism in Khoikhoi Society, *Kronos*, 24, 1997, pg 2

millenarian movement, too, arose due to their inability to stamp any sort of authority over the British through armed resistance over the previous decades.

While it may be true that Nongqawuse spread prophecies inculcating the killing of cattle, the credit she received for starting the movement is perhaps misguided. Stapleton, for instance, states that ‘This Great Cattle-Killing had been brought on by visions of a teenage girl, Nongqawuse’.³³⁹ Nongqawuse started her prophecies in June 1856, but, as early as April that same year, Lieutenant General Jackson, in charge of frontier forces, cited a belief among the Xhosa that Gaika and Umlangeni, old Xhosa chiefs, were fighting for the Russians against the British in the Crimea, and Walter Currie, in the same dispatch, reported a rumour that dead Xhosa warriors were being resurrected and were on their way to their respective chiefdoms.³⁴⁰ There were also other prophets at this time; Brownlee himself wrote of several ‘[Witch] Doctors’, such as the wife of Bulu, ‘one of Kama’s Counsellors’, as well as ‘the wife of Petsheni of Stocks Tribe’, to name a few.³⁴¹ As Weldon states, the missionary John Ross, stationed at Pirie in British Kaffraria, wrote in November of 1856 of his belief that the ‘delusion’ had started some six months previously when several of those ‘people who peep and mutter gave out various diverse sayings’.³⁴²

Peires, perhaps the leading authority on the topic, argues that the movement was not simply a pagan reaction, but that ‘The prophecy of resurrection had its roots in Christianity’,³⁴³ an understandable suggestion that would show the extent to which Christianity and European social structures had impacted Xhosa society. There are a number of ‘Christian’ themes that are present within the movement itself. One is able to pinpoint themes of resurrection, the dissolution of sins,³⁴⁴ the existence of some otherworldly force attempting to aid a ‘chosen people’ by sacrificing their most precious of belongings,³⁴⁵ and of mortal beings attempting to find absolution through self-sacrifice. There are indeed possible symbolic links between Jesus and the Xhosa ancestors, both of whom maintain a sense of humanity, whilst retaining some otherworldly manifestation. However, Peires’ focus on Christianity has been criticised

³³⁹ Stapleton, ‘They No Longer Care for their Chiefs’, pg 383

³⁴⁰ Weldon, *The interaction between the missionaries of the Cape eastern frontier*, pgs 104-105

³⁴¹ BK70, Brownlee to Maclean, 11 May, 1856

³⁴² Weldon, *The interaction between the missionaries of the Cape eastern frontier and the colonial authorities*, pg 106

³⁴³ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 108

³⁴⁴ The sin here perhaps referring to the fact that the Xhosa allowed themselves to be defeated by colonialists in previous wars

³⁴⁵ It could be suggested that just as God sacrificed his son, Xhosa ancestors were to sacrifice their eternal rest

by historians such as Timothy Stapleton, who states that ‘his [Peires’] interpretation leaves the Great Xhosa Cattle Killing as the result of an irrational superstition. Emphasizing the mixture of Christian and traditional Xhosa theology, Peires offers an explanation shockingly similar to the old ideas that the Nongqawuse episode was the product of a primitive delusion.’³⁴⁶

In truth, Peires’ work on the Cattle-Killing has been seen as being somewhat contradictory at times. The utterly underutilised work of Ashforth³⁴⁷ shows that while Peires claims that the movement was ‘a logical and rational, perhaps even an inevitable response’, he, at different times, also refers to it as a ‘fatal error’, and even a ‘foolish mistake’.³⁴⁸ Ashforth is trying to ultimately show that ‘In some ways this contradiction sums up the predicament of writing such as this. On the one hand, we want to write history in a way that casts its subjects as agents. Thus they are also responsible for errors as well as successes. On the other hand, we want to demonstrate that the people about whom we write are subject to structures and forces that constrain the possibilities of their action.’³⁴⁹ Once again, quoting Ashforth, ‘For while there may be an internal logic to these events, it is precisely because the schemes of “rationality” of the Xhosas were different from ours, different from those of the European colonists, and the British state, that the catastrophe occurred at all.’³⁵⁰ In this light, Stapleton’s statement that ‘Peires offers an explanation shockingly similar to the old ideas that the Nongqawuse episode was the product of a primitive delusion’ could be said to be somewhat Eurocentric.

Nosipho Majeke³⁵¹ follows Peires’ path and places heavy emphasis, indeed liability, for the movement on Christian missionaries.³⁵² As the Christian elements of the killing must have come from Christian teachings, in a sense, the killing could be argued to have been guided by missionaries. However, it is unlikely that missionaries had enough direct influence over the Xhosa peoples to have manipulated them to this extent. Such an argument also seems to downgrade the Xhosa as actors in the movement. Furthermore one could easily argue that the

³⁴⁶ Stapleton, ‘They No Longer Care for their Chiefs’, pg 392

³⁴⁷ Ashforth, ‘The Xhosa Cattle Killing and the Politics of Memory’

³⁴⁸ Ibid, pg 584. Ashforth does later claim that ‘By the most rigorous scholarly standards, his [Peires’] endeavor must be adjudged a success’ on pg 587

³⁴⁹ Ibid, pg 584

³⁵⁰ Ibid, pg 585

³⁵¹ The pen name of Dora Taylor

³⁵² Majeke, Nosipho, *The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest* (Johannesburg: Society of Young Africa, 1952)

theme of rebirth, resurrection, change and personal growth is one that should not be so finely attuned to Christianity, but to the human experience as a whole.

There has also been much debate on whether or not Grey can be placed as an actor in purposefully bringing about this movement. This, Peires states, is a common belief amongst a number of present-day Xhosa.³⁵³ Some radical anti-Apartheid historians such as Hosea Jaffe, writing as Mnguni, put the blame squarely on the shoulders of Grey, claiming that he planned it right from the onset. After all, Mnguni writes, ‘Grey’s deeds confirm the suspicions of millions of Africans... Grey’s life, policies and deeds give a clear answer to the question: “Who was behind the cattle-slaughter?”.’³⁵⁴ This argument, it could be said, is unconvincing due to the fact that the orchestration of such a movement, with ambiguous repercussions, would be incredibly risky on the part of the colonial government, and any ‘planning’ of such a movement would have necessitated impossible degrees of precision and foresight.

On the other side of the scale, others, such as those that Majeke describes as ‘herrenvolk historians’, as well as the Cape administration at the time of the killing, represented the movement as a planned effort on the part of the Xhosa and Sotho chiefs to bring about a state of war against the Colony. This possibility is doubtful, however, given the lack of any concerted effort to engage in any warfare. Indeed, it is difficult to explain why one would plan a war by starving and weakening one’s people. More recently, the likes of Peires and Bradford³⁵⁵ have taken strides to represent Xhosa perspective from the time of the movement– a difficult task given the marginal amount of sources displaying this experience. But for the most part, as Bradford states ‘we been presented with a desert so far as black-authored sources are concerned...For one thing, many academic historians of southern Africa do not consult texts written in tongues other than those of colonial powers. For another, ‘paradigmatic silences are the other side of paradigms’ The survival of a colonial paradigm into the twenty-first century has involved, not least, the silencing of alternatives, developed by Africans whose history this was.’³⁵⁶

Importantly, the Cattle-Killing can be seen as a movement that caused social and political rifts in Xhosa society. Evidence of Xhosa social disjointedness and political frailty by 1856 can be seen in the variety of responses to the Cattle-Killing movement. The movement was

³⁵³ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 317

³⁵⁴ Mnguni, *300 Years*, (Cumberwood : APDUSA, 1988), pgs 85-89

³⁵⁵ Bradford, Helen, ‘Akukho Ntaka Inokubhabha Ngephiko Elinye’

³⁵⁶ *Ibid*, Pg 226

anything but homogeneous; while it is believed that the majority of Xhosa followed its call, there existed a variety of responses taken up by different chiefs, highlighting a fractured Xhosa group identity – a lack of cohesion that had, in truth, existed for centuries.

Some chiefs publicly backed it, others denounced it, while others refused to make their viewpoint known – publicly at least. Xhosa chiefs Phatho, Khama, Toyise, Siwani, Anta, Oba, and Jali, to name a few, condemned the Cattle-Killing,³⁵⁷ whilst Mhlakaza, Nongqawuse's uncle, felt free to state that 'As for the Englishman's money, it would change into fire and destroy all who possessed it.'³⁵⁸ Maqoma also emphasised his stance, stating that he would not 'listen to anything the Government had to say ... as long as they are living where they now are'.³⁵⁹

But chiefs' opinions did not always sway that of the broader population, for denunciation of the movement oftentimes failed to stop 'the people' from slaughtering cattle. Stapleton even goes as far as to argue that the Xhosa Cattle-Killing was an act of popular rebellion, the true purpose of which was to rise up against Xhosa chiefs.³⁶⁰ For Stapleton, the killing of cattle, traditionally a foundation of wealth and power for Xhosa chiefs, may be seen as a solid illustration of popular rebellion against a ruling class. The Xhosa people essentially turned to their 'religious leaders', disempowering their political leaders who had failed to assert themselves against British imposition. Through a similar lens, albeit with a very different argument, Jack Lewis argues that chiefs were losing cattle and land, and thus power, due to George Grey's policies, and thus the movement stood as an effort to unify and consolidate 'the people' in the wake of their chiefs' demise.³⁶¹

Many would be quick to dismiss Stapleton's argument as one-sided and too-heavily focused on class divisions, as a Eurocentric Marxist line of reasoning motivated by class shifts. One should not simply dismiss this argument, for doing so is to see Xhosa society as an 'age-old', unchanging and inadaptible society – one in which chiefly power structures are eternal, static and fixed.³⁶² Indeed there is at least evidence to suggest that chiefs' opinions failed to sway

³⁵⁷ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 112

³⁵⁸ *Ibid*, pg 104

³⁵⁹ *Ibid*, pg 119

³⁶⁰ As referenced in Stapleton, 'They No Longer Care for their Chiefs', pg

³⁶¹ Lewis, Jack, 'Materialism and Idealism in the Historiography of the Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement 1856–7', *South African Historical Journal*, 25(1), November 1991, pgs 244-268

³⁶² This is not to argue that this movement was an example of inevitable social or cultural 'evolution' – however, in the face of British imposition, such a political change is conceivable/

popular opinion. As Commissioner Brownlee himself had stated, ‘the movement seems peculiarly to have been one of the common people.’³⁶³ Brownlee even again made reference to the fact that Xhosa chief ‘Botman is personally opposed to the movement but his people have gone extensively to it’.³⁶⁴ In the broader picture, Stapleton’s argument does not completely contradict those put forward by historians such as Peires, for both, at heart, illuminate the massive cultural shift taking place within Xhosa society in this period. This upheaval is again witnessed in the fact that there was also a sizeable group of Xhosa who remained ‘unbelievers’ – *amagogyta*, or ‘unyielding’. These individuals were chastised to great effect; threatened and intimidated by those who believed in the prophecy. These unbelievers had to actively seek protection from the colonial government, although, as we will soon see, the Cape administration was far from helpful when it came to the alleviation of Xhosa distress. Grey essentially chose to actively pressure certain chiefs to publicly oppose the Cattle-Killing, while leaving others to their own devices. In this sense, Grey actively attempted to create a certain amount of disunity amongst different tribes, whilst hindering any possibility of a unified, combined, and possibly militaristic resistance.

For instance, there was an effort to get Sandile, chief of the Gaika Xhosa, to publicly denounce the movement. Cape authorities saw Sandile as key in keeping the Cattle-Killing under control, and Brownlee emphasised the importance of Sandile’s obedience in his correspondence to Maclean, claiming that ‘Peace or war seems now to hinge upon the Gaikas’.³⁶⁵ It seems as though Grey’s administration singled out Sandile as somewhat of a weak target – as we shall see later, it was not just at the time of the Cattle-Killing that the Cape government attempted to manipulate Sandile to acquiesce to British demands. Brownlee, in 1855, a year before the Cattle-Killing movement broke out, had himself stated that Sandile, whilst ‘naturally not an evil disposed man’, had ‘not sufficient resolution and strength of mind to resist the evil influence of bad advisers. He is exceedingly sensual, and has a number of associates about his own age, who have great power over him... from want of courage, and in consequence of lameness, he has never taken part in any engagement with

³⁶³ GH 20/2/1 Brownlee to Maclean, 25 August 1856

³⁶⁴ BK 70, Brownlee to Maclean, 9 August, 1856

³⁶⁵ BK 70, Brownlee to Maclean, 9 August, 1856

the troops. His mental capacity is hardly above mediocrity.³⁶⁶ Furthermore, in 1857, during the most trying period of the Cattle-Killing, Brownlee was to claim that

*For some time past Sandilli has been saying to me that he has wished to be wholly under the orders and authority of Government, and to act in every way according to the wishes of Government... On my arrival at Sandilli's he stated ... that he saw no help except from Government; that he had been ruined by his opposition from Government ... he has evinced the utmost willingness to co-operate with me in every way ... and he and his brother Dundas have both purchased, and worn European clothing, a thing which neither of them could ever before be induced to do.' That the Cape authorities saw Sandile as a weak link can be seen once again through the words of the wife of Charles Brownlee, who claimed that Brownlee 'had removed Sandile from his own kraal to one a few miles from our residence, so as to have him among the well-disposed and away from the evil councilors.'*³⁶⁷

To the Colonial Office, Sandile was a weak link in the structure of Xhosa chieftainship. This is important to remember as this idea impacted some later events in the Cape. For the most part, the pressure applied to Sandile worked in the Cape authorities' favour. Anxious not to provoke the British, Sandile refused to back the movement, but was also aware that to publicly refute it would inflict great harm on his reputation amongst many Xhosa. As such Sandile was to begin slaughtering his cattle in the dead of the night, attempting to hide it in from Cape authorities.³⁶⁸ However, it was hardly a public manoeuvre, and from this we can see the extent to which British pressure influenced figures like Sandile. In addition to strategically pressuring particular chiefs, Grey adopted a policy whereby he would never formally meet with the Xhosa chiefs as a group, refusing to provide a platform for the unification and merging of voices. In line with this, Grey was explicit about the fact that Maclean was to, under no circumstances, meet with numerous Xhosa chiefs at once.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ Maclean, John, *Compendium of Kaffir Laws and Customs, Including Genealogical Tables of Kafir Chiefs and Various Tribal Census Returns* (Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1866), pg 135

³⁶⁷ Brownlee, *Reminiscences of Kaffir Life and History*, pg 146

³⁶⁸ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 118

³⁶⁹ Weldon, *The Interaction Between the Missionaries of the Cape Eastern Frontier*, pg 25

*The Horror Within: Grey's Reactions To And Role Within The Cattle-Killing
Movement*

As has been proposed, Grey, upon arriving in South Africa, immediately promulgated the threat of Xhosa militancy, although certain prominent British politicians quickly dispelled this tract of thought. In time, however, Grey would hark back to this depiction. Despite being warned to make '*immediate inquiry into the grounds of suspicion, relying as little as possible upon hearsay evidence*', Grey eventually gave birth to what has been termed the 'chiefs' plot hypothesis', by claiming that 'the conduct of the [Xhosa] nation resulted [not from a 'superstitious delusion' but] from a deep laid political scheme to involve the Government in war, and to bring...a host of desperate enemies upon us'³⁷⁰. It was a narrative that Grey would take with him to his grave. 'When I heard of the movement,' Sir George Grey was to narrate later on in his life, 'I at once hurried north to grapple with it. I could not have believed it so serious, until I was actually on the spot. Kaffraria was in a ferment, and a wave of destruction might roll from it across the Cape Colony. Here were nearly a quarter of a million of Kaffirs, a large proportion of whom were busy acting upon the advice of the prophetess. They were destroying their cattle and produce, and looking forward eagerly to a triumph over the whites.'³⁷¹

Despite this, it seems as though Grey was at first incredibly ambivalent about the cause of the movement. While on August 18th³⁷² and September 20th³⁷³ he was to vocalize his doubts about the culpability of the chiefs in regards to this occurrence, on the 21st of August³⁷⁴ and 27th of September³⁷⁵ (all in 1856), he was to express his belief that there was 'no doubt...that the prophet is a tool in the hands of Kreli for political purposes.'³⁷⁶ It is from this dispatch on 27 September, 1856 that Grey would consolidate an ever-lasting opinion that this was an orchestrated effort on the art of the chiefs. Whilst many, such as Bender, argue that 'While

³⁷⁰ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 219

³⁷¹ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pg 144

³⁷² *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented 6th June, 1856)* No 26, Grey to Labouchere, August 18, 1856

³⁷³ *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented 31st March, 1857)* No. 7 Grey to Labouchere, 20 September, 1856,

³⁷⁴ *Ibid*, No. 4, Grey to Labouchere, 21 August, 1856

³⁷⁵ *Ibid*, No 8, Grey to Labouchere, 27 September, 1856,

³⁷⁶ *Ibid*

the 1857 cattle-killing provided the opportunity to bring the Xhosa and their land under British control, the 1857 Indian Rebellion provided the justification³⁷⁷, Grey in actuality consolidated this justification months before this particular rebellion broke out in May 1857.

Interestingly, Maclean, too, had initially proposed doubt on the matter, proposing, on December 1856 - months after Grey's September dispatch - his belief that the movement was 'too suicidal for a mere political move.'³⁷⁸ Again, in December 1856, 'Maclean took a statement from a 'trustworthy native' to the effect that Sarhili had privately informed him that the purpose of the Cattle-Killing was to bring about a war. Even Maclean dismissed the statement at the time, because the informant was a Thembu Christian, who habitually wore European clothes, and he claimed that Sarhili would never trust such a man. And yet, later on, when they needed evidence to solidify guilt, both Grey and Maclean laid considerable emphasis on this information without ever mentioning the reservations which led them to reject it in the first place.'³⁷⁹ Interestingly, Grey had also ignored the advice of Maclean on previous occasions, when he had downplayed the threat of the Mfengu, and again when he would criticise Grey's somewhat 'naïve' native policies.

It is likely that Grey did, at first, believe that war was at least a possible outcome. This seems feasible – as seen, there were elements of the prophecy that did seem to advocate some form of conflict. Indeed, the movement is a conundrum even with present-day hindsight, and it must have been incredibly difficult to objectively conceptualise the movement at the time of its happening. However, what is important here is that these aforementioned doubts were then ignored when solidifying ideas about the movement within official discourse, and, as we shall see, a number of chiefs were unilaterally exiled for treason for their part in perpetuating an apparently intended act of war. Estrangement thus justified subjugation.

It is perhaps unsurprising that Grey's theory was consolidated just months before January 1857, when Grey was to write to Labouchere, secretary of state between November 1855 and February 1858, that 'the extended destitution now existing amongst the native tribes renders the present moment one of peculiar difficulty...and a larger expenditure than has been estimated for...this I not the time to make any changes in measures which are working so

³⁷⁷ Bender, Jill, 'Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion: the unmaking and making of an imperial career', in *Mutiny at the margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857, vol. ii*, eds. Crispin Bates and Marina Carter (New Delhi: Sage, 2013), pg 11

³⁷⁸ Peries, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 220

³⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pg 221

well, and which have stood the rude and unwholly unlooked for shocks and trials...'³⁸⁰

Labouchere was apparently at ease with this, stating on July 21st, 1857, that the British Government was 'highly sensible to your own zeal and activity...and of the discretion and firmness with which you have acted on all those occasions.'³⁸¹ To some degree, it is clear that Grey consolidated such views with the aim of justifying his overspending of the Cape budget, as shall be discussed in proceeding chapters, although in truth this was an easy task given the confidence his superiors placed in him at this point.

It is perhaps through the words of Brownlee that we can glean colonial thought on the Cattle-Killing:

'in the ordinary course of events, though famine may induce people to commit riots and outrages, a starving people are not in a position to undertake an aggressive warfare; for the Kaffirs say that famine always did more to conquer them than the forces brought against them, and wars have never been begun in seasons of scarcity, but the Kaffirs have always been most unruly and unmanageable in the years of their greatest plenty. If therefore we can with honour and dignity keep matters straight until a famine does ensue, which must be the case if the present course is persisted in for three of (sp) four months longer, I think we will find hundreds of these wretched people much more ready to take service in the colony than to fight against us.'³⁸⁵

Simultaneously, Grey believed that 'we can draw very great permanent advantages from the circumstance, which may be made a steppingstone for the future settlement of the country.'³⁸⁶; a line that reflects the fact Grey not only saw the movement as a means of destroying Xhosa independence, but as a means of bringing more settlers into the Cape borders. This latter point must be stressed. While Grey is renowned for his 'assimilationist' agenda, he drove many away from territories of Cape control. As Peires states, 'Its [Grey's subjugation] ulterior purpose was not to protect property and punish theft but to force as many Xhosa as possible to leave British Kaffraria'³⁸⁷. So, while numerous Xhosa were

³⁸⁰ *Cape of Good Hope. Copies of further Papers with reference to the Recall of Governor Sir George Grey from the Cape of Good Hope etc. etc.*, (s.i. June, 1860), Enclosure 3, in No.2, Extract from Sir George Grey's Dispatch to Labouchere, 19 January, 1857

³⁸¹ *Cape of Good Hope. Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented 31st March, 1857)*, No 10, Labouchere to Grey, 4 June, 1857

³⁸⁵ Brownlee, *Reminiscences*, pgs 396-97. Emphasis added

³⁸⁶ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 355. Emphasis added

³⁸⁷ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 222

brought into the Colony as labourers, Sarhili and his people were eventually driven eastwards, out of British Kaffraria, as shall be discussed.

If viewed objectively, one is able to perceive a line of policies that attempted to use the movement as a platform to subjugate and pacify Xhosa resistance. A policy of non-intervention was firmly put in place, and even unbelievers who sought asylum and protection from Cape colonists were given no concrete assistance. On one occasion Brownlee asked Maclean to allow around 150-200 unbelievers to settle in the Crown Reserve; a request that Maclean turned down. While Brownlee himself disapproved of this decision,³⁸⁹ for the most part ‘unbelievers’ were simply told to find shelter with chiefs who had not publically backed the movement³⁹⁰. On top of this, Grey, Brownlee and Maclean gave overt instructions to give food only to Xhosa who were in the process of indenturing themselves. Incoming Xhosa labourers had to sign a contract wherein they agreed to ‘proceed to any part of the Colony...in such a fashion and in such a manner and mode as I shall be ordered by the Chief Commissioner...’³⁹¹

In line with this, Grey passed a number of laws that allowed smooth institutionalization of these policies. For example, the incredibly important Kaffir Pass Act was enacted, maintaining that Xhosa could only enter the Colony if they were seeking employment, whilst the newly instituted Kaffir Employment Act declared that, once a Xhosa’s contract of work expired, they simply had fourteen days to sign another one; failing to do so, they would have to leave the Colony. A proclamation, passed on March 3rd, 1857, raided the issue of ‘Xhosa theft’, declaring that ‘acts of robbery by armed men have been recently committed...are unpardonable’, ‘as labour is provided for all industrious, well-disposed persons, who may be in a state of destitution...He [Grey] also warns the chiefs that all [Xhosa] found robbing in the Colony or elsewhere will be fired upon, if it is found impossible to capture them... All persons caught attempting to commit, or having committed, robberies with arms in their hands, will when convicted with such offence, be punished by DEATH (Capitals present in original source).’³⁹²

It is Grey’s ruthless and calculated treatment of the Xhosa - the way in which he failed to apply ample relief to those suffering, and the way in which he ruthlessly dealt with the chiefs

³⁸⁹ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 164

³⁹⁰ *Ibid*

³⁹¹ GH 8/32 Enclosed in Schedule 47, 3 August, 1857

³⁹² *King William’s Town Gazette*, 7 March 1857

after the movement - that has, by and large, shaped negative portrayals of him. Many historians have been hauled over the coals for simply failing to illustrate negative accounts of Grey's seemingly horrendous policies. Rutherford and Bohan, for instance, have been accused of failing to properly represent the lack of substantial relief efforts for many suffering Xhosa during the movement. For instance, for Price, 'Silence and denial ran through his [Rutherford's] account: silence about the tragic denouement for the Xhosa in the final days of their independence, and denial about the chaos and brutality that were the natural partners of Grey's policies.'³⁹³ It is indeed a delicate topic for those who understand the tragedy that belies it, although Price's criticism is perhaps harsh on a work that, while not omnifarious, deals with its particular focus well.

Orchestration or Replication?: Questions of Cognizance and Coercion on the Issue of Native Assistance

As such, it seems as though the Cape administration at this time maintained an incredible effort in pressuring the Xhosa. However, around this time, numerous independent and public institutions were set up with the aim of alleviating the starving masses. One of these was the King William's Town Kafir Relief Committee (henceforth labelled 'the Committee'). Peires' 'Sir George Grey versus the Kafir Relief Committee' provides an incredibly important and insightful narrative towards this topic. Simply put, the King William's Town Kafir Relief Committee was majestically shut down by Grey, with such aplomb that, while some remained horrified with the lack of adequate governmental aid for these people, many in fact supported Grey in the debate.

The Committee started out as a relief effort on the 17th of July, 1857, and immediately signalled its intention to not 'interfere with that system of support of which the government has assumed the responsibility...the primary object of the Committee will be to supplement the action of the Government.'³⁹⁴ Indeed, the purpose of its start-up, as ascribed by the Committee itself, was to simply help the Native Hospital of King William's Town, who had been overburdened with the increasing number of starving Xhosa pouring into the town.³⁹⁵

³⁹³ Price, Richard, *Making Empire*, pg 269

³⁹⁴ *King William's Town Gazette*, 18 July, 1857

³⁹⁵ Peires, 'Grey vs Kaffir Relief Committee', pg 155

Grey and Maclean were aware of the fact that the Committee provided an alternative for the thousands of Xhosa who sought sustenance, and thus threatened their plan of coercing them into forced labour. As such, Maclean concluded that the Committee would receive no assistance from the Cape government. The Committee was in fact attacked by both the Cape population and Cape officials, the latter of whom certainly goaded the former into holding particular brands of opinion.

The *Graham's Town Journal* was to claim that, because of actions carried out by institutions such as the Committee, 'every Kafir then that is saved from starvation...is just one more enemy fattened and rendered effective at our expense. We cannot hope that gratitude will quench a single spark of that enmity.'³⁹⁶ The *King William's Town Gazette* was to ask 'Is the Kaffir a fit and proper subject for the receipt of charity? The question having reference to the generality – not individuals- we answer No...Instead of stirring themselves up and endeavouring to gain a livelihood, they would remain listless, as at present...Work is to be had in plenty, if the trouble of application be not too great.'³⁹⁷ On another occasion the *Gazette* claimed that 'the healthy and strong – whether men, women and children – should obtain a living by the sweat of their brow and not from the resources of pseudo-philanthropy'³⁹⁸, while the South African Commercial Advertiser claimed that in 'benevolence, as of courage, the best part is discretion'.³⁹⁹

Even the often liberal William Porter was of a similar opinion, claiming that the Xhosa wished to 'be supported in idleness, for he has no desire to work, and we know that idleness is their besetting sin.'⁴⁰⁰ The Bishop of Grahamstown also adopted this line of reasoning, for when Sarhili came to him to ask for food in June 1857, the Bishop replied that 'The Missionary comes here to preach the word of God not to give food; it is your duty to provide food for yourselves...We are Christians, and love you, and wish to do you good; but when you bring God's judgement upon you for your sins, we do not know what is best to do for you.'⁴⁰¹ Even the characteristically liberal Fairbairn himself stated that 'The disposition of Government towards them is eminently pacific...But it is also generous and kind. The British Government has devoted 40,000 a year exclusively for their benefit... to enlighten and save

³⁹⁶ *Graham's Town Journal*, 15 August 1857

³⁹⁷ Peires, 'Grey vs Kaffir Relief Committee', pg 145

³⁹⁸ *King William's Town Gazette*, 18 July 1857

³⁹⁹ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 12 September, 1857

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid*, pg 18 August, 1857

⁴⁰¹ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 280

them from the fate that has too often, in other parts of the world, befallen the *coloured races* whether black or red, when visited by the white-faced Lords of the World (all italics in original).⁴⁰²

Grey and his administration played a heavy role in perpetuating this discourse in a propagandistic manner. In August, 1857, Grey published a letter within the *Government Gazette*, in which he stated

*'The dispersion of a considerable portion of the native tribes of British Kaffraria...render it necessary that the Governor should issue a caution to the public, and should call upon the inhabitants of this colony to aid him to the utmost of their power in carrying out a policy which has for its object the breaking up of the Kafir tribes within the British possessions in South Africa, and bringing them under the influence of civilization and Christianity...If the Kafir families who have been introduced are widely dispersed over the colony, and are thus brought under the charitable influence of individual employers, they will become a settled and valuable rural population, attached to their employers and homes, and may be trained in habits of industry, and imbued with Christian principles. If, on the other hand, they are allowed to roam about, to congregate together in kraals, removed from the presence and control of civilized men...Thefts will increase, lawlessness will arise, and the advantages which may result from the present state of the Kafir race will be turned to mischief.'*⁴⁰³

As the *Graham's Town Journal*, stated, in August, 1857, Grey himself claimed that 'If they [the Committee] do not take care they will break down the dykes and dams which confine the sea within proper limits, and will pour its dark and coloured waters in upon a country which has been rendered fertile and prosperous by Christian civilisation, and enlightened and laborious toil, the peaceful population of which, and the results of their industry and patience, will be swept away before the ruthless and pitiless flood.'⁴⁰⁴ Grey, a man of great importance whose opinions would clearly find publication, used a variety of newspapers to publish such views. These opinions found a place in the minds of the many who had long ostracised the Xhosa (an understandable progression given the history of the two groups).

⁴⁰² *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 2 September, 1856

⁴⁰³ *Government Gazette*, 28 August, 1857

⁴⁰⁴ *Graham's Town Journal*, 22 August, 1857

As Peires shows, those who supported the Committee were publically humiliated, their reputations tarnished to the point where every member of the Committee systematically resigned.⁴⁰⁵ One such member was Fitzgerald, who had long been an accomplice of George Grey's. Fitzgerald had first worked as Grey's medical adviser in New Zealand, acting as Colonial Surgeon in Wellington. He was apparently a brilliant doctor and an outstanding surgeon,⁴⁰⁶ and subsequently accompanied Grey to the Cape following the latter's appointment as Governor.

Fitzgerald, caught within the scenes of horror as superintendent of the Native Hospital, was highly distraught by the horrors he was faced with on a daily basis. He wrote to Maclean that

*'Every day King Williams Town was thronged and its inhabitants distressed at the sight of emaciated living skeletons passing from house to house. Dead bodies were picked up in different parts within and around the limits of the town, and scarcely a day passed over that Xhosa – men, women or children were not found in a dying state from starvation. My consulting room was every day surrounded with emaciated creatures craving food, having nothing to subsist on but roots and the bark of the mimosa, the smell of which appeared to issue from every part of the body, and to whom it would be a mockery to say, you must seek employment, or proceed to the Colony.'*⁴⁰⁷

His shock and stress was apparent, stating that 'The dead bodies I have seen lying on the hillsides; the scenes of misery and distress which I have witnessed; the cases I have been called upon to attend; the dysenteric and putrid atmosphere we have lived and worked in and breathed for the last few months; the truck-loads of dead bodies almost daily being wheeled away to the burial ground cannot easily be effaced from my memory.'⁴⁰⁸

The true tragedy of this movement can be understood in depictions such as these, and it is fairly easy to understand why, as a consequence of his experience, Fitzgerald supported the Committee, and indeed why institutions such as the Committee came into existence. Grey, however, was outraged by Fitzgerald's support of this institution, claiming that Fitzgerald had given him 'considerable pain...To the best of my ability I have afforded Mr Fitzgerald

⁴⁰⁵ Peires, 'Sir George Grey versus the Kaffir Relief Committee', pg 161

⁴⁰⁶ Hofmeyr, 'King William's Town and the Xhosa', pg 113

⁴⁰⁷ G. H. 8/32 Dr Fitzgerald to Maclean, 30 August 1857

⁴⁰⁸ Hofmeyr, 'King William's Town and the Xhosa', pg 155

everything he has applied for...*I would gladly have done still more*'.⁴⁰⁹ Fitzgerald fell over backwards to apologize for his indiscretion, claiming 'I respect and shall as long as I remain in the service to be ever obedient to your authority... I hope you will not forget that I am human and subject to all defects...'⁴¹⁰ This exemplifies Grey's ruthlessness when dealing with anyone who opposed his measures, or, as Currey would claim, one of Grey's 'fish [who] got into another man's pond'⁴¹¹. Needless to say, Fitzgerald quit the Committee and continued his work under Sir George Grey.

While in previous decades there had been figures such as John Philip who had provided stern and vocal support for native rights, a humanitarian voice of Philip's magnitude did not exist to challenge Grey's public influence. The Committee, for instance, was simply not interested in meeting Grey's challenge head on. One such person who publically opposed Grey was a Methodist minister from Grahamstown named John Richards, who wrote a letter to the press claiming 'We have nothing to do with the policy of emptying Kafirland into the Colony, be it right or wrong. We have a right to be charitable, and it is our duty to be so when helpless destitution is before us, and no man has a right to interfere with the exercise of that charity...'⁴¹² There were other voices that attached themselves to independent ideals of humanitarianism – ideals that stressed empathy and compassion. But while it is somewhat apparent that Grey used various newspapers to perpetuate certain beliefs, for the most part, a particular form of humanitarianism, one that, perhaps genuinely, believed in the importance of labour and industry as one instrument of spiritual and cultural upliftment, was prevalent in the Cape at this time. Earl Grey had previously expressed similar sentiments, years before George Grey's had ever set foot on Cape soil, claiming, in 1852, that 'it was right to call upon the Kaffirs to provide for the expense of their own government...*this demand upon them would act as a stimulus to industry*'⁴¹³ The belief that industrial stimulation was a means towards both spiritual and cultural upliftment was a prevalent social belief at the time, as has been espoused within a number of historical works investigating the Victorian era. While Grey can be said to have publicised this train of thought at the Cape, such reasoning was legitimized by the ideas of the time. Furthermore, Grey's allusion to the threat of

⁴⁰⁹ Peires, 'Sir George Grey versus the Kaffir Relief Committee', pgs 161-162. Italics included, highlighting the threat inherent within the ascribed past tense

⁴¹⁰ Peires, 'Sir George Grey versus the Kaffir Relief Committee', pg 162

⁴¹¹ Referring to a quote of Currey's about Grey's demand for 'implicit obedience', as shown on pg 15 of this thesis

⁴¹² *Graham's Town Journal*, 19 September, 1857

⁴¹³ Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell*, pg 202. Italics not present in original source.

oncoming 'dark and coloured waters', which could result in a 'ruthless and pitiless flood' upon the Cape colony merely built on pre-existing ideas surrounding the militant state of the Xhosa nation – such ideas, as argued, influencing Grey upon his arrival at the Cape.

But What of the Chiefs? – Legitimation and the Enforcement of Power in British Kaffraria

When at their most vulnerable, the Xhosa chiefs were systematically punished – rounded up and imprisoned upon the desolate Robben Island, while Sarhili and his people were pushed eastwards, beyond the borders of British Kaffraria. Maqoma was the first chief to be rounded up, originally for wandering into the Cape Colony without a pass, as the Kaffir Pass Act required, but eventually tried for the murder of a headman named Vusani in 1857. He was found guilty and sentenced to death, although George Grey extended his supposedly forgiving hand and reduced his sentence to twenty years incarceration on Robben Island. Patho, who had helped the British during the War of Mlanjeni, was charged with receiving stolen property, and was also sentenced to Robben Island. Likewise, Mhala and Seyolo, well known for their advocacy of the Cattle-Killing movement, were imprisoned on Robben Island for treason. Xoxo, a minor chief, was incarcerated for seven years for stealing horses. Stokwe, Fadani, Vadana, Quesha, Kenti, Delima and Mate, many of whom were minor chiefs, were also incarcerated on the island, although some others were sent to the gaols of King William's Town, Grahamstown or East London.⁴¹⁴ How were these acts carried out, how were they legitimised, and how did the public react to this?

Grey and Maclean were careful in making sure that the trials incarcerating these chiefs were seen as legitimate, especially in the eyes of British politicians, for whom the ideas of 'liberalism' and 'paternalism' were important pillars of British imperial policy. Attorney General of British Kaffraria Henry Barrington was aware of the need to justify these courts, and claimed that 'you [Maclean] and the Governor will have to defend the sentences and explain the ways and wherefores to the English Parliament which I think can only be done by showing that each case was fully considered and sentence justified by being in accordance with the spirit of English criminal law or of some special law made by His Excellency to

⁴¹⁴ Hodgson, Janet, 'Zonnebloem College and Cape Town, 1858-1870', *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol.2 (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1979), pg46

meet the difficulty of the position here'.⁴¹⁵ This latter justification, on the ground of 'the difficulty of the position here', was taken up by Grey and his associates.

Barrington himself claimed both that 'No one who has studied the Kafirs properly can persuade himself that there is any form of oath or anything else that will bind the conscience of such a one', and that Kaffraria was 'a country peopled as yet by uncivilised heathen tribes who therefore are unable to comprehend our laws and usages.' Given the necessity of putting down crime quickly and effectively, 'It seems expedient and not unjust to omit the forms usual among the civilised people of Europe in criminal cases and trials and to proceed in the simplest and most natural manner. The supreme power should be satisfied of the guilt of the prisoners and the punishment ordained should be sharp and severe.'⁴¹⁶ As such, numerous Xhosa were tried under a martial court system, a system distinct from those used in European legal structures, under which cases were often drawn-out in an effort to find 'objective' conclusions. As we shall see, these hastily constructed courts were often subject to tampering. These chiefs would be tried by magistrates of European descent, handpicked by George Grey, and, additionally, many of these trials relied on eyewitness accounts as told by Xhosa witnesses, which opened up the opportunity for intimidation and coercion in swaying these testimonies.

At the Cape, justification of such a system was an easy undertaking, as there was a common conviction that the Xhosa had 'unlawful' or 'unjust' legal structures in the years before Grey's arrival. For instance, the advice of a Mr. Warner had been sought out by Maclean in the early 1850s, in an attempt to gain a more assured understanding of Xhosa judicial institutions. To Warner, Xhosa judicial policy allowed for corruption and 'untruthfulness':

Defendant, Plaintiff, and Witness are allowed to tell as many lies as they like, In order to make the best of their case they have no judicial oaths; and there is consequently no punishment for perjury: and it is in cross-examination, and in sifting out the truth from such a mass of lies and misrepresentation, that the ability and cleverness of Kafir lawyers shine forth. Plaintiff and Defendant are allowed to state their case in their own way, and to produce any kind of evidence... In fact, any thing is justifiable which is done by the court with

⁴¹⁵ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 223

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid*

*the aim of eliciting the truth; and any thing is justifiable on the parts of the plaintiff and defendant, which may be done by them with a view to the bettering of their cases.*⁴¹⁸

Warner believed that ‘The greatest defect of Kafir law is that it is administered by the same parties who have the power to make new laws or alter the old ones, viz. the chiefs.’⁴¹⁹ And, furthermore, ‘The laws, however, connected to their *system of superstition*, as well as many of their social and domestic customs, are highly injurious, subversive of morality, and entirely inimical to Christianity and civilization’.⁴²⁰ As such a judicial system surely encouraged bias and untruthfulness, the Xhosa surely could not be tried ‘in accordance with the spirit of English criminal law’. Grey’s courts faced positive feedback from media outlets such the *Cape Argus*, which claimed that Grey had introduced magistrates ‘for the purpose of administering a law more pure and righteous than the Kafir laws to which they had been before subject’.⁴²¹

Despite this, certain figures were somewhat critical of these courts. One such individual was William Porter, Attorney General of the Cape Colony, who claimed that ‘I cannot, however, say that the evidence appears to me to be such as would satisfy a Jury composed of strangers to the country. I mean no disrespect to Members of the court when I say that, in all probability, they were perfectly satisfied before the trial began that plots had been hatching... They had no need of witnesses.’ Porter also questioned the legitimacy behind Mhala’s incarceration for treason as it was doubtful that he could be termed a British subject. Grey, however, merely brushed such criticism aside, sentencing Mhala to five years imprisonment, with provision for remission of sentence ‘if it should subsequently be thought that the Attorney-General is right and I am wrong’⁴²² – an unlikely occurrence indeed.

In fact, Chief Phatho was first found innocent of the accusation of stealing, but after Maclean ordered a retrial, it was discovered that he was guilty. Once again, Porter voiced his disapproval with this tampering, but this failed to make a difference in the broader scheme of things, because, while figures such as Porter were skeptical, much of the Cape public knew next to nothing about the proceedings within these trials. The *Cape Argus*, for instance, claimed that ‘we find that these chiefs, or many of them, one after another, were tried before

⁴¹⁸ Maclean, *Compendium of Kaffir Laws and Customs*, pg 61

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid*, pg 62

⁴²⁰ *Ibid*

⁴²¹ *Cape Argus*, 11 May, 1858

⁴²² Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 236

the Kaffrarian courts, and convicted and sentenced for certain crimes of which, it is very likely, they may have been guilty, but of which we know nothing, not even, in most cases, their crimes or their sentences'.⁴²³ They again made reference, on March 24, 1858, of Grey's 'mysterious policy'.⁴²⁴ In line with this, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* stated on 11 October 1856, 'Of Sir George Grey's government in British Caffraria we hear very little from himself and nothing from any other quarter on which any reliance can be placed. His Excellency seems to have no confidential Counsellors, or if he has, they are worthy of confidence for they let nothing out.' Despite this lack of clarity, Fairbairn still felt confident to state: 'That Sir George Grey and the British government are sincerely bent on civilizing and saving our barbarous neighbors, we have abundant proof.'⁴²⁵ For the most part, these trials were kept under wraps so as to not open them up to public scrutiny. Later, the *Cape Argus* was given transcripts of these testimonials, which, of course, seemed to suggest guilt on the part of the chiefs. Upon seeing the testimonials used as evidence against these chiefs, the *Argus* naturally agreed: 'From evidence which has recently been obtained, there can now be no doubt that the principal Kafir chiefs had formed a plot for involving the country in war'.⁴²⁶

This was drastically different to earlier statements, such as that made by Fairbairn in his *South African Commercial Advertiser*, claiming: 'A strange delusion unquestionably prevailed, but it does not appear that war, or an attack on the colony, formed any definite portion of the "Prophet's mission".'⁴²⁷ He argued that 'If they were a civilized race, such a confederacy would be highly probable. The American Colonies did so in the last century against the English, and in the present century the Europeans against the French. But who ... will admit for a moment that their inherent difficulties could be overcome by mere barbarians?'⁴²⁸ But this particular opinion was voiced in in October 1856, at a time when Grey was still expressing a degree of ambiguity as to the reasons for the Cattle-Killing movement.

It was in the *Government Gazette* that a number of sketchy testaments, given by numerous prophets themselves, were printed for public consumption. One of these testaments was from

⁴²³ *Cape Argus*, 11 May, 1858

⁴²⁴ *Ibid*, 24 March, 1858

⁴²⁵ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 11 October, 1856

⁴²⁶ *Cape Argus*, 30 December, 1857

⁴²⁷ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 2 September, 1856

⁴²⁸ *Ibid*, 11 October, 1856

the prophet Nonkosi. In this particular account, Nonkosi talks of the first instance in which she saw ancestors telling her of the prophecy. She claimed, apparently, to have been ‘playing at a *vley* near the Ipongo, and bathing, when a man, who called himself Umlanjeni, showed himself out of the water... the next day I went to see him again.’ She then claimed that ‘one day, without knowing that I had moved from where I was standing, at the side of the *vley*, I found myself in this country of which Umlanjeni spoke to me [a country from underneath the *vley*]... In leaving this place, I ascended a particular hole, and was carried by Umlanjeni. When I reached the top, I found that water was spread all over this place... [Umlanjeni] said it was not water, but a sort of door belonging to *their* country.’ Great effort was made by Cape authorities to represent the improbability and deceitful nature of this testimony. To this latter claim of Nonkosi’s, Maclean made a side note in which he claimed that, upon telling this part of the story, Nonkosi ‘generally spoke quietly and collectedly, without much readiness; pausing, as a Kafir does, before replying, and with head and eyes averted and downcast.’

Nonkosi also stated that she had been told by ‘Kivitchi, son of Tshatshvi, of Umhala’s tribe ... to tell the people all I have said regarding my entering the hole... He told me to tell the people I had seen the chiefs I have named come out of the water; and to say that Hlambi was a short broad-faced man, that Undushane had a protruding forehead ... and then all the chiefs would give me money, and take great care of me... The chiefs Umhala, Namba, and Sandilli gave me each a shilling at different times.’⁴²⁹

After this, it was ordered that Kivitchi [Kwitshi] be apprehended. When confronted upon his alleged role in this plot, Kwitshi apparently claimed: ‘Oh yes; my chief Umhala tried very hard to get me to take his messages to and from Umpongo. I went a few times. His messages to Nonkosi were, that she was to talk away, the sharper the better.’ He also apparently told Gawler that ‘the beginning of all this nonsense was a message from Kreli to Umhala... The message was, “Kill your cattle, Umhala, we’ll go and fight for the English cattle.”’

Maclean then, in turn, cross-examined this individual, who then admitted that ‘It was not known by all the people that Umhala had put me up to tell Nonkosi all she said... I was to

⁴²⁹ *Cape of Good Hope. Papers Indicating the Nature of the Plans Formed by the Kafir Chiefs, Which Led to the Late Destruction of Cattle and Property Among the Native Tribes; As Also a Return of the Number of Persons Who Have Disappeared from British Kaffraria, in Consequence of the Proceedings*, (Cape Town: S.I., 1857), [A] Fort Murray, 23rd October, 1857

personify the various chiefs, and imitate the bellowing of cattle. I went to the *vley* as Umhala desired me. I concealed myself at the edge of the *vley* among the rushes, and held a pair of horns in my hands, lifting them sufficiently high to allow Nonkosi to see them... I also dived, appearing out of the water at different places, and calling out “We are rising”, “We are rising”. “We are the people who died.” Whenever I was alone, I could not refrain from laughing when I thought of the deceptions I practice at the *vley*, and I often roared out “*Are the Kafirs such fools to be thus deceived?*”⁴³⁰

Of course, this all seems incredibly unlikely, and given Grey’s ruthless nature, such translations can simply not be taken at face value. One should perhaps keep in mind that individuals such as Kwitshi had been captured by Gawler, who, as we are about to see, was a merciless, aggressive individual, and there remains the possibility that he had influenced such accounts. Nonetheless, the important point here is that these testimonies were thrown to the public.

While Grey and his administration focused on public perception, a process was undertaken to subjugate the system of chieftainship. Accordingly, the children and grandchildren of these chiefs were sent to Cape Town and England to receive a Eurocentric education. The grandchildren of Maqoma and the children of Umhala, Xoxo and Sandile were just some who were sent to be ‘enlightened’ within the confines of British control. At first, these descendants were brought to Bishop Gray’s house, a decision that had been unbeknownst to the Bishop until the arrival of these children, which led to the fallout between George Grey and the Bishop, as mentioned earlier.⁴³¹ These children were then sent to Zonnebloem College, established in 1858, previously a wine estate on the outskirts of Cape Town centre. Under this rubric, George Maqoma, the grandson of the Xhosa chief Maqoma, who had been a constant thorn in the side of Cape authorities over the decades, was sent to faraway Warwickshire to be privately tutored.⁴³⁴

Just as Grey passed laws aimed at stopping ‘Xhosa theft’, he also attempted to ‘tighten the screws’ on the chiefs themselves, by introducing a regulation whereby the chiefs ‘would continue to receive their salaries as before, but the money previously allocated to their councillors was to be taken for the pay of “headmen” directly appointed by the

⁴³⁰ *Cape of Good Hope: Papers Indicating the Nature of the Plans Formed by the Kafir Chiefs*, [B] Gawler to Maclean, 12 November, 1857

⁴³¹ As mentioned on pgs 14-15 of this thesis

⁴³⁴ Hodgson, Janet, ‘Zonnebloem College and Cape Town, 1858-1870’, pg 55

government.⁴³⁵ Funds which were previously allocated to influencing councillors were now paid directly into the organization of an unpaid police force in each district in an effort to maintain strict control over the Xhosa. These police forces were a sanctuary for unbelievers, who flocked to join their numbers in an effort to keep safe, bringing into being a cheap, volunteer-based method of population control. These police groups were led by figures such as Gawler,⁴³⁶ a ruthless, villainous man. According to Peires, Gawler was known as a great believer in the sjambok, and he 'flogged so freely that [his police] were known by their backs'.⁴³⁷ Even Brownlee regretted the brutality with which many Xhosa were treated by Gawler, claiming in retrospect in 1867 that 'I freely admit that during the disorders and excitement attending the cattle-killing we did many things which would not be justifiable under ordinary circumstances and which if judged by the standard of peaceable times would be proved faulty and antagonistic to law'.⁴³⁸ Vigne is also known to have complained about the acts of men such as Gawler, writing to Maclean that 'If you approve of all these acts which are in my opinion defeating justice and degrading the office of magistrate into one I have no wish to fulfil the duties of, I trust you will inform me. Things are daily happening that I neither have conscience nor inclinations for.'⁴³⁹

In addition, a man by the name of Currie was sent with a force into British Kaffraria to expel Sarhili, or, at least, to 'drive him so far away that he would never be heard of again'.⁴⁴⁰ Once again, there is much evidence that suggests that Currie was anything but humane. During his military campaign against Sarhili, Currie himself claimed that 'The Tambookies are getting awfully frightened of us up here, and you have only to leave me alone with one hand and back me up with the other... half measures are of no use, and leniency not understood by savages... in the breaking of Fadana's Confederacy, has expired the last ray of Kaffir hope'.⁴⁴¹ On another occasion, writing to Southey, he claimed that 'The success I have had is mainly owing to you in giving me such a wide margin of orders... Now I hope if the Governor finds fault with me for going too far, you must soften it down, but I agree with you

⁴³⁵ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 111

⁴³⁶ John Gawler stands as a fascinating personality in this period. John Gawler was the son of George Gawler, the man who George Grey succeeded as Governor of South Australia in 1841, following an intense public quarrel between the two. For whatever reason, Grey seemed to favour John Gawler's son, who had found himself within the Cape Colony, and used him to apply vast pressure on the Xhosa peoples with blatant belligerence akin to, if not surpassing, that of Harry Smith.

⁴³⁷ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 211

⁴³⁸ *Ibid*, pg 212

⁴³⁹ BK, Vigne to Maclean, 21 January, 1858, as correctly cited by Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 213

⁴⁴⁰ GH 23/27, Grey to Currie, 11 February, 1858

⁴⁴¹ LG 182, Currie to Southey, 7 September, 1857

that silence gives consent... I am itching to go at Kreli.'⁴⁴² Grey subsequently expressed his admiration for Currie's work, representing his operations to the Home Government as a 'very important Military operation against a dangerous enemy',⁴⁴³ and Currie was, in fact, knighted.⁴⁴⁴

The *Government Gazette* published various pieces of correspondence from Currie. These running commentaries stood as 'heroic tales', where individuals, distanced from the brutal killings, could feel involved in the process of hunting down and capturing chiefs. These were not simply informative correspondences, but were filled with degrees of action and excitement. Such narratives were told from the point of view of Currie himself, creating a subjective experience and enhancing emotional involvement. For instance, whilst telling of the capture of 'the robber chief' Fadana and the ejection of 'all the Gcaleka squatters within the colonial boundary', Currie wrote of the time when he and his troops 'were now within 30 miles of the supposed hiding place of Fedana... it became necessary for fear of giving an alarm for so large a force to send forward a small party with a view of capturing him quietly. For this service, Inspector Griffith volunteered.'⁴⁴⁵ Told from a subjective perspective, Griffith becomes a symbol of bravery – perhaps the hero in this affair. Such installments were commonly included in the *Government Gazettes*, romanticising the entire ordeal.

This is not to argue that all subscribed to Grey's justifications. Once again, there were individuals, close to the action, who were appalled by the scenarios taking place there. John Fairbairn's son, James Alexander Fairbairn, wrote to his father that he had 'seen several of the Queens Town Burghers who were on this expedition – and the accounts they give, and, I am sorry to say, gloat over, are enough to make one's blood run cold... The young farmers who were called out to join this expedition gloat over the massacres they have taken part in... they shot men as they would bucks... Sir George Grey has cleared the country and added prestige to our name. How? By attacking men unarmed and unprepared and shooting them down whether they resisted or not.'⁴⁴⁶ There was even a member of Parliament, a Dr. Tancred, who argued that Grey's 'use of the police to expel Sarhili and suppress disputes in Kaffraria had been expansionist, aggressive and had abused colonial resources', asserting that

⁴⁴² Ibid, 23 September, 1857

⁴⁴³ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pgs 388-389

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid, pg 385

⁴⁴⁵ *Government Gazette*, 2 October, 1857

⁴⁴⁶ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 286

the British had 'no right' to seize 'kafir' land.⁴⁴⁷ However, such voices were far fewer than one would expect, given the nature of such events.

⁴⁴⁷ Bender, Jill, 'Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion', pgs 13-14

*Cape Society in the 1850s – The Impact of Representative Government,
‘Colonial Victory’ in the Cattle Killing, and George Grey upon Cape Identity*

As we have seen in earlier portions of this thesis, the Cape governors of the 1840s and 50s (figures such as Pottinger, Smith and Cathcart) faced constant public criticism during their tenures of rule. It was in New Zealand in the late 1840s and early 1850s that George Grey, too, was the subject of heated public backlash for governing in a style which many characterized as overly authoritarian and power-hungry. In the Cape, while Smith faced public fiascos such as the Convict Crisis, Cathcart later felt urged to write to his wife that she ‘must not mind what they say in newspapers or Parliament about me. The lies of a malignant press here find their way into the papers at home.’⁴⁴⁸

During his tenure at the Cape, however, George Grey was revered by a large portion of the Cape community. Indeed, as mentioned, Barbarina Grey, the stepsister of Earl Grey who lived in Cape Town, voiced her opinion that she didn’t ‘think Sir George grows upon one *except in a public point of view*’.⁴⁴⁹ Although Barbarina Grey clearly did not like the man, she clearly could not question his popularity. Newspapers also seemed to offer their respects to the Governor, who was lauded as a man of academic and intellectual accomplishment, in sharp contrast to the militaristic governors who preceded him. On 2 October 1860, amidst public rumours that the Governor of Mauritius was to replace Grey as Governor of the Cape, the *Cape Argus* made clear its admiration for the man, despite its attempt to maintain its professional and objective demeanour, claiming ‘It may be suggested that the above arrangements dispose of our present Governor in a particularly cool fashion. But he is not a man to be shelved... without intending the language of compliment, we may remark upon his singular tenacity of purpose, his willingness to bide his time, his reticence, and mingled candour with profound reserve... some time must elapse before he leaves us.’⁴⁵⁰

The Cape was itself undergoing a rapid social transformation within the period – what has been termed by some as a process of ‘Anglicisation’. The colonial drive for greater representation of British ‘virtues’ and cultural totems within the Cape in this era is an idea

⁴⁴⁸ Cathcart, *Correspondence of Lieutenant General, the Hon. Sir George Cathcart*, pg 347

⁴⁴⁹ Harrington, *My Dear Maria*, pg 10. Emphasis added

⁴⁵⁰ *Cape Argus*, 2 October, 1860

that has a fairly prevalent historiographical presence. Edna Bradlow, in her ‘The Culture of a Colonial Elite: The Cape of Good Hope in the 1850s’⁴⁵¹, argues that the Cape, while aligning itself to ‘British’ virtues and cultural precedence, simultaneously had to deal with the ‘native question’, which forcibly distinguished Cape society from its British counterpart. Worden, Bickford-Smith and Van Heyningen, in their *Cape Town: The Making of a City*⁴⁵², argue that ‘By the middle of the century, Cape Town had become an identifiably British colonial city’,⁴⁵³ in a chapter rather tellingly entitled ‘The British Town: Cape Town 1840-1870’. Du Toit and Giliomee also claim that ‘The earlier part of the nineteenth century can be described in terms of the rise of British hegemony in colonial society.’⁴⁵⁴ In truth, this process had been ongoing for decades – opera had made its debut in Cape Town in 1831,⁴⁵⁵ theatres were built throughout the 1840s, and a host of plays, periodicals and civil improvements were all evident in the Cape in these preceding decades.

While arguments promulgating a trend of ‘Anglicisation’ are by no accounts new, there is room to explore George Grey’s impact on Cape society within this interesting period. The impact of representative governance, and the placement of blame and responsibility for what the public deemed to be civil insufficiencies will also be examined, for, as mentioned, Grey’s public image existed on a different plane to that of Harry Smith or George Cathcart, both of whom were continually criticized as symbols of repression, in some sense impeding a general civilizing process,⁴⁵⁶ withholding the degree to which ‘freedom’ and ‘representation’ were available to European colonists. Here, too, the discourse of colonial ‘victory’ over Xhosa resistance following the catastrophic Cattle-Killing should receive more examination, as it undoubtedly contributed to Cape identity in this time, impacting notions of Cape civility and security. These aspects, although at times mentioned, are perhaps undervalued for their impact on Cape society, and require a more direct analysis. One of course generalises when speaking about the opinions of ‘the Cape population’, but this cannot be avoided. Here I explicitly acknowledge that this was an identity primarily connected to Cape whites of

⁴⁵¹ Bradlow, Edna, *The Culture of a Colonial Elite: The Cape of Good Hope in the 1850s*, *Victorian Studies*, 29, no. 3 (Spring 1986)

⁴⁵² Worden, Nigel., van Heyningen, Elizabeth., Bickford-Smith, Vivian., *Cape Town: The Making of a City*, (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers: 1998)

⁴⁵³ *Ibid*, pg. 153

⁴⁵⁴ du Toit, A., and, Giliomee, H., *Afrikaner Political Thought: Analysis and Documents*, vol.1, 1780-1850 (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 1983), pgs 24-25

⁴⁵⁵ Laidler, Percy Ward, *The Growth and Government of Cape Town*, (Cape Town: Unie-Volkspers, 1939), pg 296

⁴⁵⁶ Here I would argue that, although the term ‘civilising’ refers almost exclusively to the act of ‘civilising’ native peoples, this term, as an abstract, intangible point of reference, can also be applied to the act of ‘civilising’ colonial states such as the Cape, through an effort to align itself with the ideal of ‘civility’.

European descent – unfortunately records of Africans and significant non-European ideas and identities are lacking representation in written form, or, if existent, are beyond my linguistic capabilities. This dissertation will also focus primarily on Cape Town society, as Grey’s home, and as the supposed ‘central hub’ of cultural transformation in the Cape in this period, although reference will be made of the eastern districts, which faced similar social circumstances, as will be explained.

The Cape Mindscape – Ideas of Civility and Culpability

As Bradlow suggests, those at the Cape faced a fierce question of identity at this time, sitting on the ambiguous and complicated brink between civility and backwardness. It was a colony that had, in the previous decade or so, witnessed much growth in its infrastructure, and was currently undergoing great changes in regards to the security of its frontier. While the building of roads and the Cattle-Killing had massive impacts, the Cape was still fairly backward in a number of ways, and it still bore the hallmarks of a ‘wild’, ‘unsophisticated’ and ‘uncultured’ society. There was a distinct lack of important technologies such as railways, and, until recently, its very figures of state had themselves been purely military men, unable to represent degrees of elegance or civility associated with sophistication and culture.

The idea that Cape Europeans still had to share the land with a number of native races also associated the Cape with a degree of backwardness in the eyes of many elite British people,⁴⁵⁷ requiring colonials to fight against certain negative stereotypes when attempting to place themselves within the civilized world. An article appearing in the *Cape Argus* on 30 December 1857 complained about the way in which British media represented Cape Town, believing that ‘Whenever anything has appeared of the Cape [in Britain], it has generally been accompanied with something about Kafirs and Kafirland, or a wild beast hunt in the bush... Is there an imported colonist who had any fair idea of the Cape of Good Hope before he was brought within the range of Table Mountain? ... In the first place, it is a much larger and finer city that they generality expect when they leave home.’⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁷ Whilst many would argue that men of coloured skin could vote according to the Cape franchise, to state that Xhosa natives and other frontier cultures were accepted into Cape culture as equals would surely be erroneous.

⁴⁵⁸ *Cape Argus*, 30 December, 1857,

These dichotomies, between civil and savage, clean and dirty, were rife within a colony that attempted to explain its existence in reference to an idealized sense of civility that held a strong sway in British imperial culture. The distance of the Cape from Europe accentuated this sense of difference. In February 1855 Fairbairn complained about the fact that ‘From all parts of the United States and North America, intelligence now reaches England in the course of ten or twelve days; from all the capital cities and chief commercial towns of Europe, in as many minutes or hours. And this commercial intelligence was for a short time conveyed to the Cape, in thirty or thirty-five days... The latest date, indeed, of our regular files of newspapers is the 25th of November, *eighty-nine* days ago... It has been well observed that not only the liberties but the industrial arts of England and America, are kept alive and invigorated by *daily doses of intelligence*.’⁴⁵⁹

And, indeed, in the eyes of those who linked themselves solidly with the British upper classes, the city of Cape Town was unprepossessing. Figures such as Barbarina Grey, Sophy Gray⁴⁶⁰ and John Blades Currey provide interesting accounts from which one can understand the representations made of Cape Town through the lens of ‘high society’. Barbarina Grey thought ‘Cape Town is an ugly, unpicturesque, dirty town, with wide streets and flat-topped houses’,⁴⁶¹ whilst she lamented the way in which ‘the red dust flies in clouds & chokes one’.⁴⁶² In June 1858, upon her visit to Paarl, which was ‘looking prosperous & happy & full of character’, she claimed bitterly that ‘this is the first time I have felt as if I saw a real colony. Cape Town is such a mongrel place’.⁴⁶³ It was not just the outlay of the town, but the class of people within it that failed to meet Barbarina Grey’s expectations. ‘The want of petticoats is a great difficulty,’ she remarked, ‘& it is also a pity that there is no noticeable society for the young men, those whom we scrape together for dancing being from a very secondary class as to manners & education.’⁴⁶⁴ Currey, too, had similar sentiments, claiming, upon his arrival at the Cape in the early 1850, ‘Cape Town was unanimously voted to be unbearably hot and dusty... In front of it, in the middle of Heeren-gracht or Gentlemen’s Walk, were the remains of an old canal which for producing rats, mosquitoes and evil smells would be hard to beat... The meat was tough; the fish as a rule like boiled blanket; the poultry of the stringy kind found in hot countries; the wines of the country had a vile earthy

⁴⁵⁹ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 22 February, 1855. Italics present in original text

⁴⁶⁰ The former the stepsister of Earl Grey, the latter married to Bishop Gray,

⁴⁶¹ Harrington, *My Dear Maria*, pg 1

⁴⁶² *Ibid* pg 11

⁴⁶³ *Ibid* pg 24

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid* pg 21

taste; and there was little or no fruit. Decidedly we had made a mistake and the sooner we went back the better. Carry Jellyby was right: Africa was a beast.⁴⁶⁵

Like Barbarina Grey, Currey preferred the rural parts of the Cape – he ‘was very favourably impressed with the aspect of farming at the Cape thus presented to me. The lowing herds and beating flocks ... the respectful deference of the coloured servants ... the air of repose, the large cool houses and the plain though excellent fare all seemed to point to the quiet useful life far from the madding crowd that the emigrant might pass in South Africa.’⁴⁶⁶ He also had high praise for Outeniqualand, ‘and the change from the arid, stony, bush-covered ground to green rolling plains running from forest-clad mountains to the sea was delightful to English eyes’. The town of George, in particular, impressed Currey as ‘quite ideal’ – although he did complain about bad weather, and made reference to ‘maladies’, ‘bush-ticks’, ‘rust’, ‘smut’ and the ‘sour veld’ as having major effects on the enterprise of farming.⁴⁶⁷ Although praise for the ‘wild’ or rural aspects of the Cape on the one hand appear as notes of flattery, statements such as these promulgated the idea that Cape Town as wild and unrefined – perhaps exotic.

Whilst Barbarina Grey was ‘disappointed in Cape Town; there are no costumes, no brightness of colour in dress, though plenty of variety of shade in complexion’, others, such as William Ross King, soldier at the Cape, stated that his immediate observation upon arrival at the Cape was that of ‘picturesque groups of swarthy Malays in huge beehive-shaped hats or red and yellow bandanas’.⁴⁶⁸ Thus, while it is difficult to empirically scrutinize such representations, they reveal the amount to which certain depictions were defined by expectancy and comparison with the ideal of sophistication. Sophistication and civility echoed the desire to climb to idealised British standards, and public angst, complaints and disapproval echoed the desire to aspire to this idealised benchmark. Barbarina Grey complained about the fact that the Cape ‘is not foreign enough to have much character of its own, nor civilized enough for society & not savage enough to furnish manners & customs of the natives’.⁴⁶⁹ While many saw themselves as British, they were confronted with a different environment, and reality, to that of Britain. In a sense, the Cape population set itself an impossible task in attempting to mimic these idealised conditions.

⁴⁶⁵ Currey, John Blades, *John Blades Currey*, pgs 34-35

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid*, pg 37

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pg 39

⁴⁶⁸ King, 5

⁴⁶⁹ Harrington, *My Dear Maria*, pg 22

Complaints about the ‘uncivil’ or ‘dirty’ aspects of Cape Town were not limited to aristocrats, however. Indeed, there were many who thought that Cape Town was incredibly unsanitary. The *Cape Argus* once again offered a comparison between Cape Town and Europe, claiming ‘Depravity and disease abound in as great a degree as in the lowest localities in the largest cities in Europe.’⁴⁷⁰ Additionally, allegations mounted of bad smells, and complaints about the wretched state of the streets and filthy gutters were frequent. Stray dogs foraged through the town, 300 of them killed in October of 1858 alone.⁴⁷¹ In 1856, ‘savage and other dogs barked, howled and attacked at night on the Green Point common... the superintendent of police ... destroyed them with firearms’.⁴⁷² Again, the argument here is not that the 1850s stood out in this regard. Indeed, in 1836, it was noted that ‘Dogs innumerable roamed at large’, although this particular issue evoked growing alarm in the 1850s.

The Municipality was generally blamed for the ‘dirty’ appearance of Cape Town, and here it would be useful to mention how the granting of representative government in 1853 influenced concepts of civil responsibility. Before the introduction of representative government, official figures such as John Montagu had been put to the block for the civil inadequacies that seemingly plagued the Cape. However, after its implementation, representative government provided the Cape population with other symbols of responsibility against which to voice their frustration.

Both Warren and Kirk⁴⁷³ have written of an apparent class struggle taking place in the late 1840s and early 1850s between the ‘wardmasters’, large property-owning individuals given positions of power in the Montagu-run Legislative Council, and the Municipality, comprised typically of upcoming middle class citizens. In short, Municipal figures often derided the Legislative Council as an autocratic and unrepresentative institution in order to legitimise their representations of unfair administration at the Cape, within a broader push for representative governance. Digby Warren attempts to delineate the lines between these two groups, arguing that both shared similar interests, thus illuminating the political agenda inherent within the struggle between these two groups in the 1840s.

⁴⁷⁰ *Cape Argus*, 14 Jan, 1857

⁴⁷¹ Worden, Nigel. etc., *Cape Town*, pg 179

⁴⁷² *Government Gazette*, 21 July, 1856

⁴⁷³ Kirk, T. E., ‘Self-Government and Self-Defence in South Africa: the Inter-Relations Between British and Cape Politics, 1846-1854’, (D. Phil, Oxford University, 1972) and Warren, Digby, ‘Merchants, Commissioners and Wardmasters: Municipal Politics in Cape Town, 1840-1854’ (MA, UCT, 1986)

While Municipal figures were often seen as vanguard figures within the push for representative governance, in the mid-1850s, the tables had turned, and blame for unsatisfactory conditions within Cape Town were now laid at their feet. ‘It is high time’, the *Argus* preached, ‘the municipal squabbings in Cape Town were put an end to. There is little hope that the sanitary conditions of this city will ever be improved whilst this machinery is equipped. The commissioners and wardmasters play at cross purposes with each other.’⁴⁷⁴

In July of that same year the *Argus* again mentioned a correspondent by the name of ‘Anglicus’, ‘who complains of a disgraceful state of Cape Town streets’. The *Argus* seemed to share this view, claiming that ‘Months ago, before the meeting of Parliament, we directed our attention to the deplorable condition of the city, and predicted what the consequences would be if the ratepayers did not go to the Legislature for some better form of city government than that which the Municipal Ordinance provides... If something is not done soon to increase the sewerage, and to improve the habitations of the lower classes, we shall suffer greatly from contagious diseases.’⁴⁷⁵ It seems as though the Municipality now took on the role of an unrepresentative, negligent centre of power, an image that they had, in fact, rebelled against just a few short years before. With the struggle for representative governance now concluded, blame for perceived civil insufficiencies had shifted, and new symbols of mismanagement had been created, although the placement of blame was, admittedly, at times vague. In March, 1857, the *Argus* wanted to know ‘*Who is responsible for the present disgraceful state of the main line to Stellenbosch?*’⁴⁷⁶ But, in the late 1840s or early 1850s, the blame would be placed squarely and unambiguously on the shoulders of a figure such as Montagu.

As we shall see shortly, George Grey, in addition to the building of roads, promoted the construction of breakwaters and railways, and, as in previous periods, such projects, primarily based in the western portions of the Colony, provoked the still bitter rivalry between the eastern and western interests. Within this period, and in the decades preceding, the eastern portions of the Cape also attempted to accord to a sense of ‘Europeanness’. As Alan Lester has shown, ‘The Graham’s Town elite now strove to catch up with Cape Town’s “progress”, founding a botanical garden as evidence of their scientific prowess in 1850, establishing St Andrew’s College in the mould of a British public school in 1855, and shortly thereafter

⁴⁷⁴ *Cape Argus*, 7 January 1857

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 8 July, 1857

⁴⁷⁶ *Cape Argus*, 4 March, 1857

creating the Albany Museum, a Literary, Scientific and Medical Society, and a new magazine, the *Eastern Province Monthly Magazine*. Such institutions enabled colonists to achieve what the Eastern Cape settlers had been striving for since the 1820s: a demonstration ‘of European civilization in Africa as well as of the importance of Africa to the civilized world’.⁴⁷⁷

When, under Grey’s governance, the Colony’s first railway, a 45-mile work from Cape Town to Wellington, was proposed to the Legislative Council, all eastern members of the Council opposed the measure, resigning as a body when they were outvoted by the western portion of the Council. The episode created mass protestations, meetings, and, of course, appeals for separation. Clearly then, issues relating to the placement of roads, and the jealousies that were evoked by such issues, continued to excite controversy throughout the colony.

Interestingly, however, such hostility was not directed at Grey or any perceived mismanagement on the part of the governor, but rather to the ‘west’ in general. On 30 October 1860, a letter from a man named ‘Omega’ made reference to the unfairness of road construction and to the proposed construction of breakwater in Cape Town, claiming ‘your [Cape Town’s] iniquity culminates in that breakwater, the first stone of which has been lately laid by a scion of Royalty. This is your crowning sin. I fear you are beyond redemption. I have several times asserted that this work is for no other purpose than to bring about, if possible, the ruin of Port Elizabeth, though in what way this end is to accomplished I confess is not patent to me... The black clouds are gathering, and though they may hang threateningly for a while upon the declivities of the mountains, if ye don’t before long have such a storm descend upon your devoted heads as ye have not before experienced, I am no prophet.’ While perhaps not all were as extreme as this individual, many called for improvements in British Kaffraria and elsewhere in the east. However, despite the fact that George Grey did involve himself in civil projects, criticism of George Grey for this inequality was little compared to that Montagu received.

Prince Alfred, Sandile, and the Consolidation of Victory

Despite the availability of coloured workers, many middle-class and upper-class white families opted for European servants. In 1860 Lady Gordon Duff noted that ‘emigrant ships

⁴⁷⁷ Lester, Alan, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain*, (London: Routledge, 2001), pg 179

are cleared off in three days and every ragged Irish girl in place somewhere'.⁴⁷⁸ The employment of whites as domestic workers in the city of Cape Town once again indicates a social sphere in which English work environments were echoed. On 30 January 1858, the *Cape Argus* stated that 'Some of the English papers lately observed that, because there were so many Kafirs brought into the colony there would be no room for English immigrants. The introduction of Kafirs does not diminish the demand for English servants in the least degree. Thousands would be absorbed in a month.'⁴⁷⁹ It thus seems that many Europeans at the Cape were in fact somewhat worried that the influx of new black labourers would disinherit the immigration of white labourers.

The 'black question' was obviously one that had a huge influence in defining the place that the Cape held in accordance with European norms. Grey's role in diminishing Xhosa resistance had a massive influence on the image of the Cape. The colony, and Cape Town in particular, could now project itself as a truly civilised location. Shortly after the Cattle-Killing, in 1858, William Irons, Secretary of the Cape Town Mechanics Institute, published a work entitled *Settler's Guide to the Cape of Good Hope*. Here Irons illuminated the link between civility and the demise of Xhosa resistance when contesting the 'vague notion' that the Cape attracted only 'foolhardy men' undeterred at being 'exposed to all the rude hazards of a frontier life'. On the contrary, he asserted, recent advances in British Kaffraria had secured 'order' on the frontier, while Grey's novel system of administration was introducing 'civilisation' more effectively than ever before.⁴⁸⁰

For many, the incarceration of the Xhosa chiefs stood as a defining moment, and Grey himself made an effort to nurture this sense of 'victory'. The landing of Maqoma, amongst other chiefs in Cape Town upon the *Celt* on 19 December 1857 was met with massive publicity within the Cape's media, and 'Newsmen appear to have had no problem in gaining access to the chiefs and visited them during their confinement in [Cape Town] prison',⁴⁸¹ before they were eventually sent off to Robben Island. There were numerous media depictions of the chiefs. One reporter found his features unremarkable and comparable 'with any black in the coolie gangs of Cape Town', whilst another thought them to be strongly indicative of subtlety and cunning. It was also noted that with the exception of the chief's

⁴⁷⁸ Worden etc, *Cape Town*, pg 205

⁴⁷⁹ *Cape Argus*, 30 Jan, 1858

⁴⁸⁰ Lester, *Imperial Networks*, pg 187

⁴⁸¹ Hodgson, 'Zonnebloem College and Cape Town, 1858-1870', pg 49

singularly small fingers and well-formed hands there was nothing to indicate that he was of ‘gentle’ or royal blood.⁴⁸² Vadana was represented as ‘a repulsive-looking villain – a great, gaunt animal, with a cast of countenance unlike anything we have ever seen’, while Quesha was said to have ‘very little intelligence in his features’.⁴⁸³ These representations, attempting to demarcate the character of the Xhosa chiefs, in essence provided a sense of power, knowledge and with it control over these previously alien outsiders. Thus, in a way, a clear line of dominance had thus been drawn, consolidating a sense of superiority.

This sense of victory was further amalgamated with the arrival of the sixteen-year-old Prince Alfred upon the shores of the Cape. It was Grey himself who recommended that Alfred visit the Cape, and the young prince arrived upon the extravagant *Euryalas* in 1860.⁴⁸⁴ Alfred’s visit was all the rage at the Cape, and news relating to his visit took up a huge amount of space in local newspapers. Utilising the public’s enthrallment with the young prince’s visit, Darnell and Murray, a company on Adderley Street, advertised its sales of full-length portraits of the prince in the pages of the *Argus*.⁴⁸⁵ Interestingly, it seems as though many at the Cape were upset by the fact that Prince Alfred’s visit to the Cape was overshadowed in British newspapers by the Prince of Wales’ visit to Canada and the United States, although, as the *Cape Argus* claimed, the Cape was ‘a younger colony receiving a younger son’, so ‘we can perhaps afford to wait our turn’.⁴⁸⁶

The *Argus* wrote of ‘grand balls’ in the country districts, as well as the numerous souvenirs the prince left behind, such as ‘a very handsome Bible and Prayer Book’ for the Bishop of Graham’s Town, as well as ‘a superb copy of a Knight’s Pictorial History of England’, for the Literary Society of Port Elizabeth.⁴⁸⁷ It was Prince Alfred who opened the South African Library on 18 Sept 1860 – the importance of this institution and others like it shall be discussed shortly.

Grey was meticulous in his attempt to link the Prince’s visit with a process of intellectual refinement at the Cape. At the ceremony celebrating the building of this Library, Grey’s

⁴⁸² *Ibid*, pg 47

⁴⁸³ *Ibid*, pg 48

⁴⁸⁴ The *Euryalas* apparently had 540 men and mounted 60 guns. Hodgson 57

⁴⁸⁵ *Cape Argus*, 18 October, 1860

⁴⁸⁶ *Cape Argus*, 20 November, 1860

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid*

attempt to connect a broader civilising process, and with it the subjugation of the Xhosa, with the prince's visit is glaringly apparent within his speech. Here he stated:

*That as the first of the Royal Family who bore the name of Alfred drove back wandering hordes, aided their civilization, and gave peace to England, and established a university, and transmitted a lasting, permanent impulse to science and learning, so the second of the Royal Family who has that honoured name may, by what he has done in South Africa, have most materially and lastingly aided in the spread of civilization, Christianity, and learning throughout this continent.*⁴⁸⁸

While the procession accompanying Prince Alfred toured the eastern portions of the colony, Sandile rode along. Before Grey and Alfred returned to Cape Town, Sandile was asked to join them on the return voyage upon the *Euryalas*. Sandile, understandably nervous, accepted on condition that Brownlee and Tiya Soga were part of the procession.⁴⁸⁹ As we have seen, during the Cattle-Killing Grey and his administration saw Sandile as an easy, perhaps weak, target – one prone to buckling under colonial pressure. Just as Grey's administration had targeted Sandile in an attempt to dislocate Xhosa identity during the Cattle-Killing, Sandile's perceived tendency to buckle and acquiesce to demands was now, once again, used to consolidate a strengthened European identity.

Once aboard the *Euryalas* proceeding back to Cape Town, Sandile seemed quick to praise the British, perhaps understandably given his circumstances, claiming 'With dread we came on board; and in trouble have we witnessed the dangers of the great waters, but through your skill have we passed through this tribulation. We have seen what our ancestors heard not of. Now we have grown old and learnt wisdom. The might of England has been fully illustrated to us, and now we behold our madness in taking up arms to resist the authority of our mighty and gracious Sovereign.' Sandile was further impressed with the fact that Prince Albert was made to work the decks, stating 'their young Prince endures hardships and sufferings in order that they may be wise... when we behold these things, we see why the English are a great and mighty nation'.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁸ Grey's speech in *Inauguration of the New Buildings erected for the South African Public Library and Museum by H.R.H. Prince Alfred, 18th September, 1860* (Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1860) pg 8

⁴⁸⁹ Sandile's children, a son and a daughter, were also currently at Zonnebloem College

⁴⁹⁰ Hodgson, 'Zonnebloem College and Cape Town, 1858-1870', pg 58

When arriving in Cape Town, Sandile was greeted as a guest of honour rather than as a captive of war. Sandile, connected to this carnival of Anglo celebration, thus advocating the ‘civilising process’. He was paraded across Cape Town, was wined and dined at the homes of Cape Town’s major local personalities such as Saul Solomon, and was taken along to the touring Mr. McCollum’s American Circus. He was also present at the opening of the public library, as well as the Breakwater Ceremony, both of which will be mentioned later. The major enemy of the Cape for so many years was now taking part in Cape events and celebrations - to many at the Cape, this must have seemed astounding. The total and visible subjugation of Sandile and his fellow chiefs, occurring conjointly with the arrival of the royal prince Alfred upon the shores of the Cape, must have given George Grey a great deal of legitimacy in the eyes of the Cape population.

Brief reference must also be made of the Indian Mutiny of 1857⁴⁹¹, for, as Jill Bender argues ‘the Indian Revolt had provided an opportunity for the colony to unify in support of the larger cause, and the colonists had responded enthusiastically. In doing so, they had drawn the colony and the Empire more tightly together.’⁴⁹² As the *Cape Argus* itself claimed, ‘In her hours of peril, the sons of England gather round her.’⁴⁹³

It appears as though the Cape’s social response to this Mutiny was both immediate and virulent. The news was published within Cape papers on 6 August, and in that same month, the *Cape Argus* made reference to the fact that members of the volunteer Cape Royal Rifles, along with ‘many of the other inhabitants’ had volunteered themselves for transportation to India.⁴⁹⁴ Others offered financial relief, as encouraged by Grey, and in December 1857 the *Argus* reported that colonists had responded generously and that ‘all classes contribute according to their means.’⁴⁹⁵ Such a debacle, Bender argues, created a space in which the Cape’s connection to Britain was consolidated. It was, in fact, a source of pride for many Cape colonists. ‘At an Agricultural and Horticultural Society’s Banquet in November 1857, the Cape’s participation in the capture of Delhi and the relief of Lucknow was the subject of

⁴⁹¹ A massive Indian revolt against the rule of the East India Company, and an important moment in British Imperial history

⁴⁹² Bender, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pgs 9-10

⁴⁹³ *Cape Argus*, 21 October, 1857, as correctly cited by Bender, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pg 9

⁴⁹⁴ *Cape Argus*, 26 August, 1857, as correctly cited by Bender, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pg 5

⁴⁹⁵ *Cape Argus*, 2 December, 1857, as correctly cited by Bender, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pgs 5-6

numerous toasts and a source of much applause. According to the *Argus*, the Society's chairman, the Honourable Rawson W. Rawson,⁴⁹⁶ offered a toast to Britain's army and navy.⁴⁹⁷

Grey's 'Scientific Character' and its Connection With Cape Culture

For Grey, the advancement of a 'European atmosphere' within the Cape was vital. As uncivilised as the natives were, so too were the local Europeans, although, of course, on a completely different scale. While the natives perhaps had a directly 'savage' culture, locals of European descent, too, had space for cultural growth. George Grey himself seemed to denote the Cape as somewhat uncivilised, and would claim, later on in his life: 'What sort of South Africa did I find? The bulk of the whites were Boers, who were most conservative in their ideas. It was desirable to give South Africa every possible element of high civilisation, as ... universities, schools and libraries... Also, she must enlighten that cloud of a barbarous Africa which was pressing down from the north.'⁴⁹⁸

Grey believed that 'an older state or nation offered a superior educational base through books and the interaction of societies and learned circles. A younger colony such as the Cape offered an inferior one. The gap between the two resulted from poor accessibility, low standards and the lack of suitable literary and scientific models in the younger society. A Library, he stated, went some way towards reducing these problems. The formation of a scientific and literary society would reduce them further.'⁴⁹⁹

And indeed, with the help Bleek, he set out to revamp the seemingly insufficient National Library, which he saw as a vital instrument in promulgating a scientific and literary culture. While individuals such as E.R. Bell had stated that 'The Kaffirs are too cunning an enemy to be met by Tyro-Governors...'⁵⁰⁰ and while Currey quoted a 'a witty judge no longer with us that the qualifications necessary for a governor of the Cape were that he should have served in the Peninsular War',⁵⁰¹ Grey stood somewhat opposed to these stereotypes, attempting to

⁴⁹⁶ Rawson W. Rawson was Grey's private Secretary – the fact the Grey's private Secretary was chairman of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society at the Cape says quite a lot about the type of individual Grey liked to have around him.

⁴⁹⁷ Bender, 'Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion', pg 8

⁴⁹⁸ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pgs 125-126

⁴⁹⁹ Kerr, *Amassing Treasures for All Times*, pg 158

⁵⁰⁰ *Graham's Town Journal*, 12 February, 1853

⁵⁰¹ Currey, *John Blades Currey*, pg 27

represent himself as an intellectual, first and foremost. Soon after Grey's arrival, in fact, at a function marking the 26th anniversary of the Cape Public Library on 21 April 1855, Grey pressed his academic prestige, claiming 'Those whose youth has generally been passed in acquiring a knowledge of military affairs,' Grey claimed 'and whose middle age has been one of action, not of contemplation, are, I should think, eminently unqualified to instruct a literary body.'⁵⁰² At the opening of the new library in 1860, Grey romantically stated that its introduction 'become the birthright of a brighter and more glorious age... we are now preparing the means and smoothing the path which shall lead on another generation, another time, the fair and promising child of queenly knowledge, into that heritage which strong arms and daring hearts are amidst so many toils, difficulties, and dangers building up for it throughout the wide extent of Southern Africa.'⁵⁰³ This particular representation is somewhat important. It alludes to the fact that Grey, continually alluding to native 'dangers' throughout his governance, which in turn played some role in justifying his native policies, saw the advancement of literary and scientific bodies as the 'saving grace' of the Cape 'dilemma'. Through this, Grey announced himself as the saviour of the Cape.

Aligning itself to this project, the Roeland Street Jail was opened in 1859, which was 'another of Sir George Grey's related public institutions, a moral statement built to the most modern design in which total surveillance was the object'.⁵⁰⁴ To Grey, buildings had an emotional impact on social identity, and he aimed to use projects of construction to espouse, in the minds of the colonists, notions of modernity, improvement and civility. The industry of architecture, as a consolidation of 'feeling' and identity, was indeed on the rise throughout the 1850s – while in the late 1840s there had been only one private architect in Cape Town, in the 1860s there were seven.⁵⁰⁵

Grey also involved himself in the building of schools. The fact that there are two schools named after George Grey within South Africa is no coincidence, for both Grey High Schools, one in Port Elizabeth and one in Free State, were built during Grey's tenure, with Grey even laying the first stone for Grey High in Bloemfontein – an act which was perhaps emblematic of Grey's relationship with the Free State, as will be discussed in the proceeding chapter.

⁵⁰² *Proceedings of the Twenty-Sixth Anniversary of the South African Public Library, 21 April, 1855* (Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1855), p.3

⁵⁰³ Grey's speech in, *Inauguration of the New Buildings erected for the South African Public Library and Museum*, pgs 4-5

⁵⁰⁴ Worden etc, *Cape Town*, pg 183

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pg 170

Grey regularly attended the annual examinations and prize-givings at the South African College, and set up a grant, offering a 5-pound travelling expense to the three 'best candidates from the more distant parts of the colony in each subject in the entrance scholarship examinations'.⁵⁰⁶

After leaving South Africa in 1861, he decided to leave the majority of his colossal book collection to the Cape Library, which again suggests the fact that Grey saw a necessity for cultural growth at the Cape. Within the catalogue of his massive collection are books relating to a wide range of subject matter, such as 'political literature', which includes, for instance, a 'collection of twenty-eight Political Pamphlets of the times between 1626-1682', 'Ancient History', and numerous other categories such as 'Astrology and Magic' and 'Romances'. Also included are works on historical figures such as King Arthur, numerous works of poetry, including those of Homer and Chaucer, as well as works on 'Moral Philosophy', 'Science' and 'Comparative Philology'.⁵⁰⁸ On 20 March 1855, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* stated that 'We have often had the pleasure of paying sincere compliments to the people and the Government of the Cape, for their efforts to overtake the growing demands of our population for sound learning and real knowledge.'⁵⁰⁹ With Grey's projects, themselves focused on 'sound learning and real knowledge', it is easy to see how Grey became popular in the eyes of so many Cape colonists in this period.

While Grey revamped the National Library, he also set out to refurbish the National Museum. This was equally important in the eyes of many. On 26 June 1855, the *Commercial Advertiser* reported, 'The proposal to restore, or rather to found anew a SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUM, was well received by Parliament, and is likely to become a valuable Institution... A repository of natural productions is found highly conducive to the progress of the Arts in every country; but in this vast and as yet partially explored colony a COLLECTION ... is absolutely requisite to enable us daly (sic) to estimate its resources... the Museum just founded will be, to the Philosopher, one of the most curious chambers in the temple of Science.'⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁶ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 253

⁵⁰⁸ This collection can be visited at the South African National Library, Cape Town, Sir George Grey Special Collection

⁵⁰⁹ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 20 March, 1855

⁵¹⁰ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 26 June, 1855, emphasis present in original text

However, to many, the simple restoration of the Library and the Museum, while helpful, were not on their own enough to enliven scientific growth at the Cape. Within this same article, Fairbairn put forward his belief that the Museum was ‘not to be regarded as a sufficient school for those who study the production of earth. It excites curiosity, but is not intended to gratify the desire of knowledge. It suggests and directs... A mere museum philosopher, like a mere closet philosopher, sinks into pedantry, or becomes a Repository of dead formulae ... unlike living and productive Science.’⁵¹¹ Fairbairn suggested a public forum for scientific exploration. While the Museum housed specimens, it did not contribute to what Fairbairn envisioned, namely, for the Cape Colony to involve itself in a lively culture of scientific discovery and debate. As a newspaper editor, Fairbairn was perhaps well placed to understand the potential role of newspapers and periodicals in awakening this sort of culture. Indeed, on 4 October 1855, the *Commercial Advertiser* alluded to the success of the Mechanics Institute, and their periodical publications, claiming, ‘we have reason to be satisfied with the attention they have awakened, and the favour they enjoy’.⁵¹² It was the institutions such as these that truly invigorated scientific debate, and Fairbairn praised the fact that ‘several gentlemen have favoured them by delivering instructive lectures from time to time, the attendance at which clearly proved how acceptable this mode of instructing and entertaining would be in Cape Town. It is equally as popular in Port Elizabeth and Graham’s Town. We hope, therefore, to see some arrangements entered into by those Institutions for obtaining regular courses of Lectures from those who have the gift of popularizing Science.’⁵¹³

In this way, newspapers and periodicals shared Grey’s appreciation of science and its cousin disciplines. Following the presentation of a geological paper by A.G. Bain to the Geological Society of London, the *Graham’s Town Journal* felt ‘indebted to a scientific friend [Bain]’., claiming that ‘The astonishing revelations already made by geology, though still, as a science, in its infancy, are such as must command the attention of thinking men in every part of the world; and this country especially – where so little has been done in the way of Geological research.’⁵¹⁴ There was, as such, an understanding that intellectual enquiry was still in its infancy at the Cape, with the field of geology just an example of this broader trend.

⁵¹¹ Ibid

⁵¹² *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 4 October, 1855

⁵¹³ Ibid

⁵¹⁴ *Graham’s Town Journal*, 12 Feb, 1853

Newspapers provided a forum through which scientific debates and discussions were brought to life. An article which appeared in the March issue of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* highlighted the ‘improvement in land surveying ... in the application of geometry, to the determination of points or beacons, and the measurements of sides and angles’. The anonymous ‘XY’ responded to this in the *Cape Argus*, claiming that ‘There are a few points in this article with which I must take objection. The system of co-ordinate axes, by rendering the ordinate and abscissa of every particular point independent of those other points, is said to prevent that multiplication of errors which is introduced by the determination of those points by the system of triangulation... he assumes the length of the sides of his figure, and consequently the position of his beacons, so that any error introduced by the delicate methods of triangulation ... necessarily affects the co-ordinates which are determined from these.’⁵¹⁵ On 11 March a fellow mathematics connoisseur joined in on the debate, and using the formula ‘ $Bc \times Cc + (BF+Bc)Dd+2BF \times DF$ ’, agreed with his conclusion that the original article was not feasible.⁵¹⁶

In addition, during the 1850s the newspaper industry was on the rise. While in 1857 four newspapers were published in Cape Town, one year later, in 1858, this number rose to eight, two of which were Afrikaans and six English.⁵¹⁷ This indicates a growing social forum. Just as they had in the late 1840s and early 1850s driven the movement for representative government, they now were influential in creating spaces for creative academic debate.⁵¹⁸

Once again, these pursuits were attempts to define the society in accordance with the ideal of ‘Europeanness’. Edna Bradlow argues that:

The white elite was too small and too thinly spread, too isolated from the world's cultural powerhouses, to produce a vigorous, influential intelligentsia which would critically examine society. The colonists did not draw on their culturally diverse society to develop their own sensibilities, but imported Anglo-Saxon artistic and intellectual assumptions, as they

⁵¹⁵ *Cape Argus*, 4 March, 1857

⁵¹⁶ *Cape Argus*, 11 March, 1857

⁵¹⁷ Worden etc, *Cape Town*, pg 154

⁵¹⁸ While newspapers had a voice of their own in this period, they still attuned themselves to topics that already held a place in social circles.

*imported their material requirements. Such literature as originated locally tended to be moralistic rather than speculative or imaginative.*⁵¹⁹

In line with this, Bickford-Smith argues that in the 1850s, ‘theatre had been periodically attacked by evangelicals for promoting sin. Sefton Parry, a theatre enthusiast who had opened the exclusive Drawing Room Theatre in 1855, as well as the Theatre Royal on the corner on Caledon and Harrington Street, was denounced as a “child of perdition” in 1857.’⁵²⁰ Such moral censure drew on British puritanical attitudes, designed to imprint evangelical norms on colonial society, but these attitudes were overwhelmed by the thriving culture of entertainment and display that was increasingly in evidence.

Cape Town did indeed borrow literature and architecture from Europe. The *Cape Monthly Magazine* predicted on 4 December 1858 that it would be ‘a long time before we have a Cape poet who will reach mediocrity’, indicating a preference for imported works.⁵²¹ The magazine, launched in 1857, ‘regularly listed the most interesting books, government publications, and literary reviews received from England... Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, and Thomas B. Macaulay were popular with the Cape English middle class.’⁵²² Even though the magazine died out in 1860, it provides a useful glimpse into what Cape society thought was important; it covered topics such as the ‘need for local medical training, Cape Town’s water supply and recent scientific developments including Darwin’s theories’.⁵²³ Similarly, the eastern-based *Graham’s Town Journal*, on 12 March 1853, reviewed *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*,⁵²⁴ whilst on 9 May 1857 there appeared in the *Cape Argus* an advert for second-hand books sold from 44 St. George’s Street. All the books listed were in some sense scientific or informative, with works such as *Dr. Reeve’s Medical Guide*, *Rural Architecture*, *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, and *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*.⁵²⁵ Another book sale within the Cape, held by a Robert Henry Caffyn, included the sale of books such as *Bulwer Lytton’s Poems and Dramas*, *Barrow’s Dictionaries*, *Political Economy*, *History of Russia*, *Christianity in Turkey*, *Paradise Lost*, as well as, once again, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.⁵²⁶

⁵¹⁹ Bradlow, *The Culture of a Colonial Elite*, pg 396

⁵²⁰ Worden etc, *Cape Town*, pg 193

⁵²¹ Bradlow, ‘The Culture of a Colonial Elite’, pg 396

⁵²² *Ibid*, pg 393

⁵²³ Worden etc, *Cape Town*, pgs 154-155

⁵²⁴ *Graham’s Town Journal*, 5 March, 1853

⁵²⁵ *Cape Argus*, 9 May 1857

⁵²⁶ Grey Collection, G.14.b.139, Book Sale catalogue – Robert Heby Caffyn

Furthermore, the Cape's economy continued to grow rapidly during the period of Grey's governance, although this preceded the 1860s, often seen as a time of great economic downturn.⁵²⁷ As mentioned, Grey had promised the Home Government that, given a £40,000 annual budget, the Cape would be able to manage its own expenditure within a few years. Cape industrial sectors seemed to profit during this period, although this would be off-set by the fact that Grey would massively overspend his provisioned 40,000, as shall be discussed. Wool exports, for one, rose in value from £360,000 in 1850 to £650,000 1855.⁵²⁸ In 1855 £634,130 worth of wool was being exported from the Eastern Cape alone – this compared to the £21,000 worth in 1840.⁵²⁹ Government revenue rose from 270,000 pounds in 1855 to 450,000 in 1859⁵³⁰, while export revenues increased by 20 percent in Algoa Bay alone during the course of 1856.⁵³¹

George Grey portrayed this economic growth as a consequence of the new-born 'peace and tranquillity' after the Cattle- Killing fiasco. To Grey, 'increased production in every branch of agriculture and industry' flowed naturally 'from the security for life and property which peace and tranquillity have secured for the inhabitants of South Africa, who had so long suffered from protracted and devastating wars'.⁵³² Grey thus promulgated the view that with Xhosa resistance largely diminished, only now could the Cape truly begin to develop, economically as well as morally. The public was definitely aware of this as a period of economic upliftment; the *South African Commercial Advertiser* even claimed that Grey was 'the richest Governor we ever had'.⁵³³ Financial success created a public desire for improved transport facilities such as harbours and railway lines; an opinion that echoed throughout the numerous Cape newspapers at the time. For the *Cape Argus*, the 'The features of the colony would be wholly changed' with the construction of a harbour in Table Bay.⁵³⁴ Grey himself seemed to see eye-to-eye with Cape Town locals on this front, stating his belief that 'Effort was requisite for the construction of harbours, a matter of equally vital importance [compared to other similar polices such as the construction of railroads], which I took in hand.'⁵³⁵ In line

⁵²⁷ Some blame George Grey for bringing about this latter slump, resulting from a number of expensive policies, relating to immigration, native education, etc. etc.

⁵²⁸ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, 293

⁵²⁹ Weldon, *Grey and the Xhosa*, page 15

⁵³⁰ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 293

⁵³¹ *Cape Argus*, 17 January, 1857

⁵³² Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 293

⁵³³ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 10 June 1856

⁵³⁴ *Cape Argus*, 3 January, 1857

⁵³⁵ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pg 125

with this, Grey suggested that various lighthouses should be established in dangerous areas along the coast,⁵³⁶ and attempted to persuade the British Government to finance the construction of the harbor works at Cape Town.⁵³⁷ Although this plea was rejected, Grey pushed onwards and saw to the construction of Table Bay harbour, which was, eventually, independently financed by the Cape. Construction was under way in 1860.⁵³⁸ Grey also encouraged the construction of railways, and the Colony's first railway, a 45-mile work from Cape Town to Wellington, was instigated during Grey's tenure. Grey himself stated that, on arriving at the Cape, he had been amazed by the fact that there were no railways.⁵³⁹ Grey thus supported Cape interests, propelling projects of civil improvement and winning popularity in the process.

Grey's interest in numerous cultures made him a reputable figure in the eyes of the now large group of Cape Town Muslims. Grey himself stated that when he was out of Cape Town on hunting expeditions, he would make sure to 'observe the Madomedan rite' for his Muslim compatriots. 'Whenever Mahomedans were with me,' Grey stated, 'I undertook to observe the rule, nor did I ever fail.'⁵⁴⁰ Grey's respect for Muslim rites is important when one realises the number of Muslims in the Cape at this time. Within his 1861 work, *The Malays of Cape Town*, John Schofield Mayson claimed that 'The total number of Mahometans in Cape Town and its vicinity is now computed to be nearly 8000.'⁵⁴¹ 'In 1840 there were only two fully constituted mosques in the Bo-Kaap district. By 1860 this had grown to five, while Claremont's first mosque was constructed in 1854.' Islam was becoming an important part of Cape society, and efforts were made to include these mosques within a burgeoning adherence to civility. The royal arms of England was placed alongside a crescent and an Arabic inscription over the entrance of the Jami'a Mosque, also called the 'Queen Victoria Mosque', which was built in 1850 on lower Chiappini Street,⁵⁴² providing a solid metaphor of how Islamic culture was merging into Cape culture at this time.

⁵³⁶ G.H. 23/27, D 130 Grey to Labouchere, 22 August, 1857

⁵³⁷ Mathie, Nerina, 'George Grey's Federation Policy, 1854-1859' (MA, University of Cape Town, 1946), pg 19

⁵³⁸ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 301

⁵³⁹ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pg 125

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pg 149

⁵⁴¹ Mayson, John Schofield, *The Malays of Cape Town*, (Manchester: J. Galt and Co., 1861), pg 15

⁵⁴² Worden etc, *Cape Town*, pg 187

Fairbairn, Solomon and the Critique of Grey

While there is no doubt that Grey's vision of an Anglocentric colonial society was widely embraced by the white population of the Cape, Lester claims: 'That Grey's governmental vision was always a fantasy was pointed out by Fairbairn.' He felt that 'while sketching a picture of the Colony, its smiling present and glowing future', Grey 'was unconsciously drawing a portrait of his own mind, holding everything possible that is desirable, and ready to undertake any good work without encumbering his faculties or troubling his nerves with difficulties'.⁵⁴³ It is surely significant that Fairbairn, editor of the widely influential *South African Commercial Advertiser* and son-in-law of the humanitarian Reverend John Philip, publicly opposed George Grey.

However, while Fairbairn was skeptical to some degree, Lester does not mention that in this same editorial he states that 'Parliament and public were not disappointed in their expectation of a President's message rather than a King's Speech from his Excellency on Thursday. Every subject that has occupied any share of attention in this Colony for the last thirty years, or that will command attention in all times to come, seemed to be touched, and not slightly touched, by this remarkable state paper'. In fact, Fairbairn did not stop here, claiming, 'The views developed in the Speech are simple, extensive, and marked throughout with benevolence and generosity.' He goes on to say that Grey's ideas 'drape the figure of the Cape, as displayed to a vivid imagination and a believing heart. He will find the Colonists ready to support him in all reason, godliness, and honesty... of this Speech we may truly say it speaks to itself. The dullest reader will find no difficulty in comprehending it, while to the most intelligent, every paragraph suggests a long train of ideas.'⁵⁴⁴

Bender, utilizing the *Cape Argus*, attempts to show another example of colonial dissatisfaction with Grey, arguing that, 'by the early months of 1858, imperial administrators were not alone in their frustrations with Grey's colonial policy. Rather, the Cape colonists, too, questioned the motivation behind the governor's actions, expressing doubt that he always had the colony's best interests at heart.'⁵⁴⁵ Grey, without approaching Parliament on the matter, had toyed with bringing Indian sepoy onto the frontier during the Indian Mutiny of

⁵⁴³ Lester, *Imperial Networks*, pg 187, citing Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1169

⁵⁴⁴ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 20 March, 1855

⁵⁴⁵ Bender, 'Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion', pg 11

1857⁵⁴⁶, ‘in the hope that change of air and wholesome employment upon breakwaters and railways, and the interest and excitement of such employment, to say nothing of the novelty of the scene and the change in their mode of life, would distract their attention from greased cartridges and discontent, and restore them to a proper Mahomedan and Hindoo frame of mind’.⁵⁴⁷

In response to Grey’s actions, the *Argus* printed an incredibly interesting article, worth quoting extensively. It stated:

The pitcher goes many times to the well, but it is sure to be broken at last. So it has fallen out with Sir George Grey's reputation as a wise man. The bubble, so round, so perfect, so beautiful, has burst, and Sir George has proved that he can sometimes – only sometimes – be as foolish as the editor of the Zuid- Afrikaan. Some people affect to be astonished at this precocious, but happily abortive, arrangement to bring about the cutting of the colonial throat, some dark night, without any previous notice... we, who delight in picking a hole in a neighbor's coat, may now venture to question the Governor's infallibility... It has become so much the fashion of late to laud to the skies the wisdom of his rule, his mysterious policy, his inscrutable dodges, his triumphant success, that the small weak voices that here and there ventured to hint suspicion that all might not be right were drowned in the chorus of praise that rose like incense round the gubernatorial throne... But the lion's skin has fallen off, and it is well that it has done so. Too blind a confidence in a ruler is not good for a people. May not the introduction of thirty thousand savages into the colony be fraught with danger? What if the driving of Kreli's Kafirs over the Bashee should have driven them, thirsting for revenge, to Moshesh?... Is the Fingo future a cause for no anxiety, and are the Fingoes such faithful and approved loyal subjects that their transference to Butterworth is a safe measure? What do the late murders, attempted and committed, in British Kaffraria mean, than acts of retaliation, for those committed by recent patrols? Was war formally declared against Kreli before a hostile force entered his country? The Kafirs left in British Kaffraria, consider the country in a state of war. There are these and many more such questions... Should we not find ourselves in a great difficulty at this very moment, were the Governor gone, and a Darling or a Jackson reigned in his stead, with a Rawson W. Rawson as Colonial Secretary, to put his cheerful signature to their despatches without a word of protest against their contents?’

⁵⁴⁶ The Mutiny shall be mentioned more in the proceeding chapter

⁵⁴⁷ Bender, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pgs 11-12, referencing the *Cape Argus*, 24 March, 1857

This fascinating article truly illuminates the fact that Grey's duplicitous policies were known to many at the Cape, and that many chose to ignore these in their praise of Grey. While this article is inarguably critical of Grey, even here there are hints of clemency. It does, after all, later claim that

But after all, we are not infallible ourselves, and may be wrong in questioning the wisdom of the Governor's proposal. He is fond of troops, and perhaps calculated that ten regiments of armed assassins scattered over the country, would take ten regiments of British troops to look after them, and that thus he would be able to secure the permanent possession of a large force, without the risk of losing them upon any sudden emergency arising... But whether a mistake or not, we do not attach any blame to the Governor, whose motive arose partially out of zeal to advance the colony, and to promote its public works.

This, admittedly, is not the only example whereby the *Argus* criticized Grey. On another occasion it claimed that both Natal and the Cape Colony 'are agreed that they have been seduced into believing that they live under the British constitution, and under a representative local Government, and discover too late that their respective legislatures have been reduced to a farce by their respected Governors'.⁵⁴⁸ 'Beaten from Sebastopol as Governor,' the *Argus* claimed, 'he can take shelter in his Gibraltar as High Commissioner, and there he is impregnable ... above and beyond control.'⁵⁴⁹ Saul Solomon, editor of the *Cape Argus*, Solomon would, in April 1858, attempt to limit the power of Grey by motioning for the use of the Frontier Police within the Cape borders only. However, it is important to note that this motion was rejected by Parliament⁵⁵⁰ - evidently, not all shared Solomon's views.

It is difficult to find criticisms of Grey from the Cape population. This is not to argue that he did not receive any at all, as just shown. However, representations of Grey, as offered in newspapers, memorials and memoirs, generally paint positive portrayals of the man. Upon his first dismissal in 1859⁵⁵¹, 'At a Cape Town public meeting, Barry described the recall as a thunderbolt, Ebdon extolled Grey's humane enlightened policy, Saul Solomon admired Grey as a man of the people⁵⁵² ... Rutherford said his recall endangered the peace of South Africa, Fairbairn believed that neither Grey nor his policy could be easily destroyed, [and] Watson

⁵⁴⁸ *Cape Argus*, 22 April, 1858

⁵⁴⁹ *Cape Argus*, 1 May, 1858,

⁵⁵⁰ Bender, 'Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion', pg 14

⁵⁵¹ To be discussed

⁵⁵² An interesting claim given his earlier criticisms

praised him for his unfailing justice and generosity to the poor.⁵⁵³ Additionally, it was decided that a marble statue would be erected in what is now the Company Gardens in Cape Town in honour of ‘the best Governor South Africa ever had’,⁵⁵⁴ while the *Cape Argus*, despite its criticisms, claimed that ‘No one can deny that Sir George Grey was popular at the Cape from the day of his landing to his departure.’⁵⁵⁵

Such praise existed, perhaps, due to the context of the period, following the downfall of Xhosa independence. However, it was also Grey’s character, which in so many ways aligned itself to Cape culture that saw to his popularity. Grey was perhaps the first governor who was seen to represent Cape interests over those of the British. Indeed, Grey’s refusal to listen to his superiors saw to his eventual axing in 1859. While we have discussed his popularity at the Cape, circumstances were vastly different at the Home Office, where many figures disliked him, as we shall now discuss.

⁵⁵³ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 425

⁵⁵⁴ *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 27 July, 1859

⁵⁵⁵ *Cape Argus*, 23 August, 1859

*Dropping the Axe – Addressing Theories Relating to Grey’s Dismissal from the
Cape*

As has been mentioned, Grey held a sparkling reputation in the eyes of his superiors, with Earl Grey, John Russell and the Duke of Newcastle leading the line of Whig politicians who seemed to hold the man in high esteem. As late as March 1856, secretary of the colonies Henry Labouchere wrote to Grey, claiming ‘Her Majesty’s government have so much reliance on your judgment and experience ... fully sensitive to the advantage which you derive from being on the spot in forming opinions on such a subject. And I shall at all times be most unwilling to interpose any obstacles in the way of the course which you may think it right to adopt in dealing with the native tribes.’⁵⁵⁶ Again in June 1857, Labouchere claimed that ‘Her Majesty’s Government are ... highly sensible of your own zeal and activity in repairing to the frontier whenever your presence there seemed to be required, and of the discretion and firmness with which you have acted on all those occasions.’⁵⁵⁷

However, by 1859 George Grey had been fired. As seems to be the trend with Grey’s career, this event has been the subject of a degree of conjecture. Bender and Rutherford argue that ‘citing Grey’s tendency to disobey, his policy towards German immigration, and his excessive expenditure of imperial funds, the Secretary of State ... announced Grey’s formal recall’.⁵⁵⁸ The Reeses argue that the main reason for his recall was his stubborn fixation with federation.⁵⁵⁹ John Blades Currey, a contemporary of Grey’s, offers an alternative explanation. Currey claimed:

I used to see the despatches at the time and, though of course my lips are sealed on such matters, there can be no harm in my saying that his [Grey’s] efforts were not the only matters which drew on him the disapproval of the colonial office. Lord Derby was prime minister then ... Mr Eldred Mobray Cole ... was a cousin of Lord Derby and on the death of Major Hope, the auditor-general ... Lord Derby wished his relation to be appointed to the vacant

⁵⁵⁶ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented 6th June, 1856)*, No.5, Labouchere to Grey, 20 March, 1856

⁵⁵⁷ *Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented 31st March, 1857)*, No 10, Labouchere to Grey, 4 June, 1857,

⁵⁵⁸ Bender, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pg 15, Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pgs 422-423

⁵⁵⁹ Reese, William Lee and Reese, Lily, *Life and Times of Sir George Grey*, pgs 282-284

*office. Sir George Grey demurred and gave his reasons but the secretary of state insisted... It so happened that this was just before Sir George Grey was recalled, which of course was a mere coincidence.*⁵⁶⁰

That Grey was recalled for refusing to accede to this was a common conception amongst the people of the Cape directly following Grey's removal.⁵⁶¹ In comparing, contrasting, and discussing such points of view, it would perhaps be pertinent to start with a discussion of Grey's policies pertaining to the Indian Mutiny.

Only Fools and Horses – George Grey and the Indian Mutiny

As mentioned, the Indian Mutiny broke out in July 1857. As we have discussed, the Cape population was immediate in its effort to volunteer, and, pushed both by the Cape population, and by the governor of Bombay, as much as by his tendency to act independently and confidently, Grey immediately responded, dispatching the 89th garrison from Cape Town, which originally had meant to sail for New Zealand, and decided to take it upon himself to divert troops to India originally *en route* to China. Grey's decision to waylay this regiment from China, as well as his decision to send troops from South Africa, was a risky decision made independently, but it paid off, gaining 'the personal commendation of Her Majesty ... and her secretary of state for the colonies, Labouchere ... Lord Canning ... the Governor and Council of Bombay ... and the Directors of the East India Company.'⁵⁶²

However, the Home Office soon started to demand more from the Cape as the importance of this mutiny began to dawn on them. Grey acceded to early requests, which asked for one or two regiments at a time, but eventually he started to dodge these appeals. On 1 August 1857, for example, Labouchere ordered four regiments, with some artillery, and then another six on 26 August. Grey, sending the aid as requested on 1 August, simply refused to comply with the instructions sent on 26 August. All this was done in true Grey fashion – involving logical argument with splashes of emotional validation. Here Grey claimed that 'as the instructions of the 26 of August were issued in ignorance of what I had done, and do not specially repeal those of the 1st of August, I shall continue to act upon those of the 1st of August. For, in great affairs, such as those transpiring here, it does not do lightly to depart from a plan of

⁵⁶⁰ Currey, *John Blades Currey*, pg 118

⁵⁶¹ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 425

⁵⁶² *Ibid*, pg 374

operations once entered on.’ He further claimed that ‘the Empire is large and disjointed, and may, at a moment of great danger be easily involved in the greatest peril... If, at such a time, several distinct portions of the Empire, each, without considering what has been elsewhere, place themselves in jeopardy to aid the threatened point, thinking only of it, and danger suddenly appears within their own limits ... there would be great danger that the Empire might be suddenly broken up.’⁵⁶³ Rutherford argues that, at this time, Grey also lied about the number of troops left within the Cape in order to push his stance, claiming there were only 6,265 troops left in the colony, when there were 9,000.⁵⁶⁴

Grey also used a dispatch he received from Lord Canning, Governor-General of India, which only asked for more horses, as a justification to send horses instead of troops, writing to Labouchere that he ‘helped the Indian Government just in the way and at the time in which help was required, and urgently pressing upon me that horses are, at the present moment, their Chief want in India, I propose, therefore, to continue to direct effort at the present moment in procuring and shipping horses’, further claiming that until backup regiments arrived at the Cape, ‘no more troops can go on from here to India, nor, indeed, are they at this moment required there’.⁵⁶⁵ According to Williams, the total number of horses shipped to India from the Cape between 12 August and 17 February 1858 was 5,229,⁵⁶⁶ although, as Bender argues,⁵⁶⁷ the breeding of horses offered immense economic potential, which Grey was probably aware of. By the time Mutiny had been put down, Grey had, in addition to horses, committed six regiments, including a number of the previously described Anglo-German legionnaires. However, he sent less than what was asked for, and fought tooth and nail to keep his troops in South Africa.

It is in conjunction with this that one should view the round-up of the Xhosa chiefs as an act, that while primarily reinforcing the subjugation of the Xhosa, operated as a justification for retaining troops – the loss of which, while perhaps doing little to threaten the Cape’s security at a time when the Xhosa were at their weakest, would threaten Grey’s project of increasing the European presence within the Cape. Grey even attempted to use the Mutiny to gain troops in the Cape, expressing his hope that the Cape frontier be filled with 2,000 ‘nearly worn-out

⁵⁶³ Ibid, pg 377

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid, pgs 377-378

⁵⁶⁵ Williams, Donovan, ‘The Indian Mutiny of 1857 and the Cape Colony Part I: Sir George Grey (A Reassessment). Troops and Horses,’ *Historia*, 32, 1 (May, 1987), pgs 61-62

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid, pg 67

⁵⁶⁷ Bender, Jill, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pg 7

soldiers ... quite unfit for duty in India'.⁵⁶⁸ He had also previously asked for 'young' and 'untrained' reinforcements from England, who could act as replacements for any troops he sent to India.⁵⁶⁹ Here it is clear that the retention of such troops revolved around the need for immigration rather than any military rationale, as suggestions for 'young', 'untrained' men, while surely insufficient for intense military duty, would alternatively provide an inflow of Europeans to the Cape. As discussed, Grey also thought about bringing in some of the Indian sepoys leading the rebellion to provide more labourers for the any incoming Europeans, but decided against this in the face of intense public scrutiny.

With the intention to retain troops in the Cape, the Cape Colonial Secretary warned that Sarhili had heard of the Indian Mutiny, and with this as his motivation, was encouraging other chiefs to 'unite with him, and renew their attempts against the British'.⁵⁷⁰ This appeared in the *Cape Argus* in May 1858, and considering the weakened state of the Xhosa, one could argue that this deduction was somewhat manipulative and deceitful. Grey himself was to perpetuate such opinions, writing to Labouchere that, 'I have no doubt that Umhala and some of the chiefs ... [are] ready to take advantage of any opportunity, which might offer itself, and that, encouraged by the news from India, and the reduction of the force in this country – they think the now see some chance of success.'⁵⁷¹ However, such representations were necessitated at this point by the fact that Britain had begun to question Grey's refusal to send troops to India. As Grey himself was to claim to Lieutenant-General Jackson, 'It is to me a matter of deep regret that H. Maj'y's advisers, listening to the opinions of some persons in London, should be led to believe that there was not ... either an enemy in the field, nor any present apprehension of such an enemy... we must however continue to do our duty, which we owe to the Queen and the Empire'.⁵⁷²

Grey's refusal to send troops severely irritated many in Westminster. Lord Panmure,⁵⁷³ for one, 'understood that British Kaffraria was "in a perfectly peaceful and orderly state", that the Kafirs far from being "an Enemy in the Field" were coming across the frontier begging for work... Grey had under command "a very much larger force of regular troops than was ever

⁵⁶⁸ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 371

⁵⁶⁹ GH 23/27, Vol 1, 134, Grey to Labouchere, 27 August, 1857

⁵⁷⁰ *Cape Argus*, 11 May, 1858

⁵⁷¹ GH 23/27, Vol. 1. 196, Grey to Labouchere, 9 December, 1857

⁵⁷² GH 42/1 Grey to Jackson, Nov 3 1857

⁵⁷³ Whig secretary of state for war between 1852-1858

employed at one time in that Colony during any of the late Caffre Wars.”⁵⁷⁴ As mentioned earlier, Grey had received criticism for unexpectedly leaving New Zealand in the early 1850s, and many of his earlier detractors still exercised power in Westminster. Conservative MP Charles Adderley even publicised this issue, writing to the *Times* that the Cape had plenty of soldiers to spare, whilst calling Grey’s constant references to an impending war in the Cape ‘absurd’. The *Times* then ‘followed up with a lead article heavily criticising Grey’s use of troops in the Cape Colony. According to the newspaper, troops were maintained in the colony not for protection, but to encourage economic prosperity.’ It further claimed that ‘no unnecessary discretion ought to be vested in Colonial Governors, who exaggerate their own local wants’.⁵⁷⁵ The Duke of Newcastle and John Russell, acquaintances of Grey’s, no longer held the reins of power, and Grey’s reputation faced serious difficulties. Labouchere even felt it necessary to make mention of the fact that if Grey did send troops it might help his popularity.⁵⁷⁶ But Grey’s behavior was frustrating even Labouchere, who, despite his earlier affirmation of Grey’s governance, had, by December, voiced his irritation with the fact that, ‘Nothing can be more ingenious than the number of arguments Sir George Grey deduces from the same premises of fact.’⁵⁷⁷

Despite this, Grey was not to be removed as Governor of the Cape at this juncture, and nor was this probable. As mentioned, Labouchere, following in the footsteps of Russell and Earl Grey, had previously shown his willingness to allow George Grey a certain amount of independence. Indeed, even Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, perhaps swayed by Grey’s written reasoning, was to thank Grey, in June 1859, claiming ‘I shall never forget the way in which you responded to our call for assistance in the time of our utmost need... I hope I may be allowed to express my thanks for the ready and generous manner in which that appeal was met.’⁵⁷⁸ At this point, Grey had, however, frustrated a number of politicians in Westminster, and, unfortunately for Grey, the Conservatives, with Lord Derby at their head, came to power in February 1859. This was to bring about a massive change in the governance of Grey, and with it, Cape history.

⁵⁷⁴ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 392

⁵⁷⁵ Bender, ‘Sir George Grey and the 1857 Indian Rebellion’, pgs 10-11

⁵⁷⁶ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 378

⁵⁷⁷ CO 48/ 385: comment on dispatch No. 212, Grey to Labouchere, 30 December, 1857

⁵⁷⁸ Williams, ‘The Indian Mutiny of 1857 and the Cape Colony Part I’, pg 65

A Change of Agenda and the Conservative Perspective

The Conservatives had previously been in power in 1852, although this rule was to last only a few months, ousted after their proposed budget was given a vote of ‘no confidence’. Expenditure, a topic of vast political consideration for British politicians in the mid-nineteenth century, was thus to become a particularly major focus for the Conservatives in the upcoming years. While the Whigs were forced to cut down on costs at the Cape in the 1850s, the Conservatives attacked any ounce of expenditure, as shown in Adderley’s response to Russell’s grant of £40,000 to the Cape in 1855.⁵⁷⁹ Thus, when the Conservatives returned towards the end of the 1850s, especially with the ‘expenses of the Crimean War, with its incredible waste, the Indian Mutiny, and the Chinese expedition’,⁵⁸² the issue of money was a major focus for Lord Derby and associates, as was the consolidation of power and control in general. But the Conservatives found it difficult to control the ever uncontrollable Grey, and as such a testing relationship existed between the two.

One can understand the importance that the issue of expenditure played in the months before the 1858 election through the correspondence between Grey and Labouchere. While we have discussed Labouchere’s willingness to trust Grey’s suggestions, it appears as though, in early 1858, even he felt the pressure applied by the Conservatives on the issue of money. In February Labouchere ordered that ‘the introduction of Kaffirs into the colony is effected without expenditure of public or private money’. This was a proclamation that Grey simply and firmly claimed was ‘impossible’⁵⁸³ – a reply reflected the working relationship between Grey and Labouchere quite starkly. It was also in early 1858 that the secretary of state for war demanded that the German Legion be struck off full pay. Once again, Grey firmly refused, claiming that ‘The censures of the Secretary of State for War have only made me more resolved to continue my duty to the Queen and to this country in such a manner that no fault can be justly found with me, and this without regarding what cost or sacrifice such a course entails upon me.’⁵⁸⁴ Such a response was frankly disobedient, but, as argued, Grey had

⁵⁷⁹ As mentioned on pages 64-65 of this thesis

⁵⁸² De Kiewiet, ‘The Period of Transition in South African Policy, 1954-1870’, in Holland Rose, J., Newton, A., P., Benians, E., A., eds, *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, Vol. VIII, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936)

⁵⁸³ *Copies of further papers with reference to the recall of Governor Sir George Grey*, Enclosure 6, in No. 2, Grey to Labouchere, 2 February, 1858

⁵⁸⁴ Henderson, *Sir George Grey, Pioneer of Empire in Southern Lands*, pg 177

governed in this fashion throughout his career, facing no real reprimand. However, soon after this, in February 1858, the Conservatives took office, and, with this, Grey's position changed.

Grey experienced a change in tone between himself and his superiors, arching around issues of expenditure, loyalty and reliability. This change in tone was not immediate, however. Coming into power, the Conservatives appointed Lord Stanley, secretary of state for the colonies from February to June 1858, who was, in fact, the son of the incoming Prime Minister. Stanley displayed a certain amount of leniency towards Grey, while it was his successor, the intriguing Bulwer Lytton, an acclaimed writer, coining such phrases as 'the pen is mightier than the sword', 'it was a dark and stormy night', and 'the pursuit of the almighty dollar', who was much more dismissive of Grey. The conflict between Grey and Bulwer Lytton, exacerbated by different understandings of Grey's supposed responsibilities, would eventually lead to Grey's dismissal.

Lord Stanley himself, upon hearing Grey's explanations regarding use of the Cape's fiscal allowance – which Grey claimed could be justified by the unexpected Cattle-Killing and the subsequent round-up of Xhosa chiefs – recommended to the Lords of the Treasury that the Cape continue to be given a £40,000 yearly budget. However, those in charge of the Treasury thought otherwise, and Stanley was forced to report to Grey that, 'despite every disposition to hold out liberal aid to an administrator who possesses such high claims as you do to the consideration and confidence of Her Majesty's Government', in view of the Conservatives public effort to reduce expenditure, it would simply not be 'justifiable to disregard the interests of the British taxpayer, by whom such ample contributions have already been made to the experiment of Kaffir improvement'.⁵⁸⁵

On top of this, Grey had, in 1858, opened unsanctioned negotiations with a Hamburg firm, Goddefroy and Co., to send out 4,000 Germans immigrants to the Cape – a operation costing around £50,000. Arriving in office, Lord Stanley had immediately instructed Goddefory and Co. to cease this initiative. However, by this time the plan was well under way. Defending himself, Grey simply stated that he did not know that Labouchere had rejected this scheme. To this, Lord Stanley, while evidently fairly frustrated, merely claimed that 'you [Grey] must

⁵⁸⁵ *ibid*, pg 181

have forgotten'.⁵⁸⁶ While Stanley was antagonised, no obvious punishment befell Grey for his insurrection.

The reason for Stanley's tolerance of Grey can be explained through examination of Grey's past. As mentioned, Lord Stanley was the son of the incoming Prime Minister, the 13th Earl of Derby, who had previously sat as secretary of state for war and the colonies under Peel, between 1841 and 1845. It had been Derby who had in fact first appointed George Grey as governor on New Zealand in 1845. Derby seemingly held high regard for Grey, as, in his correspondence to Grey announcing his new post, he had claimed that:

*it would be very gratifying to me to prove my esteem for your capacity and your public spirit by proposing to you some other office of higher rank and of increased emolument. Still I am convinced that I shall give you a yet more welcome proof of the confidence which Her Majesty reposes in you by inviting you to undertake public duties more arduous and responsible than those in which you have hitherto been engaged... The urgent necessity which has arisen for invoking your aid in the government of New Zealand is the single apology I have (to a man of your character it will be ample apology) for calling on you, with no previous notice, to incur the sacrifices and inconveniences of proceeding thither with the least possible delay after your receipt of this dispatch.*⁵⁸⁷

In this dispatch, Derby had also praised 'the energy, capacity, and circumspection which you have exhibited' in his previous government of South Australia. Derby's earlier dealings with Grey could thus have influenced his son at this point.

This all changed with the introduction of Bulwer Lytton as secretary of state for the colonies in June 1858. While Bulwer Lytton first claimed that Britain was 'very anxious to retain your services in your present office. They are much too well informed of the advantageous results which your policy has in many respects secured to the Colony and to the frontier and set far too high a value on your abilities for this employment to contemplate your retirement from your critical and difficult duties which are now entrusted to you'⁵⁸⁹, Bulwer Lytton's perception of Grey would change in the coming months.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid, pg 180

⁵⁸⁷ Reese, William Lee and Reese, Lily, *Life and Times of Sir George Grey*, pgs 74-75

⁵⁸⁹ Mathie, 'George Grey's Federation Policy, 1854-1859', pg 55

As argued, Whig politicians had given Grey a large amount of freedom, and Grey had used this openly, overspending massively. Despite this, both Stanley and, initially, Bulwer Lytton, had announced their admiration of his governance. But Bulwer Lytton's frustration soon became apparent. In June 1859, Bulwer-Lytton demanded that Grey 'do all in your power to clear up these accounts, as well as to exhibit the objects for which the large surplus expenditure has been made'.⁵⁹⁰ The Conservatives seemed to have a point – looking at the records, it does appear as though Grey had overspent that which he was primarily provisioned. According to a report from the Commissioners of Audit, the amount that had been granted by the British Parliament 'will thus have been exceeded in January 1859 by £56,495', 'an amount so much in excess of that granted by Parliament for this service'.⁵⁹¹ There was also apparently 'due to the Treasury Chest a sum of £68,075 in respect to the advances during the year 1857–1858, on account of ... the Civilization amongst the Native Tribes of South Africa'.⁵⁹²

Excess expenditure on the part of the Cape seems to have arisen from a number of sources – while £19,850 was provided for works 'on which the Kaffirs are employed', £29,584 was the amount actually expended, the excess of which was stated to have arisen from 'building a light-house, custom-house, gaol, and pontoon, and the larger number of Kaffirs employed, with an additional cost for their maintenance'. While £500 was provisioned for hospitals, £909 was expended for this, the excess owing to 'increased number of patients'.⁵⁹³ These were just some of the excesses that Grey had surely alluded to when warning Labouchere of 'a larger expenditure than has been estimated for' in January 1857,⁵⁹⁴ for which no real punishment was received. Grey, of course, defended this overspending, claiming that, in the context of recent Cape developments, an extended use of funds was simply unavoidable.

In line with this economic focus, Grey was requested to report on the possibility of Federation of British Kaffraria, Natal and the Cape – a policy that could, in the eyes of the Home Government, allay the cost of administration.

⁵⁹⁰ *Copies of further papers with reference to the recall of Governor Sir George Grey*, No 1, Bulwer-Lytton to George Grey, 3 June, 1859

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid*, Enclosure 1 in No.1, Bulwer-Lytton to George Grey, 3 June, 1859, pg 27

⁵⁹² *Ibid*, Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 1, in No. 1, Bulwer-Lytton to George Grey, 3 June, 1859, pg 28

⁵⁹³ *Ibid*, Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 2 in No. 1, Bulwer-Lytton to George Grey, 3 June, 1859, pgs 29-30

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid*, Enclosure 3, in No.2, Extract from Sir George Grey's Dispatch to Labouchere, 19 January, 1857

A Dangerous Combination: George Grey, Free State, and the Issue of Federation

It was evidently George Grey who broached the topic of federation to Lord Stanley in July 1858.⁵⁹⁶ Here Grey claimed that he had recently received a petition from the inhabitants of the Orange Free State Republic, who claimed that ‘unless this country called Orange Free State is allied in federal union with our parent Colony, it never will enjoy the blessings of peace and prosperity. Whilst thus allied for better or for worse to the mother Colony from which unjustly we have been severed ... the prestige of such national federation would alone be sufficient to prevent those lamentable strifes with the native races of late we had to deplore.’⁵⁹⁷ The Free State had long desired such federation; it has been argued that before the Orange River Sovereignty was abandoned in 1854, ‘the proportion of the white inhabitants of the country, now about 16,000 in number, wished to remain in British rule’.⁵⁹⁸ Grey, in his twilight years, claimed that the Boers ‘were angry at having been thrust forth from their heritage as British subjects. What nation, they demanded, had the right so to treat a section of its people, who had done nothing to disqualify themselves from citizenship?’⁵⁹⁹ Federation seemed an obvious choice for the Free State, who, as a thinly populated and militarily weak settlement, sitting amongst a number of African tribes whose numbers far outweighed their own, would have been somewhat anxious to consolidate their position. The Free State had also recently been close to federating with the South African Republic (Transvaal), but when Grey threatened that this would nullify the Bloemfontein and Sand River Conventions, this possibility was dropped as a feasible arrangement.⁶⁰⁰

At this point it would perhaps be pertinent to discuss George Grey’s relationship with the Free State. Grey was evidently a great ally of the Free State, and this is perhaps not emphasized enough, given its connection with Grey’s treatment of the native Sotho. The Free State had numerous skirmishes with the Sotho over issues of land and apparent cattle theft

⁵⁹⁶ Newton, Arthur Percival, ed. *Select Documents Relating to the Unification of South Africa* (New York: Routledge, 1968), (a) Grey to Stanley, 5 July, 1858, pg 1

⁵⁹⁷ Newton, ed. *Select Documents Relating to the Unification of South Africa*, (b) Enclosure in Grey to Stanley, 5 July, 1858, pg 2

⁵⁹⁸ Fairbridge, Dorothea, *A History of South Africa*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1918), pg 233

⁵⁹⁹ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pg 126

⁶⁰⁰ In 1858, a war broke out between the Free State and the Sotho. The Free State essentially appealed to the Pretorius, president of the Transvaal, to aid them. Pretorius in turn claimed he ‘would assist on condition that the Free State merged its identity with the Transvaal.’ (Thompson, Leonard, *Survival in Two Worlds: Moshoeshoe of Lesotho, 1786-1870*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), pg 242) For more on this complicated sequence of events, read the above referenced text, as well as Mathie’s ‘George Grey’s Federation Policy’.

during Grey's time at the Cape; as early as October 1855, Grey travelled to the Free State in an attempt to allay these complications, attending a conference between Moshoeshoe, leader of the Sotho, and Boshoff, President of the Free State. After the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854, it had been decided that the Cape was to exercise neutrality in its relations between these two parties. Despite Grey's fame for dealing with natives races, Grey almost unilaterally sided with Boshoff in this instance, telling Moshoeshoe: 'You have collected some barbarians and made a kind of nation. The question is, whether you to succeed or fail... Every good man is willing to assist; no more so than the President... It is impossible that a civilized nation can allow a nation of thieves to remain on their boundary. The President and I are ready to put them down.'⁶⁰¹ Grey's ill treatment of the Sotho was exacerbated by the fact that he constantly alluded to his belief that Moshoeshoe was partly responsible for the Cattle-Killing, arguing that Moshoeshoe urged Xhosa chiefs to attack the colony in order to delay British intervention at a time when the Sotho people were themselves being attacked by the Free State.⁶⁰²

Just days after this aforementioned conference, Boshoff wrote to Grey, begging for assistance in 'the urgent necessity of establishing a regular postal communication between this town and Natal', and in securing 'four or six small brass field-pieces, with carriages, and a supply of ball and grape shot, and one howitzer'⁶⁰³. Given the requirement that Grey maintain a neutral relationship between the Cape and the Free State, one would expect him to simply, if politely, refuse such aid. However, this was not the case, for Grey felt 'much pleasure in agreeing, as a temporary arrangement, to provide a sum, not exceeding five hundred pounds per annum, for the carriage of a mail from Bloemfontein to Harrismith ... upon the understanding that you will, upon the part of the Orange Free State, as soon as practicable, establish a horse mail between some point on the above-named line of postal communication and the Trans-vaal

⁶⁰¹ *Correspondence between His Excellency Sir G. Grey K.C.B., and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies on the Affairs of the Cape Colony, Natal, and Adjacent territories, 1855-1857*, Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1857) Enclosure 3 to Dispatch No 31, Minutes of a Conference between the President J. N. Boshoff, Moshoeshoe and George Grey, 5 October, 1855

⁶⁰² Grey made reference to the 'Lieutenant-General's opinion that no doubt can exist as to the intentions of Moshesh, Sandilli, Delema, and others to enter into a combination to attack the Colony on the first favourable opportunity....Moshesh ... is very probably striving to save himself by encouraging the Kaffirs to attack us at the moment he is himself attacked by the people of Free State'. (*Cape of Good Hope: Further Papers Relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes (In continuation of Papers presented 31st March, 1857)*, No.9, Grey to Labouchere, 24 April, 1856) He furthermore claimed that 'embassies have been passing between Moshesh and Kreli and other great chiefs, and ... it is believed that the prophet is merely a secondary instrument in the hands of the great chiefs' (Ibid, No. 4, Grey to Labouchere, 21 August, 1856)

⁶⁰³ *Correspondence between His Excellency Sir G. Grey...on the Affairs of the Cape Colony, Natal, and Adjacent territories*, Enclosure 1 in Dispatch No 31, Boshoff to Grey, 11 October, 1856

Republic'. Furthermore, he agreed to 'give the necessary directions for securing the cordial co-operation of the Natal Government with you' upon the subject of road improvement between the Free State and Natal, and claimed that he would 'ascertain if we can supply you with the guns and ammunition which you require ... if it is within our power to supply you with them, there will be no disposition on the part of the Colonial Government to press for any immediate settlement of the claim which will thus arise'.⁶⁰⁴ Here, Grey not only agreed to give the Free State a sum of money, but also thus, as early as 1855, lay bare his attempt to create greater cohesion and lines of communication across the entirety of South Africa.

If the accession to these requests was not enough to show the degree of amity between Grey and Boshoff, Grey, in rather flowery and warm terms, claimed to 'entirely sympathise with you in reference to the great difficulties your Honour has to contend with as President of this youthful State... the British and Colonial Government alike watch the progress of this country with the deepest and most friendly interest, and will, to the utmost of their respective abilities, assist yourself and its government in the efforts they are making for its advancement'.⁶⁰⁵ Again, the response from the then Whig authorities said nothing about the fact that Grey's correspondence perhaps exceeded the manner with which he was to communicate with this state, and Labouchere was to simply reply, in reference to all stated above (including Grey's communications with Moshoeshoe) that 'I am glad to learn that you were enabled, in many respects, to meet the wishes of the President, and that you formed so favourable an opinion of the progress of the Orange Free State, in the establishment of good government and of friendly relations with the Cape colony'.⁶⁰⁶

Grey College, built in Bloemfontein 1856, was named after Sir George – it was in fact Grey that lay its first foundational stone. This affirmative relationship between Grey and the Free State evidently lingered for decades, as later in his life, Grey even claimed that Reitz, President of the Free State from 1889-1895, had offered him the presidency at this later juncture⁶⁰⁷, although Grey's words are often to be read with a cautionary eye and a hesitant mind.

Despite Grey's allusions to a possible federation with the Free State, Bulwer Lytton asked Grey to voice his opinions on the possibility of federation between the Cape, British Kaffraria

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid, Enclosure 2 in Dispatch No 31, Grey to Boshoff, 11 October, 1855

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid, No. 19, Labouchere to Grey, 26 January, 1856

⁶⁰⁷ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pg 127

and Natal only – the prospect of which, as discussed, had economic incentive. Grey’s eloquent and highly emotive response was incredibly long, wherein Grey pushed not just for the federation of these three regions, but for the Boer states as well, literally describing, in detail, how such a federation would look, specifying, for instance, how many provincial governments there would be, amongst a host of other meticulously laid out mechanisms⁶⁰⁸. He reverted to economic rationalisation in pushing its agenda, arguing that this scheme would allow British access to fertile lands and trade opportunities, whilst claiming that such a federation would consolidate the Cape’s position, for a lack of military unity existing amongst such isolated states only encouraged Africans to ‘resist and dare them’.⁶⁰⁹ As has been argued, Grey was a highly emotional figure, and Grey’s excitement exudes itself within this dispatch.

The impassioned essence of his dispatch was ridiculed by figures such as Merivale, who claimed ‘I had expected greater fairness and freedom from mere passion... The facts are so distorted, or loosely stated, as to be worthless ... purely imaginary’.⁶¹⁰ Bulwer Lytton claimed it was a series of ‘Impracticable plans argued at immense length – & running into much vague declamation’.⁶¹¹ But Grey particularly erred in one portion of his dispatch, where he stated ‘Although these European countries beyond our colonies are treated as separate nations, their inhabitants bear the same family names as the inhabitants of this colony, and maintain with them ties of the closest intimacy and relationship. They speak, generally, the same language, not English, but Dutch. They are, for the most part, of the same religion... They have the same laws, the Roman Dutch. They have the same sympathies, the same prejudices, the same habits, and frequently the same feelings regarding the native races.’

Bulwer Lytton had himself once noted that the ‘object of the mother country is to keep alive distinctions between the colonies – in order that all links of union between them might centre in the bosom of the parent state’. He also claimed, on another occasion, that ‘the only way to give some moral strength to the executive would be to preserve to it the prestige of the British

⁶⁰⁸ Dispatch is outlined in Newton, *Select Documents Relating to the Unification of South Africa*, (e) Grey to Bulwer Lytton, 19 November, 1858, pgs 4-6

⁶⁰⁹ Müller, Ernest Bruce Iwan. *Lord Milner and South Africa*. (1902. Reprint. London: Forgotten Books, 2013), pgs 74-75, referring to Grey to Bulwer Lytton, 19 November, 1858

⁶¹⁰ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 419

⁶¹¹ *Ibid*, pg 423

Crown'.⁶¹² The possibility of such a unified, augmented and cohesive state, with similar identities and cultures, as advocated by Grey, was thus seen as an undesirable, even dangerous possibility, especially as it would stand under the control of the uncontrollable – an independent, wily, and rogue governor. Given Grey's popularity both within the Cape and within the Free State, and Grey's tendency to disobey, such a plan would surely be detrimental to British control of southern Africa. It was no surprise, then, that Bulwer Lytton was to rather venomously reply that despite the 'very full and free exposition of your views',⁶¹³ this unification had been scrapped as a potential policy.

For Grey, political orders had never stood as limitations. As argued across this thesis, and as shown in a variety of examples, Grey had been allowed a considerable degree of space to implement policies as he saw fit. In 1859, Grey simply ignored Bulwer Lytton's orders, and, in an act illuminating his naivety, developed through years lacking in formal punishment, Grey enclosed a despatch to London showing that he had promised the Free State that he would approach the Cape Parliament on the issue of proposed federation. Bulwer Lytton, catching wind of this, once again reinforced his 'no go' stance, and hoped 'that this may have reached you in time to prevent communication to the Cape Parliament', maintaining the fact that 'Her Majesty's Government are the authorities ultimately responsible for the policy under which the South African possessions are to be maintained'.⁶¹⁴ This dispatch did not arrive in the Cape in time, and Grey proceeded to ask, in his speech for the opening of Cape parliament in 1859, if parliament 'would be inclined to promote, as far as lies within your power, a federal union with that State [Free State], and whether you would appoint a Commission to meet a deputation, chosen by the Free State Government, to agree upon the preliminary terms of such a federal union, which it might then be practical to submit for the approval of both Governments.'⁶¹⁵

And so it was that, after Bulwer Lytton had caught wind of this in May 1859, Grey was fired. Grey's letter of recall praised and simultaneously denounced him. While Bulwer Lytton acknowledged 'the large and comprehensive nature of your views, the mixture of firmness

⁶¹²Christensen, Alan Conrad, *The Subverting Vision of Bulwer Lytton: Bicentenary Reflections*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), pg 180

⁶¹³ Newton, *Select Documents Relating to the Unification of South Africa*, (h) Bulwer Lytton to Grey, 11 February, 1859, pgs 7-8

⁶¹⁴ Newton, *Select Documents Relating to the Unification of South Africa*, (i) Bulwer Lytton to Grey, 5 March, 1859, pg 8

⁶¹⁵ Ibid, (j) Grey's Speech at the Opening of the First Session of the Second Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope, 1859, pg 9

with the benevolence which has characterized your dealing with the native races, the sagacity with which you have foreseen and averted probable collisions, and the able policy by which you have availed yourself of unexpected and strange events in their history’, he also claimed ‘You have therefore indeed placed Her Majesty’s Government in this country, as well as the local Government under your own charge, in a position of extreme embarrassment and difficulty.’⁶¹⁶ While Bulwer Lytton claimed to be conscious of the grievous loss of such a respected colonial figure, he maintained that Britain could simply no longer trust Grey. Despite the fact that Smith had previously been given license to annex this territory, Bulwer Lytton now reinforced the fact that while ‘Her Majesty’s Government are very far from insensible to the weight to which your opinion on such a point is entitled...It is for them alone to determine whether steps shall be taken towards annexing or reannexing extensive regions...’ Grey’s recall was necessitated by Grey’s ‘disposition to refuse obedience to instructions’, and Bulwer Lytton was compelled to ‘remind you [Grey] how far you have allowed yourself to outstep the ordinary duties of a Governor in this respect, on several important occasions; such as, for instance, as your scheme for German immigration; and your financial arrangements in regard to British Kaffraria.’⁶¹⁷

Thus, whilst Cape figures such as Currey alluded to the belief that Grey ‘demurred’ on the decision to appoint Lord Derby’s relation to the vacant office of Auditor General, George Grey himself later claimed that ‘In effect ... I was recalled from South Africa, on account of proposals I had made, towards federation in that part of the realm’⁶¹⁸ – although both representations, in essence, point towards a dissonance between Grey and his Conservative superiors.

Grey would respond to his axing with an extensive reply professing his innocence. This is an interesting document and deserves investigation. Within it, Grey claimed Bulwer Lytton had not been clear, that during his governance at the Cape, there had been at least seven secretaries of state for the colonies, ‘each of whom held different views upon some important points of policy connected with this country’. As such, it was ‘often difficult, instantly, so to modify proceedings which I had taken in accordance with what I knew to be the wishes of one Secretary of State as to make them entirely accord with the views of each of his

⁶¹⁶ Ibid, (l) Bulwer Lytton to Grey, 4 June, 1859, pg 11

⁶¹⁷ *The Recall of His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B, Governor of the Cape of Good Hope*, (London: Willis and Sotheran, 1860), Bulwer Lytton to Grey, 4 June, 1859, Pg 8

⁶¹⁸ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pgs 161-162

successors as they rapidly followed one another.’ Grey thus rather brilliantly made use of constant cabinet shuffling in Britain, and the political shift introduced by the Conservative presence, to plead his innocence, despite the fact that previous secretaries of state had also stated their disagreement with Grey’s suggestions for federation. He also claimed that Bulwer Lytton’s dispatches expressed ‘no doubt that your own views and feelings were strongly in favour of such a federation’, despite the fact that Bulwer Lytton’s allusions did, in fact, seem somewhat obvious.

This document truly illuminates Grey’s intelligence, for in it Grey attempted to completely turn the tables, depicting his removal as ‘an act of great injustice to me’. He asked

Can, then, Her Majesty’s advisers undertake to say that, if I had in any instance assumed less responsibility, Her Majesty’s South African possessions would have been preserved intact, and have been raised to the condition in which they now are?... Can a man who, on a distant and exposed frontier, surrounded by difficulties, with invasions of Her Majesty’s territories threatening on several points, assume a responsibility which he, guided by many circumstances which he can neither record nor remember as they came hurrying on one after the other, be fairly judged of in respect to the amount of responsibility he assumes by those who, in the quiet of distant offices in London, know nothing of the anxieties or nature of the difficulties he had to encounter? If Her Majesty’s possessions and Her Majesty’s subjects are saved from threatening dangers, and they gratefully acknowledge this, whilst the empire receives no hurt, is it a fitting return that the only reward he should receive should be the highest punishment which it is in the power of Her Majesty’s Ministers to inflict? This may be the reward that they bestow; but the true one, of the consciousness of difficult duties performed to the best of his ability, with great personal sacrifice, they cannot take from him.⁶¹⁹

Throughout his career, Grey would place himself as the victim in this particular affair, reciting, decades later, that ‘I have little doubt that I could have brought about federation, only I was not permitted to go on. Much as my proposals were supported in South Africa, I could get no hearing for them from my superiors at home.’⁶²⁰ This depiction seems to imply that Grey was attempting to bring about a federation on his own accord.

⁶¹⁹ *The Recall of His Excellency Sir George Grey*, Grey to Bulwer Lytton, 20 July, 1859, pgs 12-31

⁶²⁰ Milne, *Romance of a Pro-Consul*, pgs 161-162

Grey was either one of the most naïve, or one of the most arrogant governors in Cape history. Naïve if he simply expected to be allowed a free hand, especially given the change of government in Britain, and arrogance if he believed he could argue his way out of anything, particularly to Bulwer Lytton, himself a master of written interpretation. He had, across his many governorships, experienced a large degree of freedom, and, as explained within this thesis, was brought to the Cape under a rubric that encouraged assertive measures and independent action.

Lord Derby, in the years to come, would continue to have issues with Grey. In 1868, Derby, elected prime minister for a second time, would again recall George Grey from his governance in New Zealand on account of his flouting of orders. The difference between Whig and Conservative agendas is highlighted rather markedly by the fact that, days after Grey had been recalled from the Cape, and even after the various affairs between Grey and his Conservative overseers, the Duke of Newcastle, now once again sitting as secretary of state for the colonies following the Liberals' ascent to power in 1859, immediately re-appointed Grey to his position.

In the years to come there was a continuing ambivalence surrounding the idea of federation. The Duke of Newcastle claimed in 1861, 'A few years ago we withdrew from Territory we had acquired. It was done under my advice, but I cannot be blind to the fact that there has ever since been a tendency to reverse that policy and I am far from sure that the arrangement made in 1854 will eventually be maintained.'⁶²¹ If George Grey had pushed for such a federation, then, it is reasonable to assume that such a policy may eventually have come to fruition. However, as some have argued, one event on the return of his voyage to the Cape, following his immediate reappointment in the wake of Liberal victory, may have slanted him towards a rather existentialist state of being.

A Brief Conclusion

In 1860, while Grey was heading back to Cape Town upon the *Forte*, he intercepted a letter from his wife, Lucy Grey, to fellow voyager, Admiral Keppel, asking him to unblock the interleading door between their cabins so that she could come to him at night. Whilst on the voyage, Lady Lucy attached herself to the apparently dashing Keppel. In her own words she likened her marriage to 'a creeping plant, clinging to a support that was unable to bear the

⁶²¹ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pg 432

strain'⁶²². Grey's character was seemingly too overbearing for his poor wife. Grey reacted fairly emotionally, and, according to the ship's captain, Captain Tournor, he threatened both suicide and the murder of his wife.⁶²³ After this affair he would not see his wife for another thirty-six years. According to Peires, Grey set spies on her in London, 'trumpeted his wrongs all over Cape society and the world at large', and eventually intercepted another letter from Keppel, 'which he sent to the Colonial Secretary in the hope that it would ruin the admiral's career'.⁶²⁴

While such a story seems somewhat sensationalized, an old missionary, seeing Grey again at the Cape, claimed of Grey that 'I should not have discovered [recognized] him at all, I fear – as I had not done till he spoke – so broken down – so unlike himself.'⁶²⁵ Although one can understand how this event could have a heavy emotional impact, it underlines a certain emotional fragility inherent within Sir George Grey, but also, of the difficulty Lady Grey had in dealing with George on a day-to-day basis. Judging from the way that Grey dealt with his contemporaries, one could understand the burden placed upon Lady Grey in living with such an emotional and intense ego.

Other than during Prince Alfred's visit in 1860, Grey did indeed seem a distanced figure. In his speech to Parliament in 1861, Grey, upon the death of Emigration Agent Field, claimed that he would refrain from recommending a successor 'until an opportunity has been afforded you of acquainting me with your views regarding the continuation of emigration to South Africa. You will thus be able to decide whether it is your wish that the system of immigration now in existence should be continued, or whether your desire that any modifications or improvements should be introduced into it.'⁶²⁶ This was in sharp contrast to the figure whose speeches to Parliament had, on previous occasions, closely resembled a series of lectures. On top of this, in 1860 Marthinus Wessel Pretorius, President of the (Transvaal) South African Republic, became president of the Free State. Thus the two states were joined under one political leader – an occurrence that Grey surely would have prevented in previous years.

⁶²² Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 326

⁶²³ Gutsche, *The Bishop's Lady*, pg 181

⁶²⁴ Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pg 326

⁶²⁵ Ibid

⁶²⁶ George Grey Collection, South African National Cape Town, Speech of his Excellency the Governor at the Opening of the Third Session of the Second parliament, 26, April, 1861

Grey himself offered his service in New Zealand, which was at this point involved in a war with the native Maori, even claiming that he was willing to go and work under the existing New Zealand governor.⁶²⁷ He was given more than this, replacing incumbent governor Thomas Gore Browne.

Grey's governance marked an eventful period in South African history in which a number of important policies were in the balance. Alongside the Cattle-Killing, the impact of which is obvious, the issue of federation was a massive turning point, given Anglo-Boer relations in the decades to come. Furthermore, Grey's experience of working under both Liberals and Conservatives illuminates the radical shifts in policy that were occurring in England at the time – shifts that undoubtedly impacted the Cape. Grey served as the first civilian governor at the Cape, and while the success of many of his policies rested on the context of the time – building on the policies of Cathcart and Smith, and given a remarkable degree of freedom by his superiors – they were, nevertheless, seen as successful, particularly by individuals of the time, and imperial historians in the decades proceeding Grey's governorship at the Cape of Good Hope. While many have recently gone on to criticize Grey, he remains a mystifying figure, his actions and ideas up for further interpretation.

⁶²⁷ Rutherford, *Sir George Grey*, pgs 435-436

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