The Visit of the Snake: The Storied Landscape of the Lower !Garib in the mid-1830s

Dag Henrichsen

Introduction

In 1838, after travelling for two years along and across the !Garib / Orange River – north of the British Cape Colony – the Scottish officer James Edward Alexander (1803–1885) claimed that this river is the most important natural object on the map of South Africa:

> … It is difficult to speak of the Gariep[1] otherwise than in the most enthusiastic terms. Besides its beautiful African features, its utility is very great. … That there will be white men sojourning on the banks of the Orange river at no distant day, I have little doubt; for I found, at convenient distances from the river, great store of valuable iron and copper ores, for which there is always a great and increasing demand in Europe.[2]

Alexander's account of 'An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa, through the hitherto undescribed Countries of the Great Namaquas, Boschmans, and Hill Damaras', the title of his two-volume book, is in many ways a glowing account of colonial exploitation possibilities along and in the vicinity of the river. In particular, he referred to the potential of copper mining and also of husbandry and agriculture due to the abundance of wood, gum, honey and wildlife, including seals and fish along the coast.[3] His travels included a visit to the !Garib river mouth, 'in compliance with the wish of his Excellency the Governor' in Cape Town.[4] Indeed, his enthusiastic reporting was linked to the wider needs of the Cape colonial economy and to British imperial sovereignty claims, writing: 'Suppose "an Orange River Wood and Mining Company" was established, the natives and speculators might both be benefited'.[5]

Additionally, he claims:

1 This is the Afrikaans spelling of the river's name.

2 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, pp. 106–108

3 Historiographical contextualisations of Alexander's travels and writings are discussed, for example, by Dedering 1997, Keegan 2016, and Richings 2016.

4 Alexander 1837: p. 440

5 Ibid.: p. 442

> The natives … are friendly disposed. None occupy the ground where the Orange river copper is, and if white strangers were kept under proper restraint and control, the natives would be pleased to see them among them, for the sake of the articles of European manufacture which would be introduced among them. The natives might even be induced to assist in working the mine.[6]

The !Garib habitat[7] and, indeed, much of the area's desert, drylands and coast were at that time becoming a 'globalized cultural landscape', as Sian Sullivan et al. have recently observed with reference to the presence of Alexander and other colonial representatives. They write that 'its biophysical resources and indigenous practices were becoming shaped by, as well as shaping, cultural projections and extractive demands arising in distant locations and peoples',[8] in particular due to the tentacles of global mercantile capitalism and the Cape Colony's territorial expansion. In Alexander's perception, a reorganisation of the region's society and environment was at stake.

In this essay, I pay attention to what some scholars call 'emplaced experiences'[9], and to those recorded experiences which not merely reflect but shape meaning and activity in the mutually constitutive relationship between people and their biophysical environment. In particular, I attempt to re-read some of Alexander's writings in order to highlight aspects and issues of the arguably more intimate and as such (also) intersensorial ways in which people living *with* (and not merely along) the !Garib in 1836/7 constituted a habitat in the broadest sense. Neither an ethnography of the Lower !Garib as a space and place, nor a re-narration of what Alexander had in mind in view of his (Western) readership – namely an illustrative exoticisation and racialisation of people's lives and knowledge in the region – I search for tags in order to qualify a particular African habitat beyond the fairly static colonial re-imaginations claimed by Alexander himself. As it will become evident, I focus on those 'interspersed' (Alexander) text fragments in his travel chronicle which he regarded as 'anecdotes illustrative of African manners and of the chace [sic]'.[10] Before I discuss these particular fragments, I briefly sketch aspects of the prevalent colonial discourse as reflected in his account.

A Region in Crisis

Alexander mentions multiple engagements with, in particular, the male (African) elite residing along the !Garib and chronicles some of their mutual 'conversations' (usually conducted in Cape Dutch, it seems) in some detail. Combined with a plethora of observations

6 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. 119

7 I purposefully use the term 'habitat' to point to environments – and narratives – for any organisms, and with reference to aspects beyond the societal agency of humans, and point to the relational nature between society and bio-physical environments.

8 Sullivan et al. 2016 : p. 10

9 Parkington et al. 2019 : p. 732. The authors emphasise 'a mutual coming into being' of people in, and of places, and with regard to the 'constitution of environments'.

10 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. xii. Alexander often weaves 'quotes' from his African interlocutors into his narrative.

of life and livelihoods along the river, his account vividly indicates how much political, economic, social and cultural change and issues of control, authority and power were at stake. Given the encroaching Cape Colony border and largescale population migrations since at least the late 18th century,[11] Alexander met (or, at times, heard about) 'Namaqua chiefs and tribes', 'Bastaards', 'Boers' and 'Boschmans', 'banditts', colonial farmers and hunters, missionaries, and, along the coast, ship crewmen, seal hunters and whalers. Often, he encountered 'the coloured classes'[12], i.e., people and families of varied backgrounds and with histories of intermarriage. Alexander traveled a region which in 1836/7 constituted a cosmopolitan, multilingual and – in terms of economic, social and cultural practices – complex and flexible society. By the mid-1830s, the Lower !Garib was not a colonial frontier nor border region engaged in sudden change, but a region whose people had experienced, debated, embraced and/or rejected change and transformations for centuries.

Judging from Alexander's account, a sense of urgency, if not crisis, seems to have been expressed by, at least, some of his male interlocutors. Alexander quotes Paul Lynx (Links), a *kaptein* (leader) of the Lower !Garib at the time, with reference to a conversation both men held at Aris, some 30km inland from the !Garib mouth, and revolving around a 'white man' claiming to take possession, in the name of the Cape Governor, of a 'Seal Island': 'We shall shoot the white man if he attempts to catch seals on our island.'[13] Indeed, the Lower !Garib in the mid-1830s had become an area on the brink of colonial plunder. As Alexander had to learn during his travels, rumour had it 'of our having gone to Namaqua land to take the country and enslave the people!'[14]

Alexander's 'Namaqua' interlocutors like Paul Lynx were well-accustomed to the imperial discourse of claims being directed towards people living in the !Garib area.[15] As such they articulated their sovereignty with regard to land, territory and resources, and thus also with reference to their rights of access to the !Garib river mouth and its meadows, and to hunting seals along the coast, in ways and forms comprehensible to colonial representatives such as Alexander. However, the differently perceived political economy of the region reverberated, as I argue in the following, with conceptual complexities beyond a discourse of sovereignty, accessibility and control.

Beyond the Colonial Discourse

The 'conversations' with interlocutors in the !Garib area, as narrated by Alexander, were obviously often staged and need to be regarded as highly skewed if not fabricated, nothing to say of the manipulated forms in which they were apparently lifted out of his notebooks for the purpose of publication.[16] A critical reading of these 'conversations' indicates

11 In general, see Lau 1987, and Detering 1997.

12 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, pp. 126, 140–141

13 Ibid.: I, pp. 112–113

14 Ibid.: II, p. 252

15 See esp. Dedering 1997, and Penn 1995 on these discourses.

16 Alexander's private papers remain largely in private hands and have so far not been accessible to researchers, according to Richings 2016: p.41.

that there were also numerous other, different conversations taking place in, along, about and with (sic) the !Garib, than those shaped by an imperial discourse.

When leaving Aris in November 1836 for the river mouth with a few 'Namaqua' people under the tutelage of Paul Lynx, and eventually reaching the 'overlap' of the !Garib and the Atlantic Ocean, Alexander was not only thrilled by the impressive beauty of the wetlands with their 'green islands' and 'the quantities' and 'cries of innumerable flocks of wild fowl', hares and flamingos.[17] In passing he also pointed out that:

> an immense snake is occasionally seen whose trace on the sand is a foot broad. The natives say, that when coiled up, the circumference of this snake is equal to that of a wagon wheel; and when it visits the Orange river mouth it is a sign of a good season for rain.[18]

Alexander did occasionally not only pick up 'other conversations' but might have realised that there were also other powers which influenced people's lives.

Here, I take the visit of the 'immense snake' to the !Garib river mouth as a point of departure, to trace some of these other powers alluded to in Alexander's chronicle and which seem to have tuned and turned the mind and bodies of people in the area at the time. Which other powers and intimacies could have actively guided people in the area to shape, transform and as such constitute (anew) a habitat in, alongside and with the Lower !Garib? Which kind of knowledges and which experiences were deployed by people in order to shape, encompass and embody livelihoods in the area in the mid-1830s?

As indicated, Alexander's narrative is 'interspersed' with 'anecdotes', clearly a euphemism considering the fact that he regarded these text fragments as 'absurd' stories which 'show how "children of a larger growth" can be amused in the region of the Orange river'.[19] Typically, he invoked imperial psychology in order to disregard the knowledge and narratives that the region's inhabitants associated with their habitat, effectively constructing (and manipulating) an imperial hierarchy of 'race' and knowledge for the sake of the colonial project he envisioned for the region.

The visit of an 'immense snake' at the !Garib mouth alerts us to a 'storied landscape'[20] of great complexity. Alexander did possess some kind of an 'ear' to such complexity when travelling up and down the Lower !Garib. Importantly, 'his anectodes' were conveyed to him by people who were simultaneously engaging in colonial and Christian discourses and who were accessing, to various degrees, political, economic and ideological avenues heavily influenced by colonial markets, authorities and mission churches. Indeed, these 'stories' do not only point to complex, but multilateral and intimate worlds and viewpoints and a shared 'common sense' perspective in and along the !Garib in 1836/7.

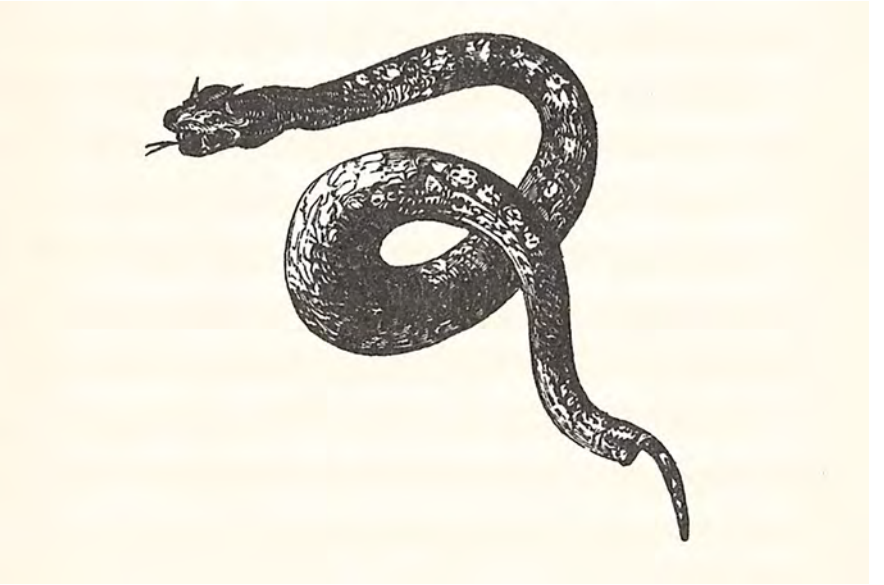
17 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, pp. 113–114

18 Ibid.: I, p. 115

19 Ibid.: II, p. 250

20 As used by Parkington et al. 2019: p. 735.

Fig. 1: 'Horned snake'. (Illustration, possibly by the Cape Colony's Surveyor-general Charles Cornwallis Michell).[21]



Snakes and Water

The occasional visit of an 'immense snake' at the !Garib river mouth constitutes a relational intimacy, in the literal, practical and cosmological sense, with a habitat beyond Alexander's own perceptions.[22] Snake and water narratives are a major trope in historical southern African cosmologies, as evident in landscape narratives and archives,[23] and Alexander's chronicle conveys this to some degree. As Chris Low's widely-cast analysis of a broad range of historical Khoisan 'ethnographies' vividly shows, snakes, water and, in particular, rain during the 19th century, generated entangled and, indeed, powerful and ambivalent relationships with people.[24] As such, dead people or ancestors could become snakes – 'spirit snakes' – and were not to be killed; and rain itself could transform women into snakes.[25] Snakes, in particular, transcended the human, natural and spiritual environment, and as such framed meaning – and possibilities – for people and their habi-

21 In Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. 56.

22 Recent research into southern African histories of habitat moves away from clear-cut anthropo- and ecocentric perspectives and stresses relational and entangled practices, attitudes and ethics. See, for example, the work of Sullivan et al. 2016, Parkington et al. 2019, and Low 2012.

23 See, with particular reference to the following sections in this paper, the extensive analysis of the fluid and ambiguous connections and entanglements between people, snakes, rain, divinity and healing in (historical) Khoisan worldviews, by Low (2012). His work provides the broader contexts of many of Alexander's mid-1830 observations as referenced in the rest of this paper.

24 Ibid.

25 The Digital Bleek and Lloyd (DBL), Notebooks, keyword 'snake'.

tat.[26] Knowledge about rainfall and water was – and is – crucial in the !Garib area, and knowledge about the snake´s visit must have carried profound meaning for the whole region. As is clear from the significance attested to the visit of the snake at the !Garib river mouth, its powers related, amongst other aspects, to people's ability to construct a future; the snake's visit 'is a sign of a good season for rain'.

The 'immense snake' radiated meaning not only for people. As Alexander had to learn on another occasion, 'monstrous snakes … whose bulk, when coiled up, occupied a space as large as an after wagon wheel [sic]' indicated their 'presence … among long grass by their smell, which was most offensive to cattle'.[27] This particular aspect of 'snake power' was pointed out to him by 'a respectable old Bastaard', Mr Balli, a wealthy stock owner residing close to Karahas further upstream from Aris. Mr Balli, no doubt, must have also held experiences with reference to the colonial farming community and Christianity. 'His' snake story obviously reflected not simply an ahistorical 'myth' or 'primordial' narrative, but emplaced experiences which were probably shared by many people in the region.[28]

A few months after his visit to the !Garib river mouth and now travelling to the north of Bethany in southern Namibia, Alexander picked up a conversation with two 'Boschmans', a man and a woman, at the fountain of '´Ahuas'. Apparently, to the dismay of the woman, the man had killed a snake:

> He excused himself by saying that he was a stranger in that part of the country, and did not know that the snake he had killed at the edge of the water, was the snake of the Fountain.
>
> ´Ahuas was not the only fountain in Namaqua land which was superstitiously believed to be preserved by a snake…It was singular enough that it should have dried up immediately after the death of the snake; perhaps a hole which the snake made in the soft mud might have kept the fountain open.[29]

This particular narrative points to the fallacies experienced by people not complying with or knowing about culturally shaped reasoning and perceptions: the fountain dried up because the man (in contrast to the woman) lacked the knowledge of attesting meaning to the snake. As such, the text is also a poignant reminder that any storied landscape is shaped by 'dense cultural meanings'[30] and discursively. Through these narratives and their narration, nature is historicised and history becomes naturalised. Their relational character points to an epistemology in which the entangled activities of people, animals and a biophysical environment mattered and shaped a habitat.[31]

26 See also Low 2012: esp. pp. 81, 92.

27 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. 145. See also Low 2012: p. 88.

28 See ibid., esp. pp. 73–80, 87.

29 Ibid.: II, pp. 227–228

30 Sullivan et al. 2016

31 For greater detail on this see esp., Low 2012.

(Absent) Ways of Sensing

The !Garib river mouth landscape was not only populated by animals, reptiles and birds, as encountered by Alexander. Temporarily, and especially in times of drought along the river, its tributaries and surrounding mountains, people from either side of its banks migrated to the wetlands and meadows of the river mouth together with their horses, goats and cattle.[32] As such, the river mouth became a changing environment and landscape. One aspect that fascinated Alexander was its perceived soundscape. He moved, as he wrote, amidst the 'distant bellow of the breakers [of the sea], and the clamour of the wild-fowl'[33] whilst 'the air was darkened with them, and the shore constantly resounded with their cries'.[34]

Alexander effectively introduced his readers to his own (inter-)sensorial and intimate responses to a particular space and place at a particular moment in time. When leaving the river mouth again in order to return to Aris, he writes:

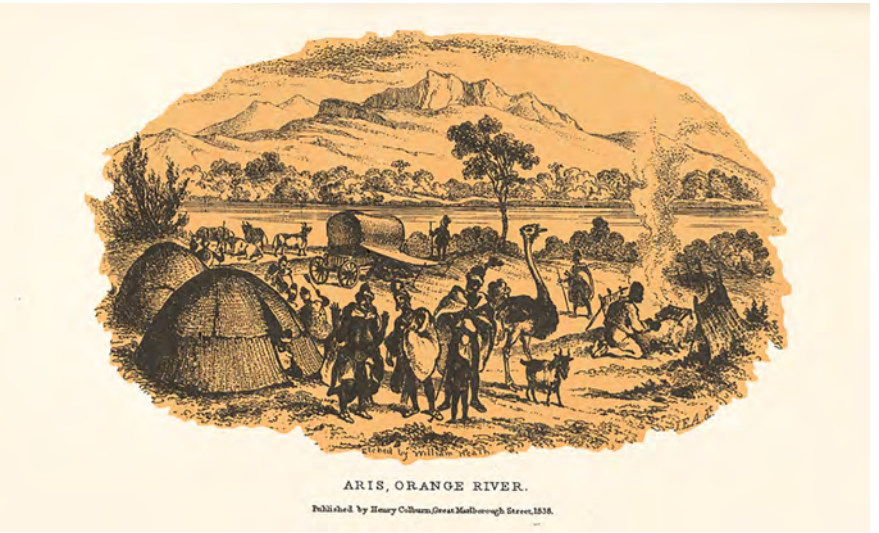
> we rode…across a country composed of sand and scattered bushes, and in which numerous mole-holes rendered riding dangerous. A feeling of heart-sinking took possession of one in traversing these hot, flat, and lonely wastes, on which there was no object to interest one, and no sound struck the ear…[35]

In other parts of the !Garib gorge, he was particularly struck by the 'disagreeable "quah," of different cadences' from the 'baboons' who 'make the lonely banks of the Gariep to re-echo'.[36]

Paul Lynx or Mr Ballie and their migrating families would most probably have objected to such descriptions, and to the limited sensory responses of Alexander. They might have wanted to communicate, for example, a different culture of hearing and listening. Alexander conveys very little about his interlocutor's ways of sensing. Consequently, the 'Namaqua's' dance and music were 'wild' for him[37] and their language 'is of great difficulty for a stranger to acquire and pronounce; the clicks resembling one another so closely, and each conveying a different signification'.[38] He did notice that 'the Namaquas, like other African hunters, can track a man or beast by marks on the sand, among stones, or by bushes, which would be perfectly unnoticed by a white man's eye.'[39] When he noticed 'a reddish cloud' at the horizon and 'thinking it must be the Boschmans cooking one of the oxen', a 'Namaqua' told him that it 'is a cloud of locusts we see'.[40] At times he provided so-called translations of a place or river name such as the 'Humabib (root water)' river or 'the fountain of 'Kururu (the noisy)'.[41]

32 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, pp. 113–114; Hoff 2018: p. XX.
33 Ibid.: I, p. 117
34 Ibid.: I, p. 114
35 Ibid.: I, p. 117
36 Ibid.: I, p. 152
37 Ibid.: I, p. 234
38 Ibid.: I, p. 193
39 Ibid.: I, p. 272
40 Ibid.: I, p. 296
41 Ibid.: I, pp. 276, 180

Fig. 2: What do we hear? Illustration of 'Aris, Orange River' (original caption), east of the !Garib river mouth (by the Cape Colony's Surveyor-general Charles Cornwallis Michell).[42]



As Steve Connor reminds us, 'cultures are sense traps'.[43] Just how much Alexander got trapped in his sensory responses towards the Lower !Garib environment becomes apparent when he sums up 'Namaqua knowledge',[44] interestingly in the form of some kind of cross-examination:

> I got old men together, gave them tobacco, and cross-questioned them as follows:
> What laws have the Namaquas?
> They have none, they only listen to their chiefs. …
> Do the people know anything of the stars?
> Nothing. …
> Do the Namaqaus believe in lucky and unlucky days, omens, &c.?
> They don't know anything of these things. …
> What do the Namaquas think of white men in general?
> The first time we saw white men we thought they were 'angry things' that would hurt us, but after we heard the Word of God we thought that the white men were better than ourselves, or that they were above us.[45]

Quite obviously, his interlocutors guarded their answers and 'played to the tunes of the examination', and to the colonial (knowledge) hierarchies which took root in the region at the time.

42 See the discussion of Michell's illustrations in Richings 2016. In Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. 82–83.
43 Connor 2005: p. 156
44 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. 165
45 Ibid.: I, pp. 170–174

As indicated, Alexander at times witnessed dance performances and 'cited' from the one or other 'song of the wild Boschman',[46] as he labeled these, as such providing additional glimpses of a storied landscape and ways of sensing. Additionally, his account is interspersed with numerous descriptions of hunting and other daily practices of place making or food security, amongst others, all crucially shaping emplaced experiences and knowledge, rooting habitat conceptualisations and attesting to a complex intersensorial ecology of people and space.[47] A few decades later, trained European scientists would write about 'the Namaquas' being '*wenig naturkundig*' (with little knowledge about nature)![48] As for Alexander, the !Garib was, as referenced above, foremost a '*natural object* on the map'.[49]

Hippopotami, Honey and Floods

Along the Lower !Garib, Alexander now and then observed bleached carcasses of hippopotami, at times hanging in the river bank trees:

> Besides trees torn up by the roots and rolling down the flood, sick or wounded hippopotami are sometimes borne down from the upper parts towards the mouth; these, occasionally before they reach the sea are fixed in the trees, and on the subsidings of the waters, they remain (in Dutch phrase) 'spurtelen'; or kicking among the branches. … the natives lose no time in stupid wonder, but quickly dispatch them with their javelins, and make merry over the rich spek, or fat under the skin.[50]

Apart from the sounds which these apparently dying animals inflicted onto the landscape, their presence changed the visual outlook of it during and after each flood, with hippo carcasses in the trees as time markers of previous floods. Narratives from Khoisan speakers of the 19th century provide much detail about what some of them referred to as 'water things', ie. sea cows which populated the upper and middle !Garib. Alexander, too, refers to the 'sea cow holes' in the riverbed and under-water landscape and the dangers this entailed for human activity.[51]

Floods shaped the landscape of the Lower !Garib and its tributaries in profound ways. Alexander´s account is dotted with references to narratives by his interlocutors about sudden floods and what this entailed in the everyday lives of people, animals and for the biophysical environment at large. Floods, real or anticipated, structured the actions and movements of people, stock and animals, and when they occurred, inflicted great dam-

46 Ibid.: II, pp. 25–26

47 See also more detailed contextualisations by Low 2012.

48 Henrichsen 2012: p. XVII

49 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. 106, italics added by DH.

50 Ibid.: I, p. 110. According to Ulla Mussgnug (personal information to DH, January 2022), the last surviving hippopotamus at the Lower Orange River was shot in 1925 at Beauvallon between Aris and the river mouth.

51 Ibid.: DBL, Notebooks, keyword 'hippopotamus'. See also the analysis by Low 2012.

age. Alexander provides a lengthy quotation from an account by *kaptein* Jan Buys[52] about 'men' and animals experiencing such floods:

> I remember … some terrible floods …A man and a snake would then be seen in a tall tree, and they did not molest each other, from fear of the torrent; or a man and a panther would be seen together. Many of the people who were living on the banks were swept away and drowned … On the banks of the Gariep, too, I recollect … that a honey seeker once climbed a cliff and loaded himself with honey; whilst he was securing his burden, he heard below him a roar, and looking down, he saw that the river had come down so as to separate him from his people on the other side; he accordingly cut a block of wood, launched it, and bestriding it, he tried, for a long time, to get into the stream…he was carried down, and was quite unable to help himself. He saw dead sea cows rolling down the river, and trees which had been torn up by the roots…At last he came to where the trees ended below ´Aris, and he thought that he should surely now be carried out to sea, when a lucky branch caught him, and he stuck fast; but he was so cold and benumbed that it was a long time before he could walk and get to his friends again.[53]

There is a point to make here about Jan Buys and his storied landscape archives. 'Old Jan', as Alexander dubbed him, was the leader of the Bethany Oorlam who in the decades before had migrated from areas south of the !Garib across the river to southern Namibia. He actively promoted Christianity and commercial trade relations with the Cape Colony and spoke Cape Dutch fluently, it seems. Yet, Alexander labeled him 'uneducated', though with 'a very good sense…very ready to communicate'.[54] Like Mr Barrie or Paul Lynx, Jan Buys embodied the cosmopolitan culture flourishing in and along the !Garib in the 1830s. His recorded 'stories' clearly show how this culture continued to be shaped by an entangled human and wider biophysical environment and informed the constitution of a habitat.

Heitsi-eibeb

Jan Buys was, of course, familiar with those spiritual and sacred spaces of the wider !Garib area which were linked to the deity of Heitsi-eibeb. Alexander had learned about such places of the 'Namaqua deity', often marked (according to him) by a 'long pile of stones … under [which] a person they call Haiji Aibib, of whom they stand in some fear, but of whose appearance and power they entertain no distinct ideas'; as such he also learned about the 'offerings' made by people passing by.[55] Buys took Alexander to such a place – 'the wonder of the country', according to Alexander – showed him a deep pit and then 'stood in alarm' when Alexander threw burning bushes and a stone attached to a fishing line into it. Whilst Alexander concluded that his own doings showed that the pit

52 Alexander 1967 (1838): I, p. 256; II, p. 231
53 Ibid.: II, pp. 244–245
54 Ibid.: II, p. 49; see also ibid.: I, p. 255.
55 Alexander 1838, p. 21

contained 'nothing … and so … lost its reputation',[56] Buys' reaction indicates that it most certainly did not lose its reputation. Rather, it simply confirmed the violence and disrespect enacted by yet another colonial agent. In the paragraph following the description of this incident, Alexander recalled the above-mentioned rumour about him 'enslaving the people'.

As Sigrid Schmidt[57] has observed, places associated with Heitsi-eibeb were and are often found near water (points). Rivers, as such, as Alexander was to learn in central Namibia from a 'Boschman', were places which, when digging for water, had to be approached with 'an offering'; by not doing so, a person could fall ill.[58] Schmidt's overview of Heitsi-eibeb-related places throughout southwestern Africa shows that its landscapes were heavily imbued with spiritually signified places and spaces of various kinds, and human agency and experience flowing from these.[59]

Outlook: Endurance

James Alexander's expedition narrative entrenched what during the course of the 19th century became the hegemonic Western society-nature dualism paradigm. This had marked consequences, as Manno Ramutsindela has recently stressed with reference to the conceptualisation of landscape and environment:

> Though humans, animals, and their biophysical environment are mutually constitutive, this entanglement has been undermined by ideas and discourses of landscapes and wilderness that thrive on social hierarchies often underpinned by a set of moral assumptions.[60]

Alexander's account is shot through with all of this and goes much further. Embedded in an imperial vision of plunder and subjugation, his narrative fed into the making of what Ramutsindela with reference to more recent times has labelled environmental racism.[61]

My attempt at reading the storied landscape along the (Lower) !Garib of 1836/7 conveys, not surprisingly, complexity and dense conceptualisations of, in, and with space, environment and place and, as such, complexity in the constitution of a habitat and a particular landscape. As I have argued elsewhere, we deal in part with topological (and not simply topographical) complexity, i.e., entangled, multilateral spatial conceptualisations and differentiations rooted in (historical) time.[62]

Given the cosmopolitan and increasingly globalised cultural landscape in the making along the !Garib, the 'stories' related to Alexander by his African interlocutors do not simply attest to the aestheticisation of (narrated) landscapes or environmental representations. They signify a selective duration of intimate, emplaced pasts and presents,

56 Ibid.: II, p. 251
57 Schmidt 2014
58 Alexander 1967 (1838): II, pp. 124–125
59 See, importantly, also Low 2012.
60 Ramutsindela 2018: p. 103
61 Ibid.: pp. 105–106
62 Henrichsen 1999

knowledge, memory, experiences and ways of sensing by people in their continual effort of constituting a habitat. In 1836/7, these 'stories' and people's ways of sensing implied endurance not merely because of a past sliding away in a rapidly changing present, but because of the significance – and power – attested to them by people engaged in shaping a future. Their many echoes can still be heard today.[63]

Bibliography

Alexander, J. E. (1837), Latest Intelligence from Captain Alexander. *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, 7: 439–446.

Alexander, J. E. (1838), Captain J.E. Alexander's Expedition. *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, 8: 16–25.

Alexander, J. E. (1967), *Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa. Through the hitherto undescribed countries of the Great Namaquas, Boschmans and Hill Damaras. London.* Facsimile reprint of the 1838 edition, Cape Town: C. Struik, 2 vols.

Connor, S. (2005), Edison's Teeth: Touching Hearing. In V. Erlmann (ed.), *Hearing Cultures. Essays on Sound, Listening and Modernity*. Oxford/New York: Berg: 153–172.

Dedering, T. (1997), *Hate the Old and Follow the New. Khoekhoe and Missionaries in early nineteenth-century Namibia*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

The Digital Bleek and Lloyd (DBL), digital archive publication, University of Cape Town: http://lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/index.html (accessed 20 Dec 2021).

Henrichsen, D. (1999), Claiming Space and Power in pre-colonial Central Namibia: the relevance of Herero praise songs. *Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB) Working Paper*, 1.

Henrichsen, D. (ed) (2012), *Hans Schinz. Bruchstücke. Forschungsreisen in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*. Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien.

Hoff, A. (2018), *!Osis – Female Leader of the Richtersveld (South Africa)*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe.

Keegan, T. (2016), *Dr Philip´s Empire. One Man´s Struggle for Justice in Nineteenth-Century South Africa*. Cape Town: Zebra Press.

Lau, B. (1987), *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time*. Windhoek: National Archives.

Low, C. (2012), KhoiSan shamanistic relationships with snakes and rain. *Journal of Namibian Studies*, 12: 71–96.

Parkington, J., D. Morris and J. M. de Prada-Samper (2019), Elusive Identities: Karoo / Xam Descendants and Square Kilometre Array. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 48 (4): 729–747.

Penn, N. (2015), The Orange River Frontier Zone, c. 1700–1805. In A. Smith (ed.), *Einiqualand. Studies of the Orange River Frontier.* Cape Town: University of Cape Town (UCT) Press: 21–109.

Ramutsindela, M. (2018), Environment. In G. Desai and A. Masquelier (eds.), *Critical Terms for the Study of Africa*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press: 102–114.

63 On the reverberations of Alexander's descriptions in 'ethnography' see Sullivan et al. 2016: p. 10; for reverberations in recent Khoisan cultural and spiritual practices see Low 2012.

Richings, F. G. (2016), Charles Cornwallis Michell, Surveyor-general, Civic Engineer and Cartographer: The Making of an Imperial Life in Cape Colony, 1828–1848, (PhD thesis, Birkbek College, University of London).

Schmidt, S. (2014), Some Notes on the so-called Heitsi-Eibeb Graves in Namibia: Ancient Heaps of Stones at the Roadside. *Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB) Working Paper*, 3.

Sullivan, S., M. Hannis, A. Impey, C. Low and R. F. Rohde (2016), Future Pasts? Sustainabilities in West Namibia – A conceptual Framework for Research. *Future Pasts Working Paper Series*, 1. http://www.futurepasts.net/future-pasts-working-papers. Accessed 20 Dec 2021.

Sullivan, S. (2019), Maps and Memory, Rights and Relationships. Articulations of Global Modernity and Local Dwelling in Delineating Land for Communal-Area Conservancies in North-West Namibia. *Future Pasts Working Paper*, 10. http://www.futurepasts.net/future-pasts-working-papers. Accessed 20 Dec 2021.