

dokument verstaan nie, hy sommer maar net lang dele daaruit direk aanhaal. Hierdie aanhalings word nêrens verantwoord nie, en is dus uiteraard nie geloofwaardig nie.

Sommer met die intrap sorg Beukes vir 'n historiese onjuistheid. As hy sy navorsing goed gedoen het, sal hy weet dat Smuts, in teenstelling met dit wat hy as skrywer beweer, verre van 'n "brilliant military leader" was. Verbandhoudende dokumente in die *Public Record Office* en *War Museum* in Londen getuig hiervan. Sy Oos-Afrika kompanjie tydens die Eerste Wêreldoorlog is 'n verdere bewys hiervan. Smuts was maar te bly om van hierdie verantwoordelikheid ontslae te raak toe hy Londen toe moes gaan vir die bywoning van die Imperiale Oorlogskabinet. En toe Smuts die aanbod kry om die bevel oor te neem van die Britse magte in Palestina in hierdie tyd, het hy eers vir Botha geraadpleeg, wat teruggekabel het: "Advise you to refuse. We both know you are no general."

Ek twyfel nie dat dié boek goeie verkope sal hê nie. Goeie verkope, nié omdat dit 'n goeie boek as sodanig is nie, maar wel omdat dit die soetsappigheid bevat wat vir 'n sekere leserspubliek bedoel is. Die feit dat Beukes dikwels met sy aanbieding in hierdie verband aan die banale grens, is hier van deurslaggewende belang. "The diary", skryf hy, "also tells how Frederica slept in the nude and one night this nearly got her into trouble while a guest in Groote Schuur." (p.129). Daar is nog talle ander soortgelyke voorbeelde. *The Romantic Smuts* kry nie 'n plek op my boekrak langs die ander boeke oor generaal J.C. Smuts nie. Beukes is 'n apologie verskuldig aan die nagedagtenis van Smuts en ook aan die Smuts-familie.

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**Clifton C. Crais: *The making of the colonial order: white supremacy and black resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865.*** (Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand Press, 1992) xvi, 284 pp. illus., charts, maps, bibliography, index. ISBN 1868142132.

*The making of the colonial order* offers new insights into the troubled and violent world of the Eastern Cape colonial frontier. Unlike earlier works that have tended to see the eighteenth-century Afrikaner frontier experience as crucial to the shaping of racial attitudes in South Africa, Crais argues firmly for the dominance of the British settlers' frontier experience. He argues further that the settler presence ushered in a revolution in the development of class and race relations in the Cape and in the way in which power was exercised.

Crais is also more concerned than were earlier historians with cultural questions and the interdependence between culture and the structures of dominance within frontier society. He offers a post-modern critique of frontier society in which he explores the extent to which the settlers' views of Africans and other subordinate

groups shaped developments on the frontier. He argues that these views, and the specific use of the language in which whites expressed them, encouraged imperial expansion and legitimized colonialism and racial capitalism. He further argues that, for their part, the Xhosa helped to shape the colonial order through the way in which they viewed themselves and settler society and through their own contest over power and identity.

Crais divides his discussion into four parts.

Part one is concerned with the frontier as a site of intensive social interaction and construction.

Part two looks at the consequences of British rule at the Cape during the early nineteenth century. The focus of attention is the extent to which the fundamental transformation of the conception and exercise of power during these years informed European perceptions of, and policies towards, colonial peoples. Crais argues that the optimism concerning the future of subject peoples that had characterized the anti-slavery crusade dissolved at this time into a cynicism and pessimism that coincided with the emergence of new conceptions of power. These new conceptions shaped the way in which Europeans viewed and exploited the colonial peoples and laid the foundation for modern conceptions.

Part three looks at the creation of a colonial society informed by these new concepts; at the complex processes of accumulation, conquest, dispossession and resistance. It culminates in the Frontier War of 1851-3.

Part four completes the analysis of the colonial conquest, examining the entrenchment of white supremacy and imperial rule. It further examines the way in which black people comprehended and often rejected the colonial world. It culminates in the Cattle Killing of 1856-1857.

Crais is interested ultimately in the way in which all of the inhabitants of the frontier associated with and comprehended each other. The stress of the book is on the way in which inhabitants within frontier society interacted. Dispossession and colonial conquest opened the way for subjected peoples, whether Xhosa, Khoikhoi or others, to begin to forge new identities which transcended but did not necessarily replace older and more ethnically based definitions of self. At the same time, the replacement of Dutch concepts of power with the British vision of the sovereign-subject relationship strengthened both the position of the state and of its legal buttresses.

There is much of interest and value in *The making of the colonial order*. By offering a new interpretation of the early nineteenth century and laying stress on the importance of the settler presence in the development of racial attitudes and of an exploitative, capitalist and ultimately racially-based society, Crais has challenged traditional concepts of South African history. His forceful arguments and his perceptive analyses have already opened a debate on the formulation of racial attitudes that will have a marked influence on frontier historiography. But there is also much in the book that leaves a feeling of

disquiet. In many ways, the analyses offered by Crais are vague, yet at the same time they can be too glib and too smooth. In addition, Crais's style and use of language at times irritates. This is particularly true of his use of words – perhaps oligopsonistic (p. 111) is in common use in the United States, it certainly is not in South Africa. Crais's use of the term “Peon” is also confusing and it is not always clear what distinguished peonage.

Although the focus of *The making of the colonial order* is on the eastern Cape, its concerns are those of the whole of South Africa and as such its interest to the local or regional historian could be limited.

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