

# J.T. van der Kemp and Eighteenth Century Coded Subjectivity

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## Abstract

J.T. van der Kemp was the first London Missionary Society President of African Missions. He arrived in the Cape in 1799, and it can rightfully be said that he was indeed the inaugurator of what became known as the ‘century of missions’ in South and Southern Africa (during the 19<sup>th</sup> century). The impact on the indigenous populations of this century of missions has been described as the most important system which, for the purposes of this paper, we may call a system of cultural violence and deculturation. In order to address this matter, the paper starts off by briefly presenting three models of the progressive impacts of missions in South Africa, viz. that of Nosipho Majeke (Dora Taylor) ([1952] 1986); that of John L. Comaroff (1989); and that of David Chidester (1996). It then proceeds to an analysis of the impact of J.T. van der Kemp, 1799-1804. Theoretically I draw on the distinction between morality and ethics by Michel Foucault as well as his theorising of eighteenth century representational thought.

**Keywords:** J.T. van der Kemp, morality, ethics, models for missionary engagement, sobriety, moral code, subjectivity

## 1 Introduction

In 1799 Johannes Theodorus van der Kemp came to the Cape Colony as the first missionary and President of African Missions of the London Missionary Society (LMS). During the twelve years before his death in Cape Town

(1811), he established a mission for the Khoikhoi and became famous for his conflict with Governor J.W. Janssens and the frontier farmers. A brief timeline can be presented as follows:

1799-1800 – Visit to Xhosaland beyond the frontier

1801 – Return to Graaff-Reinet

1801 – ‘Conditions’ under which the Khoikhoi lived ... and mission for them

1802 – Moved with Khoikhoi to Botha’s Place in the vicinity of Fort Frederick

1803 – New Governor Janssens provided piece of land for Khoikhoi – Bethalsdorp

1803 – Criticism of the ‘cruelty’ of frontier farmers vis-à-vis Khoikhoi

1805 – Called to Cape Town by Janssens

1806 – Witnesses Major-General David Baird’s taking of the Cape

1806 – Baird allows return to Bethelsdorp

1806 – Ardent abolitionist; bought a Malagasy slave woman and her daughter during his stay at the Cape awaiting Janssens’ decision. He married the daughter of fourteen years and the couple had four children before Van der Kemp’s death in 1811.

1806 – Continued criticisms of the frontier settler community

1811 – Called to Cape Town again and died there in December 1811, age 63.

Broadly speaking, the focus of this article is on a historicised understanding of a sample of Van der Kemp’s morality that he propagated and how he implemented this understanding in his own interactions with various role players at the Cape as well as on the frontier. Studies like this are important because they provide insights into historicised colonial subjectivities. As such, this is a layer in human intellectual history that does not only provide insight into the historical moment only, but also how such subjectivities continue to impact across time and space. Theoretically I draw on insights from Michel Foucault.

## **2 Theoretical Framework**

In general, morality indicates a discourse’s moral code - its prescriptions and interdictions. The study of morality, however, does not only ask what this

code is, but also how this code determines empty subject positions within discourse, how a self is to fill these positions, conduct itself within them and have such a position articulates with other similar empty positions within that discourse, or adjacent ones. This provides for the moral code's impersonal nature but also for how or through which institutions the self is both subjected to it and made into a subject of it – its agency. The question of the subject and subjectivity, therefore, asks the question of the moral code's principles, its applications as it functions within a particular discourse – discourses of science, politics, and culture but also custom, folklore, tradition, or, in modern society, the institution and the organisation (or social systems in general) – and the morality of behaviour or conduct. To quote Foucault:

By 'morality', one means a set of values and rules of action that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies such as the family (in one of its roles), educational institutions, churches, and so forth. It is sometimes the case that these rules and values are plainly set forth in a coherent doctrine and an explicit teaching. But it also happens that they are transmitted in a diffuse manner, so that, far from constituting a systematic ensemble, they form a complex interplay of elements that counterbalance and correct one another and cancel each other out on certain points, thus providing compromises or loop-holes. With these qualifications taken into account, we can call this prescriptive ensemble a 'moral code' (Foucault 1986:25).

To this explication of the moral code, Foucault (1986:26) also added the 'morality of behaviors', indicating the measure and degree to which individuals conform to the rules of conduct and resist or respect them. And, with regard to Foucault's perception of how institutions are 'intermediaries' or 'prescriptive agencies' for the moral codes, I have expanded it to accommodate 'discourse'. The reason is that the moral code is not absent in 'science' (cf. Smit 2013:26 – 27).

In the impersonal world of the moral code, then, subjectivity is not only given, but also applied to the subject and if the self becomes part of this discourse, the self has to conform to its prescribed discursive prescriptions and interdictions in action and on pain of sanction.

For Foucault, ethics is different. Ethics raises the question of the self. The ‘self’, for him,

... is not simply ‘self-awareness’ but self-formation as an ‘ethical subject’, a process in which the individual delimits that part of himself [or herself] that will form the object of his [or her] moral practice, defines his [or her] position relative to the precept he [or she] will follow, and decides on a certain mode of being that will serve as his [or her] moral goal. And this requires him [or her] to act upon himself [or herself], to monitor, test, improve, and transform himself [or herself]. There is no specific moral action that does not refer to a unified moral conduct; no moral conduct that does not call for the forming of oneself as an ethical subject; and no forming of the ethical subject without ‘modes of subjectivation’ and an ‘ascetic’ or ‘practices of the self’ that support them. Moral action is indissociable from these forms of self-activity and they do not differ any less from one morality to another than do the systems of values, rules, and interdictions (Foucault 1986:28)<sup>1</sup>.

Different from the impersonal nature of the moral code and its prescriptive subjectivities given in discourse and mediated by the institution, ethics is concerned with the personal. Not only who the self is in its inner recesses - individually articulated identity - but also how it relates to, works on itself as object, and integrates objectively given morality, is the question of ethics for Foucault. It concerns itself with how the self is to become a moral kind of person. In this sense, ethics answers the question of the kind of person the self aspires to be, the kind of life the self leads, and the special moral state the self wishes to attain. Given this perspective, the question of how ethics articulates with the moral code is then how or in what sense the self meets its sanctions and interdictions or how the self resists it, struggles with it (cf. also Rajchman 1991:90 on Foucault in this regard).

Against the background of this brief explication of the difference between morality and ethics, this article, in general, focuses on the former and a planned second article, on the latter. It is true that such a distinction

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<sup>1</sup> In order to retain Foucault’s notion on the ‘self’, I have added the female forms of the self where he only used the male forms.

cannot be carried through consistently. When one speaks of the moral code and its subjectivity, one cannot but speak too, of the self and how it relates to that code and vice versa. Even so, it does provide the possibility of analysing Van der Kemp's South African texts from two different perspectives. Further, these two perspectives follow the distinction Foucault made between the moral code and ethics, but, with one further difference. I have reserved the concepts 'subject' and 'subjectivity' for discourse and how subjectivity is not only given within discourse and its moral code(s) but also articulates the impersonal mechanisms through which discourse subjects. The concept of 'self', again, I have reserved for ethics and how the self articulates with itself but also with the objectively given subjectivity in the moral code. Depending on perspective, then, the distinction between 'subject' and 'self' is that of the objectively given and personal articulation, with one never outside the scope of the other.

With regard to Van der Kemp's South African texts, the focus is then on the moral code(s) present in them and their mechanisms of creating a subject in this article. For Van der Kemp himself, this raises the question, firstly, of subjectivity within religion, how he himself was 'transformed' to become a subject of it but also its moral agent. Secondly subjectivity within the discourses of language, natural history and exchange and how they determined subjectivity are addressed. Thirdly, within the general discourse and technologies of eighteenth-century 'power', the question of the subject is raised with regard to royal sovereignty, custom, and the distinction and conflict between secular and religious subjectivity. But first, I provide a brief overview of the models a selection of scholars developed to capture the nature of colonising missionary engagement in especially the first half of the century of missions (1800 – 1850).

### **3 Three Models for Missionary Engagement**

#### ***3.1 The Progressive Conquest Model***

This model, advanced by Nosipho Majeke (Dora Taylor) ([1952] 1986), is time-historical and emblematic of what happened during the nineteenth century, and can be put down in bullet form. For this brief summary, see especially Majeke (1986:7).

- The missionary approaches the Chief Bible in hand to ask for a piece of land;
- The trader follows, to also requires a piece of land;
- Agreement between Chief and Governor on the British becoming a ‘friend and protector’ of the Chief;
- This ‘treaty’ is a precursor to the Chief handing over large pieces of land belonging to the tribe;
- The Chief receives a magistrate and missionary;
- More mission stations are set up and more traders enter the area;
- The missionaries, due to their message create a split in the tribe (‘divide and rule’);
- Large tracts of land are handed to Dutch farmers and British settlers;
- Lost cattle are rustled back and forth between the tribe, and the frontier farmers;
- The military enter the fray to ‘keep order among the “treacherous” tribes’;
- This is accompanied or followed by gunpowder, and famine – towards the final stages of conquest;
- More land is seized and the farmers cry out for labour from the conquered tribes;
- The destitute Africans, robbed of their land, are turned into a cheap labour force;
- The British wants to stop the costly business of war;
- The frontier farmers trek away, conquering even more land beyond the colonial frontiers; and
- The British are ‘reluctantly compelled’ to ‘protect the natives’.

On this latter point, Majeke (1986:7) concludes – ‘Hypocrisy has always been one of Britain’s most useful weapons’.

### ***3.2 The British Cultural Self Improvement Model***

In distinction to Majeke’s conquest model, I capture Comaroff’s (1989) model under this heading. It derives from his analysis of the cultural impact of the industrial revolution on British class formation in Britain. Significant

in this regard is his assumption that the upward mobility preached, taught and to some extent experienced by missionaries and their class in England provides the cluster of assumptions with which they propagated upward mobility among the indigenous people in the colony (cf. Comaroff 1989:664f). Central to these assumptions were their ‘imagined’ or ‘idealized’ worlds as informed by the British experience, and their conscious or unconscious identification of three models of colonialism in the colony, viz. the state model, the model of settler colonialism; and the model of civilizing colonialism.

Described under the heading, ‘The Origins of the Colonial Mission in South Africa: Britain 1810 – 1840’, Comaroff (1989:665) argues that there were three fused aspects to the missionaries’ imagined or idealized world. Summarising, he says:

... what they wished to see was a neat fusion of three idealized worlds: the rational, capitalist age in its most ideologically roseate form, wherein unfettered individuals were free to better themselves; an idyllic countryside in which, alongside agrarian estates hard-working peasants, equipped with suitable tools and techniques, produced gainfully for the market; and a sovereign ‘Empire of God’ whose temporal affairs remained securely under divine authority (Comaroff 1989:665).

Comaroff then discusses each of these ‘worlds’ as they were understood and experienced in Britain under the related three headings:

- The individual and civilized society;
- The city and the countryside; and
- The empire of God.

These three ‘worlds’ Comaroff argues also impacted on Christian missions emanating especially from Britain. As such they constitute three colonizing models, which Comaroff (1989:671ff) discusses under the heading: ‘Colonialisms in Conflict: The South African Frontier, circa 1820 – 1840’. In British missionary understanding in South Africa, though, these were represented by four groups of characters. Summarising, he says:

From the perspective of the evangelists, the terrain sported four sets of characters – aside from Africans – and three models of colonial rule. The former included (1) His Majesty’s administrators and officers, most of them gentlemen of high birth and/ or rank; (2) British settlers, largely respectable middle-class burghers of Cape Town and farmers in the colony; (3) Boers (lit. ‘farmers’) of Dutch, German and French descent who were regarded as ‘rude’; and (4) [the missionaries] themselves, agents of the various mission societies. Even more sharply distinguished were their models of colonial rule .... The first, associated with the British administration (and by extension British settlers), may be dubbed *state colonialism*; the second attributed to the Boers, was a form of *settler colonialism*; and the third, their own, was perceived as a *civilizing colonialism*. In the missionaries’ view, if it may be so summarily stated, the three colonialisms were, respectively, bureaucratic, brutal, and benign (Comaroff 1989:672).

### **3.3 *The From Denial to Discovery of Religion Model***

This model is well-known from David Chidester’s *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa* (1996). In his studies of comparative religious practices on the colonial frontier encounters of the nineteenth century, Chidester realised that the degree of the subjection of indigenous people also determined the degree to which the indigenous people were realised as being religious. Before subjection, they did not have a religion; once subjected, they were credited as being religious. He explains.

If religion has been a contested category, a term that has been historically produced and situationally deployed, then a single incontestable definition of religion cannot simply be established by academic fiat .... [Both minimalist and maximalist definitions] have usually ignored the real issue of denial and recognition of that are inevitably at stake in situations of intercultural contact and conflict .... In tracing the trajectory from the denial to the discovery of indigenous religions on southern African frontiers, we have been able to correlate the crucial moment of recognition with the establishment



of a local system of colonial control. Under the magisterial system, the location system, or the reserve system, Africans were suddenly discovered to have an indigenous religious system. This linkage between the discovery of a local religion and the establishment of local control suggests that knowledge about religion, and religions has depended upon the power relations reinforced by colonial enclosures (Chidester 1996:254f).

## 4 J.T. van der Kemp

We first turn our attention to the moral code of ‘sobriety’ and how the subject was understood with regard to abstinence.

### 4.1 *Sobriety*

Similar to how eighteenth-century thinkers problematised systems and institutions in terms of which they then consciously created different ones, human ‘character’ too, was something to be cultivated and transformed and not given. If ‘wretchedness’ defined an uncivilised state, then it was so too for character - the savage and undisciplined forming part of a ‘horde’. This general perception was shared by both religious and secular protagonists and the manifestation of ‘civilization’ or ‘discipline’ in human character, was described as that of the subject living a ‘sober life’.

Further - and also typical of eighteenth century representational thought - ‘character’ was not only something which could be observed in ‘conduct’. It was also described, and that, in terms of how what one professes, would representationally show in ‘conduct’. We see both these perspectives in the letter written by Cornelius Brem to the London Missionary Society recommending Van der Kemp to the organisation as missionary. In his ‘answer to an enquiry into Dr. V’s *character*’ (e.a.), and having been a life-long friend of the family, he writes as follows:

He is of a very healthy, strong constitution, hardened against all fatigues by *deliberate abstinence; a model of strict sobriety*. In his *aversion he shews not the least ostentation, and seems studiously to conceal the great endowments he possesses; humble, friendly,*

*affable, and of the most agreeable address. When he left the University of Leyden he was infected with the grossest infidelity, in which he was strengthened by persons of that stamp during his stay in England and Scotland .... he began to be shaken in his former principles of infidelity, and to have embraced the christian system. On the Lord's Day attending the ministry in the village, when the sacraments of the Lord's supper was administered; he got, as he told me, Christ revealed to his heart, and embraced him by faith as his Lord and Saviour for ever. Knowing the familiar acquaintance I had with his worthy father and brother, he came to me very unexpectedly, as I have not seen him for twenty-five years; and gave me a short narrative of his life and conduct, with the influence the religion of Jesus had now upon him. Knowing his past infidel conduct, and that his worthy father had died of the grief which it occasioned; I kept myself a little reserved, desirous to see if his behaviour would correspond with his present profession; and from every information which I have obtained from my religious friends, it has been since such as I could wish (LMS I CC 1797:350; e.a.).*

As highest manifestation of the 'idea' of 'character', this communication not only focused attention on being subject to (or object of) 'religion', but the 'christian system' or 'the religion of Jesus'. Not the 'stamp' of infidelity - which could be observed in the 'conduct' of a person - but that of this religion and its 'profession', is seen as of highest representational significance. Also, not to merely 'profess', but to observe whether such 'profession' representationally articulates in 'behaviour' - 'if his behaviour would correspond with his present profession' - gave rise to the reservations Brem initially had about Van der Kemp's starting to 'profess' religion. With regard to the theme of sobriety, and also in the terminology, one gets a glimpse of eighteenth-century thought concerning 'character'.

But, in religious perspective, there is a more important observation to be made from this text. In the age of 'revolution' towards the latter part of the eighteenth century, the rise of the secular 'civil state' and government accommodation of the 'will of the people', these discourses together with their technologies of power were subjected to religion. Since Christianity was the ultimate discourse for Van der Kemp, his participation in using secular and civilising terminology in his texts, therefore, must be seen as always

having been reserved to some degree. In the sense of Foucault above, this means the ‘complex interplay of elements that counterbalance and correct one another and cancel each other out on certain points, thus providing compromises or loop-holes’. It is this subjectivity which also meant that even ‘sobriety’ must be seen - both as it relates to Van der Kemp himself and how he was its moral agent - to have been determined not by a secular view (from the perspective of health for example) but decidedly Christian understanding.

It was, then, the observation of conduct and its outward description which provided knowledge of the truth of character. More importantly even - and following natural history’s ‘limited’ understanding of ‘progress’ or ‘evolution’ - it was the transformation from ‘infidelity’ to ‘faith’ and ‘strict sobriety’ which indicated ‘transformation’.

If this transformation was witnessed by Brem and his ‘religious friends’, then, in South Africa, it appears that Van der Kemp kept to it. Subject to ‘the religion of Jesus’ but also now its moral agent, the decision to ‘leave off drunkenness, swearing, stealing, whoredom, &c.’ - abstinence - constituted the moral matrix which provided access to Van der Kemp’s catechism classes. And, to become ‘subject to our discipline’ enabled one to join the mission. This indicated not only that ‘a sober life’ constituted the moral code in general, but also that subjection to the regularities of the mission institution provided entrance into the ‘instruction’, and ‘discipline’ the mission offered (LMS I TVDK 1801:483,486). This, together with Van der Kemp’s own commitment to ‘sobriety’, is also the context in which one must understand his criticism of the soldiers and boors on the frontier on this score.

In his entries for March 20 and 22 1801, and still beyond the frontier on his return to the colony after having been in Ngqika’s area, Van der Kemp writes:

The Colonists having got some wine from the Colony, diverted themselves by intoxicating the soldiers, which ended in riot and blasphemy. William [an English deserter desiring to become a Christian] left the company, after endeavouring in vain to persuade them to leave off drinking .... [and]

March 22d. - I preached from Jam iii. 9,10. and to the English from Matt. xii. 35-37. I spoke pointedly to the behaviour of both on Friday last, and admonished the Englishmen after sermon privately. They

received it with silence, and outward demonstrations of sorrow (LMS I TVDK 1801:476).

On how the boors not only opposed the missionaries, but also ‘seduced’ the Khoi, Van der Kemp and Read say:

The boors, finding that what they said, or did, had little effect on our minds, directed their devices to our people. They endeavoured *to seduce them into drunkenness, whoredom, and other vices*; and in which, to our grief, with some they were successful. But they did not rest: *they sought to corrupt their minds to disbelieve the word of God, despise Christ, and inculcated that Hell, which the Paaps, (or Papes, alluding to us) represented as being intolerably hot, was only a comfortable place, well adapted for us (said they) who smoke*. This, however, was so shocking to our people, that they only considered these Boors as enemies and deceivers (LMS II AR 1803:158f; e.a.).

In this perspective, ‘sobriety’, then, objectively and representationally represented the moral code Van der Kemp sought to inculcate. It is woven into a matrix which includes faith in God, reverence for Christ and a fear of Hell (and hope in heaven).

In the context of the eighteenth century understanding of power in Europe, sobriety - especially in the institutions of the prisons but also barracks, schools and hospitals - similarly indicated the ‘civilisation’ - especially through labour - to which inmates, soldiers, pupils and patients were subjected to. Sobriety, amongst others, indicated the break with a life of ‘idleness’ and ‘laziness’. As in the case of the English deserters, drunkenness, riot and blasphemy indicated ‘careless’ words if not a ‘careless’ life (from Matthew 12). As for the ‘boors’, Van der Kemp chose the well-known text from James: that blessing and cursing come from the same mouth. In this context, we may surmise that he scolded the Colonists for their ‘blasphemy’.

As for the ‘vices’ - especially drunkenness and whoredom - in this episteme, it indicated the opposite of subjectivity to the Christian moral code - or the subjection to moral authority: a life of ‘laziness’ and not ‘usefulness’ (cf. Coetzee 1988:16ff). It also represented a life of crime - and in the case of the boors, ‘cruelty’.

In his functioning as moral agent, it is then evident that Van der Kemp was not only himself subject to the code of sobriety but also sought to inculcate it in others. Moreover, how one came to know whether one was subject to this morality, was - typical of eighteenth-century thought - deduced from the 'observation' of behaviour but also from how that which one professes consistently relates to one's conduct. Further, the change from one category in the natural history table - so to speak - to another, was the main nexus in terms of which the eighteenth-century subject (as object) was observed. This is true not only of Brem's report on Van der Kemp, and the references to sobriety's antitheses. It also points to all those incidents where Van der Kemp attempted to deduce something of the inner state of a person from his or her 'conduct'. I give one example. (The significance of this quote as it relates to the perception of the self is addressed in the next article.)

On January 14 1801, Van der Kemp reports as follows on one of his converts:

Some time ago, I had *observed* in the *conduct* and *temper* of Mary, some things which made me *doubt* the sincerity of her conversion, nor that I had, since that time, much religious conversation with her, though she prayed every morning with me privately ... (LMS I TVDK 1801:472; e.a.).

If these observations on 'sobriety', or how, in general, character was observed in terms of how what one professes and how one conducts oneself - also to be observed in 'temper' - objectively and representationally characterised an eighteenth-century perception of the subject, it was in these terms too, that the transformation from 'infidelity' to 'sobriety' was seen. This perspective raises the question, of 'discipline' and 'civilization'. But before this is addressed, we first have to turn to the question of the subject in the sciences of the time.

## 4.2 *Sign, Idea and Subject*

In the age of representation, and because of the pre-eminence of observation and perception over the other senses, the human being was not the 'subject', but the 'object' of science. Confronted with the bewildering array of

languages, natural elements, plants and animals as well as the representational understanding of money, 'sciences' to capture all in a 'universal grammar', 'universal table', and 'universal understanding of money' - or the 'universal encyclopaedia' - had to be developed. That these were only imaginary constructs, all the scientists of language, nature and exchange, knew:

It was [the sign] system that introduced into knowledge *probability, analysis, and combination, and the justified arbitrariness of the system*. It was the sign system that gave rise simultaneously to the search of origins and to calculability; to the constitution of tables that would fix the possible composition, and to the restitution of the genesis on the basis of the simplest elements; it was the sign system that linked all knowledge to a language, and sought to replace all languages with a system of artificial symbols and operations of a logical nature [mathesis] (Foucault 1982:63; e.a.).

Further, within the natural history table - even though he (sic) was the one who had 'progressed' the farthest - the human being was only one element of this universal array of elements in need of description and representation. This made of 'the human' an object to be observed, described, characterised and represented in the universal 'table' through the employing of the sign system.

In its simple state as an idea, or an image, or a perception, associated with or substituted for another, the signifying element is not a sign. It can become a sign only on condition that it manifests, in addition the relation that links it to what it signifies. It must represent; but that representation, in turn, must also be represented within it. This is a condition indispensable to the binary organization of the sign, and one that the *Logique de Port-Royal* sets forth even before telling us what a sign is: 'When one looks at a certain object only in so far as it represents another, the idea one has of it is the idea of a sign, and that first object is called a sign'. *The signifying idea becomes double since superimposed upon the idea that is replacing another there is also the idea of its representative power. This appears to give us three*

*terms; the idea signified, the idea signifying, and, within the second term, the idea of its role as representation (Foucault 1982:64; e.a.).*

If this was true for representational thinking in general, any idea about a human being - 'strict sobriety' for example - then, would be the 'idea signified'; if this idea is related to a particular person, then the idea would be the 'signifying idea'; and, because of the 'representative power' of this relationship, the idea plays its 'representative role'.

The question, however, now arises as to who or what did the observation, description, characterisation and representation. In line with the dictums of representational thought, this labour was fundamentally conducted by the imaginary construct or system itself. It was language itself, natural history, and exchange, which 'analysed'. Description derived from the observed and experienced as it represented itself in terms of the analytical power of the system. The signifying idea of 'order' in the system depends on the analytical power within the system - and that, within the universal order to which the systems of language, nature and exchange ultimately belong. This made 'comparison' inherent in the system itself.

Classical thought excluding resemblance as the fundamental experience and primary form of knowledge, denouncing it as a confused mixture that must be analysed in terms of identity, difference, measurement, and order. Though Descartes rejects resemblance, he does so *by not excluding the act of comparison from rational thought, nor even by seeking to limit it, but on the contrary, to universalising it and thereby giving it its purest form.* Indeed, it is by means of comparison that we discover 'form, extent, movement and other such things' - that is to say, simple natures - in all subjects in which they may be present (Foucault 1982:52; e.a.)

Foucault (1982:54) says too:

Resemblance, which had for long been the fundamental category of knowledge - both the form and the content of what we know - became dissociated in an *analysis based on terms of identity and difference*; moreover, whether indirectly by the intermediary of measurement or directly and as it were, on the same footing,

*comparison became a function of order*; and, lastly, comparison ceased to fulfil the function of revealing how the world is ordered, since it was now accomplished according to *the order laid down by thought, progressing naturally from the simple to the complex*. As a result, the entire episteme of western culture found its fundamental arrangements modified. And, in particular, the empirical domain which sixteenth-century man saw as a complex of kinships, resemblances, and affinities, and in which language and things were endlessly interwoven - this whole vast field was to take on a new configuration. This new configuration, may, I suppose, be called 'rationalism'; one might say if one's mind is filled with ready-made concepts that the seventeenth century marks the disappearance of the old superstitions or magical beliefs and the entry of nature at long last into the scientific order (e.a.).

If the human being was only part of the whole plethora of nature - one of its 'objects'; if all observation and description depended on systems of which all knew that they were imaginary (scientific) constructs; and if such observation and description were done through the sign system, then the question arises as to the importance of mathematics as ordering construct in the episteme of representation. Foucault (1982:57) explains:

... the fundamental element of the Classical *episteme* is neither the success or failure of mechanism, nor the right to mathematise or the impossibility of mathematizing nature, but rather a link with the mathesis which, until the end of the eighteenth century, remains constant and unaltered. This link has two essential characteristics. The first is that *relations between beings are indeed to be conceived in the form of order and measurement, but with this fundamental imbalance that it is always possible to reduce problems of measurement to problems of order*. So, that the relation of all knowledge to the mathesis is posited as the possibility of establishing an ordered succession between things even non-measurable ones. In this sense, *analysis* was very quickly to acquire the value of a universal method; and the Leibnizian project of establishing a mathematics of qualitative orders is situated at the very heart of Classical thought; its gravitational centre. But, on the other hand, this



relation to the *mathesis as general science of order does not signify that knowledge is absorbed into mathematics, or that the latter becomes the foundation of all possible knowledge*; on the contrary, in correlation with the quest for mathesis, he perceives the appearance of a certain number of empirical fields now being formed and defined for the very first time. In none of these fields or almost none, is it possible to find any trace of mechanism or mathematicization; and yet they all rely for their foundation upon a possible science of order. *Although they were all dependent on analysis in general, their particular instrument was not the algebraic method but the system of signs.* So there, first, appeared general grammar, natural history, and the analysis of wealth, all sciences of order in the domain of words, beings, and needs. And none of these empirical studies, new in the Classical period and co-extensive with it in duration ... could have been founded without the relation that the entire *episteme* of Western culture maintained at that time with a universal science of order.

The question, then, is about Van der Kemp's subjectivity with regard to science. It can be addressed as to his conscious employment of these five perspectives on eighteenth-century science.

#### 4.2.1 *The Universal*

From Van der Kemp's conscious and comprehensive description of the Religion, Government, Customs, etc. of the Xhosa, we can gather that this formed part of the empirical study which had to eventually form part of the universal encyclopaedia. Moreover, all his reports on latitude, natural history, and observations on exchange must be seen in this context too. Analysing his writings, Van der Kemp must have perceived himself as 'traveller-explorer' to some extent – similar to the colonial travellers of his time. His reports on issues valuable for the sciences of the time and his dialogical engagement with Le Vaillant (1791 - 1798), Sparrman (1786), Barrow (1801 - 1804) and others in his texts, reveal this side of him. Finally, when he was unsure about the outcome of his and Read's complaints to government and waiting at the Cape, the fact that one of the options he contemplated - to explore north of the Colonial frontier - shows this side of him too.

As to the general subjectivity within, or at least related to the sciences of the time, it is evident that the position Van der Kemp occupied - at least in these activities - was that reserved for the scientist *cum* traveller-explorer, doing the empirical groundwork for the universal encyclopaedia, so to speak.

#### 4.2.2 *Construct*

Consciousness of the constructed nature of Van der Kemp's contributions to the sciences is evident especially in the way he developed an alphabet with pronunciation rules for the Xhosa – the first of this nature for isiXhosa. In general, however, his contributions to the sciences and also his general interaction with people, falls out on two levels - the consciousness with which he engaged language and his ironic reportage in which he compares irrationalities with the representationally rational.

As a representative of eighteenth-century language studies, there are many references which indicate his conscious study, comparison, and teaching of language: 1) his first report when he arrived at the Cape contains reference to his comparison of Namaqua and Xhosa (LMS I VC 1799:370); 2) his learning of both Gonaka and Xhosa (LMS I 1800:416,418); 3) his conscious creation of an orthography for the Xhosa (and presumably for the Khoi too) (LMS I 1800:442ff); 4) his comparison of indigenous languages with other languages like Greek, Arabic, English, Dutch and Chinese in this text; and 5) his teaching of languages as well as 'reading and writing' to numerous people - especially after the founding of Bethelsdorp. As subject of language studies, the fact that he concentrated most of his activities in this area, and because this 'science' was seen as the most important one through which one contributed to the universal encyclopaedia, Van der Kemp's engagement with languages shows his consciousness that such languages were seen to be mere constructs. This is especially evident from the creativity he employed in such engagement.

Many of Van der Kemp's descriptions and reports are infused with laughter, often at his own expense. Against the table of reason - and among the initiated in Europe who would read his reports (LMS and Dutch Missionary Society Directors; and readers of the *Transactions of the LMS*) - Van der Kemp's texts reveal a high level of irony. Such irony, came from the

conscious reflection on the break with the episteme of resemblance - that 'superstition' and 'dreams' do not represent the real, and, that even sense-experience may deceive (cf. below). In this regard, Foucault (1982:51) pointed out that within comparison,

... the chimeras of similitude looms up on all sides, but they are recognised as chimeras; it is the privileged age of *tromp l'oeil* painting, of the comic illusion, of the play that duplicates itself by representing another play of the *quod pro quo*, of dreams and visions; it is the age of the deceiving senses; it is the age in which the poetic dimension of language is defined by metaphor, simile, and allegory.

There is the well-known example where Van der Kemp refers to the Xhosa having given Le Vaillant 'milk in a basket, washed out with their urine' as if this was part and parcel of their custom (LMS I R 1800:435), I quote a few others.

The first is a joke at Le Vaillant's expense, but too, on the ambivalent relationship towards 'witchcraft' among the Xhosa:

Mr Vaillant tells us, that there can be no superstition, where there is no religion. If he had lived among this nation, he soon would have discovered, that they are extremely superstitious without religion, and been convinced of the falsity of this conclusion. Witchcraft is very common among them, and though its practice be prohibited by the king, and connected with infamy, he, like Saul, calls in sorcerers himself, to discover secrets, especially guilty persons, and those, who are indicated by the Magicians as guilty, are, without any further examination, punished (LMS I R 1800:432).

Van der Kemp scolded C. Faber - one of the colonists beyond the frontier for his behaviour towards the San. He further reports:

[Faber] returned, and spoke warmly against baptism by immersion [practised by Van der Kemp], in which he discovered a lamentable ignorance and superstition. I said, that I could not give way to prejudices which dishonoured Christ and his blameless example ... (LMS I TVDK 1801:473).

An example of the ‘deceiving senses’:

A young [Xhosa] woman came to visit us, but seeing our tent from a distance, which was shaken by the wind, she took it to be an elephant or some other rapacious beast, which we had let loose to destroy her life ... (LMS I SA 1799:405).

With regard to Van der Kemp’s interaction with Ngqika, there are many: 1) his request for rain, and when it rained too much, that Van der Kemp must pray to have the ‘tremendous thunder claps’ stop; 2) the numerous reports on exchange, e.g. ‘a milch cow for a few buttons and two coarse old handkerchiefs’; 3) Ngqika’s view that the killing of shipwrecked sailors was to be seen on the same level as that of killing wolves; and 4) Ngqika’s gaming with Bruntjie:

He offered to exchange a cow for a dog, belonging to our [Khoi], V. Bruntjie; this being accepted, I observed to him that it was an old dog, without teeth, and good for nothing; but he said, that he liked the dog, and intended to give him likewise a cow for it *without teeth*. He gave him, however, a young cow and calf, an ox for a present to the son of Mr. Maynier, and a cow for our food (LMS I 1801:489).

#### *4.2.3 Analysis, Observation and Description*

Throughout his engagements in South Africa, especially in his study and observations with regard to languages, natural history and exchange, Van der Kemp was in fact ‘analysing’ in terms of the sciences of the eighteenth century. The way in which he ‘mapped’ language was determined by both the different parts - especially the ‘proposition’ - in which language scholars of the time did their analytic work, but also that of natural history. His conscious engagement with natural history - even though he had ‘no taste for that science’ - was also evident. As for exchange, he consciously introduced a new economic system into the colony - to have the Khoi live and work as well as get paid within the missionary ‘Institution’, similar to the prisoners and inmates in prisons and ‘asylums’ in Europe.

#### *4.2.4 Computation, Comparison and Order*

The eighteenth-century's infatuation with 'mathesis' and 'computation' was not with this mathematics as such. Even if the ideal - in natural science for example - was eventually to develop a system which would capture all sciences mathematically, the main objective was to have such a mathesis represent the system(s) of ideas. Ultimately, mathesis was subject to the signifying power of the sign - its representation(s). Measuring exercises and comparison all formed part of giving or prescribing order.

This is the context in which we can understand Van der Kemp's interest in geography, his continuous measuring exercises (of latitude, plants and animals), but also reports on mistakes in 'computation' of time (for the latter, cf. LMS I SA 1800:409; R 1800:465). The same is true of his comparative exercises. Whether he compared the 'sounds' of 'monosyllables' within different languages, plants in South Africa with those in Europe, or exchange on the frontier with the 'trade' in colonial context, all these are related to the episteme of representation: how all multiplicity can be ordered in terms of the 'idea'.

#### *4.2.5 Order and Disorder*

Van der Kemp employed the concepts of order and disorder mainly as they related to illness – he was in fact also a qualified medical doctor – but that he used them too, to represent social disorder and order (LMS I TVDK 1800:418; LMS AR 1804:240).

The information above shows Van der Kemp as the 'absent' or 'transparent' though conscious subject within the sciences of his time. As traveller-explorer, conscious of the constructed nature of scientific systems, as observer and describer in terms of the analyses the systems themselves provide, as comparative gamer and bent on having 'disorder' reversed to 'order', the rational eighteenth-century subject was highly conscious of his innovative and creative contribution to the universal encyclopaedia. That he did so as 'absent' subject is beyond doubt. By this, I mean that Van der Kemp was - like fellow scientists of the time - uncritical of the 'power' which comes into play with the very 'representative power' his 'creativity' unleashed, i.e. not only 'the idea signified' or 'the idea signifying', but especially, in this second term, 'the idea of its role as representation' (in terms of Foucault above).

The reason for this ‘absence’ of a critical attitude towards the hegemony inherent in representation’s ‘gaze’ and ‘analyses’ as such - especially in the context of not only the constructedness but also the ‘makability’ of everything - is easily understood. The system - but also the ‘Institution’ - was not seen as oppressive and exploitative. It signified ‘science’, but also ‘liberty’, ‘cultivation’, ‘usefulness’, ‘equality’, ‘industry’, ‘discipline’, ‘civilization’.

A third perspective comes from the pre-eminence of Christianity for Van der Kemp. Given Van der Kemp’s subjectivity with regard to religion and more particularly, missionary endeavour - to spread his gospel universally - his texts show him to have developed a knowledge of the Xhosa which missionaries following after him could use. This has two points of significance. On the one hand, even though he actively participated in the sciences of the time, the knowledge he developed and communicated back to Europe was intended to prepare and educate missionaries (in Europe) and further the proclamation of the gospel in (South) Africa. On the other hand, even if his - and also later missionaries’ - contribution to the sciences had this focus, they nevertheless made contributions to the sciences of the time.

More even than its influence in the scientific domain, Christianity’s influence becomes evident in the subjectivity the mission institution fostered - how ‘institutionalisation’ calls forth the question of subjectivity and subjectedness.

## **5 Subjectivity**

With regard to ‘power’, the representational episteme still accommodated royal sovereignty - in England, for example - but made it subservient to the common good, or, in institutional terms, to Parliament - representing the will of the people. In England, this transformation occurred with the so-called ‘silent’ and ‘bloodless’ ‘revolution’ of 1688. In the Batavian Republic - as influenced by France - the Patriot movement did away with royal sovereignty and replaced it with thinking and systems founded on notions of the ‘social contract’. In principle, it held that whereas ‘the social contract’ and its derivatives - the ‘will of the people’, the ‘common good’ and the ‘benefit of community’ - limited the freedom of people, they did so for the ‘common good’. On the one hand, the ‘social contract’ represented a commonly-shared

civil, justice and legal system, doing away with the excesses of royal sovereignty and giving rise to the emergence of the civil and legal subject. On the other hand, willing subjection to this system meant not only the limitation of 'liberty', but also that such subjectivity would benefit from the equality which the system entails and exercises.

If this, in general, represents the thought of the time on this issue, then a further development was to introduce into the system those still outside and not part of it. This is the rationale for the mushrooming of 'institutions' - schools, prisons, asylums, hospitals, army academies, and factories - and also for concepts like 'discipline', and 'civilization'. The lazy, the vagabonds, criminals (especially as related to property) - those not subject to the contract - had to be made into citizens.

Van der Kemp's obvious preference for royal sovereignty - evident not only from his positive evaluation of the Xhosa king Ngqika, but especially his attachment to Britain - must be understood, nevertheless, in the context of his exclusion of the same dynamics present in the 'social contract', the 'common good' and the 'Institution'. This is the nexus in which Van der Kemp's thought on his creation of an institution for the Khoi as well as his 'disciplining' and 'civilizing' activities must be positioned. If he endeavoured to have the Khoi seen and treated in civil society, as 'on an equal footing' in 'every respect' with the Colonists, then his objective was nothing less than making the Khoi into British citizens or subjects.

This view, however, has to be qualified on two counts. Van der Kemp's participation in the 'civilization' exercise, was defined by how royal sovereignty still accommodated religion - as it promoted loyalty and subservience to kings. From this perspective, exercises of 'civilization' and 'discipline' ultimately derived from God as king and not secular power. This made Van der Kemp stand outside politics to some degree, and explains his repeated claims of 'neutrality'. This is also the context in terms of which the London Missionary Society as a 'non-aligned' institution vis-à-vis established churches, must be seen. Ultimately, it wanted to be of service in the spreading of the gospel - to proclaim the kingdom (and kingship) of God - universally, irrespective of even ecclesiastical authority and denominational organisation.

But, secondly, in a secondary way, Van der Kemp had to contribute to the 'civilization' of society, and, faced with the secular requirements of the Batavian Governor Janssens at the Cape, this appears to have been difficult.

From Janssens' correspondence with him and Van der Kemp's reports on interactions with the Governor, Janssens' discourse represents secular views. This is evident from the fact that he not only qualified his 'Proclamation' by saying that it was developed in the context of - not his - but De Mist's decision to further the missionary enterprise. Significant, however, too, is that the main values in terms of which he laid down his rules were those of the Khoi becoming 'useful' to and 'benefiting' society. Most importantly, Janssens' intention - evident from both his critique of Van der Kemp and the fact that he wished the missionaries to actively encourage it - was that the missions were to become nothing more than a labour pool for the frontier settler farms. For Janssens, it appears, religion was to be advanced only to produce good farm labourers.

Against this background, then, and in order to analyse Van der Kemp's thought on 'subjectivity' or 'morality' in this context, three issues come to the fore: his attitudes with regard to royal sovereignty; custom; and the common good.

### **5.1 *Subject to Royalty***

Van der Kemp's approval of King Ngqika is amply evident not only from his reports on personal interactions with the king, but also his comprehensive description of the Xhosa life-world and appreciative remarks in this context.

Van der Kemp reports frequently on his interactions with Ngqika and one could say that there is a certain 'affection' evident in these reports. On at least one occasion, Van der Kemp indeed uses the word 'love' to describe their relationship - i.e. after the initial 'suspicions' were out of the way. This is off-set against the fact too, that Van der Kemp must have perceived the Xhosa as 'friends', because, on leaving Ngqika's area together with the Colonists beyond the frontier - and under pretext of hunting elephants - he says:

If I were to accompany them, I must give up entirely the mission among Gika's [Xhosa], who would certainly *turn my enemies* should I join the Colonists in their flight (LMS I TVDK 1800:429).



Moreover, that Ngqika returned Van der Kemp's approval, is evident from his statement to Van der Kemp on his last journey into the Eastern Cape. The significance of the statement is that it was unsolicited since Van der Kemp visited Ngqika for an entirely different reason - to come and meet Maynier to negotiate peace with the Colonists. Van der Kemp reports:

He said that he should be happy if we were willing to live again in his country; and upon my asking him if he would favour our design to instruct his people? he answered, that as to himself he was willing to receive instruction, and that those of his subjects, who did not choose to follow his example, might let it alone (LMS TVDK 1801:489).

The fact that he attempted to comprehensively describe the Xhosa 'lifeworld' but also his appreciative remarks in this context, reveals a subjectivity that approved of royal sovereignty. This comes to the fore in his remarks on the joke the Xhosa played on Le Vaillant, the flexible relationship between Ngqika and his people, the absence of slavery, that the Xhosa 'seldom steal' and the minimalism in their systems of 'Crimes and punishments' for example. It is in this context that we can describe Van der Kemp's approval of Ngqika in terms of 'benevolent sovereignty'. It is also in terms of this conception of governance that Van der Kemp's subject relation to Ngqika was already given in the royal sovereignty it appears he appreciated.

## **5.2 *Custom, Home and the Subject***

'Custom' and 'home' are two of the concepts Van der Kemp employs to depict elements of the life situation of the Xhosa and Khoi respectively. Here, these two concepts stand not only for the specific elements Van der Kemp described, but, in general, for all those received traditions and archaisms of these two groups, as well as the articulation of subjectivity within and in relation to them.

In general, then, Van der Kemp's comprehensive description of Xhosa custom indicates appreciation - even though he still held them to be a 'barbarous nation' and not 'civilized'. From the comprehensive description of

his observations of Xhosa Religion, Customs, Government, Language, and History, it is evident that he approved of royal sovereignty and also of the Xhosa socio-political system. In comparison with the ‘conditions’ of and ‘state’ in which the Khoi found themselves, the Xhosa had everything and the Khoi nothing. The fact that Van der Kemp could embark on such a comprehensive description means that he could enter his observations on each and every topic under which one could also describe an integrated and coherent socio-political system in Europe. He did not even do something similar for the Khoi – to comprehensively describe their ‘customs’ as he did for the Xhosa. We only find him creating an ‘Institution’ for them - i.e. apart from his negative ‘characterisations’ and descriptions of the Khoi.

If Van der Kemp’s analytical description of the ‘state’ or ‘conditions’ of the Khoi are positively stated, we get an idea of what he meant with regard to how the mission had to make them subjects and citizens - through creating an institution, providing positive ‘conditions’ where they had ‘food, instruction, liberty, useful employments’, ‘their own home’ and were ‘useful’ to the Colony, ‘happy’ and ‘safe’ (LMS I TVDK 1801:496). Similar to conceptualisations of the institution at the time, the mission had to bring about ‘freedom and protection’ for the Khoi (LMS II EJBP 1802:84).

As for the negative descriptions, the most prominent is the reference to the Khoi as ‘lazy’ and to their ‘natural languor, stupidity and aversion from every other kind of mental or bodily exercise’ (LMS II L2 1804:152). Even so, there is no evidence that Van der Kemp used similar language in direct interaction with the Khoi. That he nevertheless saw them to be ‘subject’ to the missionaries’ ‘discipline’ shows his intention to make them into European subjects. The missionaries were the subjects through which this was to be achieved.

It was Van der Kemp’s express aim to ‘civilise’ and ‘discipline’ the Khoi, but, this was qualified in terms of his perceptions of religion and especially Christianity. In common with representational understandings of the time, ultimate or ‘perfect’ civilisation was provided by religion. In his introduction of the hierarchy between ‘Hearers’, ‘Catechumens’, and (baptised) ‘Christians’, he introduced the Khoi to a Western, institutionalising, as well as institutionalised, hierarchical subjectivity. The missionaries’ introduction of ‘a kind of judges’ as well as their appointing of a ‘sister’ responsible for experimental discussions with females, also indicate that they were fostering such institutionalised subjectivity, similar to that of

the school, barracks and prisons in Europe.

This also manifested in European clothing. For the Khoi, Van der Kemp reports in his letter of April 23 1803:

As for clothes, our people either go naked, or cover themselves with the skins of animals. Some choose a more European dress. In such a case, we give to a man a jacket, a pair of trousers, and a handkerchief; to a woman, a jacket, a petticoat, and a handkerchief; we have not yet introduced shirts and shifts, but they would be of use (LMS II EL2 1803:94).

But establishing an institution which the Khoi could call their own ‘home’ also meant that they had to be able to articulate with their own tradition(s) and the archaisms of the ‘received’. In view of the absence of any references to the history of the Khoi, past traditions or custom - in the way that Van der Kemp made such references to the past of the Xhosa - it appears that he attempted to give them such a ‘history’ as it derives from the Bible. This is evident from the fact that he switched his ministry from a synchronic ‘scientific system’, to diachronic historical one - to trace ‘the first lines of an historical system of the ways of God with mankind, derived from Scripture’ (LMS I TVDK 1800:412f). He often refers to this historical system - which may indicate precisely this concern with providing the Khoi with ‘history’ - and even requested the LMS to send one missionary to Bethelsdorp to specialise in this area (cf. especially LMS I TVDK 1800:420; II EL2 1803:94). In this switch, further, the synchronic level was to be taken by ‘catechism’ for which he developed a Khoi text, *Tzitzika Thuickwedi miko Khwekhwenama* (Principles of the words of God for the [Khoikhoi] nation) (LMS II AR 1804:239). In this context, however, the fact that he created this text, may also indicate that he developed a text on the Khoi language or grammar similar to that for Xhosa<sup>2</sup>.

In the context of this argument, this would mean that, in the absence of tradition, Khoi life (and custom) would be brought in line with Judaeo-Christian principles derived from Biblical materials and their moral conduct, fashioned after his education taking place in catechising activities. Ultimately, however, the fact that he requested the book of Kolb to be sent to

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<sup>2</sup> At this point I have not been able to trace these texts in extant archives.

him may be an indication that the importance of the Khoi finding out more about their own ‘custom’ and ‘history’ was indeed one of Van der Kemp’s concerns (cf. Enklaar 1988:129; and Kolb 1731). The same point is also evident from the fact that Van der Kemp makes one observation on Khoi hierarchy and land - also indicating his consciousness about how they were indeed crowded out of the country and off the land by the Colonists.

The [Khoi] Captain Ruiter, grandson of that Ruiter, *to whom a considerable part of this country formerly belonged*, came as a messenger from Klaas Stuurman, telling us that *he desired a part of the country for him and the [Khoi] to settle in*, and to be instructed in the Christian religion (LMS ITVDK 1801:493).

In his overview of the prison institutions in France, Belgium, England and America (Foucault 1979:120-131), Foucault (1979:123) pointed out how these institutions were to restore to the state the subject(s) it had lost or create the citizens the ‘lazy’ and ‘vagabonds’ were not yet. In this, the cultivation of *homo oeconomicus* and religious ‘conscience’ went hand in hand. Even though qualified, and because they have lost their customs and land due to colonisation, Van der Kemp’s ‘establishment’ of an ‘Institution’ for the Khoi had the same aim.

### **5.3 Commonality and Disaffected Subjectivities**

As for his objectives with and for the Khoi, his statement that they ‘should be perfectly free, upon an equal footing in every respect with the Colonists’, shows that he wished to see them as subject to the British and in South Africa Batavian rule of the time. It also indicates that the kind of subjectivity he attempted to foster was that of the ‘disciplined’ and ‘civilized’ individual, qualified by a Christian moral code - part of the social pact and civil society, but only to a degree.

In this context, the new rules he first communicated to Dundas, the rules Janssens laid down, and those by the LMS for ‘African Missions’, were all mainly aimed at fostering such subjectivity – in terms of eighteenth century ‘European’ understandings. Qualified, however, it meant a European subjectivity, but one which transcended the rising nationalisms of the time.

Significant in this regard is that all these rules relating to the institution to be established derived from 'ideas' - showing the pre-eminence of eighteenth-century thought also on this level of analysis. Referring to Dundas' letter, dated October 30 1800, Van der Kemp says that the Governor desired to have his 'ideas respecting ... an institution' for the Khoi. In his submission to Dundas, he also says:

... it is with thanksgiving to God, and acknowledgement of my obligations to your excellency that I proceed to submit my *ideas*, and those of my bother Read often having consulted Mr. Maynier, on the subject, to Your Excellency's decision (LMS I TVDK 1801:496).

Of the thirteen 'ideas' laid before Dundas and also Janssens, the latter's as well as the frontier farmers' 'disaffection' arose mainly with regard to Van der Kemp's assertion that the Khoi should be seen and treated 'on an equal footing in every respect with the Colonists' (LMS I TVDK 1801:482). For Van der Kemp - and deriving from both the 'equal misery' (sin) but also the universal message of salvation all humanity shared equally - 'equality' had a particular Christian connotation. The comparisons and 'discriminations' which characterised civil society and the sciences of the time, the fundamental comparative game of identities and differences - opening the way for the central role of 'classification' and the universal 'table' at the time - were for him transcended by Christianity.

In contrast, it appears that Janssens - and the settler farmers - only saw the missions as a way to 'cultivate' the Khoi in 'industry' and for them to contribute towards the 'common good' of the Colony by working on the Colonists' farms. It is especially on this point that their ways parted. Sharing equal 'liberty' and being on 'a same footing with the Colonists' were not what Janssens' regulations entailed in Van der Kemp's analysis. It was obvious to them that the Khoi did not receive 'justice' as the 'social contract' (or its derivatives) implied. This is why Van der Kemp and Read objected vehemently to this state of affairs, i.e. because their 'consciences' - as determined by the equal subjectivity of all within Christianity - did not allow them to go along with this distorted image of civil liberty.

We thought it our *duty* to declare ... that *our consciences* would not permit us any longer to observe that hard article of the settlement

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granted to our institution, by which *we were recommended to encourage the voluntary engagement of the [Khoi] into the service of the Colonists*, on account of the *cruelty and injustice* with which those who entered into their service were treated, *without any justice being done to them by the Magistrates* (LMS II AR 1804:241).

In this analysis, the subjectivity of the Khoi and that of the Colonists were not 'equal' before the law. Representationally, if civil society was to mirror the moral of Christian equality before God, then this is the point where the ways parted.

Secondly, if these diverging views on 'equality' manifested on this level, it also did so in the expulsion of the Khoi from the church. When it became evident to Van der Kemp that the Khoi 'were averse from assisting at our evening family worship with their masters', he started to hold one for them separately (LMS I FA 1799:388). When the Khoi had to evacuate the church at Graaff Reinet, Van der Kemp significantly added:

We signified to the Commissioner, our wish that no blood should be shed on our account, that we were ready to retire with our Heathen out of the church, and to meet in another house; I assured him at the same time, that those Colonists, who should like to join the [Khoi] in Divine worship, should always be welcome in our meetings, which should be open to every one without distinction, but *that I never would preach in a church, from which our Heathen congregation should be excluded* (LMS I TVDK 1801:483).

For Van der Kemp, religion - not only its role in the cultivation of *homo oeconomicus* but also community - transcended the boundaries of civil society. In the same way that his appreciation of 'common sense' and 'humanity' - qualities which the frontier farmers lacked - transcended such boundaries, religion did too. And it is the 'equal' subjectivity which the 'common good' - or in this case, 'justice' more particularly - and 'religion' had to cultivate, which was important. See for example:

The Governor wished us to desist for the present from the instruction of the [Khoi] in reading and writing, chiefly the latter; but I could not, however, with all the regard due to his rank and character,

consent to a *proposal so contrary to the apparent interest of Christ's kingdom, and so unworthy of the rights of a free nation*; merely to stop the clamour of a number of ill-natured people; but the prejudices of honest men against us diminish gradually (LMS II EL2 1803:94; e.a.).

More than anywhere else, this quote brings to the fore Van der Kemp's perception of subjectivity - that, first and foremost, it meant being subject to the 'interest of Christ's kingdom' which gave access to equality in education.

But, thirdly, about the difficult nexus of events which Van der Kemp had to face with the take-over of the Colony by the Batavian regime, the question is how he articulated subjectivity in general to the state. A significant perspective comes from his letter of February 29 1804 to the LMS.

*It was an easy matter to convince the brave and philanthropic Governor Janssens of the futility of the objection that our undertaking was entirely separated from all national views and concerns, and that your direction being entirely restricted to spiritual purposes, did not, even in the least degree affect, much less relax the authority which government has a right to exercise over all its subjects, any more than the filial obedience due to a father or tutor, infringes the rights of a sovereign over a son, or pupil residing in his dominions* (LMS II L2 1804:150; e.a.).

The analogy Van der Kemp draws here between the mission's relationship to the LMS as well as the fact that it fulfilled its 'spiritual' mission under the 'authority' of the present (Batavian) government and the relation of the son to the father as well as to the sovereign was used by Rousseau (1973:166) too - although not in the same way or to make the same point. This does not indicate a direct relationship between Rousseau and Van der Kemp. (In his searches in Van der Kemp's texts kept in archives in Europe, Enklaar (1988:198,203) did not find any references to Rousseau.). This kind of example could have been used all over Europe in the Philosophy classrooms of the time. In the context, however, 'filial obedience' to the LMS is an equivalent for Rousseau's argument for reciprocal 'voluntary' retention of relations between father and child after the maturation of the child - and

part of convention and not the 'natural' relationship given with the responsibility the father has with regard to the 'preservation' of the child.

More importantly, however, such metaphorising comes from Rousseau's view that the family is not only the 'most ancient of all societies', but also the most 'natural'. In this sense, Van der Kemp in fact used an argument which was at base naturalist, i.e. to counter expectations derived from the 'rights' of sovereignty over its subjects - the latter to be understood in the broader context of the sovereignty of the social contract and not royalty. For Van der Kemp, then, subjectivity in relation to government and subjectivity to the LMS, was of two kinds. This split may account not only for his vehement opposition to both government and frontier farmers, but also - at least to some degree - for his giving 'spirituality' pride of place in his ministry rather than 'cultivation' of the Khoi into useful subjects.

## **6 Conclusion**

The perspectives on subjectivity above have shown that, for Van der Kemp, the impersonal forces which defined his qualified understandings of 'sobriety' and 'discipline' but also the 'sciences' and the 'social contract' came to characterise his own life and determine his criticism of the frontier farmers and the 'ideas' he put forward for the institutionalising of the Khoi. On the one hand, his own rigorous 'obedience' to regulations laid down by Governor Janssens - even when he complained - shows a subject committed to the commonly-held belief that the institution and especially the state, were held in high regard. It not only transformed the pre-revolutionary unilateral hegemony of sovereignty, but also did away with its excesses by making royal sovereignty dependent on the 'common will'. As for the then emerging civil society, this construct not only provided freedom and equality but also limited individual 'liberty' in so far as the 'common good' transcended it. As the farmer discontent and Van der Kemp's critique of their 'cruelty', however, showed, the ways parted, because, in Van der Kemp's estimation, settler farmer subjectivity was not limited as to the excesses its liberty gave rise to.

On the other hand, within the positive esteem the state and its institutions were held at the time, the subjectivity Van der Kemp represented was also creative. The 'ideas' in terms of which he founded not only



Bethelsdorp - but also 'African Missions' in general - aimed at the 'civilization' of the Khoi people and African people more generally speaking. The subjectivity so 'cultivated' - especially through institutional regulation ('education') and moral obligation - was to be that of an industrious citizen contributing to the 'common good' of the Colony. However, while Van der Kemp saw such subjectivity to be 'on an equal footing in every respect with the Colonists' - derived from his commitment to Christianity - Janssens and the settler farmers, it appears, only saw the mission as a way to 'cultivate' the Khoi for farm labour. This gave rise to moral perceptions which distinguished between two classes of citizen and not of equality - to which Van der Kemp vehemently objected .

If these perspectives provide some insight into the objective subjectivity and therefore the morality Van der Kemp saw himself subjected to but also for which he became a moral agent, then the question as to ethics or the cultivation of the self, must be addressed too.

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