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### **Abstract**

South African director Zola Maseko's documentary, *The Life & Times of Sara Baartman* — 'The Hottentot Venus', is punctuated with the jazz singer Gloria Bosnian's catchy continental refrain, 'I'm going back to Africa'. In 1998, when the film was completed, this projected homecoming was an optimistic conclusion to a nearly two-hundred-year-old story. Maseko's film turned out to be timely. In January 2002, the French government — apparently inspired to act by a poem to Saartje Baartman which appeared on the internet — announced that her remains would indeed be returned for burial in South Africa.<sup>2</sup> Following a ceremony in France in early May, they were flown from Paris back to Cape Town; and in August, marking her birthday (on the 9th) and nationwide Women's Day celebrations, Saartje Baartman was finally buried in her natal earth — in the Gamtoos Valley area of the Eastern Cape — as thousands looked on and a female choir sang 'You are returning to your fatherland under African skies' (see "'Hottentot Venus' Laid to Rest', online.)

KAI EASTON

## Travelling through History, ‘New’ South African Icons: The Narratives of Saartje Baartman and Krotoä-Eva in Zoë Wicomb’s *David’s Story*<sup>1</sup>

South African director Zola Maseko’s documentary, *The Life & Times of Sara Baartman* — ‘*The Hottentot Venus*’, is punctuated with the jazz singer Gloria Bosman’s catchy continental refrain, ‘I’m going back to Africa’. In 1998, when the film was completed, this projected homecoming was an optimistic conclusion to a nearly two-hundred-year-old story. Maseko’s film turned out to be timely. In January 2002, the French government — apparently inspired to act by a poem to Saartje Baartman which appeared on the internet — announced that her remains would indeed be returned for burial in South Africa.<sup>2</sup> Following a ceremony in France in early May, they were flown from Paris back to Cape Town; and in August, marking her birthday (on the 9th) and nationwide Women’s Day celebrations, Saartje Baartman was finally buried in her natal earth — in the Gamtoos Valley area of the Eastern Cape — as thousands looked on and a female choir sang ‘You are returning to your fatherland under African skies’ (see “‘Hottentot Venus’ Laid to Rest’, online.)

### SLIPPERY ICONS

This is and is not an article about Zoë Wicomb’s *David’s Story* (2001). It circles around her text, primarily to discuss two very allusive and elusive characters who figure in it, only to slip out of the story. As Dorothy Driver writes in her afterword to the Feminist Press edition of the novel: ‘Where history is silent, myth often speaks, and Wicomb’s reinvention of history needs to deal with a current mythification involving two early South African women, Krotoä/Eva and Saartje Baartman’ (2001 228). Despite their fleeting presence in Wicomb’s novel, both of these women, I would argue, are integral to a book that refuses to engage them wholeheartedly in its plot.

In history, Krotoä-Eva was a woman of considerable linguistic talents; she was also the first indigenous woman to have appeared in early Cape official records — including the governor’s own journal. Saartje Baartman, born over 100 years later, was by no means the only African woman to be exhibited in Europe, but her story — even to the present day — has been particularly spectacular. In Wicomb’s novel, these historical figures are linked as David Dirkse trawls through history

in search of his Griqua ancestry. A member of the ANC's military wing, David is married to Sally, a former comrade, but there is more than a suggestion in the novel of his attraction to Dulcie, another female comrade in the MK. Like the stories of Saartje and Krotoä, Dulcie's presence comes from an absence of detail — a refusal (in this case by David, rather than the narrator) to flesh out her story. For if Wicomb's novel makes gestures to the lives of Krotoä-Eva and Saartje Baartman, it also creates gaps, false links, difficult genealogies. As Driver notes:

Despite David's protests, the narrator leaves his story about Krotoa out of the text. She agrees to include his story about Saartje Baartman, but does not. And then she does not — untrustworthy indeed! — honor his request to remove references to his love for Dulcie. [2001 230]

Flitting in and out of centuries, in conversation and debate with a variety of texts (most notably Sarah Gertrude Millin's 1924 literary chronicle of miscegenation, *God's Stepchildren*),<sup>3</sup> *David's Story* is firmly placed in the present too: alternating between Cape Town and Kokstad in 1991, a year into 'the New South Africa'.<sup>4</sup>

Baartman, in particular, has been much in the news, not only with her recent return and burial, but especially since the 1980s when South Africa, as Wicomb has said, 'discovered' her (1998 91). With the nation's transformation to a non-racial democracy, she has become an icon for Khoisan nationalists, who still feel politically and economically marginalised in the new ANC-led dispensation.<sup>5</sup> Equally, Krotoä-Eva, as Carli Coetzee has written, in a current quest by some South Africans for authentic origins, is being remembered in the 'new' South Africa as 'the founding mother', and there have been recent recastings of her life both in books and on the stage.

In this historically demarcated nation (one which has also been newly demarcated in provincial terms), and in the wake of the TRC hearings and the Truth Commission report, there is an increasing focus on memory, history, and the creation of 'the South African story'.<sup>6</sup> As part of this new story, how have Krotoä-Eva and Saartje Baartman as icons been transformed in the present? Equally, how might the remembering of them be complicit with the scientific and historical discourses that surrounded them during their lifetime? And what are the implications then of Wicomb's 'adoption' of Saartje Baartman and Krotoä-Eva as theoretical icons in two of her recent essays? Taking one of the intertextual avenues suggested by Wicomb's text and perhaps, even more so, by Driver's afterword, my interest is in exploring how Krotoä and Saartje, though separated in history by well over a century, have re-emerged as 'presences in the South African imaginary'.<sup>7</sup>

Like the concept of hybridity, a word taken from the biological and botanical sciences (Young 1994, 6) and today perhaps best known from Homi Bhabha's writings and postcolonial theory more widely, the icons of Krotoä and Saartje have travelled through history, shifting and acquiring new definitions — from the

age of colonialism, scientific racism and miscegenation to the current cultural politics of representation, reconciliation, and national belonging.

The writings of travellers, scientists, historians, literary critics and cultural theorists have signalled the symbolic importance of the Khoisan in this earlier context. J.M. Coetzee's seminal study, *White Writing*, and Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* have contributed significantly to our knowledge of colonial discourse on the 'Hottentot';<sup>8</sup> and a number of other influential scholarly works have discussed 'the Hottentot' as icon: for example Sander Gilman argues that,

while many groups of African blacks were known to Europeans in the nineteenth century, the Hottentot remained representative of the essence of the black, especially the black female. Both concepts fulfilled an iconographic function in the perception and representation of the world. (255)

while Saul Dubow writes that

[a]s an icon of 'otherness', the Hottentot or Bosjesman (the terms were used more or less interchangeably until the mid-nineteenth century) occupies an important place in the history of Western thought. (20)

More specifically, Saartje Baartman was, as Sharpley-Whiting puts it in her book *Black Venus*, a 'cultural and scientific icon of primitivity and sexual depravity' (5).

The representation of Saartje and Krotoä as icons of 'otherness' and female 'sexual lasciviousness' in colonial times was followed by a new imaging of the 'Hottentots', influenced by Rousseau, as 'noble savages' (Dubow 24). In the 'new' South Africa, this has shifted again — into a language of national healing and veneration. I shall return to this in my concluding remarks, but first some biographical context.

#### THE NARRATIVES OF KROTOÄ-EVA AND SAARTJE BAARTMAN

Krotoä-Eva was a servant in the household of Jan van Riebeeck, the first governor of the Cape of Good Hope. She became fluent in Dutch and Portuguese, and acted as a translator between the Dutch and the Khoikhoi, marrying the Danish surgeon, Pieter van Meerhoff in 1664. This was the first marriage in the Cape Colony between native and settler (Wicomb 2001c), at a time when racial mixing, as Wicomb's narrator has it, was 'old hat in the melting pot of the Cape' (2001a, 41).<sup>9</sup> When van Meerhoff died in a slaving expedition to Madagascar, however, Krotoä-Eva found herself on the outside of both cultures, 'rejected by both Khoi and Company' (Worden et al 23). Though baptised as a Christian, and the mother of van Meerhoff's children, she was banished to Robben Island, where she died from alcohol abuse in 1674.

In her obituary, her story is recorded to emphasise her 'unChristian' behaviour:

'This day departed this life, a certain female Hottentoo, named Eva, long ago taken from the African brood in her tender childhood by the Hon. van Riebeeck, and educated in his house as well as brought to the knowledge of the Christian faith, and being thus

transformed from a female Hottentoo almost into a Netherland woman, was married to a certain Chief Surgeon of this residency, by whom she had three children still living, and some others which had died. Since his death however at Madagascar, she had brought forth as many illegitimate ones, and for the rest, led such an irregular life, that for a long while the desire would have existed of getting rid of her, had it not been for the hope of the conversion of this brutal aboriginal, which was always still hovering between...’ (qtd in Schapera, 1933 124–25)

In her essay on Krotoä-Eva, Carli Coetzee highlights not her ‘degeneration into drunkenness and prostitution’ as Wicomb has written (2001c online) but rather her genealogical contribution to early Cape society:

On the night of 8 February 1669 in Cape Town, two children were removed from the care of their mother, the Khoikhoi woman Krotoä. She had been living in a cottage (furnished by the Dutch East India Company) under the name Eva, and was the widow of Pieter van Meerhoff, a Danish surgeon who had joined the DEIC garrison in 1659. After the children were removed from her care, the house was boarded up, and the children put in the custody of a respectable member of the (white) Dutch community. *These children grew up as part of Cape Dutch society, and became the founding members of many Afrikaner families.* (Coetzee 112) [emphasis added]

The offspring of this first mixed-race marriage at the Cape of Good Hope thus become progenitors at the moment that their maternal line — and thereby their hybrid identity — is obscured. However, in the Cape today, as Carli Coetzee goes on to say, there are Afrikaners who are claiming rather than denying lineage with Krotoä in an effort to ‘gain what seems like legitimate access to the new rainbow family’ (115), and as J.M. Coetzee similarly remarks: ‘For adventurously minded Afrikaners, laying claim to a dark ancestor now holds considerable cachet...’ (2001 311).

Steven Robins also notes how some Khoisan nationalists, despite their ‘complex ancestry’, have claimed biological and cultural continuity to pre-colonial Khoisan ancestors such as Saartje Baartman and ‘Krotoä (Eva)’ (131). Robins cites specific examples — for instance, how Mansel Upham, previously categorised as ‘white’ in the ‘old’ South Africa and now ‘the Griqua National Conference’s legal representative, insisted upon making public his claims of genealogical links to a founding Khoi ancestor, Krotoä (Eva)’ (134). Upham was also significantly involved in Griqua demands for Baartman’s return. In a *Weekly Mail & Guardian* article he describes her symbolic importance today, proclaiming:

‘Hottentots are the most dehumanised people in colonial history. Even today the term is used to designate non-human status and *Saartjie Baartman’s remains are an icon of this history...*’ (qtd in ‘Bring Back’ online) [emphasis added]

Cape Town historian Yvette Abrahams ‘asserted a “Brown” identity that gave a personal resonance to her claims on the body’ of Krotoä. (Robins 136). Abrahams is also interviewed in Maseko’s documentary, and has published an essay on the

historiography of writing on Baartman where she observes how the earlier mythmaking around her 'became an increasingly conscious, and public, process' (224).

In the following parenthetical passage — in one of only two references to Krotoä in *David's Story* — Wicomb cunningly addresses the whole question of origins and colonial stereotypes:

(There is the indisputable example of *the first native woman of no parentage, Eval Krotoa*, who in spite of being taken into the cleanliness of the Dutch castle, in spite of marriage to a white man and fluency in his language, reverted to type and sold her own brown children's clothes for liquor.) (2001a 38) [emphasis added]

Genealogy is also a question in the case of Baartman. As Wicomb notes, hybridity is embedded in Saartje Baartman's very name [1998 93] (also seen in such variations as Saartjie, Sara, Sarah; Bartman, Bartmann). Though recent reports on Baartman seem more certain of biographical details, Sharpley-Whiting's study suggests these facts were not yet accounted for in 1999: 'mystery surrounds her date of birth, her date of death, her racial/ethnic origins — was she a Hottentot (Khoikhoi), a female Bushman (San), or a *sang-mêlé?*' (Sharpley-Whiting 17).

In 1810, about age 20 and by now working as a servant in Cape Town, Saartje Baartman left on a ship for England, apparently having entered into a contract with a ship's doctor, William Dunlop. In exchange for money and the promise of return passage to the Cape of Good Hope after five years, she was to exhibit her body — to crowds in London and subsequently private viewings in Paris — to those who would be fascinated by her steatopygia (a word Wicomb plays with and celebrates in her novel ([Driver 2001, 249]), the simultaneously exotic and primitive marker of black female sexuality which seduced science and, in particular, Napoleon's surgeon Georges Cuvier. Billed as 'The Hottentot Venus', in her life she was scrutinised, inspected and gazed at. After her death in Paris from small pox and alcoholism in 1815, Cuvier, 'the father of biology', dissected her. His 'gift' to science was to preserve her brains and genitals [considered remarkable for the legendary 'Hottentot apron'] in jars. These remained on exhibit in the Musée de l'Homme, along with her skeleton and a plaster cast of her body, until as recently as 1974.<sup>10</sup>

Maseko's *Life and Times of Sara Baartman* adds some scholarly as well as speculative shape to her story. In a review of the documentary, Neil Parsons highlights the following scene:

It is an account previously unknown to me, when Sara tells a Paris journalist about her origins. A female over-voice [*sic*] recounts with engaging simplicity a tale of childhood betrothal in the Houteniqua mountains, brutally interrupted by white settler slave-raiders attracted by the smoking fires of the pre-nuptial feast. *Who cares if it could have been a type-story rather than literal truth?* It is the one time in the film that we get a glimpse of a *real-seeming Sara*... (2002 online) [emphasis added]

Parsons intriguingly focuses on a potential memory recounted in the film, pointing to the need to reimagine the stories we have of these two women in fuller terms. Sharpley-Whiting's study was published the following year, but according to her brief biographical summary below, Saartje was married before going to Cape Town:

Born in Kaffraria in the interior of the Cape Colony of South Africa in approximately 1788, and renamed Saartjie Baartman when the region came under Dutch colonial rule, Baartman was one of six siblings. Her father was a drover of cattle who was killed by neighbouring San, and her mother died when she was two years old. Her husband was a drummer, and she had had one child, who died shortly after birth. She became a domestic of sorts to a Boer farmer, Peter Cezar, at the Cape of Good Hope. (17)

### THEORETICAL ICONS

In her essay, 'Shame and Identity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa' [1998], Wicomb sets out how Saartjie Baartman illustrates, as a 'body bound up with the politics of location' (93), many of the concerns of postcolonialism and postmodernism. After introducing her story, she frames her discussion around Saartje, who becomes representative, not only on a national level, but on an individual level. Wicomb 'adopts' her as 'icon' (as she phrases it [93]) and goes on to provide a remarkable listing of the theoretical possibilities offered by Baartman. In addition to her postcolonial symbolism, Wicomb writes:

The Baartman case also neatly exemplifies some of the central concerns of postmodern thought — the inscription of power in scopic relations, the construction of woman as racialised and sexualised other; the colonisation and violation of the body; the role of scientific discourse in bolstering both the modernist and the colonial projects — and is thus a convenient point around which to discuss the contested relationship between postcolonialism and postmodernism. (93)

While Wicomb's critical writings, as Driver suggests, certainly provide fascinating intertextual links with *David's Story*, they also set up a discourse about representation that the novel itself interrogates.

In 'Translation and Coetzee's *Disgrace*', a paper given at the University of Zurich last year, Wicomb employs Krotoä, the successful translator (who has also been 'translated' by the Dutch into 'Eva') as an opening to her discussion of Coetzee's novel.

The story of the indigenous Khoikhoi woman, Krotoä, is an exemplary case in which translation as a figure within the narrative of colonial subject formation can be examined. (2001c online)

However her reinscription of Baartman and Krotoä in these essays is playfully undercut when the unnamed narrator in her novel admits to excluding the origins

of David's story. He has tried to link his narrative genealogy, no less, with that of the 'founding mother' and, subsequently, Saartje:

David's story started at the Cape with Eva/Krotoä, the first Khoi woman in the Dutch castle, the only section I have left out. He eventually agreed to that but was adamant about including a piece on Saartje Baartman, the Hottentot Venus placed on display in Europe. One cannot write nowadays, he said, without a little monograph on Baartman; it would be like excluding history itself. (2001a 1)

*David's Story* has been described as 'elegaic, wry, and expansive'<sup>11</sup> and, indeed it is, as well as copious in its interweavings, and deliberately neglectful of continuities, but to return to my earlier question: what do we make of these new translations of Krotoä and Saartje? Here, in Wicomb's own words, they become 'icons' of critical discourse. Are both the essays and the novel part of another strategy in the literature of the 'postcolonial exotic'? Is Wicomb, as Graham Huggan would suggest, 'working from within exoticist codes of representation' in order to subvert them or is she redeploying them 'for the purposes of uncovering differential relations of power'? (32).

Both essays move from examples of a hybrid identity (in the form of an actual historical figure) to a convincing challenge to Homi Bhabha's theory of hybridity, particularly in the case of the first essay, in terms of its inapplicability in regional (Cape) terms. The specificity of the Cape coloured<sup>12</sup> community requires elaboration of Bhabha's theory, for his discussion of hybridity, migration and diaspora does not, as Wicomb argues, translate to a culture where miscegenation and slave origins are suppressed or where, instead of liminality and displacement, there is a real sense of belonging, even 'a proprietorial attitude towards the Cape' (Wicomb 1998, 105). As Robins writes, 'many of the people referring to themselves as Brown, Coloured, and Griqua are in fact of slave-European-African-Khoi-San ancestry' (133). Wicomb herself proposes the idea of 'multiple belongings', which can conflict, overlap and negotiate difference as an alternative to 'denying history and fabricating a totalising colouredness' (1998 105).

Yet if Bhabha's use of the term is unable to accommodate the current politics of identity in the Western Cape, hybridity's longer history reveals itself as perfectly accommodating, suggesting a range of shifting definitions. Robert Young has brilliantly mapped this out in *Colonial Desire*, demonstrating 'the connections between the racial categories of the past and contemporary cultural discourse':

it may be used in different ways, given different inflections and apparently discrete references.... *There is no single, or correct, concept of hybridity*.... The question is whether the old essentialising categories of cultural identity, or of race, were really so essentialised, or have been retrospectively constructed as more fixed than they were. When we look at the texts of racial theory, we find that they are in fact contradictory, disruptive and already deconstructed. (27) [emphasis added]

The process of remembering and forgetting is thus embedded in the history of hybridity. Encompassing both celebration and denial, it can involve a selectivity similar to that of nationalism. As Bhabha writes 'The national memory is always the site of the hybridity of histories and the displacement of memories' (169).

Iconicity is equally selective and varying: it can be used (as in the past) to make a whole people stand for 'otherness' (as in the Khoisan, or the 'Hottentots'); it can be used more specifically to make a person stand for a race and gender's 'otherness' (as in Saartje or Krotoä — black female sexuality and pathology); or, again as in the examples of Saartje and Krotoä, it can be redefined and used as a reminder of its historical meaning (their past suffering as women and that of all Khoisan). It can also, if we look at current references, move into a language of veneration (and here we might also think of the 'new' South African icons of Mandela and Tutu).

#### 'THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SYMBOLIC'<sup>13</sup>

While the issue of Baartman's return to South Africa for burial has stimulated much debate and discussion, there has been little attention to the way in which the contestation involved in claiming her, the questions regarding her ethnicity, and the proposals concerning the site for her burial, are connected with a history of spectacle which continues to the present day, both in the media and academia. Graham Huggan's thought-provoking and richly argued study, *The Postcolonial Exotic*, provides a helpful framework here:

The exoticist production of otherness is dialectical and contingent; at various times and in different places, it may serve conflicting ideological interests, providing the rationale for projects of *rapprochement* and reconciliation, but legitimising just as easily the need for plunder and violent conquest. (13)

The controversial 1996 museum exhibition *Miscast* has been called the 'catalyst for the production of collective memories and the articulation of KhoiSan and Coloured ethnic nationalism' [Robins 132]. Despite its intentions, it was perhaps a perfect example of the exotic representation of otherness described by Huggan above. While the guest curator, Pippa Skotnes, argued that its aim was to expose and challenge colonial practices of representation, it was interpreted by many, most of all the Khoisan themselves, as a further example of violence and exploitation. Following intense debate and exchange between Skotnes and some of her detractors, we have the publication of her accompanying book, with a foreword written by Marilyn Martin that singles out Saartje Baartman not only as a Khoisan icon, but a national icon:

For all of us [Saartje Baartman] stands as a reminder of the agonies of the past, of our need to face and deal with history and memory, and of our collective responsibility to resist a desire for historical amnesia. The debates around her also impact on issues of redress and restitution of land, and land is inextricably linked to place and identity.

(Martin 9)

After Mandela's election in 1994, campaigns began in earnest for Baartman's return to South Africa for a decent burial: this itself has been another reason for debate. Is she from the Eastern or Western Cape? Is the Cape a strategically or appropriately national site for her burial, as Wicomb asks or even, as has been suggested by the renowned paleo-anthropologist Philip Tobias, for a shrine?<sup>14</sup> Interviewed in the *Daily Mail & Guardian*), Willa Boezak had this to say:

[When] we celebrate her homecoming it will be a spiritual ceremony.... It will be a reburial. It will not be a Cape Town thing, it will not be a Griqua thing, it will be a national thing. ('Rejoicing' 2002 online)

In McGreal's article for *The Guardian* [2002], Cecil le Fleur's response similarly suggests that the significance of Saartje Baartman's return goes beyond the politics of ethnicity:

Irrespective of the fact that she is of Khoisan descent, we don't want to create the impression that we claim her as Khoisan property. Mostly, we want her to have a decent burial and to treat her in death how she was never treated in life. (online)

And Matty Cairncross, also a member of the Khoisan community, claims that:

'The return of Saartje Baartman to South Africa is a victory for all South Africans and indigenous peoples of the world. It's an historic moment for everyone, especially for women in South Africa. She can be a unifying symbol for us'. (qtd in Allie, online)

*David's Story* ends dramatically, with a bullet shooting through the narrator's computer, leaving scrambled words, 'impossible hybrids' (213). The text we are reading then, is apparently not the one that was written.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, David's amanuensis has played havoc with his story throughout — erasing and reinventing as she sees fit. What we are left with is a co-authored text which negotiates versions of the truth, and the icons of Krotoä and Saartje reside as palimpsests, while the haunting figure of Dulcie 'echoes like a scream' throughout the pages, refusing to fully emerge or disappear.<sup>16</sup> In some ways, then, the narratives of Saartje Baartman and Krotoä-Eva hardly find a home in Wicomb's hugely ambitious novel, but as Driver says, through her playful exclusion and inclusion of these two icons, 'the narrator's decision to erase David's stories about them flies in the face of ... current ethnic identifications' (2001 231).

## AFTERWORD

On the surface, the American Feminist Press edition of Wicomb's book, which contains Driver's skilful and authoritative afterword, is a necessary appendage: another narrator takes over and fills in the gaps, 'unravels', as it were, the literary and historical intertexts for an international readership. While Driver has produced a superbly researched, self-conscious and almost exhaustive critical analysis, we

might still question the marketing of this novel — which is so wittily attentive to interpretative strategies — with an afterword that, in the end, explains it all.<sup>17</sup>

Saartje and Krotoä have both been called icons and symbols ‘of an era in the history of the world, ... when colonialism and imperialist subjugation was carried out without anyone being answerable to anyone else’ (Tobias qtd in Ferreira, online). However, the current mythologising of Saartje Baartman seems certain to supercede that of her seventeenth-century predecessor Krotoä, the Khoi woman who died on Robben Island. President Thabo Mbeki ‘has declared [Baartman’s] grave a national monument and said a second monument will be erected in her honour in Cape Town’ (‘“Hottentot Venus” Laid to Rest’, online). ‘Plans are afoot’, says another report, for a ‘shrine of remembrance where people can come to pay homage and respects to her memory’ (Allie, online).

Krotoä Eva’s story might have travelled through history and joined up with Saartje’s, but for the woman they called ‘the Hottentot Venus’, it is not only her story, but an image of her — once the very icon of ‘otherness’ on display in the Musée de l’Homme, now the ‘new’ South African icon of inclusiveness and unity — which, in its reproduction, seems likely to become an object of international veneration such as the scientist Cuvier could never have imagined. According to Professor Tobias, as the original ‘plaster cast of her body remains in Paris, ... the South African government has asked for a copy of it’ (Ferreira, online).

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this essay was presented at ‘Versions and Subversions’, an international conference on African literature at Humboldt University, Berlin on 2 May 2002. Coincidentally, this was the day that Baartman was being flown back to Cape Town. I am grateful for the comments and questions that followed in the discussion, particularly a reminder of the case of El Negro, the African man returned to Botswana from Spain in October 2000. See ‘Stuffed Man’, online.
- <sup>2</sup> According to a report on the SABC, ‘It was Diana Ferrus’s poem that brought a breakthrough after years of campaigning. A French senator saw it on the Internet and asked for a translation’. See ‘Saartjie’s Remains to Come Back Home’ (online).
- <sup>3</sup> It encompasses much of the relevant history of Adam Kok, which is covered in Millin’s novel. Specific references to Millin occur for example in Wicomb 2001a, p. 38 and p. 161; additionally, see the epigraph from *God’s Stepchildren*, p. 63.
- <sup>4</sup> As Rob Nixon notes, de Klerk coined the term on 2 February 1990, the day he announced Mandela’s release (196). See also Attridge and Jolly (4).
- <sup>5</sup> See McGreal, quoting Cecil le Fleur, chairman of the National Khoisan Consultative Conference Council; see also Mansel Upham in ‘Bring back the Hottentot Venus’: ‘Bringing back her remains can help to ... stimulate a debate about aboriginal groups — like the “bushmen”, Griquas and coloureds — who have been neglected in reductionist black and white versions of our history’ (online).
- <sup>6</sup> Sanders 17 on the Truth Commission report writing what it terms ‘the South African story’.

- <sup>7</sup> Many thanks to Liz Gunner for this phrase.
- <sup>8</sup> See Schapera, 1933 and 1960. In *Early Cape Hottentots*, a volume edited for the Van Riebeeck Society in 1933, Schapera writes: 'The Hottentoots or Hottentots, a name under which they have become celebrated in ethnography, history and general literature' (i); but he also acknowledges the distinction between their self-representation and the European designation: 'They all allied themselves *Khoikhoin*, "men of men, people of pure race", a name by which they distinguished themselves from others. The term *Hottentots*, by which they are now universally known, was imposed upon them by the Europeans about the middle of the seventeenth century' (v). Recent practice refers to Khoisan or KhoiSan; while 'Hottentot' and 'Bushman', as pejorative historical terms, are commonly written with inverted commas.
- <sup>9</sup> See Elphick and Malherbe, and Elphick and Shell for historical accounts on Khoisan and settler interrelations in the early Cape Colony.
- <sup>10</sup> There are conflicting accounts in news reports as to when exactly her remains were removed from display; Wicomb says it was in the 1980s (1998 91).
- <sup>11</sup> Publicity blurb, inside jacket of Feminist Press edition (Wicomb 2001a).
- <sup>12</sup> Following Wicomb, I use the lowercase spelling unless it appears as part of an article title where the house style is that nouns are capitalised or where I am quoting from a text which still uses uppercase. As J.M. Coetzee writes: 'with a C the term still carries apartheid echoes; with a c it is more or less neutral' (2001 308).
- <sup>13</sup> A phrase from Bhabha in interview with Attwell (108).
- <sup>14</sup> See Wicomb (1998 91). Maseko's documentary on Baartman ends with discussion about negotiations for her return. Tobias suggests that they might want to have a shrine in Cape Town, with Khoisan curators, since it was from Cape Town that she left for England. Tobias means this as a dignified tribute, but it is again the language of veneration that interests me here.
- <sup>15</sup> Or is it? Just before the bullet hits the computer, the narrator includes this aside: 'I take a break from writing this impossible story with a turn in my unseasonable garden, slipping a backup disk into my pocket as I always do' (212).
- <sup>16</sup> David describes her as 'a kind of scream somehow echoing through my story' (Wicomb 2001a, 134).
- <sup>17</sup> Thanks to Amar Bhatia, for an intellectually engaging essay (submitted in January 2002) on Toni Morrison's introduction to the new English translation of Camara Laye's *Radiance of the King*, New York Review of Books edition [2002], to which further discussion of Driver's afterword in Wicomb's novel might provide interesting comparisons. Tellingly the local Kwela edition of *David's Story* contains no such critical apparatus. Note the reissue in 1999 by the Feminist Press of Wicomb's first work of fiction, *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town*, includes both an historical introduction and critical essay. See also Driver's substantial article on this earlier work in *World Literature Today*.

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