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(MIS)REPRESENTATIONS OF CLASS AND 'RACE' ON AND AROUND *DIE BRAAK* IN STELLENBOSCH

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ABSTRACT

This is a historical narrative of recreational space in the 19th Century Stellenbosch, known as 'Die Braak'. The development of sport in Stellenbosch dates back to 1866 and coincides with the influx of young white men who engaged with people across the racial divide on 'Die Braak' when they came into town for their studies at Stellenbosch Gymnasium, a forerunner of Stellenbosch University. The methodological aim of this study was to decontextualise existing narratives in terms of race and class (mis)representations on 'Die Braak'. A historical reinterpretation of the dominant narratives of Stellenbosch features in this article. Attention was directed specifically to historically marginalised minorities. The study covered a period from 1863–1886. However, several documented accounts point to there being sports activities in and around 'Die Braak' as early as the 1700s. Slight reference was also made to human and sport activity during the Stone Age period in the area referred to as Stellenbosch in the 21st century. In conclusion, the contribution of marginalised groups, that is misrepresented in existing sport narratives of 'Die Braak' is placed at the centre of the research. This study thus intervened by providing new scrutiny of sport facilities in colonial society by rooting 'Die Braak' in a colonial context.

Keywords: History; 'Die Braak'; Stellenbosch; Class; Race**.**

INTRODUCTION

Writing in 1979, geographer Pierce Lewis referred to a landscape as "our unwitting autobiography, reflecting our tastes, our values, our aspirations, and even our fears, in tangible, visible form" (Lewis, 1979:11). As sport emerged in the mid to late 19th Century from its folk game origins, it had a number of effects on the landscape. It is fair to say that sport has been the dominant factor influencing the character and shape of the landscape (Bale, 2003). This study is crafted with the above in mind by examining an open square of land in Stellenbosch, commonly known as *Die Braak*. Traditionally, *Die Braak* was presented as "a place where a variety of games took place of which cricket and football were the most popular" (Van der Merwe, 1984:1). In many cases, this presentation is done without any social or political commentary.

The authors of this article have crafted a narrative that reinterprets and re-represents *Die Braak*, not only as a recreation space but also as a geo-social landscape that reflects colonial administrative thinking and practices around race in the latter half of the 19th Century. Sport on *Die Braak* is not studied in itself, or as an isolated piece of land, but as a space that functioned as a product of underlying social processes. As such, it is a confirmation of the

ground-breaking work by the historian Christopher Saunders entitled *The Making of the South African Past: Major Historians on Race and Class* (Saunders, 1988).

According to Margaret Hoskyn, a former Stellenbosch resident, the name '*Braak*' dates back to the governorship of Simon van der Stel at the Cape Colony when he visited the area called *Wilde Bosch* (Wild Bush) in 1679 and renamed it after himself (Hofmeyr, 1967; Giliomee, 2003). 'Braak' is a Dutch term that refers to "a fallow ground or an open space not to be built over" in case of a fire (Hoskyn, 1978:37). Initially, '*De Braak*' served as a recreation area used as a multi-purpose centre for public gatherings, festivities and a military training ground during the period of Dutch occupation of the Cape Colony (1652-1795 and 1802-1805) (Hoskyn, 1978). During the British occupation period (1795-1802 and 1806 onwards) it was used for festivities and sport practices and was officially named King's Square on 19 March 1818 (Craven & Jordaan, 1955). On 31 July 1849 it was formally renamed Adderley Square under municipal direction, in honour of Charles Bowyer Adderley, who agitated in the British House of Commons that the Cape Colony should not be made a penal settlement (Craven & Jordaan, 1955).

By 1865, it was a field used for organised sport (Smuts, 1979a). In 1866, Adderley Square was renamed *Die Braak* (Stander, 2000). In 1885, it was an important sports venue in colonial Stellenbosch and "[T]he first Olympic Festival at Stellenbosch" was held there (Van der Merwe, 1987:59). Throughout history, black people were either written out of the mainstream narrative or stereotyped in negative caricature forms, as will be highlighted further on. At this juncture, the authors need to state that they are of the mindset of approaching 'race' as a social construct and distance themselves from the South African references to African, coloured, white, Indian and others. These social constructions are used in this writing only when historical realities need to be clarified.

A keen observation throughout the research process was the scarcity and misrepresentation of black people's experiences on and around the square in mainstream literature during the 19th Century. This confirms the claim by the Nigerian novelist and historian, Chinua Achebe (quoted in Odendaal, 2018:1) that during the colonial period, black people were excluded from mainstream historical narratives and not seen as active agents in society. Therefore, this study discards the commonly held idea that the town of Stellenbosch was founded on 8 November 1679 by the colonial governor, Simon van der Stel, whose stereotypical attitude to people of colour was not an isolated view in the literature of colonial times (Böeseken, 1964:117).

BACKGROUND

Until recent times, the dominant narrative that dealt with the history of Stellenbosch implied that there was no black sport agency in Stellenbosch in the 19th Century. Typical of this genre is the section on the history of the Stellenbosch Rugby Football Club in the publication, *History of South African Rugby Football*, which opens with the statement: "Stellenbosch is a little Western province village with 4,700 European inhabitants" (Harvey & Strasheim, 1933:470).

In instances when references are made to a black presence in literature relating to Stellenbosch and *Die Braak* in particular, it is usually in a negative light. This calls for the reinterpretation of literature relating to black presences in colonial Stellenbosch with a deliberate intent of creating decolonised narratives. The 45-page hard cover publication by Annie Hofmeyr, *Die meulsloot* (The millrun), fits this mould (Hofmeyr, 1967). This publication traces the history of the water mill in Stellenbosch and is authenticated by leading government officials of the day. Throughout the narrative, white people are presented as rounded characters

with full names and human experiences, while reference to black people is restricted to words such as 'Kleurlingvrou' (coloured woman) (p. 10) and 'oppasster' (nanny) (p. 10). When reference is made to a full name of a coloured person such as Pieter Stone, it is to point out that he worked for Mr. Hunt, the miller, a white man (p. 26).

It might be useful to refer to empirical evidence in the form of published diaries and other documentary forms of colonial scientific literature emanating from public figures who visited and stayed in Stellenbosch during the 18th Century to understand early colonial race relations. To this end, brief reference is made to two publications of the Historical Publications Southern Africa (HiPSA) (formerly the Van Riebeeck Society) (VRS). HiPSA was established in 1918 with the intention to publish meticulously edited original sources on Southern African history, which were largely inaccessible to the average South African. Since then it has produced one volume in every year bar one. The subject matter of its volumes went well beyond white society at a time when this was not popular and contained rich information on the indigenous San, Khoekhoen and African populations and slaves, though usually seen through colonial eyes (HiPSA, n.d.).

Reference to Stellenbosch in these publications provide readers with an environmental backdrop of life (human, fauna and flora) in the area as seen through the lens of European colonial scientists. The first publication in this literature corpus to be referred to is *The Diary of Adam Tas* (Fouché & Paterson, 1970). This is a published diary of an 18th-century free burger who rebelled against Dutch colonial rule. His legacy lives on in the naming of a major road in present-day Stellenbosch. In the diary, the reader gets a glimpse of master-servant relations during Dutch colonial rule (Fouché & Paterson, 1970:317). This relationship persisted in language usage in Stellenbosch, long after the Dutch occupation period in words such as 'volk' (Hofmeyr, 1967:33). In this instance, 'volk' refers to 'mob, common people, coloured people, boys, work people and labourers' and not to the 'volk' described as the 'chosen people', as white Afrikaans speakers were called (Bosman, *et al*., 1969:872). In contrast to the negative stereotyping of coloured men, young white men in 19th-century Stellenbosch were referred to as 'kêrels', translated as 'chaps' or 'fellows' (Bosman, *et al*., 1969:349).

The Adam Tas narrative deals in part with a petition drawn up by a Stellenbosch farmer against official corruption in the town. Of special interest to this study is the emergence of hegemony where the colonial government obtained the support of 20 blacks, liberated slaves and convicts in a 240 signed counter petition (Fouché & Paterson, 1970). Moreover, revelations about Wilhelm Adriaan van der Stel's (the governor's) and colonists' thievery of cattle from indigenous people have come to the fore (Fouché & Paterson, 1970). It is possible that these people were familiar with the space called *Die Braak* and crossed paths in daily affairs there. Throughout this publication, blacks and women are pushed to the periphery. Race relations between black and white are further illuminated in another VRS publication that relates to the 18th-century travels of the Swedish botanist, Carl Thunberg (Forbes, 1986). Thunberg's writing form reflects the colonial justification for colonisation. For example, the colonial land invasion of 18th-century Stellenbosch was justified by "the weakness of the natives" (Forbes, 1986:267). The reader also gets insights into early military reviews and compulsory military service in Stellenbosch, most likely on *Die Braak* (Forbes, 1986).

Traditionally, literature relating to the history of *Die Braak* is largely of a celebratory nature. These writings are mostly presented in the form of nostalgic memories and over-romanticised versions of the past without critical engagement of colonial complexities. The official publication entitled *Stellenbosch Three Centuries* (Smuts, 1979) is such an example. This book is presented in the apartheid style writing that foregrounds a white history from 1679 to 1979.

The 463-page coffee-table publication highlights colonial privilege and drives black narratives to the periphery. Thus, with the introduction of turf clubs in Stellenbosch in the early 19th century, no mention is made about black jockeys (Tijmens, 1979). Yet, the descendants of indigenous Khoekhoen people were central in the development of this sport as jockeys (Archer & Bouillon, 1982). Overall, this publication does not provide a critical interpretation of colonial representations of *Die Braak*, but it does confirm a black presence. Here we refer to the portrayal of a black woman by the painter, Samuel Davis, on *Die Braak* in 1779 (Fransen, 1979).

Another publication that features a black presence, albeit impotent, on *Die Braak* is *Met die Maties op die rugbyveld 1880-1955* (With the Maties on the rugby field) by Danie Craven and Piet Jordaan (Craven & Jordaan, 1955). This may be regarded as the authoritative work on Stellenbosch University's rugby history at the time with the Prime Minister and Rector of Stellenbosch University writing messages of congratulations in the introduction (Craven & Jordaan, 1955). It is in this publication that fleeting reference is made to the use of town criers for announcing rugby matches. Of interest for this study is the photographic depiction of the last town crier, Simon Aasvoël (Vulture) Williams in 1918 (Craven & Jordaan, 1955).

The sport historian, Hendrik Snyders, refers to the giving of nicknames to sport fans of colour as acts of epistemic violence (Snyders, 2018). The authors of *Met die Maties op die rugbyveld 1880-1955* conform to the Apartheid portrayal of characters by referring to whites as "players" but non-whites as "chams … with whom conflict was inevitable" (Craven & Jordaan, 1955:33). This kind of writing presented the illusion that 'racial' interaction was an undesirable element in society. Thus, a dominant narrative has emerged that minimalises black presence on and around *Die Braak* that relegates them to "bellicose chams" unworthy of equally using the public square as a sports field (Mynhardt, 1898:21). The term "Chams" is a reference to Ham, the son of Noah, believed to be dark-skinned and the father of all black people. This word in the Western Cape, was later changed to the racist term, *gam* and became a derogatory term used to refer to people who were later classified as coloured.

A common theme in these publications is the minimalist portrayal of a black presence on *Die Braak*. Although wary of assigning motive to previous researchers, we believe this brief literature review revealed that existing literature on the history of *Die Braak* had ignored data – archival and in the public domain – relating to social conflict in broader Stellenbosch. This calls for a process of redress that requires not so much band-aid patchwork on past (often superficial empirical) narratives by adding additional examples, in a changing context, to prove that black South Africans do indeed have a sports history, but rather a full-scale re-imagining and rewriting of the history of sport in the country. This rewriting must inevitably go with painstaking research and readings in still under-exploited archives and fields of enquiry despite the pressures of the post-modern digital age to produce instant outcomes (quoted in Odendaal, 2018:5).

METHODOLOGY

This study rested on a reinterpretation of existing case studies as documented in published popular books, theses and academic journals. The most common research methodology used in sport history writing in the South African context until the 1980s was the scientific historical method. The scientific historical method of research can be attributed to the 19th-century historian, Leopold von Ranke. According to von Ranke, history should report on "how it really was" (Muir, 1987:4). A shortcoming of the method is that it offers little in the way of social

analysis (Nauright, 1997:18). As the literature review indicated, the documented evidence relating to *Die Braak* revealed little about social discrimination against black people in colonial settings.

Although this study uses the scientific historical method, it is not without critique and an attempt was subsequently made to overcome this criticism. When an attempt is made to apply the scientific historical method to overcome the shortcoming of social analysis, it solicits another descriptive tool: the structural empirical method. The structural empirical method ignores principles of social analysis and focuses solely on 'facts' (Coetzee, 1969:11). This lack of social analysis of historical sources becomes a drawback if the sport historian realises the necessity of viewing the subject in terms of underlying social developments that helped to produce them or which they in turn helped to produce (Allen, 2002:5). This research subsequently utilised a socio-historical methodology that subjects sources to critical analysis.

JUSTIFICATION FOR STUDY

This study comprised six factors that signified its importance. First, it opened opportunities for future scholarly discourse on colonial sport facilities and playing areas in study fields, such as sport history, geography, arts and social sciences (with the focus of sociology and anthropology) for the town of Stellenbosch. Second, the collected evidence also provided space for critical engagement in discussion forums, such as heritage events. Third, the findings of this research study could benefit the tourism industry by rewriting marketing brochures and booklets that foreground marginalised histories. Fourth, this study also laid bare the importance of more rigorous examination of sport beyond institutional histories. Fifth, this study brought new historical perspectives on *Die Braak* and the broader Stellenbosch community to the fore by drawing attention to existing monuments and statues. Historian Simon Haw wrote about this in the following way: "Most monuments and statutes tend to blend into the background and are seldom even noticed much less interrogated by the citizenry busily going about their daily round" (Haw, 2010:163). Finally, this study was motivated by a desire to record and report sport experiences of historically marginalised minorities on *Die Braak*.

DELIMITATION AND AIMS OF STUDY

This study covered a period that stretched from 1863 to 1886. The point of departure corresponds with the introduction of higher education in Stellenbosch, while the terminal point of this study coincides with municipal intervention that resulted in the banning of ball games on *Die Braak* following reports by the local magistrate of socially inappropriate conduct between race groups (Smuts, 1979a:445; Craven, 1980:4). Some attention is, however, directed to periods prior to and after this delimitation. This study's major methodological aim was to decontextualise existing narratives in terms of 'race' (mis)representations on *Die Braak*. It does so by reinterpreting existing dominant historical narratives of Stellenbosch in decolonial ways. The implication of this is that it becomes necessary to put in place, as this study aimed to achieve, new paradigms for understanding the colonial sport past (quoted in Odendaal, 2018:2). Furthermore, the study aims to conscientise the academic community about the utilisation of recreational spaces in Stellenbosch as areas of 'race' and class contestations during the colonial period.

FINDINGS

Early colonial sport history of *Die Braak*

According to Louis Péringuey, a turn-of-the-20th-century archaeologist, there was human activity in the present Stellenbosch area about 250 000 years ago during the Earlier Stone Age period (Seddon, 1966). This archaeological encounter with modern-day historical perspectives on sport resulted in a conclusion that sport, with its modern traits of hero making, has footprints in Stone Age society (Estes & Mechikoff, 2002:23-24).

Further research is necessary to determine the evolvement of games and sport of pre-colonial communities in and around the present day *Die Braak*. A research based publication refers to the work of P.J. Waller who suggested that "historically, [modern day] towns have their origins in five causes: trade, recreation, defence, religion and administration" (Waller, 1983:20). Many modern cities and villages also trace their origins to the accessibility to available water sources. Here reference can be made to Cape Town's sprawling suburbs that developed along the banks of the Liesbeeck River (Robinson, 2011). Stellenbosch developed along the banks of the Eerste River and a tributary is still visible on *Die Braak* in the present day. In 1687, the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) granted permission for the erection of a water mill in close proximity to the area later called *Die Braak* (Hofmeyr, 1967:16). An unreferenced statement was found that soccer players on *Die Braak* washed themselves at the watermill in 1879 (Craven & Jordaan, 1955).

The earliest known and recorded sport historical data on *Die Braak* dates to 1703 when the square was referred to as "Exercitie Plein" (exercise field), an official training and parade ground for the Burgher Militia, which had been formed in 1686. Until 1703, the Militia travelled to Cape Town for all training and annual parades but they later agitated for permission to train on local terrain (Smuts, 1979b). *Die Braak* was still used as a military ground by 1749 (Hofmeyr, 1967). The Burgher Militia used clay pigeons tied to poles to practise shooting at target. In subsequent years, *Poppenjay shooting* (clay parrot shooting), also became an activity of entertainment for the white population of Stellenbosch (Van der Merwe, 2007b).

To date, it is unknown what role black people had in this activity that was held, most likely, on *Die Braak*. However, historian Hermann Giliomee refers to a letter drafted by a few Cape rebels against governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel, stating that non-whites "have been allowed to handle arms and participate with Christians in … military exercise" (Giliomee, 2003:17). Unorganised games and public gatherings during the 18th Century are also mentioned in references to *Die Braak* (Smuts, 1979a:444). In his memoir, Judge Petrus B. Borcherds referred to *Die Braak* as a playground where he and his friends used to play kite and other ball games (Borcherds, 1963).

Die Braak: A public space as signifier of sport and race relations in Stellenbosch

Sport on *Die Braak* during the early years of the second British occupation (starting in 1806) was characterised by opposition from state and the church. Thus, all games played on a Sunday were put to a stop in 1825 following a complaint lodged to the magistrate by the Rhenish Church that was inaugurated on the far end of *Die Braak* on 8 February 1824 (Marais, 1918; Giliomee, 2003). The complaint claimed that games on *Die Braak* caused rowdiness and a disturbance to worshippers on Sundays (Smuts, 1979a). However, similar complaints were not made when a mass meeting was held, largely by white colonists, on *Die Braak* on 19 July 1849 to agitate against the Cape Colony becoming a penal settlement (Craven & Jordaan, 1955). By 1855, *Die Braak* was a place where young people "could enjoy themselves with innocent

games" and a group of colonists opposed the building of a church on the grounds for this reason (Stander, 2000).

With the start of the Theological Seminary of the Dutch Reformed Church on 1 November 1858, higher education became established in Stellenbosch (Van der Merwe, 1985:ix). In December 1863, the foundation was laid for the establishment of the Stellenbosch Gymnasium, which became a reality in 1866. It is propagated in Stellenbosch University literature that these developments gave rise to organised sports in Stellenbosch (Mynhardt, 1898). Also during 1863, a group of boys from the Zonnebloem College visited Stellenbosch on a school outing. On their visit they encountered a group of local boys playing quoits and decided to engage with them in a cricket match (Hodgson, 1975). This game, in all likelihood, took place on *Die Braak* or Adderley Square, as it was officially known.

Zonnebloem College was established in 1858 with the purpose of providing a British education for the sons of Xhosa chiefs (Hodgson & Edlman, 2018). The Zonnebloem boys had, according to the Master's thesis of Janet Hodgson, been playing cricket as early as 1861, four years prior to the recognised starting date of the Stellenbosch Cricket Club (Hodgson, 1975; Stander, 2000:55) This event was not recorded in a Master's thesis dealing with the history of cricket at Stellenbosch University that traces the origin of the game in the town to 1865 (Stander, 2000). Yet, a deeper analysis of this event reveals much about race relations in Stellenbosch during the 1860s.

According to the diary entry of Walter Monde, one of the Zonnebloem boys, they were objectified by the local population "who looked at us as if they have never seen well-dressed 'Africans' before" (Hodgson, 1975:455). Hodgson remarked in her Master's thesis that: "One cannot help wondering, too, whether the group of Zonnebloem pupils might not perhaps have met with some hostility from the local populace" (Hodgson, 1975:455). Historian André Odendaal says the historic events surrounding this game "provides researchers with a reference of how indigenous people came to play cricket. The governor, Sir George Grey, orchestrated Chief Mhala's (an African resister to British colonial expansion in the Eastern Cape) banishment to Robben Island on trumped-up charges, but started to educate his son and other 'princes' at Zonnebloem College in the hope of becoming loyal British subjects (Odendaal, 2003). By 1877, some Stellenbosch residents regarded rugby football on *Die Braak* as the preferred game over "the dull cricket" (Craven, 1980:3).

The first African student at the Stellenbosch Theology Seminary, Daniel Gezani, who was a student there in 1881, had a worse experience than the Zonnebloem boys of 1861 (Mackinnon, 1887:60). It is reported that in the first year of his ministry, Gezani developed pulmonary tuberculosis that eventually led to his death, owing to his poor housing conditions in a room with a damp floor while in Stellenbosch (Grundlingh, 2018).

Of special significance for sport historians is the fact that the Stellenbosch rugby team, ironically known as the 'Fifteen Devils', was almost exclusively comprised of theological students (Craven & Jordaan, 1955:32). It would seem unlikely that these students' stereotypical attitudes toward race would have differed on the playing field at *Die Braak*. These were attitudes that determined "whites to be civilised and blacks were uncivilised [translated]" (Scholtz, 1964:31).

Such attitudes were still visible in the 20th Century, which led theologian Jaap Durand to speak of white mindsets aimed at westernising blacks, whom they regarded as cultural freaks (Durand, 1970). It is possible that Gezani could have been regarded as such by fellow students, as Africans from the Eastern Cape were encouraged by the colonial government to migrate to the Western Cape for purposes of labour, not for higher education (Smit, 1964). Thus, the

Zonnebloem-Stellenbosch interaction, however sociable it might (or might not) have been, was one between coloniser and colonised. Bear in mind that the Zonnebloem boys' fathers were banished to Robben Island at the time, while the boys were being educated in the hope of becoming loyal British subjects (Odendaal, 2003).

By 1874 sport was an established practice on *Die Braak* where school pupils, college students and staff, as well as townsfolk played (Van der Merwe, 2007a). It is not known for certain what version of football was played. However, according to one Victoria College student, for many years cricket was more popular than football among some students in Stellenbosch (*Cape Argus*, 1886b). Unconfirmed reports indicate that football was played without goalposts and players served as goalposts when penalty or conversion kicks were taken. Players also indicated whether a conversion or a drop goal was to be awarded without the presence of a referee (Craven & Jordaan, 1955).

Die Braak was a space where people from different walks of life intersected, often violently, causing the municipality to place a notice in 1874 in the middle of the playing field, proclaiming that ball games were banned and that play would only be allowed on the Commonage. At the same time, a certain P. Hartogh and 15 other colonists applied for permission from the municipality to play football on the field, but was refused. Shortly afterwards, presumably as an act of rebellion, Hartogh grazed two of his horses on *Die Braak*, for which he was fined 5 shillings (Craven & Jordaan, 1955).

On 27 April 1875, according to the historian, Floris van der Merwe, a schoolboy attacked a local magistrate because he prevented them from playing football on *Die Braak*. The boy and his friends were interrupted by a police officer, on an order from the magistrate, to terminate the game. When the boys refused, the magistrate appeared himself and whipped them with his stick. One of the boys responded by choking the magistrate until a few police officers came to his rescue (Van der Merwe, 2007a). On 4 May 1875, 28 colonists wrote to the municipality requesting a meeting to determine whether football and cricket would be allowed on *Die Braak*. For unknown reasons, the municipality informed attendees at the meeting – contrary to the prohibition notice and the letter to Hartogh earlier – that "they never had any objection to allow such games to be played on Adderley Square, as long as these games do not interfere with the safety of passengers or public passing along the public thoroughfares, and to persons residing in the neighbourhood" (Craven & Jordaan, 1955:30).

During 1879, the magistrate wrote to the municipality about "improper scenes occurring on Adderley Square [*Die Braak*], such as fighting, using obscene language between the European and coloured boys playing football and other games" (Smuts, 1979a:445). However, football offered 19th century schoolboys throughout the Empire a sublimated violence which made it a powerful substitute for the knightly training of earlier centuries (Turner, 2016). This is embodied in Thomas Hughes' famous novel about British school rugby, entitled *Tom Brown's Schooldays*: "There has been two collar bones broken [this semester] and a dozen fellows lamed. And last year a fellow had his leg broken" (Hughes, 1994:100). At the South African College (SAC), the forerunner of the University of Cape Town, hacking and tripping had not been banned and barging and shouldering were cultivated arts (Babrow & Stent, 1963). In Cape Town, a match between Hamiltons and Villagers was marred by enthusiastic supporters (possibly black and white) "crossing the boundaries of the field and interfering with the course of the game" (Babrow & Stent, 1963:8).

In 1880, *Die Braak* was recognised as an official rugby field (Craven & Jordaan, 1955:32). This was a time when sport administrators promoted Muscular Christian values that centred on the idea of a:

> Well-knit body as model for a well-formed mind that harmonised as a basis for spiritual health with external principles of growth and order. It was believed that this could be achieved through an education system that produced manliness, courage, patriotism, moral character and team spirit. It was the acceptance of these notions that contributed to an increased interest in school sport and physical education in the last half of the 19th century (Siedentop, 1990:69).

In time, many institutions of higher learning in the Cape Colony had at least one administrator that promoted Muscular Christianity. Diocesan (Bishops College) had George Ogilvie; Zonnebloem College had Oscar Hine; St. Andrews School in the Eastern Cape had the Rev. Mullins; and the Stellenbosch Theological Seminary had the Rev. J.J. Neethling (Anon., 1944; Calder, 1990; Odendaal, 2003; Van der Merwe, 2007a).

In the Social Darwinist atmosphere of the time, objections against Muscular Christian violent play were not directed at the violence *per se* but at the fact that such aggression took place in a socially mixed environment. State sanctioned segregation also increased from the latter part of the 19th century because villages became more populous and land became scarcer and pricier (*Cape Argus Weekly Edition*, 1885; *Supplement to the Wynberg Times and South African Agriculturalist*, 1886). Middle-class people in Cape Town and surrounding areas then started agitating for enclosed sport grounds (*Cape Monthly Magazine*, 1873). Thus, the *Stellenbosch College Times* proposed in 1885 that future athletic meetings had to be moved to the adjacent, 'Die Laan' (the Avenue), because "*Die Braak* could not be fenced in – resulting in a loss of income, there was an uneven surface that was unsuitable for running events and a lack of cover for spectators [translated]" (Van der Merwe, 1987:60). Open fields, across the Cape Colony, gradually either disappeared as playing spaces or became enclosed stadia for a ticket-paying class of spectators who were provided with class-based seating or standing arrangements.

Football was socially diffused in the late 19th-century industrialising United Kingdom in four ways: the rise of real wages among the urban working class; the increase in leisure time associated with the introduction of a 5.5 day working week; new developments in transport technology; and growing literacy, associated with the introduction of compulsory junior schooling (Goldblatt, 2006). Late 19th-century Stellenbosch fits into this description. In 1874, an 'Arts Department' was established at the Undenominational Public School in Stellenbosch, making it the third major educational institution in the western half of the Cape Colony (Hill, 2010). Also, a railway line was opened between Cape Town and Stellenbosch on 1 May 1863 (Anon., 1960:ix).

Die Braak became the official playing grounds for the Stellenbosch Gymnasium students, while coloured children were instructed to play on an area called *Die Vlakte* (The Plains) in 1880 (Smuts, 1979a). The players who remained on *Die Braak*, played under the auspices of a club that was established in 1875 and was a founding member of the Western Province Rugby Football Union in 1883 (Parker, 1983; Van der Merwe, 2007a). It was during this time that other sport clubs in Stellenbosch were established, notably cricket (1865), athletics (1884) and hockey (1901) (Van der Merwe, 1987; Calder, 1990; Stander, 2000; Van der Merwe, 2007a).

The Stellenbosch Rugby Club could thus request the municipality, with success, in 1885 to mark the field on *Die Braak* and chop down trees along the river for permanent goal posts (Craven & Jordaan, 1955). The idea of sport being a vehicle for 'civilisation' and 'progress' was internalised across the racial divide. When the Spes Bona Soccer Club for coloureds was established in Stellenbosch during the early part of the 20th century in *Die Vlakte*, its

constitution stated that its aim was to "foster sportsmanship and to live out true sportsmanship in the community" (Biscombe, 2010:31).

Later, coloured people living on the boundary roads of *Die Braak* in Alexander Street were removed from the immediate vicinity of the playing fields (Hofmeyr, 1967). It was also an indication of things to come in the form of forced removals from the town to Cloetesville and Idas Valley during the 20th Century. Elsewhere in the Colony, there remained some contact across the colour line, among spectators at least. In 1886, a journalist reported on a rugby match between Stellenbosch and Somerset West "where the field was crowded with spectators of every class who shouted and cheered for the edification of players" (*Cape Argus*, 1886a:n.p.).

DISCUSSION

Sport is often lobbied as a medium for change that can potentially unite people. This study of colonial recreation on *Die Braak* reveals that sport can also set up and aggravate racial tensions. This is revealed through accounts where recreational spaces such as *Die Braak* and *Die Vlakte* were not places for equality but rather areas of 'race' and class contestations. In 1879, coloured children were forced to move to the fields on *Die Vlakte*, while the Stellenbosch Gymnasium students continued playing on *Die Braak* despite there being a complaint about violence and obscene language generated through ball games on *Die Braak*. This action implies that only the coloured children displayed such behaviour and were therefore undeserving of equally sharing the recreational space. Furthermore, when all sports were strictly prohibited on *Die Braak* (1886), the Gymnasium students also moved to *Die Vlakte*, a municipal ground where coloured folk shared playing facilities with whites, and frequent clashes broke out (Craven, 1980). It was only a matter of time before the students started agitating for private fields.

The Reverend J.H. Neethling, an active member in the rugby fraternity, is quoted in the *Students Quarterly* as stating that the driving force behind obtaining a new field was motivated "by not having to consider the rights of the coloured children as they did on *Die Braak*" (Mynhardt, 1898:21). These accounts exposed the role that sport, with the assistance of municipal officialdom, played in creating racial and class divisions that became an accepted part of the Stellenbosch community. The study focussed on marginalised people who had been written off in historical narratives that deal with the development of sport on and around *Die Braak*. It showed how these individuals were portrayed in the stereotypical imagery of 19th-century colonial society. These portrayals found their way into standard literature and through documentation into official archives and if left there untouched, they will remain a misrepresentation of class and 'race' on and around *Die Braak*, in Stellenbosch.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that there is a lingering dominant narrative that ignores the contribution of marginalised communities to the historical sport narrative of *Die Braak*. This study concluded that *Die Braak* was part of the 'racial' contestations shaped by colonial culture and policies. A study of colonial recreation on *Die Braak* helps historians map a path of understanding of forced removals as a social engineering project with a historical backdrop. The negative stereotyping of black people on *Die Braak* is significant to the extent that this study could only be a first step along a path towards redress in the way sports historians have represented marginalised groups. This study highlighted how marginalised groups were written out of mainstream narratives. Future studies should hone in on developing full characters behind these

misrepresented individuals. This will go some way in a re-representation of "South African 'code chronicles' that have more often than not tended to celebrate sporting achievements in the 'establishment sports' – notably cricket and rugby – and to underplay the associated history of racial fragmentation and discrimination" (Hill, 2010:12).

This research also alluded to an idea that the social contestations at community level between class and 'race' on *Die Braak* were not unique and historical research on other recreational sites in colonial spaces could lead to a deeper understanding of the issues raised in this article. There is merit in the argument that sport clubs in Stellenbosch, which grew out of communities that were dispersed because of forced removals, created a uniting factor in the community (Biscombe, 2010). However, the unfolding events on and around *Die Braak* proved that sport was also a reflection of deep divisions in colonial society and formed part of the (mis)representations of class and 'race' of the time.

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