

*Peter Pels*  
*Seminar Iconisation and Ethnography*

**Bio**

Peter Pels (1958) is professor of African anthropology at the Leiden University. He has published on critical anthropological theory, the anthropology of colonialism, the history of anthropology, modern African politics and religion, and material culture. He co-edited and contributed chapters to *Magic and Modernity* (with Birgit Meyer; 2003), *Embedding Ethics* (with Lynn Meskell, 2005) and *Cultures of Voting* (with Romain Bertrand and Jean Louis Briquet, 2007) and is currently working with archaeologists on interpreting the Near Eastern Neolithic, on cyberculture and science fiction, and on the materialization of past and future in everyday life.

**Abstract**

**H. Rider Haggard, the Zulus, and the iconisation of Africa**

Around 1880, when the colonial domination of Africa took the shape it was to keep until decolonization, the books of H. Rider Haggard popularized an image of African peoples that, together with the romance of wildlife, continues to rule the global stereotypes of Africa today. Two figures, one of denigration, the other of romantic appreciation, overshadowed this image: the witch and the warrior – and both can be traced to Haggard's influence, his translation of ethnographic knowledge, and his 20<sup>th</sup>-century popularity in film.