



The articulation of context and identity in *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents whose dreams for me far surpassed my own. Wish you were here.

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SUMMARY

The primary focus of this qualitative research project is on the articulation of contexts and identity in operatic texts. In literature, postmodern appropriations and re-writings of classic nineteenth-century texts have changed perceptions about the ability of the marginalized Other's identity to change. As a discursive phenomenon, opera helped to shape nineteenth-century perceptions of the exotic Other. This thesis argues that the appropriation of operatic texts to reflect various contexts induces the potential to shape alternative perceptions about identity. In *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha* (2005), a cinematic adaptation of Bizet's *Carmen* (1873–74), director Mark Dornford-May revisits earlier versions of *Carmen* and uses semiotics and several other narrative strategies in order to articulate the identities of the African female Other within the context of a post-apartheid township. This thesis illustrates how the dialectic relationship between text, context and identity formation becomes evident in the analysis and comparison of Prosper Mérimée's novella *Carmen* (1845), George Bizet's eponymous opera and *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*.

Key words: adaptations, context, exoticism, identity, narratology, narrative strategies, opera, postmodernism, semiotics, text

OPSOMMING

Hierdie kwalitatiewe navorsingsprojek fokus hoofsaaklik op die wyse waarop kontekste en identiteite deur operatekste geartikuleer word. Postmoderne aanpassings en die herskryf van klassieke negentiende-eeuse literêre tekste het daartoe bygedra dat alternatiewe persepsies oor die gemarginaliseerde Ander ontstaan het. Die diskursiewe aard van opera veroorsaak dat hierdie genre 'n invloed op die artikulering en vorming van negentiende-eeuse persepsies van die eksotiese Ander gehad het. Hierdie proefskrif gaan van die standpunt uit dat die aanpassing van operatekste, na gelang van 'n verskeidenheid kontekste, die potensiaal het om alternatiewe persepsies te laat ontstaan. In *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha* (2005), 'n filmverwerking van Bizet se *Carmen* (1873–74), herbesoek Mark Dornford-May vroeëre weergawes van *Carmen* en gebruik hy semiotiek, asook etlike ander narratiewe strategieë, ten einde die identiteit van die vroulike Afrika-Ander binne die konteks van 'n informele nedersetting in die post-apartheidsera te artikuleer. Wanneer Prosper Mérimée se novella *Carmen* (1845), Bizet se gelyknamige opera en *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha* ontleed en met mekaar vergelyk word, illustreer hierdie proefskrif hoe die dialektiese verhouding tussen teks, konteks en identiteitsformasie na vore kom.

Sleutelwoorde: konteks, eksotisme, identiteit, narratologie, narratiewe strategieë, opera, postmodernisme, semiotiek, teks

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Carmen (1875) by Bizet. Produced by the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in the UK (2006). Set and costume designs by Tanya McCallin. Film stills taken from DVD © Decca

And still I rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset by gloom?
'Cause I walk like I got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your word,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from the past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

Maya Angelou (1978)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Contextualization of the research project

This thesis explores the articulation of contexts¹ and identities² in *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha* (2005), a cinematic adaptation of Bizet's *Carmen* (1873–74), which is an operatic adaptation of Mérimée's eponymous novella (1845). The thesis is the result of an interdisciplinary research project based on the theoretical precepts of semiotics and narratology as found in literature as well as music.

Within a South African context, this research project is significant because perceptions of opera as an imposed Western art form are fast diminishing. Instead, opera is increasingly regarded as a narrative expression in which human experiences are encoded within alternative contexts. The re-encoding of nineteenth-century Western operas within African contexts is achieved by appropriating the semiotics of opera's composite conventions (henceforth referred to as conventions),³ creating intertextual spaces, and by employing narrative strategies to manipulate temporal and spatial dimensions. New contexts are created in which identity is articulated. Nketia (2005:188) believes that "[a] performance in many ways brings a renewal of shared knowledge and experience and the contextual approach enables one to observe how this experience unfolds both in the musical process and the interaction of those present." By taking into account the African and South African context of *U-Carmen*, it is possible to infer the identity of a specific society as articulated through the use of the above-mentioned semiotics and strategies.

¹ The term *context* includes social, temporal and spatial dimensions. As with social identity, so social contexts and cultural contexts, in which ideological contexts are embedded, are inextricably merged.

² In this thesis identity is regarded as dynamic and hybrid by nature. All references to identity should be understood as including *social* and *narrative* identity. It should also be understood that cultural identity (which includes ideological identity) is embedded in social identity. While social identity refers to the identity of a group of interrelated people, cultural identity is indicative of the nature of the interrelationship. Narrative identity refers to the perceptions of identity created in works such as operas, novels etc.

³ Composite conventions refer to all the elements that constitute the musical, dramatic, visual, and theatrical conventions of opera (see diagram on page 94).

The focus on opera as discourse⁴ illustrates how signifiers and narrative strategies contribute towards perceptions of the formation of identity as a dynamic process, determined by specific social, temporal and spatial contexts (henceforth referred to as contexts). This focus implies three major 'markers', namely text, context and identity formation. These markers in the primary works foreground perceptions and articulations of particularly the female, exotic Other in nineteenth-century European and post-apartheid South African contexts.

The concern of this research project with the identity of the Other is fuelled mainly by Western perceptions of the non-Western, exotic Other⁵ during the nineteenth century in Europe. During that century, exoticism permeated many works of art and literary texts contributing to perceptions of foreign peoples and places such as the Orient, Spain⁶ and Gypsies.⁷ Perceptions about the exotic Other were strongly filtered through the Western Self's⁸ convictions about race, class and gender, resulting in the Self being regarded as the norm against which the marginalized, exotic Other was measured.

Postmodernism and its recognized manifestations (postcolonialism),⁹ feminism, intertextuality and metafiction) question meta-narratives. It is characterized by the belief that a shift from the margin to the centre is possible and that boundaries are not necessarily absolute. These notions allow the Other to be regarded not only from the outside, but also from the inside.

⁴ In this thesis the term *discourse* refers to a text that features an extended treatment of specific subject matter using various methods of communication.

⁵ For the sake of expediency, all references to the Self and Other should be understood to designate the Western Self and non-Western exotic Other.

⁶ The reasons why Spain was regarded as an exotic space will be discussed in Chapter Three.

⁷ Gypsies residing in European countries such as Poland and Hungary are commonly known as Roma. Those residing in Spain are known as *gitanos* (Gypsies). In this thesis I refer to two denotations, depending on the context of the discussion: Liégeois and Berret (2005:16) use the term 'Gypsies' in reference to "the whole mosaic of Romany peoples and their culture" while Locke (2009:5) uses the term to indicate the "fictional and stereotypical images of the Roma".

⁸ The use of the term *Self* refers to Jenkins's (2004:27) definition which describes it as "an individual's reflexive sense of her or his own particular identity, constituted *vis-à-vis* others in terms of similarity and difference."

⁹ Jørgensen (1997:105) claims that postmodernism and postcolonialism are similar because both question the Self that "speaks about the Other in order to find the Self".

When the Self shares the same contexts with the Other, he¹⁰ is designated as simultaneously Self and Same.¹¹ In such cases the distinction between Self/Same and Other is the result of the marginalization of certain groups within shared contexts, such as women and children. Within such contexts, the Self/Same is still perceived as being different from and often superior to the Other. Within the patriarchal system of the African contexts, perceptions of the African female as being the exotic Other are based purely on gender-linked convictions. Within the field of literary studies, postmodernist authors' appropriation and transformation of classical nineteenth-century texts have resulted in the re-imagination and re-articulation of the marginalized or peripheral Other's identity.¹² This shift in focus from the margin to the centre is often achieved by the construction of new narrative¹³ spaces in which representations of dominant ideologies, as well as the identities of the Other are encoded.

Such spaces are constructed by using, for example, semiotics, intertextuality and narrative strategies that manipulate temporal and spatial dimensions. The audience decodes the encoded message during the process of interpretation. Their contexts inform their inference of meaning. The tendency to appropriate existing texts is not restricted to postmodernism or to literature. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, opera emulated other musical genres, such as symphonies and string quartets, in depicting the exotic Other. The affective and cognitive values that the elements constituting the conventions of opera elicit contribute towards this genre's ability to articulate contexts and identities and render them discursive. Complex contexts and multiple identities can be constructed by the semiotics of opera and by

¹⁰ For the sake of expediency, the male pronoun is used to refer to both male and female genders.

¹¹ The Self as Same dialectic referred to here is in accordance with the Hegelian dialectic as expounded in his *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807). Hegel regarded self-consciousness as "an understanding of the other in the self, i.e. an identity which is both the self and the self of the other; an identity of identity and difference: a negative dialectic" (Jørgensen, 1997:105).

¹² Jean Rhys's novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) elevates the absent character, Bertha Mason, in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) to become the protagonist in Rhys's novel. Similarly the character of Magwitch assumes new dimensions as Jack Maggs in the eponymous novel by Peter Carey (1997).

¹³ Genette (1980:25) explains that the word *narrative* (in French *récit*) can refer to three separate things: either the oral or written narrative statement that undertakes to tell of an event or events; or the succession of events, real or fictitious events that are the subject of the discourse, with their varied relations; or, finally, the act of narrating.

manipulating temporal and spatial dimensions using intertextuality and narrative strategies. Any adaptation or appropriation¹⁴ of an opera will involve the same process of encoding and decoding as a literary text.

In the book *Operatic Migrations* Roberta Marvin (2006:5) discusses the parodies of operas which were performed in London during the nineteenth century. These parodic adaptations often served as social commentary on Victorian sensibilities. Furthermore, Marvin (2006:4) points out the widespread practice of transforming and transferring existing works from “one medium to another, one century to another, and one cultural setting to another”.¹⁵ The transference from one medium to another involves the adaptation of precursory texts which again involves a process of decoding and recoding. The purpose of adapting and transferring a work from one context to another is thus not only intended to subvert and criticize; it also serves as a means to relate the history and identity of a specific society. This is exactly what happens in Dornford-May’s cinematic adaptation of Bizet’s opera.

Dornford-May’s cinematic adaptation is not too far removed from characteristic social practices in South Africa, as indigenous oral cultures in South African societies regard the (re)telling of stories as an important vehicle for cultural expression. This storytelling is usually combined with dance and music. In post-apartheid South Africa there is a search for artistic ways to articulate identities and (hi)stories of minorities who have hitherto been ignored. More recently, artists have tended to turn toward historical Western art forms such as classical ballet, dance theatre and opera in order to find ways to articulate alternative perceptions of multiple South African contexts and identities.

¹⁴ Locke (2009:19) points out that the term *appropriation* is one recently adopted in studies on reciprocity in the music of the Self and the Other. However, his belief that this term also has an embedded “possible moral disapproval” (Locke, 2009:19) should not be regarded as applicable to all cases. Appropriation does not necessarily denote something that was improved because it was inadequate. It could also be an enhancement or adaptation of something significant that has the potential to be the vehicle for a specific meaning

¹⁵ Several filmmakers have directed operas, transferring them from stage to cinematic screen (Levin, 2006:241). Such filmmakers include Ingmar Bergman (Mozart’s *Zauberflöte*, released in 1975) and Patrice Chéreau (produced Mozart’s *Così fan tutte* in 2005) in Europe. One of the most prolific filmmakers of operas is Franco Zeffirelli in the United States of America and elsewhere. His filmography includes cinematic versions of Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1982) and Verdi’s *La Traviata* (1983), as well as live recordings of productions such as Puccini’s *La Bohème* (1982) and Verdi’s *Otello* (1986).

Examples of Western operas that have been reconceptualised within an African context include such works as songwriter Hal Shaper's adaptation of Puccini's *La Bohème* (*La Bohème Noir*, 1997), Beethoven's *Fidelio* (Robben Island near Cape Town, 2004) and the adaptation of Verdi's *Macbeth* (Artscape Theatre in Cape Town, 2001)¹⁶ titled *macbEth: the opera* by the theatre director Brett Bailey and the composer Péter Louis van Dijk. These appropriations illustrate that opera is a "historically situated synthesis of means of artistic expression that can mediate and transcend temporal, geographical, and social boundaries" (Marvin, 2006:1). In some instances the transformation of opera might relate to a variation in setting as with the appropriation of Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Other productions, such as *La Bohème Noir* and *macbEth: the opera*, appropriate, for example, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century contexts.

1.2 Scope of the research project

As mentioned before, this research project investigates three primary texts. Bizet's opera is a stage adaptation of Prosper Mérimée's novella. Mérimée's work invokes themes such as class and gender distinction, as well as racial bigotry. The author's depiction of Spain as an exotic locale and Carmen as the exotic female Other is the genesis for several dichotomies that relate to identity formation: white/non-white, European/non-European, male/female, Protestant/Catholic, civilized/uncivilized (the dichotomy here refers to English and/or French vs. Spanish/Gypsy/Basque).

The French librettists of the opera, Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, refer to Mérimée's use of exoticism in depicting nineteenth-century Europe's perceptions and treatment of the exotic, non-Western Other. Bizet's musical score further develops perceptions of the exotic Other. *Carmen's* score balances music recognized as conforming to nineteenth-century 'high' opera conventions with musical numbers that generate perceptions of Spanish local colour.

¹⁶ This adaptation was also performed at the Pretoria State Theatre in 2002 and during the Spier Arts Summer Season in 2007.

U-Carmen eKhayelitsha (henceforth referred to as *U-Carmen*) is a cinematic adaptation by Mark Dornford-May in which Mérimée's and Bizet's texts are re-encoded within the context of a post-apartheid South African township. Dornford-May follows in the footsteps of filmmakers of more than seventy cinematic adaptations of Bizet's opera, for example Hammerstein's *Carmen Jones* (1943–44), *Prénom Carmen* by Jean-Luc Godard (1983), *Carmen* by Carlos Saura, *La Tragédie de Carmen* by Peter Brooks (1983) and *Carmen* by Francesco Rosi (1984).¹⁷ The most recent adaptation before *U-Carmen* is director Robert Townsend's cinematic adaptation made in 2001 for the American cable television channel, MTV. It is commonly known as a *hip hopera*, featuring very little of Bizet's original music and reminding one more of *Carmen Jones*. A wide variety of genres are represented in the cinematic adaptations of Bizet's *Carmen*. Davies (2005:3) lists parody, arthouse, animation and even Western examples.

A comparison of Mérimée's and Bizet's texts with that of Dornford-May shows how the cinematic adaptation of *Carmen* constructs alternative contexts within which the identity of the female Other is articulated. In *U-Carmen* Dornford-May uses the basic primary narrative and the music of Bizet's *Carmen*, but appropriates signifiers, creates intertextual spaces and employs narrative strategies to indigenize the opera. *U-Carmen* is a transcultural product that focuses on the identity of the African female and the contexts in which she exists. The hybrid styles that emerge represent all the societies from which the contributing musics¹⁸ originate and are the inevitable result

¹⁷ Marshall-Leicester (1994:246) claims that Bizet's *Carmen* is "a single extended text or discourse [because] it is composed of a congeries of discrete verbal, musical and visual signifiers." He also states that this discursive text has been used for several purposes, but that its usefulness has not yet been depleted (Marshall-Leicester, 1994:246). Various interpretations and transformations, cast within the composite conventions of opera, create the possibility for even more functionality to be discovered for Bizet's opera. Colmeiro (2002:128) asserts that "the key to [Carmen's] continual renewal and adaptability might be its fundamental ambivalence about issues crucial in the formation of our modern consciousness, an ambivalence which reveals cultural anxieties about gender, race, class, nation, language and sexuality."

¹⁸ The term *musics* should be interpreted in the same way as the French *les musiques* which refers to the co-existence of bodies of musical works belonging to a specific genre, style or cultural group. Hargreaves *et al.* (2005:2) claim that artists and audiences determine that which is perceived to be musical and also point out that their views need not necessarily correspond. Sounds (and silences) are regarded as musical because of the meaning attributed to them by a group of people who are in agreement. This action takes place within the specific social and cultural contexts in which the sounds originate and are experienced and expressed (Hargreaves *et al.*, 2005:2).

of the fact that “[W]e are in the other and the other is in us” (Aubert, 2007:53). *U-Carmen* becomes a palimpsest where “new inscriptions are written over the original inscription without the original ever being completely erased” (Viljoen, 2007:8). Consequently, *U-Carmen* re-encodes Mérimée’s and Bizet’s narratives and articulates unique perceptions of the Other.

The main question that flows from the discussion above is: What contribution do semiotics, intertextuality and narrative strategies in Dornford-May’s cinematic adaptation of Bizet’s *Carmen* make to the articulation of identity? Several sub-questions emanate from this main question:

- How does the relationship between text and context contribute towards perceptions and articulations of the exotic Other in general?
- How do opera’s discursive qualities contribute towards identity formation?
- How does the depiction of Spain and Gypsies in Mérimée’s novella *Carmen* contribute towards nineteenth-century perceptions of the exotic Other?
- How do the semiotic signs, intertextuality and narrative strategies in Dornford-May’s cinematic adaptation compare with Bizet’s opera and contribute towards the articulation of African female identity?

Each of these questions will be unpacked when discussing the thesis design in 1.4. Once these questions have been answered it will be clear that Dornford-May’s cinematic adaptation employs specific signifiers, intertextuality and narrative strategies to re-encode and indigenize Bizet’s opera so that the identity of the African female as the exotic Other within an African context can be articulated.

The main question and research purpose determine the research design for this project.

1.3 Research design

This research project applies the four dimensions of a research design suggested by Durrheim (2006:37) as guidelines and, therefore, takes into consideration

- the “interrelated ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions” (Durrheim, 2006:40) of the paradigm from which the research is approached,
- the purpose of the research,
- the situation in which the research is conducted and
- the methods used to conduct the research.

Set within a postmodern paradigm, this research project deconstructs and interprets the multiple, context-based realities implied in the primary works. Postmodern perspectives on identity formation and the plurality of contexts provide an ideal rationale for the purpose of this research, namely to explore the significance of semiotics, intertextuality and narrative strategies in the articulation of identities in opera. This theme is considered to be exemplified in social artefacts¹⁹ such as operatic adaptations of literary works and cinematic adaptations of operas.

This research project follows a qualitative approach. It is simultaneously interpretative and phenomenological because it relates to an interest in interpretations and the derivation of meaning based on human experiences and allows an “open-ended, inductive exploration” (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:272) befitting the diversity of such experiences. The research project’s commitment to “understanding human phenomena in context, as they are lived, using context-derived terms and categories” (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:276) serves to achieve the purpose of the research, namely to examine the relationship between text, context and identity formation.

Interpretative phenomenological research relies on the researcher to collect and analyse the data. The researcher’s close relationship with the data means that extra care has to be taken to ensure trustworthiness in both the data analysis and the report of findings. Research methods must be selected in such a way as to comply with the four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985:290): truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality.

¹⁹ Durrheim (2006:41) defines social artefacts as “the products of human action...and forms of social interaction.”

The research for this project adopted an integrative literature review which allows for the inclusion of a number of methods, including a systematic review of books, articles from journals, magazines and newspapers, compact discs and digital video disks, interviews and conversations. The relevance of each of the sources was subjected to quality criteria such as the impact that the study had on its field of expertise, whether a source had been peer-reviewed or not, the credibility of publications and the expertise and scholarly impact of the author. Initial interviews were conducted and interpretations of the data were checked by follow-up interviews after the data had been analysed. Furthermore, the research project attempted as far as possible to include the most recent sources in order to ensure the most prevalent thoughts on the issues investigated in this thesis. In those instances where older sources were used, this was done in order to elucidate insights expressed within the contexts in which the sources originated.

Diligence in determining relevant themes and using appropriate language and style to discuss them contribute towards the *applicability* of the study. The style of presentation includes illustrations of art works and film stills (screen grabs) extracted from digital video disks in order to substantiate arguments. The combination of words and pictures is in accordance with the approach recommended by Merriam (2009:16): “the product of a qualitative inquiry is *richly descriptive*.”

Ultimately the thesis is designed to answer the main question while adhering to the chosen research design.

1.4 Thesis design

This chapter serves as an introduction to Chapters Two to Six in which the sub-questions that emanated from the main question, will be examined. Chapter Seven will discuss the themes that will be identified during the analysis of the primary texts and will also serve as the conclusion to the thesis.

Chapter Two is concerned with text, context and identity. It contextualizes these concepts and considers the reciprocal relationship between them. The chapter also offers a discussion on the poetics of narratology, referring to the works of authors

such as Bal (2009), Barthes (1984) and Genette (1980) as frames of reference. The chapter begins by conceptualizing text and explaining how a work evolves into a text. The encoding and decoding of texts involve the field of semiotics and, therefore, a discussion on the relationship between sign, signifier and signified will be included in this chapter. Furthermore, the relationship between the creator of the work, the work itself, the addresser (performer) and the addressee (audience) will be considered.

Preparing the reader for later analyses of intertextual spaces in the primary texts, Chapter Two continues with a discussion on intertextuality. The main concepts constituting this phenomenon (text, context and participants) will be contextualized, followed by an explanation of how intertextual spaces can be analysed as well as how they contribute towards the construction of contexts. The ways in which meaning can be derived from intertextual spaces are complemented by examining who the participants in the formation of such spaces are. The discussion also provides an overview of different types of intertextuality.

Because of the genres of the primary texts involved in this thesis (an operatic adaptation of a novella and a cinematic adaptation of an opera), the conceptualization of text concludes by considering the theory of adaptation, referring mainly to the work of Linda Hutcheon (2006).

Chapter Two then continues by conceptualizing context. It considers how focalization relates to temporal and spatial dimensions and how the manipulation of these dimensions contributes to the construction of contexts. Because the formation of identities occurs within these contexts, Chapter Two offers a discussion on postmodern perceptions of identity and identity formation as opposed to nineteenth-century sensibilities regarding these issues. This is done by considering how the Self perceives the Other within these two paradigms.

The latter part of the eighteenth century and the greater part of the nineteenth century were characterized by an increase in travel enhanced by the industrial revolution. Travellers and researchers encountered far-away places and foreign peoples. The increased interest in reading and the development of the printing press allowed people to gain knowledge about remote and foreign places and peoples.

Such places were perceived to be *exotic* and perceptions about the identities of the exotic *Other* were cultivated by the *exoticism* featuring in literary works, visual and performing arts and music. In the light of these circumstances, Chapter Three focuses on exoticism and considers the question: What is exoticism and how is it used to articulate and shape perceptions of the Other?

The chapter begins by conceptualizing exoticism. The implications of nineteenth-century exoticism are considered, as well as postmodernist perceptions of exoticism. A discussion of nineteenth-century perceptions of Spain as an exotic space and Gypsies as the exotic Other serves as preparation for the discussion of Mérimée's depiction of Spain and Gypsies in Chapter Five. The chapter concludes by contemplating the manner in which musical exoticism (specifically exoticism in opera) is used to depict the identities of the Other. It conceptualizes musical exoticism and examines its vernacularism²⁰ and sources in general before proceeding to consider the use of exoticism in nineteenth-century opera.

Chapter Four considers opera as discourse. This musico-dramatic genre is discourse that has the capacity both to enact and to subvert contexts. The challenge that the librettist and the composer of an opera face is to create works in which drama and music are combined to depict human experience. This combination is achieved by means of the semiotics of the conventions of opera. These conventions subsume the musical, dramatic and theatrical elements of opera, each communicated in their respective sign systems, graphic and acoustic musical signs (textual, vocal and instrumental), gestures, corporeal signs, facial expressions, set designs and costumes.

The first section of Chapter Four considers the musical elements of opera, especially the semiotics of music, the relationship between music and context and the manner

²⁰ *Vernacularism*, when referring to music, involves the unique musical elements, materials, nuances and devices embedded in the music of a specific country or region, cultural and/or ethnic group. It thus constitutes a 'musical language' used in the music of the specific society. Cheryl Keyes (2009:12 and further) regards ragtime, blues, hip hop, rap and jazz as examples of black vernacular music. It is, of course, possible to regard the differences within a specific musical vernacular as a dialect. As such, ragtime, blues, hip hop, etc. may be regarded as dialects of black vernacular music.

in which intertextuality in music contributes to the texture of music and the construction of new contexts. This is followed by an explanation of how the composer, performer and audience contribute towards the communicative nature of music and how the manipulation of temporal and spatial dimensions informs the construction of contexts in opera. An overview of the semiotics of the dramatic and theatrical elements in opera serves to illustrate their significance in signifying emotional, temporal and spatial dimensions. The most salient strand throughout the chapter is opera's ability to facilitate perceptions about identity.

Chapter Five focuses on the manner in which Mérimée manipulates the narrative aspects in *Carmen* in order to articulate the identities of the exotic Other. Mérimée is one of those French Romantic authors whose works had a pronounced influence on nineteenth-century perceptions of the exotic Other. His interest in Corsican, Illyrian and Spanish societies and his travels to the aforementioned countries resulted in literary works in which these countries were depicted as dangerous and inhabited by characters prone to violence.

A close reading of the novella will show how the identifiable and perceived sources of Mérimée's *Carmen*, his allusions to biblical and Shakespearean elements and paratextuality contribute towards the construction of intertextual spaces in the novella in which nineteenth-century sensibilities about the Other's identities are embedded. This reading, adopting postmodernist and post-colonial critique, also considers the plot, context, characterization and focalization as narrative aspects and suggests how they contribute towards the articulation and shaping of perceptions about Spain and Gypsies as the exotic Other in general.

Chapter Six compares Bizet's operatic adaptation of Mérimée's *Carmen* with Dornford-May's cinematic adaptation. The analyses in this chapter refer to the principles of narratology and emulate a close reading of literary works. The use of literary theories and strategies to analyse opera is not new and does not intend to negate any theories of musical analysis. Considering opera from a literary point of view is inclusive, because it considers links between narrative strategies and musical aspects, which include melodic and harmonic texture and the structure of the music.

This inclusivity is in accordance with the new historical ²¹ approach that will be used for this study. The new historical approach implies taking into consideration the social relations (including ideologies) of a specific temporal context, as well as the stylistic characteristics of its cultural products. The new historical approach correlates with Locke's (2009:2) approaches to the study of the styles of musical exoticism, which includes the *Exotic Style Only Paradigm* and the *All the Music in Full Context Paradigm*²² (henceforth designated FCP).

The discussion of themes identified during the analyses of the primary texts comprises the content of Chapter Seven. This concluding chapter will also provide suggestions for further research.

²¹ The new historical approach involves more than considering only the historic contexts in which a work originates and its form and style (Taylor, 2007:5). The new historical approach also adheres to a model of hermeneutics which involves taking the implied meaning and assumptions in texts as the point of departure during analysis. Culler (2011:67–68) describes this model as the *hermeneutics of suspicion* as opposed to a *hermeneutics of recovery* which might restrict any interpretation of the meanings and value a text might contain within its original context.

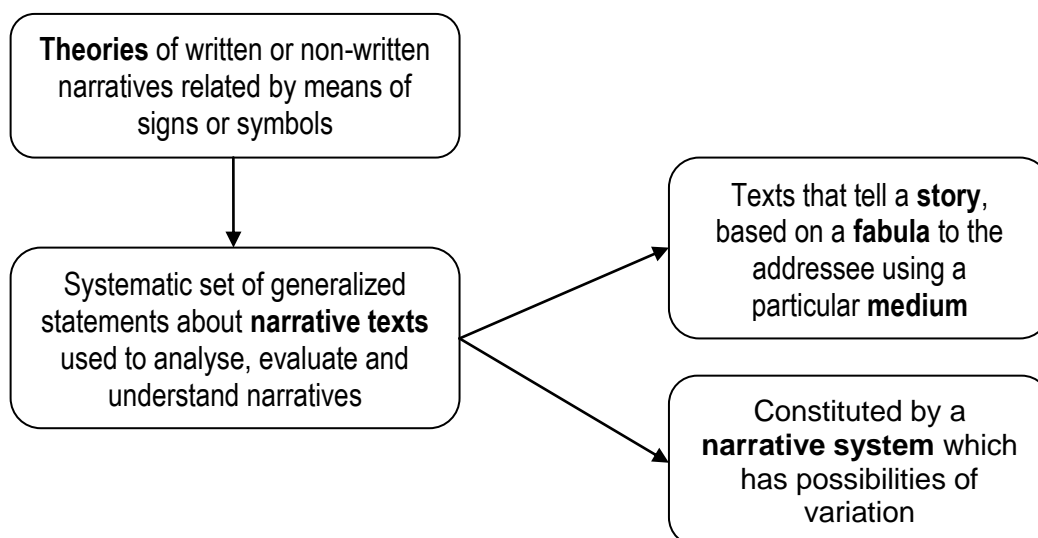
²² Locke (2009:2, 3) describes the *Exotic Style Only Paradigm* as focusing on the “established stylistic [musical] codes as the main or even sole factor in the process of exotic portrayal” while the *All the Music in Full Context* takes into account the musical style as well as social and cultural contexts of the portrayal. These two paradigms should not be regarded as opposing but rather as complementing each other (Locke, 2009:22).

CHAPTER 2: TEXT, CONTEXT AND IDENTITY

As explained in Chapter One, the intention of this research project is to explore the significance of semiotics, as well as intertextual spaces and narrative strategies in the articulation of identities as exemplified in nineteenth-century opera and postmodern adaptations of this genre. Three major concepts are embedded in this statement of intent, namely text,²³ context and identity. This chapter sets out to explore these concepts and to consider their interrelationships as preparation for the analyses of the primary texts in Chapters 5 and 6. During the course of the discussion, it will become clear that it is impossible to demarcate each of these concepts exactly, because of their reciprocal nature.

Because text and textuality are concepts studied in narratology, a discussion on the poetics of narratology is necessary. This discussion will presuppose that narratology entails the theories of written and oral narratives, as well as artistic expressions such as visual and performing arts. Such theories involve a systematic set of generalized statements, constituted by the narrative system of the text. These narrative theories facilitate the analyses, evaluation and understanding of narrative texts (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Concepts in narratology



²³ Because opera involves a narrative which is recounted to the audience, all references to text in this thesis should be understood to refer to narrative texts.

When considering what constitutes a text, one should recognize that a text is encoded by an addresser and decoded by an addressee. This topic belongs to the field of semiotics and this chapter offers a concise explanation of the relationship between the sign, the signifier and the signified, as well as that between the creator of the work, the performer as addresser, the work itself and the addressee.²⁴ It also explains how a work evolves into a text. The study of music signs, like those of language, falls within the field of music semiotics. Because of this research project's concern with opera, the semiotics of the musical, textual, dramatic and theatrical elements will be discussed In Chapter Four.

The conceptualization of text is continued here with a discussion on intertextuality. Intertextuality is one of the major literary devices used in the primary texts analysed in this thesis. It is one of the strategies used to achieve multi-layered textures in texts. Heteroglossia,²⁵ double-voiced discourse and polyphony,²⁶ concepts expounded on by Bakhtin (1981), are indicative of this multi-layered texture. Chapter Two examines the nature of intertextuality (text, context and participants) by dealing with the questions of what exactly may be regarded as text, how intertextual spaces inform perceptions of contexts, as well as who the participants in the formation of these spaces are. It considers the ways in which such spaces can be analysed and how meaning can be construed from them. Because intertextuality is a complex concept which implies much more than alluding to a single precursory text, an overview of different types of intertextuality is included in this chapter.

The nature and adaptations of the primary texts for this research project (novella to opera to film) necessitate some consideration of the theory of adaptation. Therefore,

²⁴ From this point forward, the terms *addresser* and *addressee* refer to opera performers and audiences.

²⁵ The term *heteroglossia* is a translation of the term *raznorecie*, coined by Bakhtin in his essay *Discourse in the novel* (1935). It refers to the multiplicity of language in a text. Bakhtin was intrigued by the easy manner in which heteroglossia is incorporated into the structure of the novel (Wales, 2001:187).

²⁶ Allen (2000:212) explains: "Bakhtin's vision of double-voiced discourse is essentially intertextual, in that it recognizes that all utterances contain within them the dialogic force of competing interpretations, definitions, social and ideological inflections." A polyphonic texture implies the presence of multiple, independent voices which allows the emergence of multiple perceptions (Viljoen, 2007:121). While heteroglossia relates to polyphony, they are not the same: polyphony implies multiple voices whereas heteroglossia relates to the distinctness and layering of languages in a text (Wales, 2001:186).

the conceptualization of text concludes by examining the theory of adaptation, specifically from written texts to operas (operatic adaptations) and from operas to screen productions (cinematic adaptations). The evolution of opera from written text to stage and to screen will be made clear by considering the various modes of engagement that are available for adaptations, as well as the challenges, advantages and core differences of the adaptations. This discussion concludes by considering the relation between adaptations and contexts.

The inextricable link between context, text and textuality will have become evident in the discussion on intertextuality. Lokke (1987:10) claims that text cannot exist without context. Therefore, this chapter also considers what context is and explains the concepts of *time* and *space*. It also discusses narrative strategies used to manipulate temporal and spatial dimensions in order to create, for example, intertextual spaces which can articulate various contexts.

It is within such contexts that identity formation takes place. Consequently, this chapter also discusses postmodern perceptions of identity and identity formation, seeing that postmodernism is the ethos adopted by this research project. These postmodern views are placed *vis-à-vis* nineteenth-century perceptions and depictions of identity and identity formation. This section also considers the relationship between context and identity, illustrated by the Western Self's attitude towards the non-Western Other during the nineteenth century.

2.1 Text

The poetics of text and textuality fall within the field of narratology. Definitions of the major concepts involved in narratology are provided before the idea of *text* is conceptualized. The conceptualization of text will also include a more detailed discussion of the concepts included in Figure 1 (page 14), which is based on an explanation of narratology by Bal (2009:3). The major concern of this research project is not to expound the theories of narratives in general. It suffices here to say that narratology concerns the theories used to determine the general statements which assist in the analysis, evaluation and understanding of narrative systems which underpin narrative texts.

Before considering what a narrative text is, the question that should be answered is: What is text? In his essay *From Work to Text* (1984b:155–164), Barthes proposes a distinction between *work* and *text*. Based on his distinction, a work is an encoded phenomenon that is concrete and tangible, while text is a dynamic entity which emerges when the work is decoded and re-encoded, actions which only take place once the work is “activated through the act of being read, told, exhibited and interpreted” (Viljoen, 2007:40). It is only through the process of decoding and recoding of the original work that meaning evolves and texts and subtexts emerge. This process simultaneously involves the addresser and the addressee. They have a collaborative relationship and because of their involvement with the work, become participants in creating a text which is dynamic and multi-layered. According to Kristeva (1980:69), the relationship between the addresser and the addressee is the horizontal axis around which the plurality of the text pivots. She also identifies a vertical axis which contributes to a text’s plurality, namely the relationship that the text has with contemporaneous and precursory texts.

The discussion below considers how the encoding, decoding and recoding of a text constitutes the evolution from *work* to *text*.

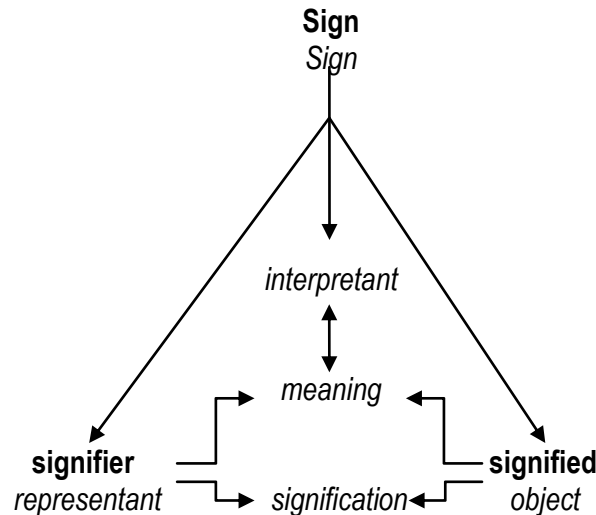
2.1.1 Encoding: signs, symbols and icons

The work is encoded by a creator using specific linguistic or non-linguistic signs. Signs are classified in three groups (Fludernik, 2009:102). *Deictic signs* are signs that relate to contexts in which communication takes place and are directional. Words and gestures (for example, pointing towards someone or something) are examples of deictic signs. *Iconic signs* often resemble that which they signify. An illustration of an aeroplane on the overhead traffic signs on the highways alert travellers of the connection leading to the airport. Whereas iconic signs resemble that which is signified, *symbolic signs* (arbitrary signs) are representative, even if they are not completely referential. The well-known symbol of Nike, for example, clearly represents equipment and attire relating to sport and leisure.

The study of signs, especially as they relate to language, has been pursued by semioticians such as Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Each of

these scholars provides a model of the sign. The differences and commonalities between the two models are summarized in Figure 2 below.²⁷

Figure 2: Comparison of Saussurean and Peircean models of the sign



- ◆ Ferdinand de Saussure
- ◆ Charles Peirce

The Saussurean model proposes that the sign consists of two elements: a *signifier* (referring to the form of the sign) and a *signified* (the concept to which is referred). The signified can be classified according to two modes of signification: denotation and connotation. Chandler (2007:137–143) provides a detailed explanation of these modes: the denotation of a work implies determining its literal meaning. However, it is possible for each work to have connotative (non-literal/figurative) meaning and this meaning is discovered through the act of decoding or interpretation. Allen (2000:196) lists three ways in which the interpretation of signs can be done from a semiotic point of view: at a syntactic level, the sign is recognized in relation to other signs; at a semantic level the intended meaning of the sign is understood; and at a pragmatic level the sign is interpreted in terms of how it relates to other aspects. The inference of non-literal meaning through interpretation and the interpretation at a pragmatic level relates strongly to Culler’s (2011:69) *hermeneutics of suspicion*, which allows for a critical analysis and an interpretation by the addressee.

²⁷ A detailed discussion of the models can be found in *Semiotics: the Basics* by Chandler (2007).

In Peirce's model of the sign, the *representant* and *object* can be regarded as synonymous with each of de Saussure's terms, which are signifier and signified respectively, but the Peircean model adds another element to the equation: the *interpretant*. Chandler (2007:29) cautions that the interpretant is "not an interpreter but rather the *sense* made of the sign". As such the interpretant is closer to inferring *meaning* and the process which Kristeva (1974) describes as *signifiance*. Signifiance is a concept that is different from what de Saussure (1989) refers to as *signification*.

Signifiance requires the act of reading which results in interpretation (Allen, 2000:218). An analysis of such interpretation leads to the discovery of a diversity of assumptions and meanings which often mutates seamlessly into the emergence of a text.²⁸ Therefore, signifiance links more closely to the formation and communication of meaning than signification.

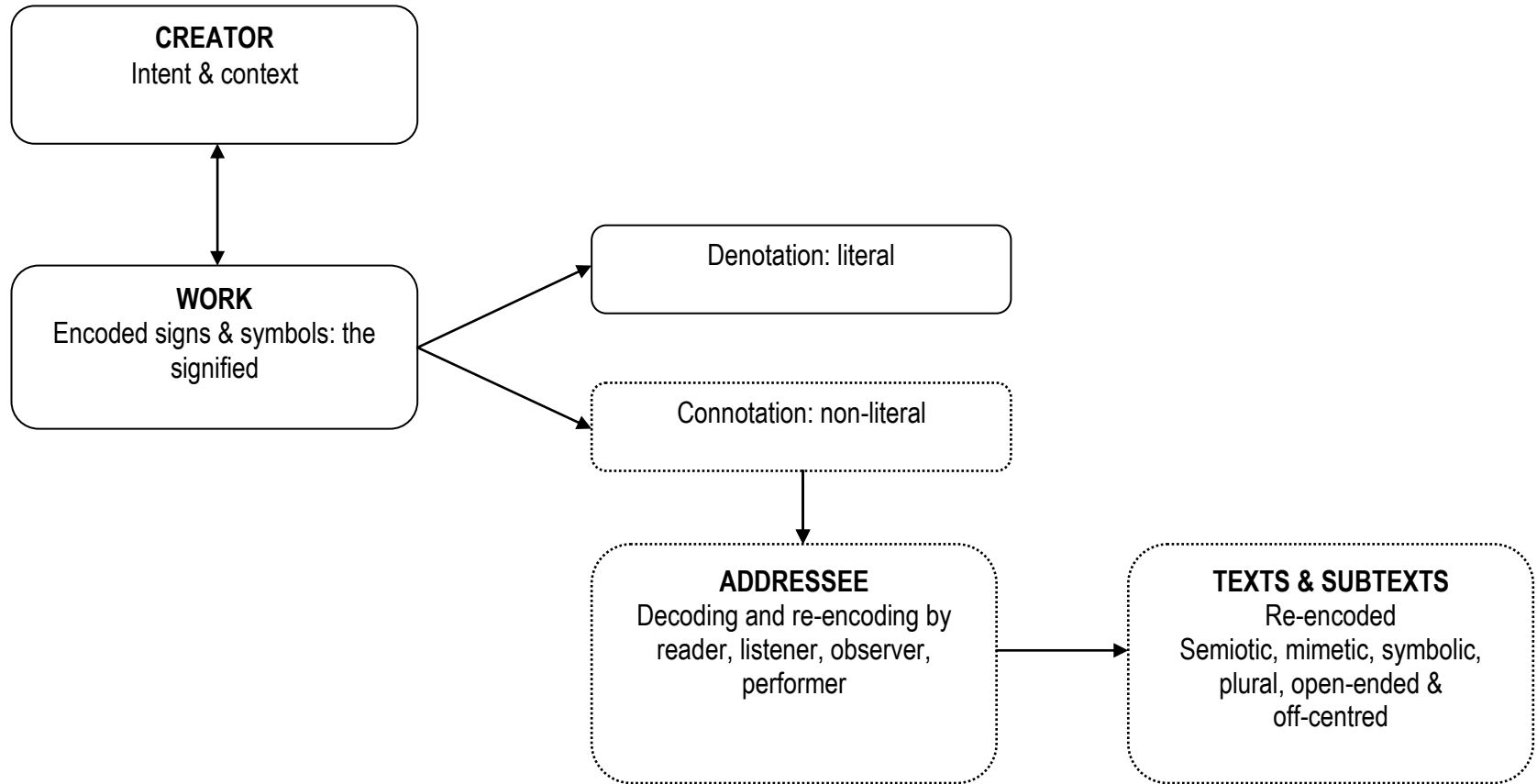
Signification, on the other hand, refers to dealing with issues such as the functionality of signs, the process by which signifying takes place, the role of signs within a semiotic system, determining what exactly is signified and the transfer from language to reality. This all takes place before the act of reading and poses the biggest difference between signification and signifiance.

2.1.2 Decoding: Addresser, work, addressee and text

A work is classified according to its stylistic and composite lineage and confirmed by its creator as well as the context within which it exists. The diagram in Figure 3 on the next page summarises the relationship between the creator and the work as well as of possible modes of signification (mentioned on page 1) and how they relate to the emergence of a text. As is evident from this diagram, the emergence of a text depends on the addressees' discovering semiotic and mimetic value embedded in the signs and symbols of the work. Bal (2009:5) acknowledges words and sentences as signs, but also includes other signs, such as "cinematic shots and

²⁸ It is possible for a text to contain overt and profuse meaning which renders the use of any hermeneutic method of interpretation unnecessary (Viljoen, 2007:41).

Figure 3: From work to text



sequences, or painted dots, lines and blots". The analysis of *U-Carmen* In Chapter Six will show how cinematic shots signify, for example, Carmen's contexts and her interiority.

Barthes (1984b:159) emphasises the symbolic nature of the text when he states that "a work conceived, perceived and received in its integrally symbolic nature is a text". This statement acknowledges the involvement of the creator, the interpreter and the addressee in the process where a work becomes a text. The process will most likely involve the addressee interpreting and perceiving the meaning of the work. The interpreter and the addressee are thus the same person. However, there are instances (such as in the case of the performing arts) where another participant is added, namely the performer. The performer is both addressee (upon receiving and interpreting the text) and addresser (when performing the text). This means that a doubling of interpretation and perceptions takes place. The performer interprets and performs that which he perceives; the addressee(s) interprets the performance and new perceptions that emerge. The inclusive approach that characterizes Dornford-May's production (cast members became involved in several aspects of the production) is a good example of how the performer functions simultaneously as addressee and addresser. The success of this approach will become evident in Chapter Seven.

While the addressee does not necessarily negate the involvement of the work's creator and the context in which the work was created, Barthes (1984a:142ff) does not value the relationship between creator and work as the sole means of determining meaning during analysis and interpretation. Acknowledging the creator's part in the creative act, as well as his involvement in determining the hermeneutics of the work, Barthes (1984b:155) underscores the idea that the mutation from work to text is not dichotomous, but rather an evolution of epistemology. This evolution culminates in a hermeneutic system that defies rigidity while maintaining a 'structure' which is open-ended and decentred.

The fact that the hermeneutic system of a text is open-ended and decentred also allows it to be transcendent: not only does it relate internally to the work itself, but it can also move outside the work to relate to previous works and texts. The

transcendent nature of the text also leads to a repudiation of rigid classification in terms of genres and sub-genres and renders texts ambiguous, self-conscious and contradictory. This ability to surpass the boundaries of the work lies at the root of intertextuality – a concept to be discussed later in this chapter.

Having determined how a work evolves into a text, we can now continue to consider what a narrative text is. While all the traits of a text in general apply to a narrative text, it is possible to define a narrative text more precisely.

2.1.3 Narrative text

Bal (2009:10) believes that a narrative text can be defined as a text where an addresser relates a story to an addressee, using a chosen medium. This medium could include sound, images, language, artefacts and architecture. It is also possible to combine mediums such as images, language and sound as is evident in, for example, opera and its cinematic adaptations.

There are two concepts in the definition of a narrative text that need further explanation, namely *story* and *medium*. When considering the concept of story, one needs to explain another concept, namely the *fabula*. Viljoen (2007:23) asserts that “a distinction is made between the *elements* of the imagined material (the *fabula*) and the conscious manipulation of these elements, during which the elements become *aspects* of the story: plot, context, characterization and focalization”. This manipulation relates to all elements of the *fabula* and affects all aspects of the story, which leads to constituting the narrative system. The manner in which focalization relates to temporal as well as spatial dimensions will be discussed in 2.4.1.1 of this chapter.

The *fabula* can thus be seen to consist of elements which provide the original, imagined material for the story. Bal (2009:181ff) devotes a whole chapter to the fixed and dynamic elements of the *fabula*. She lists actors,²⁹ locations and objects as

²⁹ Bal (2007) does not use the term *actors* as referring to humans who act a part in a production. She describes them as “agents [not necessarily human] that perform actions [and who] cause or experience an event” (Bal, 2007:6).

elements and refers to series of events as the processes (Bal, 2009:189). The action involved in the events are performed by the actors (characters) and presented from specific points of view. These actions and events are ordered in a logical, chronological sequence and are placed within specific temporal and spatial contexts.

The discussion above makes it clear that the evolution from the creator's encoded work to a text depends on the manner in which the work is decoded and re-encoded by the addressee. It also clarifies the manner in which narrative texts emerge when the elements of the fabula are manipulated to constitute the aspects of the story. However, besides contemplating how a text comes to exist, it is also necessary to ask: What exactly may be defined as text? This question is complex and ambiguous. It cannot be answered completely by explaining the evolution from work to text and needs further consideration. It becomes especially relevant when considering *intertextuality*, a concept addressed in the section below.

2.1.4 Intertextuality

Earlier in this chapter it was stated that the plurality and the transcendence of text can be regarded as the foundation of intertextuality. Kristeva coined the term *intertextualité* in 1966 during her contemplation and reconfiguration of Bakhtin's concept of dialogism³⁰ in the novel. Kristeva's research led to her focus on text and textuality – a shift from Bakhtin's focus on the novel and intersubjectivity – to intertextuality. Following the work of Kristeva, the theories of scholars such as Barthes (1970, 1984), Bloom (1973, 1975), Broich and Pfitser (1985), Genette (1997b) and Riffaterre (e.g. 1978, 1980) led to intertextuality being regarded as a complex concept and a literary strategy strongly associated with post-structuralism. Allen (2000:58) states that “[i]ntertextuality, as concept, has a history of different articulations which reflect the distinct situations out of which it has emerged”. The evolution of intertextuality cannot really be summarized in a few words and it is not the intention of this study to present a history of intertextuality which has been well-

³⁰ Allen (2000:23) points out that dialogism is more than the dialogue between characters. In the dialogism of a novel each character has a unique identity and the characteristics of this character are linked to specific ideologies and social standings. These characteristics are portrayed in the texts by, amongst other things, the character's words.

documented by authors such as Juvan (2008), Orr (2003), Allen (2000) and Worton and Still (1991).

To propose a definition for intertextuality is not an easy task, since there is no single definition that absolutely encapsulates its essence. At this stage a cryptic definition must suffice in order to introduce some of the relevant concepts: intertextuality concerns the relationship between a text and other texts, the contexts from which these texts emerge (d) as well as those role-players who are involved in the realization of the text. A more comprehensive version of this definition will be provided once all the concepts have been considered.

Klein (2005:12) contends that “the ways that we define and confine intertextuality hold court over our perspectives on the text and how we make sense of it”. This statement confirms that the most obvious concept involved in intertextuality is text. However, it is appropriate to explore some aspects regarding texts further, especially as they relate to intertextuality. While literary and non-literary works of art (novels, poems, comic strips, music, films, paintings, sculptures, etc.) are commonly regarded as texts, the question remains whether there are other ‘texts’ that may be ‘read’ and interpreted and, therefore, be involved in the formation of intertextual spaces.

2.1.4.1 *Text and intertextuality*

Wales (2001:120) defines intertextuality as “a continual dialogue between text given and other texts/utterances that exist outside it, literary and non-literary”. By explaining one of the concepts in this definition, it is possible to get closer to classifying what could be regarded as text. The term *utterances*, as used in the definition provided by Wales, should not be regarded as referring exclusively to verbal entities. Allen (2000:19) claims that utterances include, for example, scientific and literary discourse as well as scholarly works and he notes the dialogic nature of all utterances. Viljoen (2007:40) concludes that texts include utterances “however cryptic or extended, written or spoken, literary or non-literary, whether canonical works or popular literature [and] even environment”. The reference to environment should be understood not only to include physical and topographical spaces, but to

all contexts. Text is the phenomenon that articulates identity and human experience, meaning that all the dimensions constituting a context are texts. Intertextuality includes “the relationship between a text and the languages or discursive practices of a culture and its relationship to those particular texts which, for the text in question, articulate that culture and its possibilities” (Culler, 1976:1383). In accordance, the history of a society, as well as that of an individual, is also regarded as text.

i) Origins

In the field of intertextuality, perceptions about the origins of texts are important. The question emerges whether the origins of precursory texts that influence the contemporaneous text can be determined. One perception of intertextuality is that the contemporaneous text refers to texts of which the origins can be precisely determined. One could, for example, argue that Peter Carey’s *Jack Maggs* (1997) is a re-configuration of Magwitch, a character in Dickens’s *Great Expectations* (1863). However, intertextuality entails much more than mere allusion by one text to another, or the influence of a text on another and it follows that a study of intertextuality should not be limited to merely determining the origins of and allusions to existing texts. Peter Carey’s novel involves more than a consolidation of a text with a single pre-existing text. The novel is not merely the product of the expansion of the history of a transported convict. Other ‘texts’ to which *Jack Maggs* relates include nineteenth-century sensibilities regarding the marginalized Other, the Dickensian style of writing and even the life history of Charles Dickens (in the character of Tobias Oates). This plurality in the textuality relates to the multi-layered and polyphonic texture of the novel.

ii) Presuppositions

Culler (1976:1382) accordingly warns that there are instances where intertextuality is a-temporal and infinite, because the origins of the conventions and presuppositions of the precursory texts cannot be determined beyond a doubt. These traits of intertextual spaces is in accordance with Barthes’s argument that one should not regard any subject introduced in a text as new or original; it is already infinitely multi-

layered because of the various texts of which the origins cannot be determined (Barthes, 1990:10).³¹ A text is thus never completely original because it inevitably contains several fragments of the precursory texts' presuppositions and conventions which have already been 'read'. Culler (1976:1391) thus concurs with this principle of *déjà lu* (already-read).³²

Kristeva (1974:339) claims that the status of a text as a meaningful practice presupposes the existence of other texts and also that all texts are under the jurisdiction of other texts.³³ The question of what a piece of writing presupposes can be applicable to any text. Determining and articulating presuppositions is not an easy task and it is not always possible to trace presuppositions back to the creator's intent or knowledge. Presuppositions may be unintentional and posited deeply within the creator's unconscious and the responsibility for exploring and revealing them is assumed by others resulting in an act of *dédoublement* – an approach from a different point of view (Culler, 1976:1381). Culler (1976:1393) also confirms the importance of context when he states: "These presuppositions are defined not on relations between sentences but on the relations between utterance and situation of utterance."

2.1.4.2 Context and intertextuality

Context is an important concept involved in intertextuality. Allen (2000:36) points out that both Kristeva and Bakhtin believe that texts are an integral part of the context within which they emerge but, whereas Bakhtin took into consideration the subject creating/uttering the text (subjectivity), Kristeva focuses on text and textuality within specific contexts. Different aspects inform the determination of a text's context, including the point of view from which the text is considered, the hermeneutic method applied when interpreting the text, knowledge of the historical context of the

³¹ "je n'est pas un sujet innocent, antérieur au texte...Ce "moi" qui s'approche du texte est déjà lui-même une pluralité d'autres textes, de codes infinis, ou plus exactement: perdus (dont l'origine se perd)" (Barthes, 1970:16).

³² The term *déjà lu* was coined by Barthes and the word 'lu' is derived from the French word *lire*, which means *to read* (Patin & McLerran, 1997:30).

³³ "tout texte est d'emblée sous la juridiction des autres discours qui lui imposent un univers" (Kristeva, 1974:338,339).

text and the response resulting from the interpretation. Once the context of the text has been determined, it becomes possible to derive meaning from these contexts and it is then that intertextuality replaces intersubjectivity (Kristeva, 1969:146).³⁴ Thus intertextuality does not only refer to the relationship of a text to those preceding it, but intertextuality also asserts the text's position within and contribution to a discursive and contextual space. Culler (1976:1394) believes that the meaning and significance of a text are best determined if related to the context, as well as the discursive and the intertextual spaces in which it exists.

2.1.4.3 *Meaning and interpretation*

One could argue that meaning is based on intertextuality. Intertextuality results in the rethinking of a text's meaning and allows the emergence of alternative intention and meaning. When attempting to determine the meaning of a text, that text is considered in relation to other texts that are regarded to be exemplary of its style. The involvement of texts within an intertextual space results in the emergence of themes, often inferred from tropes that emerge. Once the nature of the narrative's aspects, as well as the *topoi* and *tropes*³⁵ are determined, interpretation follows.

The interpretation of the text should not merely enable the reader to derive meaning from it, but to also become aware of the plurality which constitutes meaning (Barthes, 1990:5). The meaning of a text is inferred by taking into consideration aspects outside the text itself. Interpretations are informed by experiences inside and outside contexts and, for this reason, are varied. Because of the dynamic nature of the text and the context, there is also a plurality in the interpretation; therefore, meaning is temporary and provisional. As the context changes, the text is altered and the interpretation appropriated.

³⁴ "tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte. À la place de la notion d'intersubjectivité s'installe celle d'*intertextualité*" (Kristeva, 1969:146).

³⁵ In literature the word *topos* (plural, *topoi*) designates recurring themes such as reality versus appearance in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Tropes include metaphors, simile, metonymies, synecdoches and ironies. In Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787), Zerlina is metonymic of the battered woman who even invites punishment from her fiancé in the aria "Batti, batti bel Masetto".

The reconfiguration of a text (by means of interpretation and appropriation) increases the number of participants (role-players) in intertextuality because the addressee enters the communication process. The relationship between the creator, the addresser and the addressee in the communication process will be discussed in more detail when discussing the matter of musical communication in Chapter Four. At this stage it is sufficient to take note that a work is positioned within a specific discursive space because, through the acts of writing and of receiving, the text relates to other texts and their codes and conventions (Culler, 1976:1382ff). Therefore, discursive spaces involving reading and writing are regarded as intertextual spaces. The reader's contribution to the creation of intertextual spaces is very important because, for example, readings of later texts and the analysis of intertextual spaces in these texts can also change interpretations and perceived meanings of precursory ones.

When considering the influence that an analysis of intertextual spaces has on the formation of meaning, attention should be paid to the analysis of intertextual spaces. It has already been stated that the mere determination of origins and allusions to precursory texts are not the only aspects taken into account when intertextual spaces are analysed. The analysis of such spaces should consider all forms of discourse, whether the origins can be determined or not, as well as aspects inside and outside of the contexts in which the various texts exist, as well as those from which they have emerged and the perspective from which the texts are presented should be taken into account. Knowledge of the ways in which intertextual spaces are created will assist in the analysis of how intertextuality contributes to the formation of meaning, contexts and identities.

2.1.4.4 *Types of intertextuality*

It was mentioned earlier that intertextuality implies much more than merely alluding to a single, determinable text. There are various ways in which intertextual spaces can be formed. A text could emulate or refer to the style and contexts of its predecessors or it could subvert or appropriate stylistic and ideological aspects. These forms of emulation, reference, subversion and appropriation are achieved by using specific literary devices such as allusion, parody, paratextuality, allegory,

adaptations and quotations. Klein's (2005:12) suggestion of different types of intertextuality expands on those concepts. His list includes the following types:

- *Poietic intertextuality* refers to specific texts that an author brings to his creative work. A reading of poietic intertextuality is historically informed and often takes the form of a study of influences that the precursory texts had on the text and its creator.
- *Esthetic intertextuality* refers to a variety of texts that a society contributes to the interpretation of the work. Because of the plurality and fluidity of a society's contexts, it follows that the texts contributing to the interpretation relate to various domains, for example spatial, temporal and social.
- *Historical intertextuality* implies that the main focus of the study of a text is the context in which it originated. This focus exposes the text to history as well as to textuality. The plurality of contexts is reflected in the texture of the text.
- *Transhistorical intertextuality* occurs when various historical contexts are considered in the study of a text. As in the case of historical intertextuality, the text is opened to history and textuality, but there is an increase in the plurality of the text and its texture.
- *Aleatoric intertextuality* refers to those cases when a study of the text adopts an a-temporal approach. Such an approach again opens the text to history as well as textuality but adds finite as well as infinite dimensions of meaning, simultaneously contributing to and frustrating knowledge, taking into consideration creator, addresser and addressee and simultaneously contributing to intent and interpretation but defying absolutism.

There are also other forms of textuality which contribute towards the formation of intertextual spaces, namely *paratextuality*, *metatextuality*, *hypertextuality* and *epitextuality* – all concepts discussed by Genette (1997). Because these concepts are relevant to all the primary texts analysed in this thesis, a brief description of each is given.

Paratextuality involves the study of paratextual elements in a text. Genette (1997b) writes extensively about paratexts. In short, paratexts can be described as those texts situated at the parameters of the text's main body. Chandler (2007:2 06) lists the following as examples of paratexts: "titles, headings, prefaces, epigraphs, dedications, acknowledgements, footnotes." However, one should not over-simplify the concept of paratextuality by uncritically accepting Chandler's list as conclusive. Genette (1997b:5) explains that paratexts consist of a combination of *peritexts* and *epitexts*. It should be noted that paratexts are different from *peritexts*. Peritexts are linked very firmly to the role of the publisher and include, for example, dust jackets, acknowledgements, formatting and typeface (Genette, 1997b:16). Genette (1997b:344) explains that the distinction between peritexts and epitexts relates to spatiality.

The epitext is any paratextual element not materially appended to the text within the same volume but circulating, as it were, freely, in a virtually limitless physical and social space. The location of the epitext is therefore anywhere outside the book – but of course nothing precludes its late admission to the peritext.

It follows that the infinite spatiality of the epitext allows for any context to be regarded as an element of paratexts. Genette (1997b:8) states accordingly that "every context serves as a paratext."

Paratexts can display metatextual and hypertextual elements.³⁶ Metatextuality refers, for example, to the relationship between two texts where one text 'comments' on another, while not necessarily quoting from it or even referring to it by name (Genette, 1997a:4). Hypertextuality is another term used by Genette (1997a:5). While hypertextuality, like metatextuality, refers to the relationship between a given text and a precursory one, it does not take the form of a commentary.

In conclusion, it should be admitted that this discussion on intertextuality is highly condensed given the scope of the available information on this matter. However, it

³⁶ In his book *Palimpsests: literature in the second degree* (1997) Genette reconsiders his own perceptions of the subject of poetics and proposes that it entails *transtextuality*. Transtextuality exceeds all the types, modes, genres from which a text originates. Genette (1997a:1–7) recognizes five types of transtextual relationships: intertextuality, paratextuality, architextuality, metatextuality and hypertextuality.

provides an overview of the concepts and role-players involved in the formation and analysis of intertextual spaces, how intertextual spaces contribute towards the inference of meaning, as well as of some of the types of intertextuality. Based on this discussion, a definition of intertextuality might read as follows: intertextuality concerns the relationship between a text and other texts (literal/non-literal, linguistic/non-linguistic). The study of intertextuality involves the exploration of this relationship and takes into consideration the dynamic contexts in which texts emerge and exist in order to determine meaning. However, there are instances in which intertextuality has a dimension of a-temporality because the origins and contexts of texts are not necessarily known. The plurality of contexts contributes to the possibility of a dialectic and eclectic style of intertextuality which results in the emergence of unlimited intertextuality. Intertextual spaces can occur within a style or a body of work and meaning is construed by the contributions of the creator, the text itself, the addresser and the addressee.

The construction of intertextual spaces is a device that is used very successfully when texts are appropriated within alternative contexts and adapted for other media. The analyses of intertextual spaces in the primary texts of this thesis will show how Bizet's operatic adaptation of Mérimée's *Carmen* and Dornford-May's cinematic adaptation have produced interpolated spaces in which alternative contexts and identities are articulated.

2.2 Adaptations of texts

Hutcheon (2006:33, 34) describes adaptations as the

creative and interpretive transposition of recognizable other work or works [...] a kind of extended palimpsest and, at the same time, often a transcoding into a different set of conventions. Sometimes, but not always, this transcoding entails a change of medium.

U-Carmen is an excellent example of a text in which the extended palimpsest and transcoding are achieved by adapting a stage production for the cinema screen.

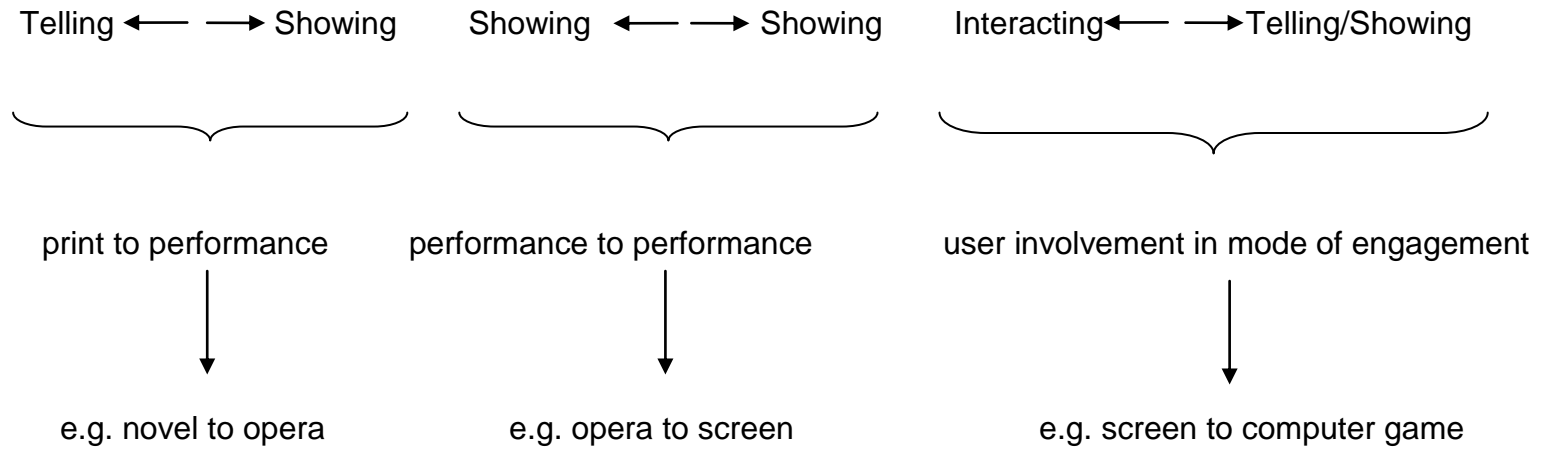
Hutcheon (2006:38ff) also claims that there are three possible modes of engagement available for adaptations. The diagram in Figure 4 on the next page serves as a summary of these modes.

A novel is regarded as a 'telling' medium, while opera is regarded as a 'performance' medium. They are categorized as such because of their unique 'mode of engagement'. The mode of engagement includes all elements involved in the communication process. Such elements are often unique to the specific medium. Despite the analogical relationship between these two mediums, adaptations from one medium to another face challenges that need to be overcome in order to produce a seamless transition to achieve a synthesis of the various mediums that should be as inclusive as possible.

One of the challenges that an operatic adaptation faces is the difference between the nature of the signs in a novel and those in opera. This difference makes it difficult to adapt the written text into an audio-visual one. For example, the indexical qualities and iconicity of operatic signs produce a sense of specificity not necessarily found in a novel. An image in an opera is less dependent on the audience's imagination than images in a novel. Mérimée's *Carmen*, for example, provides its reader with detailed information of Carmen's physical features in a descriptive paragraph. This detailed description is irrelevant in Bizet's eponymous opera because the audience can actually see Carmen's features. In Chapter Six we shall observe which techniques are used in Dornford-May's cinematic adaptation of Bizet's opera to also include Mérimée's description of Carmen's physical features.

Another challenge concerns the content included in the operatic adaptation. In some cases, operatic adaptations require the compression of time and careful consideration has to be given to the exact material from the novel to be included in the opera. Care has to be taken, for example, not to sacrifice the core message of the novel by editing it too heavily. The dramatization of the novel requires, for example, that descriptions of contexts and characters' innermost thoughts, as well as the narration of events, are "transcoded into speech, actions, sounds, and visual images" (Hutcheon, 2006:40). Imagined concepts are now presented visually and perceived aurally.

Figure 4: Adaptations and modes of engagement



However, the inclusion of music, dramatic action and visual elements such as set designs and costumes makes the contraction of information easier. The musical elements in opera are as important in the narrative process as the textual and dramatic elements, all of which have mimetic functions that signify meaning in a more concise manner than a written text. Conflict between characters, for example, can be signified by a single gesture. Set designs allow temporal and spatial dimensions to be perceived at a glance, while costumes can easily signify cultural differences (see 4.4.4 in Chapter Four).

Cinematic adaptations of operas are less complex than, for example, adaptations from novels to operas, because both opera and cinema are performance media. Operas and their cinematic adaptations have commonalities as well as differences. Both are classified as belonging to a showing mode of engagement but they are different because of the “specific constraints and the possibilities of each medium’s conventions” (Hutcheon, 2006:49). Furthermore, the textual or writerly traits of cinematic productions render these texts constant and invariable. This may be regarded as a drawback but, taking into account the variability of interpretation, the constancy of cinematic productions is not absolute. There are some advantages in adapting a text for the medium of film.

Screen productions simultaneously decode and re-encode the precursory text(s) and allow for temporal and spatial dimensions to be manipulated more easily; these dimensions are more limited by the constraints of a stage. The closest an audience can come to a character in a stage production, is the front of the orchestra pit. Hutcheon (2006:42) identifies another important advantage that cinematic adaptations have, namely “the use of a multitrack medium that, with the aid of the mediating camera, can both direct and expand the possibilities of perception”. A choice of camera shots and angles, as well as the process of editing, allows a greater sense of proximity, which effectively contributes to perceptions of time, space and human experience.

There are scholars who are adamant that films should not employ literary devices which will result in the film ‘telling’ rather than ‘showing’ the story (McKee, 2010;

Seger, 1992). Their arguments support the notion that the most suitable medium to articulate both the intimacy and the distance of point of view is prose (Hutcheon, 2006:52). However, devices such as flashbacks³⁷ (analeptic episodes) and shifts in focalization in films bring about a broader perspective on various issues, including interiority³⁸ and exteriority. One of the human experiences that can be effectively articulated in cinematic adaptations is emotion. The perception that cinematic realism does not allow for so effective an articulation of internalized emotion and thoughts as is found in, for example, opera, is debatable. Cinematic techniques, such as close-up shots, are available to articulate the kind of interiority that is usually embedded in an aria and allows the film audience to understand internalized aspects. Hutcheon (2006:58) explains that “visual and aural correlatives for interior events can be created, and in fact film has at its command many techniques that verbal texts do not.” On the other hand, exteriority – usually believed to be best conveyed by a showing method of engagement – can lose its efficiency because it is not as subtly presented as in the novel and, therefore, not as richly imagined.

It has already been mentioned that the relationship between music and interiority in opera is very close. The conductor’s facilitation of the musical progression of the stage production allows an audience to experience the musical elements’ contribution to the actualization of the narrative in live performance. In cinematic adaptations, the conductor and orchestra are no longer visible. While the screen production eliminates this facilitation, it has a variety of techniques by which not only music, but also other sounds and sound effects can be incorporated. As a rule, cinematic adaptations pre-record sound and actors lip-synch during the shooting of the scenes. Chapter Six will show how *U-Carmen* succeeds in establishing the presence of the orchestra as if in a live performance and how the soundtrack contributes towards establishing Khayelitsha as reality. It will also show how a sense of intimacy and immediacy is achieved by the methods used in their recording and editing of the soundtrack. Marshall-Leicester (1994:248) states that cinematic

³⁷ Hayward (2006:153) states that flashbacks “are most clearly marked as subjective moments within [a] narrative...cinematic representation of memory and of history and, ultimately, of subjective truth.”

³⁸ For the purpose of this discussion, the term *interiority* refers to the mental and psychological dimensions of human experience.

productions allow “speech (dialogue and voice over), music (either background music or made by characters), and non-vocal, non-musical sounds (the noise track – footsteps, crickets, creaking doors)”.

Hutcheon (2006:80) points out that “[t]he complexities of the new media also mean that adaptation there too is a collective process”. Operatic and cinematic adaptations usually involve more participants than an author or a composer. An operatic adaptation involves not only the author of the original novel, but also the librettist and the composer of the opera. Because of their interpretation of the various texts, and their decisions on how these interpretations can be embodied by the actors, the directors thus become part of the adaptation process. Hutcheon (2006:81) acknowledges the contribution of actors to the adaptation process and remarks that “[a]s in staged works, the performers are the ones who embody and give material existence to the adaptation”. Added to these participants are the costume and set designers.

In addition to the participants mentioned above, cinematic adaptations have script-writers, cinematographers and film editors. While all these participants contribute towards the adaptations to a certain degree, Hutcheon (2006:85) reminds us that in cinematic adaptations it is ultimately the director and the screenwriter who share the responsibility for the adaptation. She defines the other participants’ involvement as being “more to the screenplay and thus to the film as an autonomous work of art”.

Although cinematic adaptations of operas do not necessarily mean a change in genre, the conflict usually brought about by such a change can still be evident. Opera audiences have very specific expectations based on their knowledge and experiences of opera. The more familiar an audience is with a text, the more they will expect from the adaptation. Audiences will probably be more critical of cases where cinematic adaptations deviate too far from the traditional versions of operas. There are audience members who may even find translations of operas into indigenous languages as disruptive. A member of the audience at a South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM) conference confessed to finding the Xhosa libretto of

U-Carmen strange.³⁹ Audiences of different media will also have different expectations. These expectations can be frustrated when the audience of one medium engages with another medium. The reader of a novel may find the constrictions in the operatic adaptation frustrating, while the audience of a cinematic adaptation may find the cinematic realism harsh and unsettling.

Those participants responsible for adaptations consciously keep audience response in mind, as well as that the “appeal of adaptations for audiences lies in their mixture of repetition and difference, of familiarity and novelty” (Hutcheon, 2006:114). Hutcheon (2006:117) attributes the success of an adaptation to the palimpsest brought about by intertextuality. She believes that audiences find pleasure in the fact that they can recognize and relate to a variety of familiar and unfamiliar texts.

As with all aspects pertaining to narratology, both operatic and cinematic adaptations are closely related to contexts. The extent of contextuality when it comes to adaptations can only be imagined if one understands the plurality of the concept of context (see footnote 2 on page 1). Hutcheon (2006:143) adds more layers to the term context by including “elements of presentation and reception, such as [...] advertising, press coverage and reviews”. Adaptations can conform to and shape contextual issues such as perceptions about race and gender.

The relationship between adaptations and contexts does not only involve temporal, but also spatial dimensions. Adaptations very often transform works into alternative contexts (Hutcheon, 2006:150). The adaptation of Verdi’s *Macbeth* (Spier, 2007) entitled *macbEth: the opera* by Brett Bailey and composer, Péter Louis van Dijk, transcends time and space and reflects the multilayered quality of contexts. This adaptation transposes Verdi’s nineteenth-century Western opera to postcolonial Africa. Temporal dimensions and social structures are implied, for example, by Macbeth being depicted as an African dictator with his wife, Lady Macbeth, as European. Duncan, the king whom Macbeth murders in order to gain power, is dressed in a colonial-style uniform which is adorned by an excess of medals. The

³⁹ Comment on my paper delivered at the first annual SASRIM conference in Bloemfontein (August 2007).

ideology implied by this costume is juxtaposed with that of tribalism embodied by the ever-present choir who perform in tribal dress.

It is interesting that Bailey's adaptation, in which Verdi's opera has been reduced to 90 minutes, involves multimedia action and, because of its unique stage setup, contains elements of a showing mode of engagement. There is, for example, a screen which shows a text message that Lady Macbeth receives on her cell phone. The fact that the audience is made privy to this message brings an immediate sense of intimacy and involvement. The audience joins the singer-actors on stage and sits in a V-shape. All action takes place in the space between the seats. This allows the audience to 'enter' the space in which the action takes place.

macbEth: the opera is an excellent example of the transcultural adaptations of operas that have been made in South Africa. The Cuban anthropologist Ferdinand Ortiz coined the term *transculturation* in 1947. It refers to a complex process which involves both acculturation (appending cultures) and deculturation (eradicating cultures). An understanding of transculturation enables us to understand human experience and development in all contexts (Ortiz, 1995:98); it also allows for the possibility of new cultures to emerge (Ortiz, 1995:102, 103).

Hutcheon (2006:147) claims that transcultural adaptations have the ability to change the politics of race and gender. The analysis of *U-Carmen* in Chapter Six will show how this cinematic adaptation eliminates the racial issues permeating the libretto of Bizet's opera to leave the focus on gender issues. We shall see how the indigenization of Bizet's opera, as well as the articulation of the apartheid history of South Africa and the social structures of township communities, helps *U-Carmen* succeed in articulating the identity of the African woman as the exotic Other within her own community. Indigenization is illustrative of how adaptations transform works in alternative contexts. It also allows the emergence of hybrid forms.

Dornford-May, the director of *U-Carmen*, used various narrative strategies in order to achieve these results. These strategies pertain not only to the conventions of opera, but also to that of cinema. Because the focus of this research project is not on cinematographical techniques, such as camera shots and angles, any mention of

such concepts will be explained briefly in footnotes. What is more important at this stage is to consider the concept of context – the temporal, spatial and social dimensions within which texts originate and exist.

2.3 Context

The increasing tendency towards historically informed performance practice⁴⁰ places the creative arts within their historical and social contexts. The result is a renewed acknowledgement of art's contribution towards articulating ideological concerns. The interaction between context and culture is applied to a variety of fields: anthropology, business, education, philosophy, arts and science (Crang, 1998; Haviland *et al.*, 2010; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hood & Hopson, 2005). While these authors consider the multiple dimensions of *culture*, it is crucial to consider the importance of dimensions such as time and space as part of context.

In Chapter One (footnote 1, page 1) I briefly explained that the term *context* in this thesis should be understood to include social, temporal and spatial dimensions. I prefer using this term mainly with reference to social contexts, on the understanding that they include cultural contexts in which ideological dimensions are embedded. This approach to contextuality correlates with *macro-context*, an extension of the traditional notion of context. Wales (2001:82) explains that macro-context involves “increasingly ‘remote’ environments [beyond the situational or communicative contexts] such as the geographical, social and cultural; also the cognitive context of background or shared knowledge and beliefs”. As such, the social contexts (the total contexts pertaining to the society's existence) encompass the cultural practices of a society which, in turn, express the ideologies of that society. Social contexts are also linked to the temporal and spatial dimensions which contribute towards their dynamic nature.

⁴⁰ Historically informed performance practice (HIPP) takes into account not only the historical musical context of the creative art work, but also the temporal, spatial and ideological contexts which results in interpretations and performances based on the hermeneutics of both recovery and suspicion.

2.3.1 Creating contexts

The formation of contexts is closely related to temporal and spatial dimensions. It is dependent on the manipulation of these dimensions in the elements of the fabula. This manipulation is achieved by employing specific narrative strategies that pertain to the duration and ordering of events, as well as the treatment of the location(s) presented in the fabula. Eventually, the elements of the fabula evolve into the aspects of the story in which the unique rhythm and the sequential ordering of events contribute towards spatial content, perceptions and functionality.⁴¹ One of the aspects of a story that links intricately with temporal as well as with spatial dimensions is focalization. In order to understand the relationship between focalization, time and space better, it is first necessary to briefly consider each of these concepts separately.

2.3.1.1 Focalization

Scholars such as Bal (2009), Currie (1998), Fludernik (2009), Genette (1980) and Rimmon-Kenan (2002) prefer the term *focalization* to terms previously used, such as *point of view*, *perspective*, *narration*. While, in some cases, these scholars' work presents somewhat diverse opinions on the poetics of focalization, they all agree that *focalization* better subsumes the complexity of the narrative voice. Bal (2009:149) accordingly distinguishes between the focalizer (one who speaks or sees) and the focalized (subject or object of focalizer). Rimmon-Kenan (2002:73) makes a further distinction between seeing and speaking, referring to them as the focalization and the narration. The focalization and the narration can either be performed by different agents or by the same agent, depending on whether the narration uses a first-person or third-person omniscient narrator. This choice of narrator informs the objectivity or subjectivity of the narration. The link between the subjectivity of the focalization and narration and the formation of context will be discussed below.

⁴¹ Bal (2009:75–112; 133–145; 214–222) discusses the concepts of time, space and location, as well as the strategies pertaining to these concepts, extensively. For this thesis, only those issues relating to the analysis of the primary texts, namely Mérimée's novella, Bizet's opera and Dornford-May's film will be broached.

Culler (2011:89) explains that temporal focalization involves the narration of focalized events by relating them to temporal dimensions: events relating to present, past and future, events perceived in hindsight, recollection or renewed insight. Spatial focalization relates to the 'distance' from which the focalization takes place and how it is translated in the narration. Adhering to the principles regarding the agent involved, spatial focalization relates to whether it is executed by a first-person or third-person omniscient agent. The narration can adhere to a single temporal or spatial dimension or present a variety of temporal or spatial dimensions. This implies that the focalization within a narration can shift, contributing to the polyphonic texture of the text as well as the representation of multiple contexts. Once again, these representations can be presented in either an objective or subjective manner. Therefore, the objectivity or subjectivity of the focalization and narration influences the formation of contextual sensibilities.

Having explained how focalization relates to both temporal and spatial dimensions, we shall proceed with a short consideration of time and some strategies used to manipulate temporal dimensions.

2.3.1.2 *Time*

The concept of time is inextricably linked to art. Bal (2009:77) distinguishes between time-based arts (such as narrative, film, theatre) and still artefacts (such as paintings, sculptures, architecture). Time-based arts are obviously related to temporal dimensions, but temporality also pertains to still artefacts when the contexts that inform these artefacts are taken into account. Time is a complex concept in the sense that the duration and rhythm (frequency of occurrence) of represented events vary significantly. Historical time implies a prolongation of time filled with events of different durations, some lasting longer and others only a short period. The rhythm of routine activities is different from those that occur infrequently.

In stories, time is one of the aspects that relates directly to the contexts and the plot of the story. In the fabula, all events – past, present and future – occur in a specific sequence and within a specific timeframe. The difference between the fabula, the story and the narrative text was explained earlier in the chapter. The duration and

the unique organization of the sequence of the events in the fabula contribute towards the temporal dimension of the context and plot of the story. It is possible for the events, which in the fabula might be presented in a chronological sequence, to be reconstructed into an anachronological⁴² sequence of events as the story develops. The issue of anachronies will be discussed in more detail in 2.2.3.1. The anachronological course of events affects the temporal and spatial aspects of the story, resulting in the emergence of new contexts. A plot emerges from this anachronological treatment of events. The chronological sequence of events in *U-Carmen* is interrupted, for example, by instances where characters remember events from their past. These interpolations contribute towards the construction of a complex plot.

According to Griffith (2010:51) a plot involves the relationship between cause and effect as well as the intentional presentation of events in order to extricate affective and intellectual responses from the addressee. He lists “pacing, intense conflict, surprise, rising action, climax, withheld information, and foreshadowing of later events” as ways in which the response can be elicited (Griffith, 2010:51). It is often only after having read the complete story that the cause-effect structure of the plot makes sense and that the sequence of events can be placed in some chronological order. The issue of sequential ordering of events will be broached again in 2.2.3.

The manipulation of temporal dimensions of a narrative involves the anachronical treatment of events. Ireland (2001:288) defines anachrony as the “discordance between order in which represented events are supposed to have occurred, and the order of representation in the text”. The *reach* of the anachrony relates to the position it occupies within the temporal dimensions of the primary narrative⁴³ while the *extent* of the anachrony involves the duration of the deviation (Genette, 1980:48). These anachronies are achieved by means of narrative strategies such as

⁴² A distinction should be made between two concepts: *achronological* and *anachronological*. Bal (2009:96) explains that a deviation in time which cannot be clearly identified, defined or analysed constitutes an achrony, while an anachrony refers to a clearly identified deviation from the chronological ordering of the events which can be defined and analysed (Bal, 2009:82).

⁴³ I use the term *primary narrative* as corresponding to the term *first narrative* used by Genette (1980:48) to describe the ‘original’ narrative to which anachronies relate. Bal (2009:89) refers to these deviations as episodes “outside the time span of the primary fabula”.

interpolations. This involves deviating from the sequential ordering of events by instances of analepses, prolepses and parallelisms. The analysis of *U-Carmen* in Chapter Six of this thesis will show the significant use of analepses to create intertextual spaces. Therefore it is justified to consider what this narrative strategy entails.

Genette (1980:49ff) explains analepses in detail. Analepses (sometimes referred to as retroversions) involve much more than the mere evocation of previous events. Depending on how the anachrony relates to the text's primary narrative, analepsis can be external, internal, overlapping or double. The deviation from the primary narrative can even involve analeptic prolepsis – retroversion-within-anticipation (Ireland, 2001:288).⁴⁴ The reach and extent of the *external analepses* are found completely outside the temporal extent of the primary narrative, in other words, events that occurred before the events presented in the primary narrative. *Internal analepses* are references to past events which fall within the temporal reach and extent of the primary narrative. Ireland (2001:288) describes *mixed analepses* as events beginning prior to the primary narrative and continuing through an entry point into the temporal frame of the primary narrative. Should an analeptic episode exceed the temporal frame of the primary narrative, it is regarded as *overlapping analepsis*.

Another strategy used to deviate from the time frame of the primary narrative is *parallelism*. A parallel phase or episode occurs when there is a deviation from a certain point in the primary narrative to present a sequence of events that the addressee assumes to be occurring simultaneously to the primary narrative (Ireland, 2001:293). In *U-Carmen* instances of parallelism serve to juxtapose contrasting experiences within one culture.

The time frame of Carmen's fabula spans an extended period of time and involves a multitude of events. Therefore, there are instances of ellipses⁴⁵ in the narrative of

⁴⁴ Temporal prolepses are not as frequently used as analepses and refer to instances where future events interrupt the primary narrative by means of foreshadowing as well as internal and external anticipation (Genette, 1980:67ff).

⁴⁵ Wales (2001:122) states: "In narratives or plays ellipsis or omission of events assumed to happen but not described or enacted is a means of speeding up the action or pace of the discourse."

Carmen's story. Genette (1980:43) does not regard ellipses as anachronies. He acknowledges ellipses as relating to temporal dimensions of the narrative, but does not see them as significantly influencing the sequential ordering of events. However, in *U-Carmen* there are instances where ellipses occur within analeptic episodes. This manipulation of temporal dimensions contributes to the multilayered texture of the narrative and influences the sequential order of events significantly.

2.3.1.3 Space

Another aspect of the story that is closely linked to the context is space. Bal (2009:134) argues that *space* is a concept that is "sandwiched between that of *focalization* [...] and that of *place*" (my italics). *Place* can be regarded as space with physical and topographical traits, but it can also be seen as an abstract concept which is informed by various contexts (Viljoen, 2007:29). The sense of place is subverted when perceptions of contexts are disrupted by alternative, dominating ideologies. Ashcroft *et al.* (2000:179) explain how, for example, colonization disrupted the significance of places through displacement, migration and subjugation of subjects and the imposition of the colonizer's language.

Language also has a significant influence on how place is perceived. The discrepancy between perceptions of place – based on how language describes it – and the reality of place is disruptive. Within a society, perceptions of place can also vary from one group or individual to another resulting in a sense of belonging or displacement. Accordingly, Ashcroft *et al.* (2000:179) argue that it is possible for place to "be a constant trope of difference in post-colonial writing, a continual reminder of colonial ambivalence, of the separation yet continual mixing of the colonizer and colonized".

Having a clearer understanding of the concepts *time*, *place* and *focalization*, we can therefore see how space is separated from place by means of focalization. Briefly, *place*, an element of the fabula, is presented in the narration as an aspect of the story. This development from element to aspect is mediated by the focalization, after which spaces emerge. Physical spaces relate to sensory elements such as seeing, hearing and touching. Objects such as furniture, plants and artefacts are both visible

and tangible, while sounds are audible. While these sensory elements contribute towards perceptions of physical spaces, space is increasingly associated with collective and individual identities⁴⁶ and ideologies within specific contexts. This perception of space adheres to postmodernism's diffusion of boundaries to create the impression that space should not be regarded only as a geographical location with topographical boundaries. Soja (1989:129) explains the reciprocal relationship between space and contexts by claiming that "spatiality is simultaneously the medium and outcome, presupposition and embodiment, of social action and relationship".

McHale (1987:45) lists *interpolation*, *superimposition*, *juxtaposition* and *misattribution* as strategies used by postmodernist authors to construct or deconstruct spaces or zones. Based on the primary texts in this research project, I take the liberty to expand on McHale's (1987:46) conceptualization of each of these concepts in order to show how they can be applied to temporal, spatial and social contexts and musical texts.

McHale regards *interpolation* as the formation of imaginary worlds with corresponding real-world characteristics. While *Carmen's* world (as artefact) is imaginary, the interpolation of biographical and historical detail about characters and South Africa in *U-Carmen* contributes to the formation of alternative contexts. *The juxtaposition* of imaginary worlds (interpolated spaces) with known worlds is also possible and can be extended to improbable and impossible real-worlds, as in the works of science fiction. McHale (1987:46) furthermore defines *superimposition* as occurring when "two familiar places are placed on top of the other [...] creating through their tense and paradoxical coexistence a third space identifiable with neither of the original two". The fourth strategy identified by McHale is *misattribution*. Any given space is subject to an addressee's assumptions, presuppositions and associations. Misattribution occurs in accordance with postmodernist aims of undermining meta-narratives (Viljoen, 2007:110). These notions are contrary to

⁴⁶ Jenkins (2004:16) believes that the emphasis in understanding individual identity concerns the differences between people, while the understanding of collective identity also considers the similarities a group of people share. However, regardless of these emphases, individual and collective identities find common ground in the social context within which they interact.

modernist writing's dependence on the reader's perceptions of spaces and identities in order to understand them.

The analysis of *U-Carmen* in Chapter Six of this thesis is not restricted to finding imaginary, improbable or impossible worlds versus real-world situations or pointing out unidentifiable spaces but examines how the narrative process is manipulated and how past and present events are interpolated to add to perceptions of known and unknown worlds. The analysis will also consider the juxtaposition and superimposition of contrasting contextual and musical styles and identities as well as a general misattribution of assumptions regarding said styles and identities in *U-Carmen*. The manner in which these strategies are used contributes to creating perceptions of space through the information and content provided of the space and inferring the functionality of the space. A large part of perceptions of spaces relates to the identity of those who inhabit those spaces.

2.4 Identity

Identity is one of the major preoccupations of postmodernism. Postmodernist perceptions of identity repudiate the Cartesian philosophy of a posited *cogito* (soul/thinking being)⁴⁷ where the subject's consciousness is regarded as given and fixed. Weimin and Wei (2007:250ff) discuss the attempts of philosophers such as Biran, Kant, Husserl and Sartre to subvert and dispute Descartes's first principle of a metaphysical system: the deduction that *cogito* (the soul / thinking being) consists of two substances – mind and matter. The authors explain Sartre's belief that the Self is not to be found in the *cogito* but rather in the greater context of the world and its inhabitants.

Weimin and Wei's (2007) views endorse Sarup's (1996:14) argument that postmodernism regards identity formation as a process in which the dialectic of psychological and sociological factors should be taken into account. Identity is socially constructed and validated; it is constituted by intricate manifestations of the

⁴⁷ Descartes's original statement is to be found in his *Discourse on Method* (1637). It was originally written in French (*Je pense donc je suis*) and only appeared in Latin in 1644 in the seventh article of the first part of *Principles of Philosophy* (1644): *cogito, ergo sum* – I think, hence I am.

Self and the Other in relation to class, race, gender and contexts (Schick, 1999:19). This definition underscores the interactive relationship between contexts and identity. Schick (1999:12) also believes that ideas about the Self/Other dichotomy are firmly integrated with thoughts on 'here' and 'there', but cautions against simplifying identity formation to a mere here/there dichotomy. He explains that 'here' and 'there' consist of "an entire archipelago of places, with which one engages in discursive relationships of inclusion and exclusion, attraction and repulsion, acceptance and rejection" (Schick, 1999:24).

Postmodernism regards identity formation as a dynamic process. The dynamic nature of the process implies change in temporal and spatial dimensions to which identity is linked. The protean quality of identity should be attributed to the plurality and mutability which allow change and appropriation in the process of identity formation. Sarup (1996:1) argues that identity can be "displaced, hybrid or multiple". While scholars such as Sarup (1996:14) propose that the concepts of displacement, hybridity and multiplicity contribute towards postmodernist perceptions of identity as fragmented, incoherent and contradictory, Kellner (1992:43) cautions that this should not be understood to mean that postmodernism regards identity as uncertain, illusory, superficial, inconsistent or frail. Contrary to such perceptions, postmodernism actually considers identity to have at least some measure of stability. There are scholars (Schick, 1999; Harvey, 1993) who agree that identity needs some sustainability and longevity, which are often embedded in the narratives that articulate it.

The relationship between identity and narrative is broached by Schick (1999:21), who argues that "[i]dentity is its own formation and narrative is the medium through which that formation is realized". Such a narrative forms part of a human being's existence and is articulated by various social institutions that inform and articulate contexts and contribute towards the formation of identities.

2.4.1 Context and identity

Perceptions of identity are informed by experiences and contexts. The reciprocal relationship between contexts and identity is marked by fluidity, mutability and

plurality⁴⁸ which include various levels of identity, such as those of a social, national, regional, ethnic, religious and linguistic, gender and corporate nature (Crang, 1998; Sarup, 1996:1; Segers, 1997:269). This plurality of contexts and identity is the result of the dynamic nature of social processes within specific temporal and spatial dimensions. These social processes are embodied in cultural practices which can be regarded as the expression of a society's processes and experiences. It follows that the cultural identity of one society can be distinguished from another based on their textual and contextual differences.

Hammond (2007:25ff) maintains that a consideration of the relationship between context and identity needs to take into account three factors when addressing the cultural identity of a specific group: (1) the *in-group's*⁴⁹ internalized perception of their own unique identity, (2) the general perceptions of the in-group's characteristics within specific contexts, and (3) the perceptions of the *out-group* regarding the in-group's identity. Depending on which of these factors serve as the main frame of reference, depictions will show either self-realization or differences. The manner in which these differences were perceived during the nineteenth century resulted in the emergence of a dualistic philosophy of identity, described by Taylor (2007:74) as increasingly Manichean.⁵⁰ This dualistic philosophy manifested in the binarism⁵¹ of Self/Other, which is prominently manifested in the relationship between the Western Self and the non-Western Other.

⁴⁸ This perception of identity is evident in a country such as South Africa with its vast variety of ethnic groups where it is inevitable that the multiplicity of languages and identities will contribute towards a social identity (Hammond 2007:25ff).

⁴⁹ The term *in-group* is used by Hammond (2007) to distinguish the between one's own group (*self*) in relation to *out-groups*, i.e. other groups (*other*).

⁵⁰ Manichæism is a religion that originated in Persia in 241 A.D. Its founder, a self-proclaimed prophet, was Manichæus, who died a martyr's death in 276 A.D. This doctrine is based on the belief that there are two opposing and conflicting principles: good and evil (Neumann, 1919:491–93).

⁵¹ Within a postmodernist context the use of the term *binarism* would be more appropriate than *binary oppositions*. Binarisms, especially within a postmodern context, do not necessarily indicate a dichotomy in which the binaries are opposite ends of a continuum. Nearness/distance is a binarism that relates to both temporal and spatial contexts. In both contexts, the implication of nearness or distance is a relative concept. The time lapse between apartheid (then) and post-apartheid (now) in South Africa is less than twenty years and, for the inhabitants of a white suburb, their neighbours in an adjacent informal settlement might seem foreign and alien (near/far).

2.4.2 Western Self versus non-Western Other

An important aspect in a postmodernist approach to identity is a consideration of the Self and the Other. This thesis adopts the same approach and offers not only a discussion on how nineteenth-century Westerners regarded non-Western, exotic Others, but also explains how the African female Other is regarded from within a context that may be regarded as 'home'. While Chapter Five will use Mérimée's novella to illustrate Western perceptions of non-Western contexts and identities, the analysis and interpretation of *U-Carmen* in chapters seven and eight will show how the African female Other is marginalized within her own society. Therefore, the discussion below serves as background for general perceptions arising from the Self/Other binarism as well as for specific perceptions about women as the exotic Other.

Sarup (1996:47) is convinced that the only way in which identity can be perceived is through difference. Accordingly, the formation and perceptions of the Self's identity is closely linked to its sense of its differences from the Other because these differences act as a foil for the inherent qualities of the Self. Perceptions of differences informed the shaping and articulation of binarisms such as good/evil, superior/inferior, civilized/uncivilized, black/white, Christian/non-Christian, etc. These binarisms are embedded in subtexts with underlying implications regarding race, class and gender. One of the most profound binarisms relates to gender, namely male versus female. Taylor (2007:20) confirms that

modern, colonial attitudes toward racialized difference were shaped by existing attitudes toward difference; that new, racialized conceptions of difference drew upon older notions of gendered difference, and upon the racialized difference of Others closer to home – Turks, Arabs, Jews, Irish; and that these eventually informed one another.

Earlier in this chapter it was mentioned that notions of the Self and the Other are linked to notions of 'here' and 'there'. Perceptions of the Self are informed by ideologies of the 'here' as well as by the pre-assumed notions of 'there'. Schick (1999:21) believes that the formation of identity only makes sense if juxtaposed with

alterity; it therefore follows that the presupposed notions of ‘there’ include perceptions about and formations of the identity and space of the Other.

A seminal text in which the Western Self’s attitude towards – and perceptions of the non-Western Other is debated, is Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* (2003 [1978]). This is a text that has been criticized as much as it has been embraced. It is a very useful source from which to infer the relationship between the Self and the Other. Locke (2009:3) reminds us that Orientalism was initially regarded to refer to “variants of (literary and artistic) exoticism” which related to the inhabitants and ideologies of countries and regions such as Turkey, Persia, Central Asia, India and east- and south-east Asia. However, the relationship between exoticism and Orientalism is best described by Pal-Lapinski (2005:109), who states that “exoticism is a trope that at times includes and parallels orientalism, but is not necessarily limited to it”.

Mention was made earlier that this research project adopts a postmodernist approach to identity and identity formation. Rather than considering perceptions purely based on interpretations or the parameters of the structures of an ideology, postmodernism also considers the physical, psychological and semiotic aspects which inform and shape these structures. This study will consider a few aspects that inform the Self’s perceptions, articulation and treatment of the Other, namely the documentation of the Other’s contexts and identities, the Self’s domination of the Other as well as womanhood and sexuality as tropes, that is metaphors, for class and racial differentiation.

2.4.2.1 *Documentation of the Other’s context and identities*

More often than not, nineteenth-century perceptions of and convictions about the Other were informed by a ‘textual attitude’ which is characterized by its static nature.⁵² The reasons for adopting a textual attitude include readers’ attempts to make sense and gain knowledge of that which is unfamiliar or threatening (Said, 2003:93). Another reason for referring to texts in order to understand human nature

⁵² Said (2003:93) explains textual attitude as the notion of using literature to understand human nature and context. It is possible, however, also to regard music and the visual arts as texts and, therefore, a source of information.

and contexts is that the smallest measure of success in articulating any sense of reality about a subject leads to the emergence of even more texts relating to the same subject. Success breeds success, regardless of whether the contents are reliable (Said, 2003:93). The superior Self claims to present the true and fundamental nature of an inferior Other. The information in these texts is seldom repudiated by the marginalized societies and spaces involved, it further strengthens prejudice and results in the continued debasement of the Other.

An excellent example of asymmetrical relationships is found during the nineteenth-century when the Self's views of the Other were indicative of an imperialist *Zeitgeist*. Contrary to postmodernist beliefs about the fluidity and mutability of contexts and identities, nineteenth-century perceptions of the Other were more fixed and representative of the imperialist ideology. One of the ironies of colonial rule lies in the discrepancy between Western European ideologies and the misattribution of those ideologies within colonized spaces. Stoler (1989:136) contends that “[c]olonial cultures were never direct translations of European society planted in the colonies, but unique cultural configurations, homespun creations in which European food, dress, housing, and morality were given new political meanings in the particular social order of colonial rule”.

The power of imperialism and colonialism was expedited by experiences of travellers and researchers who explored places outside Europe. Taylor (2007:43) explains that one of the explorers' aims was to write histories for the Other, an aim which indicates deeply patronizing perceptions that the Other has no real knowledge of himself and, therefore, no identity.

Knowledge and identity were attributes of the Self and the information provided during the eighteenth and nineteenth century was informed by the Self's ideologies. These ideologies were often dominated by Christian doctrines and were used as paradigms with which the Other's contexts and identities were compared. Because of the Other's difference in religion, culture and appearance, his position in the evolutionary order of beings was regarded as being very low down and he often was regarded as ignorant and uncivilized.

Furthermore, when the Self is contextually⁵³ removed from the subject about whom he is writing, the Self's disdainful attitude towards the Other worsens. Den Hollander (1967:362) claims that "[t]he bare assertion of having been in a distant country was sufficient; the truth behind the claim was not severely tested: one took delight in the narrations and accounts". Instances where the Other was 'documented' by those who had not even travelled to their countries are evidence that first-hand experience and observation were not always deemed essential in order to create a sense of truth or authenticity. Taruskin (2010:390) explains that it is often sufficient simply to name something in order to give it life, or for something/someone to become metonymic despite being imagined and fictional. It thus follows that nineteenth-century depictions of the Other led to perceptions and understandings of fragmented information and distorted knowledge, filtered through mistrust and patronizing presuppositions (Said, 2003:xii; Locke, 2009:39).

While Self/Other is a binarism which traditionally implies a dominant/subaltern⁵⁴ relationship, it is reflexive by nature. The dominant Self's reaction to the subaltern Other originates from deep-seated anxieties and contradictions while the Other acts as a recognizable likeness to the Self. This imagined and fictional Other, as depicted by an ill-informed author and perceived by a less-than-critical audience, becomes a 'reality' that the Self uses as foil for his own identity formation. The Self is redefined and elevated by integrating familiar practices and structures with unfamiliar aspects of the Other.

Contrary to imperialist thinking, postmodernism also takes note of the Self as the Other. The decentring of the Self,⁵⁵ as acknowledged by a postmodern approach to identity formation, acknowledges the sameness of the Self and the Other as well as the differences between them. Postmodernism regards the 'truth' articulated in the text as being dependent on the context in which it occurs rather than on that which is related about it. It also deems the use of well-established imperialist perceptions as a

⁵³ Contextuality in this sense could include temporal, spatial, social and narrative contexts.

⁵⁴ One of the most profound works on the subaltern, is an essay entitled "Can the subaltern speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea" (1988), written by Gayatri C. Spivak.

⁵⁵ Sarup (1996:46) explains decentring of the Self as meaning that the "individual consciousness can no longer be seen as the origin of meaning, knowledge and actions".

benchmark against which to measure new and unfamiliar views and practices as a subjective meta-narrative in which the representation of the Other is often aimed at confirming the meta-narrative rather than interrogating it. Postmodernism displays a strong measure of incredulity towards these meta-narratives and questions them consistently.

2.4.2.2 *Western superior versus non-Western subaltern*

The power relationship between the Self and the Other is axiomatic and clearly evident in the meta-narratives about the Self/Other binarism which emerged during the nineteenth century.⁵⁶ Meta-narratives about the Self and the Other result in the Self believing that the Other's world needs rectification and they allow the Self to intervene and assume a relationship of superior versus subaltern.

The reasons for the superior's intervention are seldom benign. Said (2003:xiv) distinguishes between two possible motives for one society's involvement with another: a desire for equal involvement and growth, or the intent to dominate. History has proven that a relationship of power in which one party is controlled and dominated by another is rife with conflict and usually ends in disaster. The problem is that the Self's belief in the truth of the world as he knows it often results in the perception that the Other's world is inferior and completely unacceptable. The Self then strives to negate all ideologies, structures and histories in order to replace them with his own, which he perceives to be the truth.

Again, nineteenth-century imperialism is an excellent example of a superior Self versus a subaltern Other relationship. Young (2001:27) attributes to imperialism the power to conquer non-Western subjects directly or by means of political and economic manipulation. This power was expedited by the discovery and colonization

⁵⁶ Proof of the Self's patronizing presuppositions regarding the Other during this era is evident in Arthur James Balfour's lecture in the House of Commons (13 June 1910). Said (2003:31ff) provides extracts from and a critical analysis of Balfour's lecture. Basically, Balfour's lecture is concerned with two themes: knowledge and power (Said, 2003:32) that allowed the Self to assume the right to speak on behalf of the Other. Balfour distinguishes between Westerners and Orientals, between superior and subaltern. He believed that the occupation of the Other's land, as well as the control and occupation of their affairs and assets, is completely justifiable (Said, 2003:36).

of new-found territories.⁵⁷ These new-found territories were regarded as peripheral spaces, while Europe was perceived to be the centre. The peripheral spaces were characterized by encounters filled with tension between colonizers and colonized. The tension was brought about by epistemological frustration because colonizers' knowledge of the colonized Other was not necessarily based on facts and did not result in a better ontological understanding. Often the epistemological frustration, prejudice and a feeling of imminent threat, due to vast distances and ignorance (den Hollander, 1967:374), produced tacit resentment of and discrimination against the Other. The need arose to control and assimilate not only the Other's space, but also the identity of those who were regarded as threatening Others. Without control or at least assimilation, the only option left was destruction and erasure. This option often resulted in the most atrocious acts conceivable, such as the enslavement and torture of the native population in the Congo Free State under the rule of King Leopold II of Belgium.

The manner in which the Self perceives his own identity as part of a society within a context of differences contributes to the resentment and fear of the Other. Stoler (1989:138) maintains that

racist ideology, fear of the Other, preoccupation with white prestige, and obsession with protecting European women from sexual assault [...] were part of a critical class-based logic; statements not only about indigenous subversives, but directives aimed at dissenting European underlings in the colonies – and part of the apparatus that kept potentially subversive white colonials in line.

The Self's discrimination against the Other was specifically directed towards class, race and gender. Colonialist countries such as Britain and France regarded the unfamiliar Other as inferior based on patriarchal perceptions. When Schick (1999:24) points out perceptions about the relationship between race and class as articulated during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he claims that race and ethnicity

⁵⁷ Said (2003:41) points out that, in the century between 1815 and 1914, colonialism's geographical domination grew from 35 percent to approximately 85 percent. He also claims that France increased its colonial space from 1.0 to 9.5 million square kilometres and the number of people colonized increased from five to fifty million during the last two decades of the nineteenth century (Said, 1993:169).

were often metonymic for class and that class formation and articulation were based on racial differences. The conflation of the Other's class, race and gender will be discussed in more detail in the section that follows.

2.4.2.3 *Womanhood and sexuality*

Schick (1999:59) points out that the human body is a vehicle of "socially significant meanings". These significations contribute towards the perception and articulation of the human body as a text with semiotic and mimetic value. Such perceptions and articulations are often stereotypical and offer epistemic support for ideologies and differentiations.

The one aspect of the human body which is regarded as determinant of multiple classifications is sexuality. Sexuality was used as a narrative strategy in the formation of the Other's space and identity, because it was regarded as having the ability to delineate the difference between normal and abnormal, proper and permissive, morality and immorality. Sexualized spaces and identities were thus constructed and based on social differences between the Self and the Other as well as between the 'here' and the 'there'. The formation of these spaces demarcates not only the contexts and identity of the Other but also those of the Self (Schick, 1999:66).

Sexuality is thus an important axis on which the Other's identity formation pivots,⁵⁸ as illustrated in both Mérimée's and Bizet's *Carmen*. Kaplan (1985:148) claims that ideologies relating to class and race are intricately informed by sexual differentiation and Schick (1999:7) directly links sexuality and identity when he asserts that "[s]exualized images of men *and* women were used, in Europe's discourses of the other, as key markers of place, and hence of determinants of identity and alterity". The link that modernist Western consciousness made between sexuality, space and

⁵⁸ Another pivot around which the Other's space and identity are constructed involves temporal aspects. The Other was geographically as well as historically removed from the Self. The nineteenth-century Self's historicist perspective imagined each period in history to represent human development and evolvment. This perspective gave life to the conviction that societies that had existed longer (such as those of the Other) were archaic stases and that younger societies (such as those of the Self) were more evolved and civilized – and, therefore, superior in values and social structures (Schick, 1999:68ff).

identity allowed sexuality to become a criterion and trope to articulate alterity: it succeeded in signifying the Other as “different: uncontrolled, unbridled, frightening, but also attractive, fascinating” (Schick, 1999:168, 169).

However, the nineteenth-century Self’s fixation was focused especially on womanhood and female sexuality. Modernist imaginations of the female Other followed a prolonged history of womanhood as identifiable with remoteness, primitivism, paganism and hedonism (Austern, 1998:27ff). Difference, as exemplified in especially the female Other’s sexuality, was implied in the depiction of physical characteristics and behavioural conduct. The subversion of the female Other was severe and she was regarded as innately immoral, overtly and excessively sensual and of lesser intelligence (Said, 2003:40, 208). Articulations of the female Other served to bolster perceptions of overt concupiscence, deviant sexual practices and pathological wantonness.

Taruskin (2010:406) states that female otherness was compared to “an addiction or a disease, against which Europeans need protection or inoculation”. The bigoted treatment of the female Other was illustrative not only of the power relationship between male and female, but also of the power relationship between the Self and the Other. The female Other was regarded as a threat, whether it was at a physical, epistemological or psychological level, and anyone who was threatening and could not be controlled had to be excised.

Schick (1999:130) lists several exotic female characters who pose a threat in both novels and political discourse. Works of the nineteenth-century French painter and sculptor Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904) serve as examples of how the female Other was depicted in the visual arts.⁵⁹ Examples of sculptures depicting the female Other include *Asia* (design approved in 1864) by the British sculptor John Henry

⁵⁹ Illustrations of these paintings have been retrieved from <http://public-domain-images.blogspot.com> and were accessed on 24 January 2012.

Foley (1818–1874) and *La Nègresse* (1872) by the French sculptor Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827–1875); they confirm the artists' interest in the female Other.⁶⁰

The titles of Gérôme's paintings, such as *Une piscine dans le harem* (A Pool in the Harem), *Baigneuses* (Bathers), *The Hookah Lighter* and *A Slave Market in Rome*, are self-explanatory (see Plates 1–4 on the following pages). The most obvious feature that these four works share is that of female nudity. In the first three paintings, women are portrayed as idle and without inhibitions – sharing the communal baths. The sense of overt sensuality is further enhanced by their nudity and the presence of a hookah (a device used for smoking flavoured tobacco) in each of these paintings. A woman smoking defied nineteenth-century European social norms and is found to be sensual and sexually aggressive.

Besides nudity and the non-Western smoking device, the setting of these paintings strongly contributes towards creating the context of the exotic Other. In *Une piscine dans le harem* (Plate 1) the starkness of the setting serves to enhance the women's nudity and sensuality. However, the water and arches in this painting still symbolized femininity and contribute towards perceptions of feminized spaces.⁶¹ The use of signs such as Moorish-style arches, marble floors, dome-like roofs, turquoise arabesque patterns, Eastern-style carpets and a hexagonal table in *Baigneuses* (Plate 2), strengthen the perception of the exotic. In the Hookah lighter (Plate 3), the luscious plants and the water form the perfect exotic setting for the women who are depicted relaxing with no inhibitions about their nudity. In fact, all the paintings contrast the smooth nudity and curves of the female bodies with their textured surroundings.

⁶⁰ Images of these sculptures were accessed on 24 January 2012 and retrieved from respectively <http://www.speel.me.uk> and <http://www.metmuseum.org>

⁶¹ The term *feminized* is borrowed from Schick (1999) and the idea of spaces being feminized is based on gender ideologies which rigidly posit women as the weak, passive, subservient and obsequious Other. Colonized spaces are regarded to be equally weak, compliant and servile (Schick, 1999:2). Superior male qualities included the ability to control one's emotions and behaviour, to clearly communicate by means of linguistic skills and to possess high moral values as well as sound, intellectual reasoning. Austern (1998:31) states that "femaleness was symbolically associated with what Reason left behind – the dark powers of the earth goddesses, immersion in unknown forces associated with mysterious female powers." Any lack of these skills was regarded as detrimental and indicative of effeminacy. It follows that any space or person in which these qualities were not evident, was regarded as effeminate and was thus feminized.



Plate 1: *Une piscine dans le harem* by Jean-Léon Gérôme
Oil on canvas (1876)

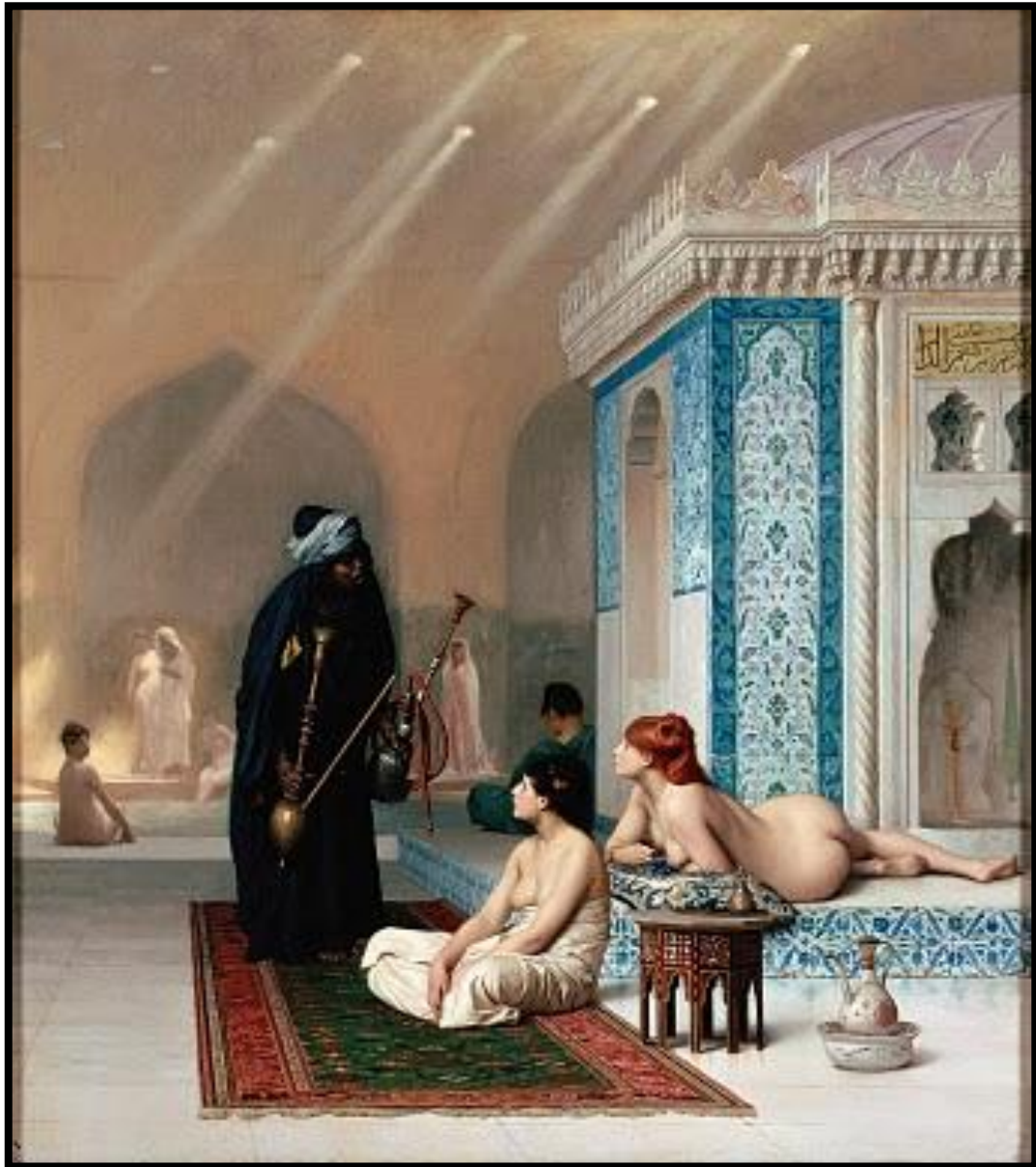


Plate 2: *Baigneuses* by Jean-Léon Gérôme
Oil on canvas (1881)

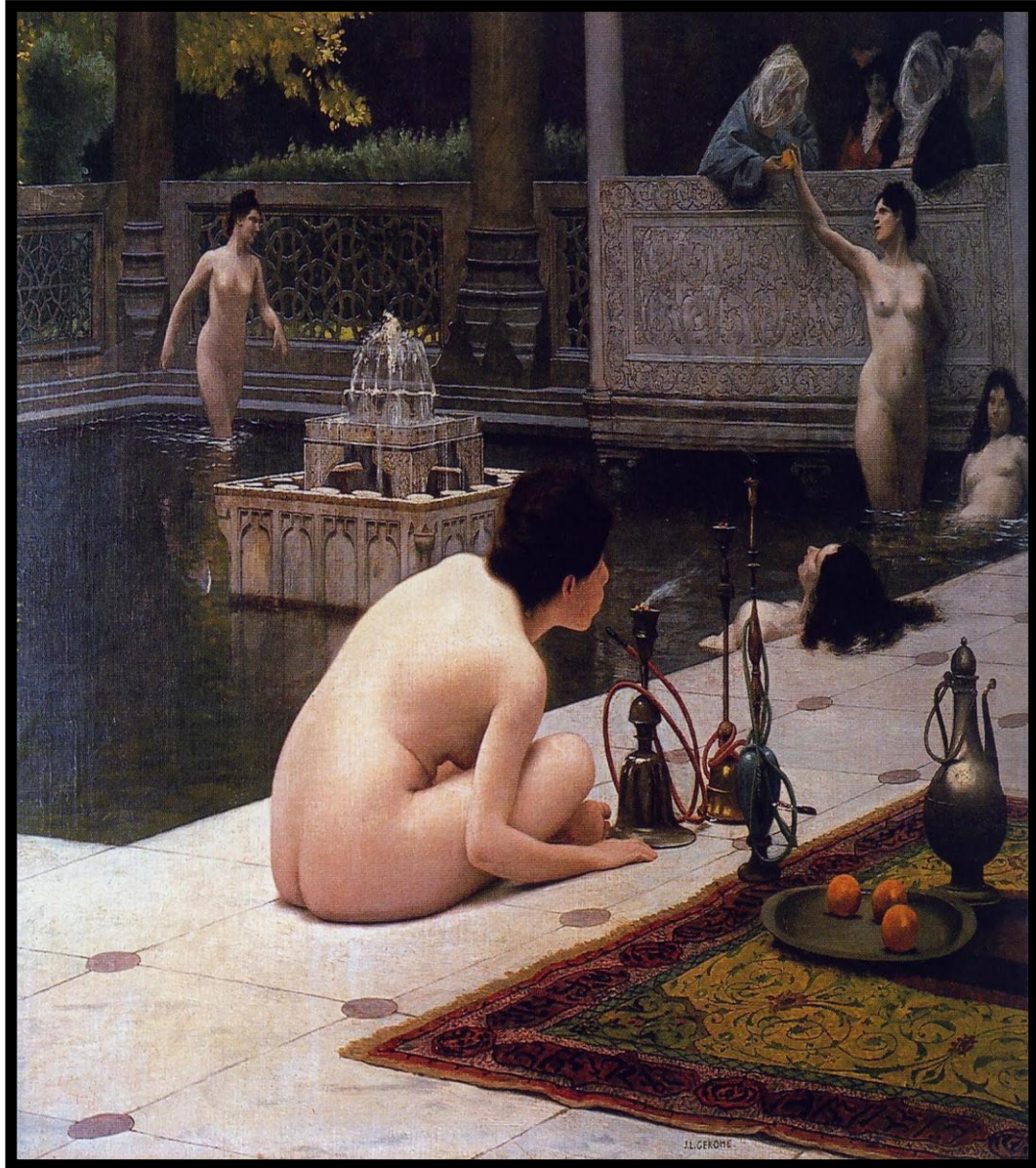


Plate 3: *The Hookah Lighter* by Jean-Léon Gérôme
Oil on canvas (1898)



Plate 4: *Slave Market in Rome* by Jean-Léon Gérôme
Oil on canvas (1884)



Plate 5: *Asia* by John Henry Foley
Marble (1871)
Albert Memorial, Hyde Park, London



Plate 6: *La Nègresse* by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux
Cast terracotta (1872)
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

While it may be argued that Gérôme's depiction of womanhood in the first three paintings presented here should not be perceived as necessarily degrading, the same argument cannot be made about *Slave Market in Rome* (Plate 4). This painting shows the total debasement of women of all ages being sold as slaves. The humility of being paraded nude and clean-shaven in front of a group of leering men who reach out to them is evident in the women's body language. The woman standing in front of the men is covering her eyes while the other is sitting down, hugging her knees close to her body. However, the most shocking aspect of these slave transactions is found in the images of the two children on the far right of the painting. Slavery acknowledged no age limits. The one girl has clearly not yet reached the age of puberty and rests her head on her arm as if already tired of life. The other child is even younger and attempts to hide behind a woman holding a baby.

Foley's marble sculpture (Plate 5) depicts figures representing China, Asiatic Turkey, Persia and India. This sculpture has very strong subtexts relating to the exotic Other. The female figure (breasts bare) is clearly an Indian woman dressed in typical attire. The male standing on her right can be recognized as Persian by the typical turban and robes worn by Persian men. From his unclothed torso and the rest of his attire, it is evident that the male figure partly seen on her left is a slave. The Scythian headdress implies his connection to Asiatic Turkey. Behind the elephant sits a turbaned man surrounded by bags, most likely implying trade in products such as spices. The attire of the Chinese man sitting down reminds one of the clothes of a Shaolin monk. This perception is enhanced by the presence of the two urns.⁶² This subtext of the Other's religious context is not the only one to be perceived in this sculpture.

The elephant on which the Indian woman is sitting provides the most salient religious subtext. Elephants are worshipped by Hindus, Buddhists, Jainists and Sufis. The Hindu god with the head of an elephant, Ganesh, is believed to be the remover of obstacles. The animal is a symbol for physical and mental strength and represents values such as obedience, the ability to learn from mistakes and respect. The most

⁶² The Shaolin monastery is a Chán Buddhist temple at Song Shan, close to Zhengzhou City in China.

interesting feature of Foley's elephant is the phallic shape of the tusks which can be interpreted as articulating procreative power.

While Foley's sculpture does not depict the exotic Other in a negative way, this work can be regarded as representative of nineteenth-century artists' fascination with foreign people and places.

The inscription at the foot of Carpeaux's cast terracotta bust of an African slave (Plate 6) reads *Pourquoi! Naître esclave!* (Why born a slave?). This inscription is indicative of a patronizing mindset. No one is born a slave. Servitude is imposed. Regarding someone as being born a slave justifies subjugation. The rope across the woman's naked breasts is a reminder not only of artists' use of nudity to depict the female Other, but also of her servitude. Distinguishing features such as the broader nose, fuller lips and coarse, curly hair contribute towards the formation of stereotype perceptions of African appearance. The emotion on her face, as well as the sideways positioning of the head, is significant. Being taken into captivity, the woman looks back at the life she is leaving behind with obvious sadness.

The derogatory position and disparaging treatment of women were echoed in that of the ethnic Other. Schick (1999:136) claims that nineteenth-century views on race were often articulated in sexual terms. He asserts that perceptions of the Other's sexuality acted as a trope in which two components were firmly embedded: race and pathology (Schick, 1999:166). Womanhood, the ethnic⁶³ (including dark-skinned) male and female Other, as well as children were deemed as being inferior in their physical evolution and social development. Schick (1999:167) highlights the calamitous position of native women who are debased twice over because of their race and their gender. An unproven inference is made that the Other's gender and race are mutually indicative of their inferior identity.

The preceding discussion of the relationship between the Self and the Other provides an indication that the social politics of the latter half of the nineteenth

⁶³ During the nineteenth century, the term *ethnic* was used to denote people or a group of people who share a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural heritage – often perceived to be outside the boundaries of Western Europe.

century was sinister in its perceptions and articulations of the differences between the Self and the Other. Music and other art forms also were employed to articulate these differences to both the Self and the Other, with a specific focus on female sexuality (Taruskin, 2010:405). The question emerges: what narrative strategies did artists use to depict the contexts and identities of the Other? This question will be answered in detail in chapter four using Mérimée's novella *Carmen* (1845) as illustration.

2.5 Conclusion

The reciprocal relationship between text, context and the formation of identity has been explored in this chapter. The encoded work, created by the artist who uses signs and symbols, is decoded by the addressee. This decoding of signs and symbols takes place through the act of interpretation which produces an inference of meaning. This process constitutes the emergence of a text.

The acts of decoding and interpretation in the performing arts (such as in music) is characterized by duality. The first level of decoding and interpretation is executed by the performer. He presents his 'text' to the audience who, in turn, proceeds to decode and interpret the performed text. This plurality and mutability are characteristic of the texture of texts.

Because of the plurality of interpretations and meanings, a number of texts and the formation of intertextual spaces become possible. These intertextual spaces are analysed and interpreted by the addressee. In the performing arts these spaces are simultaneously decoded, interpreted and re-presented by the performer. The relationship of various texts with each other, whether from determinable origins or not, is characterized by intertextuality. Intertextual spaces are created by integrating several texts taking into account contexts in which they originated or emerged as well as the participants who contribute towards their formation.

The concept of context is intricately linked to temporal and spatial dimensions. The manipulation of these dimensions by using narrative devices such as anachronies, interpolation, juxtaposition, superimposition and misattribution allows new contexts to

be construed. Individual and collective identities of societies are formed within these contexts.

Perceptions of the Other's identity that were informed by the Imperialist *Zeitgeist* during the nineteenth century are contradicted by postmodern perceptions of identity. Notions of the Other's inferiority as fixed led to the debasement of especially colonized societies during the nineteenth century. Women, in particular, were subjected to biased characterization. Postmodernism refutes such prejudice and posits points of view that promote perceptions of identity as fluid and contextualized.

The complex texture of contexts is achieved by manipulating the temporal and spatial dimensions of the fabula, thus creating new spaces. Postmodernism acknowledges the complexity, multiplicity and hybrid nature of contexts. Because of the reciprocal relationship between space and contexts, it follows that spatiality implies similar characteristics as context (Schick, 1999:6).

Finally, the chapter considered the poetics of operatic and cinematic adaptations. It is clear that there is a close relationship between these adaptations (texts) and the articulation of contexts and identities by means of composite, semiotic and narratological strategies. In the case of the primary texts involved in this research project, the focus is on the articulation of the exotic Other and therefore the next chapter will examine the concept of exoticism.

CHAPTER 3: EXOTICISM

This chapter aims to conceptualize and compare nineteenth-century and postmodern perceptions of *exoticism* in order to examine how this notion has been used to articulate and shape perceptions of the exotic, non-Western Other. A discussion of Spain as an exotic space and Gypsies as the exotic Other serves to illustrate the asymmetrical relationship between the Western Self and the non-Western, exotic Other (hereafter designated merely as the Other) and assists in the demarcation of the scope of nineteenth-century exoticism. The primary goal of this discussion is to provide a background for the analysis of Mérimée's novella in Chapter Five. In that chapter the exploration of Carmen's embodiment of female identity refers to the concepts discussed in this chapter. This chapter concludes by contemplating the manner in which musical exoticism (specifically exoticism in opera) is used to depict the contexts and identities of the Other.

During the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century, the Other was perceived to be *exotic*. Such perceptions were initially cultivated by the *exoticism* featured in literary works by poets, authors and philosophers such as Chateaubriand, Dumas, Gautier, Goethe, Heine and Nietzsche. The Orient and classical antiquity were two of the exotic motifs frequently found in literary works. Thornton (1996:5, 6) explains that literary works, as well as accounts of journeys to exotic places were often used by some authors as the source of their creative work. However, it was not only literary texts in which exoticism featured; it also found its way into the visual and performing arts. Painters such as Delacroix (1789–1863) and Decamps (1803–1860) created works using Oriental subjects and themes (Lacombe, 2001:185). Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century composers such as Mozart (1756–1791), Spohr (1784–1859), Verdi (1813–1901), Puccini (1858–1924) and Ravel (1875–1937), to name but a few, used musical and non-musical elements in their compositions to represent exotic contexts and timbres.

3.1 Exoticism conceptualized

Exoticism is a difficult concept to encapsulate and attempts to define it often result in a cache of definitions. Definitions of early nineteenth-century exoticism describe it as

an extension and intensification of Romanticism in which the romantic style is carried “to the utmost extreme of the monstrous, exotic, even morbid” (Spann, 1933:86). More recently Bongie (1991:4) described exoticism as

a nineteenth-century literary and existential practice that posited another space, the space of an Other, outside or beyond the confines of a ‘civilization’ [...] that, by virtue of its modernity, was perceived by many writers as being incompatible with certain essential values – or, indeed, the realm of value itself.

For people with a limitless and rich imagination, as well as a need for new experiences, such remote and foreign places had strong appeal. Early in the twentieth century, two terms were used to describe Western Europe’s pre-occupation with the remote and unfamiliar (Spann, 1933:87): *Südlandsehnsucht* which translates as ‘a yearning for Southern countries/regions and *Fernweh*, ‘a longing for far-away places’. However, Bellman (1998:xii) emphasises that it is not so much *distance* as *strangeness* which is the most salient aspect of exoticism. Bongie’s definition and Bellman’s emphasis on strangeness summarize the most prominent tropes in nineteenth-century exoticism, namely societies and contexts of remote and unfamiliar times and places.

There were various reasons for using exoticism as a mode of representation and reflection. The one that seemed harmless enough was that exoticism provided a form of escapism from the harsh realities and discontent of nineteenth-century capitalist, industrial society. While such escapism may seem benevolent, Said (1993:131) warns against covert ideologies and policies which might result in cultural products serving as justification and propaganda for marginalization. Exoticism conceals or exposes ideological diversity⁶⁴ by representing, for example, imperialist ideologies in a manner that seems almost aesthetically pleasing and acceptable. Nineteenth-century subjective depictions of otherness, for example, depended on seemingly harmless portrayals in order to disguise the disparity of power between the Self and the exotic Other (Huggan, 2006:14). However, this exoticism succeeded in underscoring and justifying the exploitation and disempowerment of the exotic

⁶⁴ Scholars such as Bongie (1991), Mason (1996), Rousseau and Porter (1990) and Todorov (1994) investigate the ideological diversity of exotic discourses.

Other (Locke, 2009:39; Savigliano, 1995:189). This exoticism of the nineteenth century in fact consisted of grossly generalized impressions, with distorted attributions and appropriations that created and signified ideologies and practices derived from subjective perceptions of the remote and unfamiliar (Den Hollander, 1967; Locke, 2009; Rousseau & Porter, 1990). Stereotypical identities of remote and unfamiliar people, cultures and places were constructed through fantasies derived from unsubstantiated perceptions of the Other. The remote and unfamiliar were closely linked to the Other, and so the inevitable binarism of Self/Other emerged.

Exoticism's influence on the depiction of Self and Other is a result of its dialectical and multifaceted character, as well as its ability to accommodate a diversity of identities and contexts. This diversity is codified in semiotic devices that represent diverse levels of self- and otherness. The codification may be appropriated in order to depict alternative relationships between the Self and the Other as well as competing ideologies (Huggan, 2006:13). In Chapter Four we shall see how diversity is encoded within the elements of opera's composite conventions and how performers and audiences decode such diversity.

The influence of exoticism on perceptions of the exotic Other during this time not only articulated perceptions of the Other, but also redefined and validated articulations and perceptions of the Self and its contexts in Europe (Rousseau & Porter, 1990:ix). Exoticism accomplished this by the appropriation, assimilation, exaggeration or belittlement of the characteristic traits of the Other's individual and/or collective identities.

It is, of course, debatable whether *exoticism* is similarly perceived by both the Self and the Other, if they share the same contexts. The inequality in power relationships and differences in identity mentioned earlier may change when contexts are shared. The power relationship between the Self and the exotic Other within shared contexts is often rooted in the marginalization of certain groups such as women, children and racial others. Within these contexts, the concepts of *exotic* and *exoticism* are indicative of dissension. Célestin (1996:221) argues that

the confrontation of the Same with the Other at Home, with the exotic in the Center, would result in an intensified awareness of difference. A new exoticism will make its appearance: a paradoxical exoticism without travel, without temporal or geographical distance, without representation, since the exotic would be here and now.

Exoticism has thus evolved into “a means for the subject of a powerful, dominant culture, to *counter* that culture in the very process of *returning* to it” (Célestin, 1996:3). The dominant culture could constitute, for example, patriarchy: an ideology countered by the marginalized female subject. This counter-action results in conflict within the context that the patriarchal Self and the female exotic Other share. Célestin (1996:2) also argues that

[e]xoticism may constitute a potential means of leaving or escaping Home and, as such, it does create a rift between individual and culture. Yet it is also a mode of representation; this is why the subject who would practice exoticism can never really leave Home, since Home is also audience, just as this subject can never really go Home again once the exotic has become part of his (self-constituting) experience.

This quotation emphasises that the Self and the exotic Other are equally affected by exoticism because of shared contexts. Whether, of course, the *exoticism* of nineteenth-century Europe is still perceived in the same way within a postmodern context is a question that merits some consideration (see footnote 9 in Chapter One for a definition of context in this thesis).

Rousseau and Porter (1990:vi) confirm the need to rethink perceptions of the remote and exotic within a postmodern context. Within this context, exoticism seems to exceed any limitation it might have had in nineteenth-century Europe. A question which occupies the minds of postmodernists is how exoticism is influenced when a shift from the peripheral to the centre occurs. While postmodern thoughts on exoticism have some correspondences with nineteenth-century sensibilities on the matter, postmodernism regards nineteenth-century perceptions of the exotic Other's space and identity as a meta-narrative and suspects that the majority of these perceptions are based on misleading and manipulative depictions of otherness.

The concepts of time and space implied by nineteenth-century perceptions of far-away places are still present in postmodern perceptions of exoticism. However, the diffusion of boundaries that characterizes postmodernism also applies to the concepts of centre and periphery. This diffusion of boundaries does not only relate to spatial (geographical) contexts, but also the perceptions and articulation of those contexts. The diffusion of boundaries means that the divide between the Self and the exotic Other no longer necessarily involves opposing identities and contexts; it could also pertain to those identities and contexts that are within close proximity to each other, possessing more commonalities than perceived differences. There is thus a decentring of the Self and a movement of the peripheral, exotic Other to the centre, which results in a greater sense of Sameness within shared contexts.

Another correspondence between postmodern and nineteenth-century exoticism is postmodernism's acknowledgment of the relationship between exoticism, contexts and identity formation. However, postmodernism allows for the reversal of Self and exotic Other which results in the increased awareness not only of differences, but also of possible commonalities. From the newly created centre, the exotic Other is now regarded from another point of view – practically from the *inside out*. Harootunian (2002:vii) agrees that, if the depiction of otherness is less biased, exoticism can very well be regarded as an approach that negates the unyielding clichés and stereotypes of the Other engineered by Western imperialism and colonialism.

Postmodernism acknowledges the possibility that, in some contexts, exoticism validates acts of pillaging and subjugation, while in others it provides underlying principles for acts of reconciliation (Huggan, 2006:13). Postmodern authors such as Célestin (1996:2) regard exoticism as, amongst others, a mode of representation that has the ability to articulate diverse interests depending on the contexts in which it serves. These contexts correspond with Célestin's (1996:221) concept of *Home* mentioned earlier in this chapter.

3.2 Spain and Gypsies as the exotic Other

3.2.1 Spain as exotic space

It is clear from the arguments presented above that a predilection for exotic contexts and ideologies was prominent in the nineteenth century. Romanticists were searching for anti-industrialist and pre-modernist contexts which would provide cultural, historical and artistic richness. As a result, artists turned towards contexts such as the Mediterranean, the Orient and Spain as inspiration for their art.

The fascination of artists and travellers with Spain as an exotic space was fuelled by perceptions of a country on the periphery of Europe characterized by unbridled passion and savagery. Parakilas (1998:138) avers that “it was the French who needed Spain to become exotic”. Lacombe and Glidden (1999:145) explain that

[b]y taking the spectator out of familiar territory, exotic subject matter allows for the creation of imaginative plots rich in original sorties, sometimes founded on authentic elements, historical fact, local peculiarities, or singular behaviours. Spain, as the country nearest to France and the best known of all the ‘exotic’ countries, was exploited for this purpose.

By exoticizing Spain, the French constructed a barrier between themselves and other non-European countries. Thompson (2012:162) contends that, during the Romantic era, French Romantic authors saw “in Greece a threshold to the East, in Spain an outpost of Africa and the Orient, and in the old, more extensive Levant an utter confusion of races and religions”. It was especially the history linking Arabs to Spain which fed perceptions of Spain as pointing the way to the Orient.⁶⁵

Nineteenth-century perceptions of exoticism thus combine Spain, Africa and the Orient without taking into account marked differences in context, geographical location, cultural behaviour and mores. The comparison between Spain, Africa and

⁶⁵ Arab armies first invaded Spain in 711 AD during the Islamic expansion from North Africa to the West (Sandler, 2002:603).

the Orient was far-reaching. Stendhal⁶⁶ (1830:152) asserts that everything in Spain is African: blood, manners, language, ways of life and of combat; if the Spaniard were a Muslim he would have been completely African.⁶⁷ The extent to which Spain was regarded as a non-European and exotic Other is further evident in Hugo's (1829:x) statement that Spain is a replica of Asia; Spain is semi-African, Africa is semi-Asiatic.⁶⁸ Alfred de Vigny (1826:289) takes the argument further and claims that a Spaniard is a man from the East – a Catholic Turk.⁶⁹ His statement identifies the Spaniard as racially and religiously different. Regarded as being closer to the Eastern countries, Spain was assumed to reflect the literary language and tropes, as well as the artistic styles of Eastern countries, which were regarded as being different from those of European literature and arts (de Sismondi, 1846:445). Thus, Spain is an extension of the Orient; both are regarded as being exotic and non-European.

Three nineteenth-century events contributed significantly to perceptions of Spain as an exotic space: the Peninsular Campaign (1808–1813), the Franco–Spanish war of 1823 and the *Exposition Universelle*, held in Paris from 6 May to 31 October 1889. At the *Exposition Universelle*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* and a flamenco danced by Gypsies from Granada generated an increased interest in Spain as an exotic space and the Gypsies as the exotic Other. The issue of the Gypsies as the exotic Other will be discussed again later in this chapter. The Peninsular Campaign and the Franco–Spanish war are events that confirmed Spain as a peripheral space outside of that of the Holy Alliance (Russia, Prussia and Austria)⁷⁰ and the Quadruple Alliance (Britain, France, the Netherlands and Austria).

⁶⁶ Stendhal is the pen name for the nineteenth-century French author Marie Henri Beyle (1783–1849).

⁶⁷ “Sang, mœurs, langage, manière de vivre et de combattre, en Espagne tout est africain. Si l'Espagnol était mahométan il serait un Africain complet” (Stendhal, 1830:152).

⁶⁸ “l'Espagne c'est encore l'Orient; l'Espagne est à demi africaine, l'Afrique est à demi asiatique” (Hugo, 1829:x).

⁶⁹ “Un Espagnol est un homme de l'Orient, c'est un Turc catholique” (de Vigny, 1826:289).

⁷⁰ The Holy Alliance was an alliance between Russia, Prussia and Austria, initiated on 26 September 1815 by Tsar Alexander I in order to counter revolutionary and liberal sensibilities which could have threatened the old social order (Fremont-Barnes, 2007:474).

It was convenient to use Spain as an exotic geographical space, because it strengthened the distinction between the “European, occidental, chivalric [and] Asiatic, exotic, excessive and feminized” (Colmeiro, 2002:131). The Imperialist assertion of Spain as an exotic and feminized space implies both a physical and an ideological conquest in which women are exploited because the marginalization of identities and the feminization of contexts are noticeable especially in the characterization of female characters. The feminization of space is realized because of the perception of sexual freedom that is manifested in the perceived immoral behaviour of the women within that space. The link between womanhood, sexuality and feminized spaces will be illustrated in the analyses of Mérimée’s novella in Chapter Five.

An image that inspired ambivalent emotions and a fear of the other in nineteenth-century Europe that also contributed towards Spain being perceived as an exotic context was the “imaginary construction of the Gypsy as icon of Spanishness” (Colmeiro, 2002:127). Few people were perceived to embody anti-industrialism, pre-modernism, unbridled passion and savagery as well as the Gypsies who resided in the urban areas of Spanish cities.

3.2.2 The Gypsies as the exotic Other

3.2.2.1 Origins

The history of the Gypsies’ origins has been widely debated and is characterized by controversy. One of the reasons for the confusion about the origins of Gypsies is that, in the early stages of their presence in Europe, the Gypsies preyed on the sympathy of society by fostering misperceptions and mystery associated with their ancestry in order to benefit financially. Mac Laughlin (1999:38) points out that “in late medieval Europe, Gypsies, presenting themselves as an exiled nobility from Egypt, or under the guise of penitent pilgrims, successfully solicited alms from Christian communities in the fifteenth century until later exposed as imposters and banished to the outskirts of European civilization”.

Another reason why the Gypsies' origins are contentious is that the history of their migrations was not recorded by those who were part of it. The origins of the Gypsies have traditionally been misrepresented by dominant groups in such a way as to promote racial essentialism and exclusivity (Mac Laughlin, 1999:53). The most prominent example of such bigotry occurred during the Second World War when an estimated 500,000 Gypsies were killed in Nazi-Europe (see Plate 7 on next page).⁷¹ Furthermore, the various groups of Gypsies were designated with multiple names. Different countries and languages have unique names for each group of Gypsies. For example, in Spain they are known as *Gitanos*, in the Netherlands as *Egyptiers* and *Gyptenaers* and in Greece as *Yifti* (Liégeois & Berret, 2005:25). To add to the confusion, the same term is sometimes used to describe different groups of Gypsies. There is a group of Gypsies who refer to themselves as *Rom* in order to separate themselves from other groups of Gypsies (Liégeois & Berret, 2005:16).

Liégeois and Berret (2005:18, 23, 34) divide the theories on the origins of the Gypsies into "legends[,] strange hypotheses and reasonable guesses [and] some certainties" all of which are in some way related. Several legends regarding the origins of the Gypsies allude to biblical events such as the legends of a Gypsy blacksmith who failed to use a nail destined for Christ's crucifixion. It was believed that his nail then became red-hot and that it followed all Gypsies as a curse. Yet another legend claims that Gypsy guards were punished for becoming intoxicated and failing to defend Christ. Yet another legend proposes that Gypsies were created before Adam and Eve and, because they were not implicated in the sins of Adam

⁷¹ Heinrich Himmler published a decree in 1938 entitled *Bekämpfung der Zigeunerplage* (Fraser, 1995:258). The title (translated into English as 'Combating the Gypsy Plague') is indicative of the disdain with which Gypsies were regarded. Müller-Hill (1998) provides a diary of events in which the Gypsies and the Jews were persecuted during World War II. A prominent German researcher on Gypsies, psychologist and psychiatrist, Dr Ritter (see Plate 8), began his research in 1936, funded by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Committee). On 3 May 1938 the DFG allocated 15 000 Royal Marks for Dr Ritter's research on individuals regarded as 'asocial bastards': Gypsies and Jews. In a progress report of 20 January 1940 he states that research has shown that the majority of native Gypsies are of mixed blood. Müller-Hill (1998:14) cites Ritter's proposal for a solution to the Gypsy problem: "The Gypsy question can only be considered solved when the main body of asocial and good-for-nothing Gypsy individuals of mixed blood is collected together in large *labour camps* and kept working there, and when the further *breeding of this population of mixed blood* is stopped once and for all." On 3 August 1944 the final 2897 out of the registered 20 943 Gypsy prisoners in Auschwitz died in the gas chambers.

and Eve, they are not subject to the punishment passed down from God to mankind. This belief is justified by another which claims that, when Pharaoh's armies were destroyed in the Red Sea during their pursuit of Moses and his people, a Gypsy man and a Gypsy woman escaped to become the Adam and Eve of the Gypsies (Liégeois & Berret, 2005:18–22).

Linguistic research conducted to determine the origins of the Gypsies dates as far back as the work of Borde in his *Fyrst Boke of Introduction of Knowledge* (1542) and the 71 Romani words with Latin equivalents by the Dutch scholar Bonaventura Vulcanius in 1597 (Fraser, 1995:10,186).⁷² The earliest claims that the Gypsies' Hindu origin is based on, amongst other things, language are challenged by Crawford (1865:25ff). He questions theories in this regard because of what he perceives to be a lack of scientific research. However, Liégeois and Berret (2005:34) believe that research based on language has provided some certainties about the Gypsies' origins. They claim that *romani čib*, like other languages spoken in the northern areas of India, has its origins in Sanskrit (Liégeois & Berret, 2005:36) and provides a lexical comparison which shows the origins of the Gypsy language and borrowings originating during the Gypsy migrations from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries (Liégeois & Berret, 2005:37). While linguistic research provides reasonable hypotheses for the Gypsies' possible Indian ancestry, it is not conclusive.

Fraser (1995:22) cautions against early results of research relating to physical anthropology, such as that presented by Pittard (1932); based on the measurements of skulls. More recent research conducted by Mastana and Papiha (1992:46) asserts that the gene frequency of Gypsies found in Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary and Yugoslavia shows similarities to populations from India, while European populations show a compatibility with English, Welsh and Swedish Gypsies.⁷³ However, they caution against absolute inferences, because of the variability of the number of

⁷² Fraser (1995) uses three texts, of which the research spans almost one hundred years, to illustrate the history of the Gypsy language: *Études sur les Tchinghianés* by Alexandre Paspatis (1870), *The Dialect of the Gypsies of Wales* by John Sampson (1926) and *The Language of the Swedish Coppersmith Gipsy Johan Dimitri Taikon* (1963).

⁷³ Recent anthropological and serological research that attempts to determine the Gypsies' origins includes that of Fraser (1995), Hancock (2010), Kenrick and Puxon (2009), Liégeois and Berret (2005) and Mastana and Papiha (1992).



Plate 7: First Gypsy internment camp at Marzahn in the Third Reich (n.d.)¹
Landesarchiv, Berlin



Plate 8 (1936): Dr Robert Ritter (far right) questioning a Gypsy woman in the presence of a German police officer²
German Federal Archive

¹ Retrieved on 21 May 2012 from <http://www.ushmm.org>

² Retrieved on 21 May 2012 from <http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org>

samples and the number of genetic markers that were used for research. They also bemoan the fact that very little has been done to gather genetic and biological data from the Romany Gypsies as the ideal research subjects of the population's genetic structures (Mastana & Papiha, 1992:50).

Initial arguments claimed that, during the fifth century, a homogenous group of people fled India and entered Anatolia and Europe together. However, scholars such as Hancock (2010:54), who has retracted his earlier support of this argument, provide interpretations that are in accordance with that of Crawford (1865:36), a nineteenth-century scholar, who believed that the Gypsies who entered Western Europe in the fifth century were already a hybrid group. Fraser (1995:35ff) draws a link between the Indian musicians called *Zott* who entered Persia before the tenth century and the *Jats* of India: "*Zotti* (plural *Zott*) and *Luli* or *Luri* are still Persian names for 'Gypsy' [...] *Zott* is an arabicized version of the Indian tribal name *Jat*." It is believed that a division occurred amongst the Gypsies while residing in Persia and that the European Romani – the *phen* – left Persia for Armenia. From there they moved into western Byzantine territory, the Balkans and the rest of Europe.

The presence of Gypsies in Eastern and central Europe can be traced as far back as the fourteenth century. Gypsies arrived in Paris in 1427. An account of the event in the *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris* already mentioned the unattractive appearance of the women – witches predicting fortunes and causing trouble with their 'lies'. It also tells of the Gypsies' ability to rob the innocent, probably by means of magic or evil powers (Liégeois & Berret, 2005:42). In France, the Gypsies were regarded as being descendants of Indian lower social classes and they were perceived to be

primitive, uneducated, sensual, degenerate, living on the fringes of society, and devoted to thieving and fortune telling [...] rebel outcasts and outsiders, travellers, musicians and dancers, whose free-spirited women possess both the power of seduction and the occult [...] backward, superstitious, ignorant, quaint (Colmeiro, 2002:133).

In Spain the presence of Gypsies was first documented in 1447 in Aragon and Catalonia. Similar to the first Gypsies in Andalusia (1462), the Gypsies of Aragon and Catalonia were afforded positions of power and treated with the utmost hospitality. However, it was not long before the Gypsies had overstayed their welcome and

relationships between them and their Spanish hosts had deteriorated. Those Gypsies who entered Spain from the Mediterranean did not have the same standing as those who had come from Egypt. The strict legislative provisions regarding the Gypsies, proposed by the Pragmatic Sanction of Medina del Campo in 1499, were extended by King Charles I. These laws restrained Gypsies from continuously migrating from one place to another. Punishment for not adhering included banishment, enslavement and forced labour on the galleys of warships (Fraser, 1995:99).

3.2.2.2 Gypsy identity

The Gypsies' race, religion and nationality were the basis for why, despite being a minority group, they were regarded as iconic of a Spanish identity. The term *exotic* as applied to Gypsies was not meant to be complimentary, but rather derogatory. Mayall (1988:6) lists three markers according to which Gypsy identity is perceived: "a romantic race, a degenerate race and a group of outcast travellers". They were non-white, non-Christian and non-European and followed a nomadic lifestyle. Therefore, they were regarded as the internal ethnic Other.

Besides this racial bigotry, the difference in lifestyles of the bourgeois societies of the imperialist and industrialized countries and the Gypsies led to a divide between these societies. The Gypsies were separated culturally and economically from the settled and sedentary bourgeois societies because they were tinkers who lived within a close-knit family structure and earned their keep by, amongst other things, scissor-grinding, skewer-cutting, peg-making, broom-making, providing entertainment at country fairs and working as seasonal agricultural labourers on farms (Mayall, 1988:58). The ways in which the Gypsies thus obtained and earned their living necessitated a migrant existence.

This nomadic lifestyle went against the grain of dominant ideologies, alienating Gypsies from European mainstream society (Mayall, 1988:16). While there were other minority groups, such as the Jews, who were also separated from mainstream society based on racial and cultural factors, Gypsies – mainly because of their nomadic existence – were regarded as parasites that fed unscrupulously off their hosts. Anti-Gypsy laws, established at the end of the fifteenth century, required

Gypsies to acquire a trade within 60 days of residence and prohibited them from travelling in groups and wearing their traditional clothes. There were mainly two kinds of Gypsy travellers: those who travelled in a group as an extended family, earning their keep by offering their services and those who travelled alone and earned their wages by being employed to perform specific tasks (Mayall, 1988:14).

Besides their nomadic lifestyle, Gypsies were also perceived to be religiously ignorant and indifferent. Mayhew (1968:2) claims that a nomad can be identified by, amongst other things, “his vague sense of religion”. Missionaries, volunteers and the state accepted the supervision of – and responsibility for the moral and religious good of the Gypsies (Mayall, 1988:1). Feedback gained from these philanthropists was often biased and tainted by their own perceptions of propriety. In Spain, the Gypsies’ history is closely linked to the history of religion. The Gypsies did not conform to any notion of evangelical Christianity and were, therefore, regarded as heathens who were perfect examples of immorality, indolence and superstition.

Besides religious indifference, Mayhew (1968:2) adds “the absence of chastity among his women and his disregard of female honour” as two more characteristics by which a Gypsy could be identified. The emergence of myths, clichés and stereotypical⁷⁴ identities were the result of Gypsies being regarded as a racially and religiously separate minority group. While these perceptions pertained to the collective and individual identities of the Gypsies, gender preconceptions contributed to further marginalize the Gypsy woman. One stereotype that permeates perceptions of Gypsy women is that of a fortune-teller. Gypsy women who practised this ‘art’ contributed to the romanticized and exotic perceptions of their magic abilities by dressing and looking the part. She could either be the exotic beauty or the wrinkled hag with large jewellery, colourful clothes, red lips and eyes lined with black coal.

⁷⁴ The stereotypical depiction of Gypsy identity serves as the archetype upon which further perceptions have been built.

3.2.2.3 *Spain and Gypsies in art*

The feminization of the inferior Other's space and culture has been embedded in the visual arts, language and imagery used in literature, historical writings and in music. During the nineteenth century, many artists used Spain and the Gypsies as the setting and characters in their work. However, genres that emerged from creative works depicting these exoticized contexts and identities often contributed to false perceptions that were unkind, mocking, unfair and generalized (Colmeiro, 2002:129). Depending on the genre, characters were either depicted as mysteriously eccentric or dangerously malicious. These depictions were renditions presented by artists whose perceptions were informed by their Western world view. Colmeiro (2002:129) points out that the artist's involvement with the exotic often resulted in "superimposing European values over these other cultures, creating a distorted picture that conformed more with the expectations and fears of Europeans than with reality."

Western perceptions of the Gypsies' lifestyle were depicted in paintings by artists such as Albert Anker (1831–1910), Édouard Manet (1832–1883), Henri Rousseau (1844–1910) and Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). Themes included the Gypsies' propensity to travel from one place to another, their cultural practices and female exoticism and sexuality.

In Manet's oil painting titled *Gypsy with a cigarette* (Plate 9) the intense colours and the woman's dark complexion articulate a sense of vibrant unpretentiousness. As mentioned earlier, a woman smoking is simultaneously sensual and defiant. The horses are symbolic of the Gypsy woman's nomadic lifestyle and the manner in which she rests her body against the black horse implies a sense of familiar ease brought about by shared experiences and spaces.

Anker's painting (Plate 10) depicts the stereotypical image of a dark-skinned, wrinkly old woman using cards to predict two young girls' fortune. The bright red hue of her head scarf contrasts with the subdued colours of the girls' clothes. The lighting of the painting places the Gypsy woman in the dark, while the two girls are in the light.

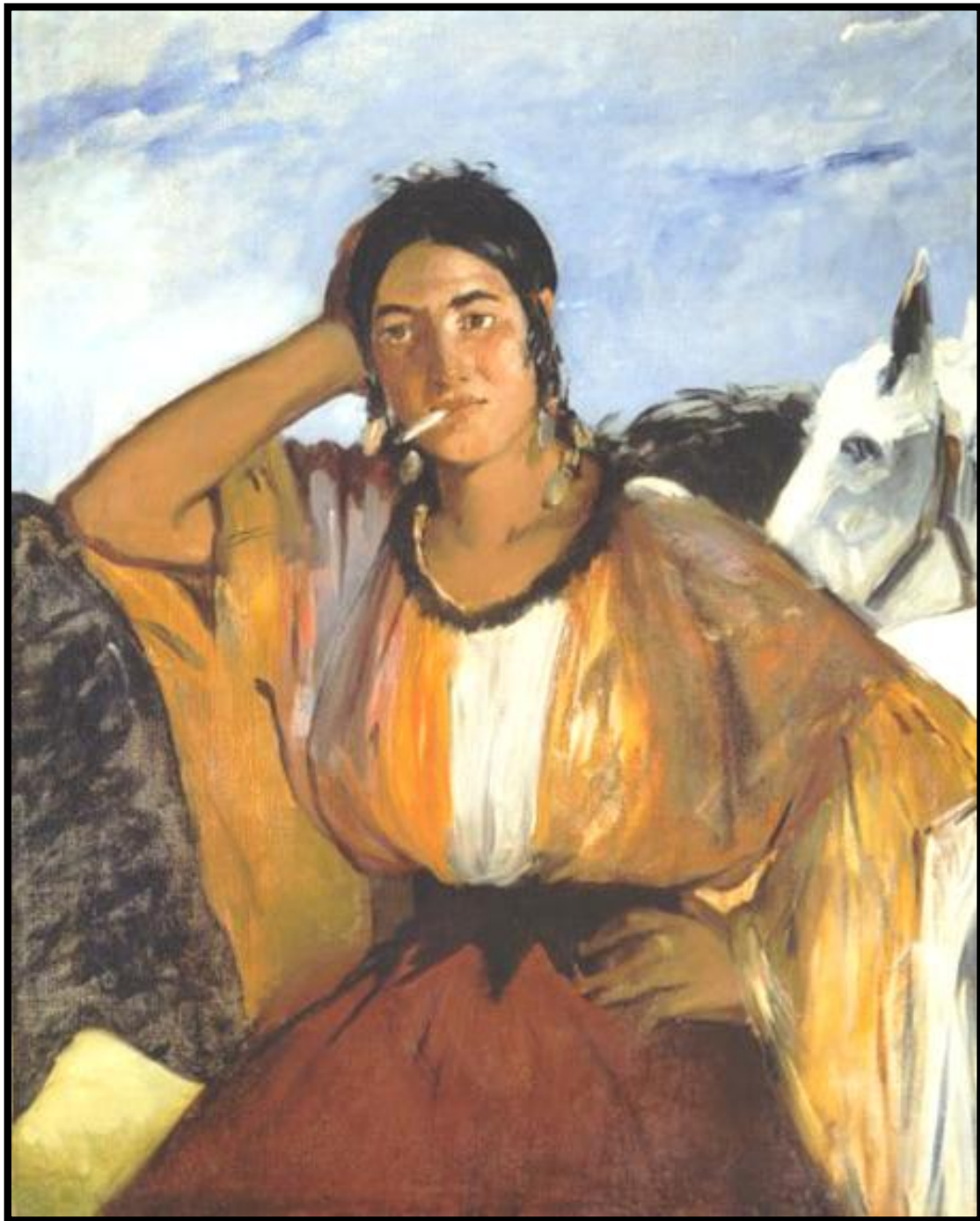


Plate 9: *Gypsy with a cigarette* by Édouard Manet¹
Oil on canvas (1862)
Princeton Art Museum

¹ Retrieved from <http://impressionistsgallery.co.uk> and accessed on 15 May 2012.



Plate10: *Die Kartenlegerin* by Albert Anker²
Oil on canvas (1880)
Swiss Institute for Art Research, Zürich

² Retrieved from <http://www.marygreer.wordpress.com> and accessed on 15 May 2012.

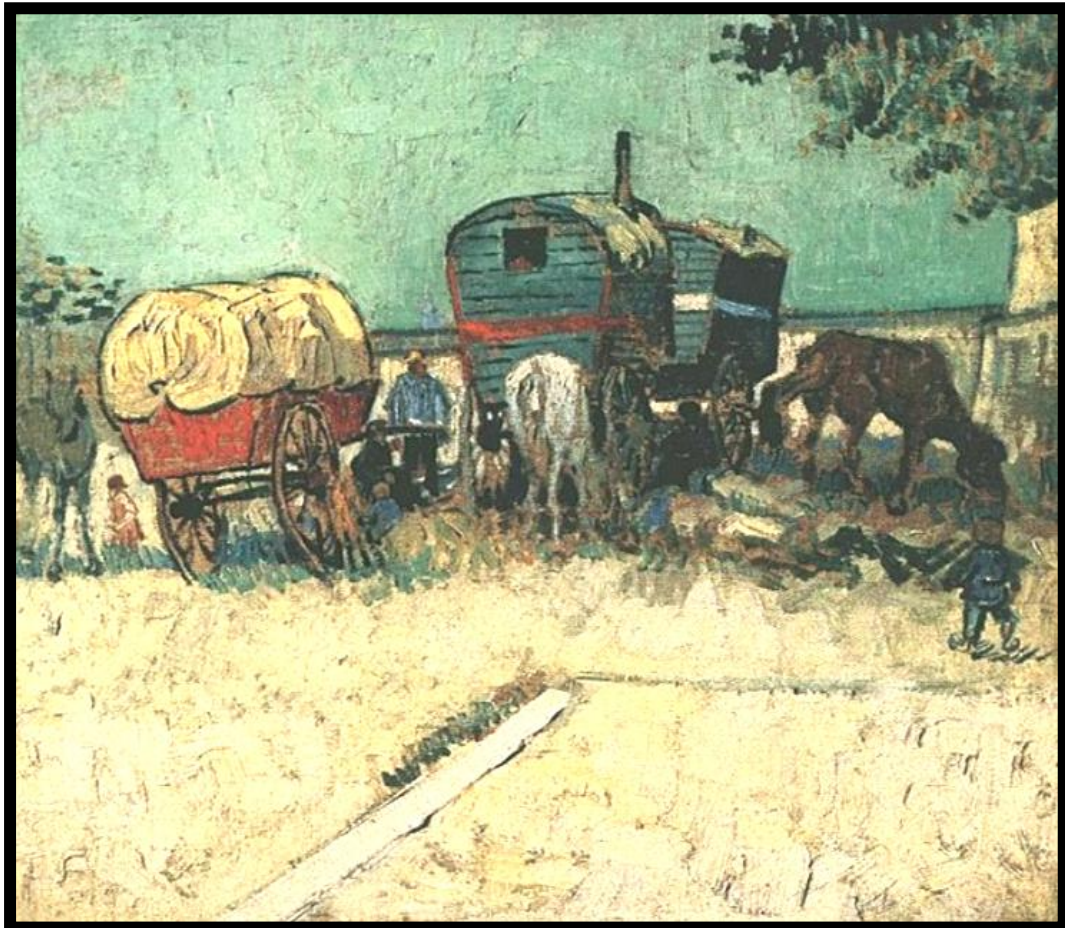


Plate 11: *Les roulettes, campement de bohémiens* by Vincent van Gogh³
Oil on canvas (1888)

³ Retrieved from <http://www.vangoghgallery.com> and accessed on 15 May 2012.



Plate 12: *La Bohémienne endormie* by Henri Rousseau⁴
Oil on canvas (1897)
Museum of Modern Art in New York City

⁴ Retrieved from <http://artblogbybob.blogspot.com> and accessed on 15 May 2012.

Van Gogh's *Les roulettes, campement de bohémiens* (Plate 11) depicts the nomadic and bucolic lifestyle of the Gypsies. The balance in the painting is interestingly created by placing the Gypsy camp in the upper half of the canvas. The bright colours of the caravans and the sky are in stark contrast with the bleakness of the bottom half of the canvas. This bleakness creates a feeling of being removed – indicating an area of separation.

Rousseau's *La Bohémienne endormie* (Plate 12) echoes the same intense colours as Manet's *Gypsy with a cigarette*. Just like Manet's painting, it also features a female figure and an animal. However, Rousseau's female figure does not exude sensuality and defiance. Her face is calm as she sleeps under the full moon. She is modestly dressed in a djellaba, a garment worn by both men and women in the Maghreb region (countries in the extreme north-west region of Africa, such as Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia). This garment and the woman's dark complexion emphasize her non-Western origins. The only possessions she has with her are a cane, a water jar and a lute. The landscape, the full moon, the shaped curves of both the lute and the jar all render this an obviously feminized space. The lion, its tail stiff and recognizably phallic, is painted one-dimensionally and is shown as intruding into this space.

Literary works depicting the exotic Other are often characterised by racial, social and gender essentialism. The perceived characteristics of Spain and Gypsies as the exotic Other are represented in literary works such as *Tsygany* (1824) by Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837), *Un Voyage en Espagne* (1843) by Théophile Gautier (1811–1872), *Carmen* (1845) by Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870), *The Count of Monte Christo* (1846) and *De Paris à Cadix* (1847) by Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870), and *The Virgin and the Gypsy* (1926) by D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930). A close reading of Mérimée's novella in Chapter Five of this thesis will show how it exoticizes both Spain and Gypsy identity.

As in many other instances where a literary text inspired an opera, Mérimée's novella *Carmen* was used as source for the libretto of Bizet's eponymous opera. Bizet is not the only composer to use Spain as geographical context of exoticism. Smith (2005:144) points out that Spain surpasses any other country as the choice for

setting for operas. He attributes librettists' and composers' interest in Spain as an ideal setting for operas to the fact that it was regarded as

an exotic land whose history, scenery, and archaic way of life were ready-made for the exaggerations and unrealities of opera. It abounded in crags, castles, bandits, smugglers, friars, sinister priests, corrupt lawyers, honour-crazed aristos, vendettas, bullfights, superstitions, and violently sexy dance rhythms (Smith, 2005:144).

Works by other French composers who were influenced by Spain and the Gypsies include *Vendôme en Espagne* (1823) by Daniel Auber (1782–1871) and Ferdinand Hérold (1791–1833), *España* (1883) by Emanuel Chabrier (1841–1894), *Le Cid* (1885), *La Navarraise* (1894) and *Cherubin* (1905) by Jules Massenet (1842–1912), to name only a few. However, the use of Spain as geographical context of exoticism is not restricted to French composers. Several of Giuseppe Verdi's (1813–1901) operas are set in Spain, amongst them *Ernani* (1844), *Il trovatore* (1853), *La forza del destino* (1862) and *Don Carlo* (1867). In *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782) by W.A. Mozart (1756–1791), Constanze is a Spanish noble lady and Belmonte is a Spanish prince. Operas which feature Gypsy characters include *The Bohemian Girl* (1843) by Michael Balfe (1808–1870) and *Mirette* (1894) by André Messager (1853–1929). *Der Zigeunerbaron* (1885), an operetta by Johann Strauss (1825–1899), is set in Hungary and Vienna and tells the story of the Gypsy Baron, Sandor Barinkay. The issue of exoticism in nineteenth-century opera will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

3.3 Musical exoticism

3.3.1 Musical exoticism: conceptualization

The recurrence and fixation of exoticism in the practice of Western art music characterized the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Locke, 2009:2). Several factors contributed to the expansion of musical exoticism during the nineteenth century, including the increasing use of musical elements and materials that provided a sense of local colour in compositions and the increase in music publications (especially the publication of folksongs). Furthermore, increased encounters with the Other as a result of globalization, migration and the diaspora

(Locke, 2009:131–132) led to a need to depict the Other through music that was informed by elements and material of the exotic Other's music.

In one of his earlier definitions of exoticism, Locke (2000:266) defines it as

the process of evoking in or through music a place, people, or social milieu that is not entirely imaginary, and that differs profoundly from the 'home' country or culture in attitudes, customs, and morals. More precisely, it is the process of evoking a place (etc.) that is *perceived* as different from home by the people making and receiving the exoticist cultural product.

The definition above invokes various participants in the images of exotic places and people through music. We are reminded of the relationship between composer, performer and audience and the fact that the derivation of meaning is informed by, amongst other things, the audience's beliefs and experiences (see Chapter Two). The audience's perception of exotic elements in music is based on their assumptions about the exotic Other and the associated music. Locke (2009:11) uses a term from cultural theory to describe these presuppositions, namely *technologies of listening* in order to emphasize that the need is more to consider what meaning the audience derives from the music than to determine intent (Locke, 2000:266).

Locke (2000:266) acknowledges that his earlier attempt to define musical exoticism is unsatisfactory, because it minimizes music's interaction with non-musical elements as well as stylistic evocations. In a later publication Locke (2009:1) gives a more concise version of the earlier definition and describes exoticism in music as "a quality that links a work to some especially fascinating, attractive, or fearsome place: to an Elsewhere and, usually, to its inhabitants and their supposed inclinations and ways".

Taylor (2007:2) similarly defines exoticism in music as the "manifestations of an awareness of racial, ethnic, and cultural Others captured in sound" and believes that a study of exoticism in music entails more than just considering the style and form of a composition. The study of musical exoticism also concerns the temporal and spatial context in which the composition originated. The spatio-temporal matrix is in accordance with the distinction between Locke's (2009:2, 3) *Exotic Style Only Paradigm* of musical exoticism and *All the Music in Full Context Paradigm* (FCP) in

the study of musical exoticism because it takes into account both musical and social structures.

The search for exotic material by composers has been either lauded or dismissed by scholars (Bellman, 1998; Huggan, 2006; Locke, 2000 & 2009; Taylor, 2007). While some scholars are positive about musical exoticism and find it exciting and enriching, others are divided about its value and credibility. Composers of exotic works are at times accused of using stylistic textual and musical stereotypes with the result that these works often are dismissed unfairly as being inappropriate and of lesser value. Another objection relates to the possible promotion of political ideologies. Audiences and scholars who perceive any form of marginalization of the Other in a creative work as a result of exoticism, will scorn its existence. Others who regard exotic works (somewhat naively) as a means of virtual escape to far-away exotic times and places, will welcome exoticism as a form of enlightenment and endorsement of contextual 'authenticity'. Despite all objections, exotic musical language is always indicative of world views and ideological paradigms. The discussion in Chapter Seven of this thesis will draw conclusions based on the analyses in Chapter Six and will show how Bizet's exotic music contributes to perceptions of the African woman as the exotic Other in *U-Carmen*.

It is ideal to use FCP as an approach to analyse musico-dramatic⁷⁵ works (such as operas and films) because it takes into account that they can depict exotic temporal and spatial contexts as well as collective and individual identities using musical and non-musical devices⁷⁶ (Locke, 2009:61). FCP also acknowledges the possibility that

⁷⁵ Locke (2009:82) uses this term when referring to musical genres which include dramatic action as one of its conventions. Operas, musicals and even oratorios are examples of musico-dramatic genres.

⁷⁶ The debate about how instrumental music engages (and whether it can articulate) non-musical aspects is ongoing. This thesis does not aim to enter this debate but rather to focus purely on opera as a musical genre that includes non-musical elements such as setting, costumes and drama.

the audience's presupposed repertoire⁷⁷ contributes to the perceptions of exotic Otherness.

Another aspect that FCP allows the researcher to take into account is the emotional tone of the work, which refers to the emotions evoked by the unique use of musical and non-musical devices in order to create a sense of exotic Otherness. The analyses of the primary texts in this research project will show how FCP enables the researcher to take into account the chronology and style, genre, temporal and spatial contexts of the identity depicted as well as that of the performer (Locke, 2009:66).

Besides his distinction between the two paradigms in musical exoticism, Locke (2009:6) proposes a further three new categories of musical exoticism that make it possible to examine exoticism in music composed within an increasingly global context: overt exoticism, submerged exoticism and trans-cultural composing. The degree to which these categories pertain to different texts and contexts will be discussed in the chapters relating to the primary texts.

Locke (2000:265, 267) identifies the Self/Other binarism as the one most strongly subjected to exoticism and points out that music can also evoke alterity because of its alliance with verbal and visual elements. He also points out that there are works that manage to "unquestionably evoke a place or people despite making little or no use of stylistic markers of 'otherness'" (Locke, 2000:266).

It was mentioned in Chapter Two that subtexts are embedded in binarisms that result in dichotomies such as Self/Other and male/female. These binarisms are the cornerstone of musical exoticism. They involve the use of musical and non-musical devices⁷⁸ to create and justify real and fictitious perceptions of the identity of the Self and the Other within specific temporal and spatial contexts: then/now and nearness/distance (Locke, 2009:66–71). Musical depictions of the exotic Other

⁷⁷ The term *presupposed repertoire* refers to the audiences' contexts, knowledge of music in general, perceptions of the Other's ideology and knowledge (perceived or factual) of the Other's music.

⁷⁸ Non-musical devices contributing to the exotic character of, for example, an opera, include the title, the narrative progression (the order in which events and experiences are narrated), the characterization, choreography, sets and costumes.

affected both the Self (Western audiences) and the Other. Taruskin (2010:406) asserts that “music can also serve (even simultaneously) as a dehumanizing influence, dehumanizing both the exotic victim and the momentarily deprived witnesses in the theatre – yes us”.

3.3.2 Musical exoticism: vernacularism and sources

In order to reflect the images of the Other on stage and in music, composers had to admit that traditional methods of composition were not adequate and that “they had to adopt a fresh sensibility and create an exotic musical language” (Lacombe, 2001:197) – a musical vernacular used to portray exoticism.

Musical vernacular and dialects in compositions used during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are well documented by authors such as Bellman (1998) and Locke (2009). The focus was placed on the manner in which musical exoticism contributed to perceptions of the non-Western Other during the nineteenth century. While musical exoticism’s contribution to perceptions of Carmen’s character will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7, a discussion of another composer’s use of musical exoticism will serve as a gateway for the discussions in later chapters.

Félicien David (1810–1876) is one of the nineteenth-century composers whose work reflects the above-mentioned musical vernacular and dialects. Lacombe (2001:198) describes David as an artist with considerable significance. Following extensive travelling and research, David composed his symphonic ode *Le Désert*.⁷⁹ The first performance in 1844 was attended by a group of Arab guests who responded most favourably to the composer’s version of the muezzin’s chant (sung by a tenor) – the chant with which Muslims are called to prayer: *El Salamalek, aleikoum el Salam* (Gradenwitz, 1976:472). David’s combination of the spoken word (poetry) with choir, soloist and symphony orchestra resulted in the emergence of the new genre: the

⁷⁹ A recording of this work, distributed by the Capriccio label, is available at www.classicsonline.com. It features Lazzaretti Bruno (tenor), the St. Hedwig's Cathedral Choir and the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Guido Maria. The narrator is Pascaline Olivier.

symphonic ode (Lacombe, 2001:198). He achieved the unique character required by this combination by employing traditional European compositional techniques to introduce bold rhythmic forms, sonorous and mixed timbres and idiomatic elements of Arabian melodies in his work (Scudo, 1863:36).

Le Désert consists of three parts of which the first two each consist of six pieces and the third part has five pieces. All the titles of the pieces are reminiscent of the exotic context in which they are set. Two examples are numbers two and three of Part I: the choral piece, *Allah, Allah! à toi je rends hommage* (Song of the Desert – Glorification of Allah) and the poem *Quel est ce point dans l'espace* (Appearance of the Caravan).

Le Désert proves that, by employing a repertoire of musical devices such as specific rhythmic patterns, harmonic structure and progressions, tonality and tonal colour, it is possible to articulate specific exotic meaning through the music. Sources from which these musical elements were borrowed included folk music and dances. Allusion to and borrowing of musical elements from precursory works is a phenomenon also found in Bizet's *Carmen* and *U-Carmen*. These instances of intertextuality will be discussed in the chapters that are concerned with the analyses of these two texts.

The discussion on musical intertextuality already mentioned composers of Western art music using elements of folk music in their compositions. Exoticism and folklorism are closely linked, because the musical elements, instrumentation, structures and melodies in folk music contribute towards a sense of local colour. Therefore, the use of folk music is very effective in creating a sense of the exotic. Furthermore, Dahlhaus (1991:305) asserts that exoticism and folklorism both “flourish on an aesthetic illusion that arises when the defining features of music, painting, and literature intermingle”. He also lists technical devices used by both exoticism and folklorism: “pentatonicism, the Dorian sixth and Myxolydian seventh, the raised second and augmented fourth, nonfunctional chromatic coloration, and finally bass drones, ostinatos, and pedal points as central axes” (Dahlhaus, 1991:306). The stereotypical devices employed by exoticism and folklorism alike allowed composers to depict both national and exotic contexts. It was, for example, quite possible for the

characteristics of a favoured space and its inhabitants, such as Spain, to be embedded in the vernacularism of exotic music.

Probably the most popular genre used to create a feeling of exoticism is the folk song. The use of Spanish songs serves as an example. Locke (2009:133 & 134) points out that

Spanish songs [...] were much performed in Paris. Their recurring images of Spanish bandits, coquettish Spanish females, and the like – reinforced by distinctive syncopations, melismas, and modal features derived from Spanish folk music – helped engrave deeper in the French mind many already prevailing stereotypes of life on the Iberian Peninsula.

The use of existing folk songs was encouraged even well into the twentieth century. People were advised to “[l]isten closely to folk songs; they are an inexhaustible mine of the most beautiful melodies and will give you a glimpse into the character of different nations” (Schumann, 1946:132).

Some of the forms that were successfully employed to evoke perceptions of exotic Otherness involved dances and dance forms – also in *Carmen* and *U-Carmen*. Whaples (1998:15) reminds us that, during the seventeenth century, exotic dances were categorized as either belonging to the non-Western Other or the Self, but performed by characters representing the Other.

Lacombe and Glidden (1999:150) claim that “dance is a constant in any exotic plot, and is at the heart of operatic exoticism”. Even if dances were not performed as choreographed numbers, their form and style were embedded in the vocal and orchestral numbers of the opera. The bold rhythmic forms of dances were derived from original Spanish dances and often were adapted to suit traditional European conventions (Lacombe, 2001:201).

In order to illustrate how dances could be used to depict the exotic Other, and because some numbers in Bizet’s *Carmen* features characteristics of dance forms, the section that follows will consider the nature of one most popular dances in the Spanish dance repertoire: the flamenco. The brief discussion of the music and the

performance of the flamenco should be regarded as further illustration of how musical devices may be used to articulate meaning in various musical forms.

Martínez (2003:6) roots the flamenco firmly in *cantes*⁸⁰ (songs) such as *soleares*, *tarantos*, *seguirilla*, *alegrías*, *bulerías* and *tientos*. The dances are connected to these songs and have corresponding rhythmic patterns, harmonic structures, tonalities and colour. Martínez (2003:6) contends that, in order to define a work as flamenco, three elements should be present: *compás* (rhythmic structure),⁸¹ mode (musical tonality) and *flamencura* (performance).

One of the most common rhythmic cycles of these dances contains twelve beats in a *compás*. It is of the utmost importance to place the accents on the correct beat (it may be the third, sixth, eighth, tenth and twelfth)⁸² and to do it in such a manner that it ties in exactly with the emotional intention of the music and the dance (Martínez, 2003:7). The performer must have a sense of *compás* and *palos* (measure and place) and these can differ from one context to another.

Martínez (2003:9) maintains that “flamenco is not governed by theory, but by the mood of the moment”. This statement should be kept in mind when considering tonality in flamenco. The tonal structure of flamenco music is dialectic and includes major and minor keys, as well as Dorian, Phrygian and Lydian modes.⁸³ While the Phrygian mode, associated with the Phrygians from the country now known as Turkey, is the more prominent mode used in flamenco music, it keeps a distinct character because it deviates marginally from the Greek Phrygian mode (Martínez,

⁸⁰ Refer to Martínez (2003:6ff) for all the Spanish terms used in this section about flamenco music and dances.

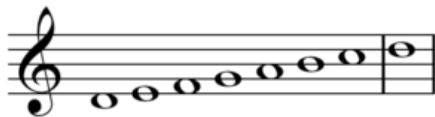
⁸¹ Martínez (2003:7) defines a *compás* as “a rhythmic cycle, a recurring pattern, with accents in certain places.”

⁸² This pattern corresponds to the African ‘standard pattern’.

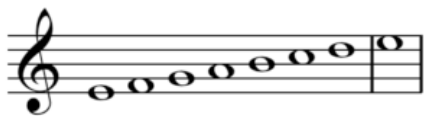
⁸³ In order to achieve a tonal structure that reflected exotic identities, composers also employed elements such as Arabian modes and Franco-Italianate features. Farmer (1965:99ff) provides a brief overview of the old Arabian melodic modes from early publications (d.c.765). He describes the development of the Arabian mode with 17 intervals within the octave to the Pythagorean system of 12 semitones which forms the basis for the Oriental system as it is known (Farmer, 1965:102). The Franco-Italianate style constitutes the dialectic between the crisp, clear and vigorous sound of Italian music (especially as found in Italian Baroque music) and the sensual, deeply harmonious and often paradoxical sound of French music (Marvin, 2007).

2003:8). The ancient Greek Phrygian mode has semitones between the second–third and fifth–sixth degrees, while the semitones in the Phrygian mode used since the eighteenth century are found between the first–second and fifth–sixth degrees (see Music examples 2 and 3 below).

Music example 1: Ancient Greek Phrygian Mode



Music example 2: Ancient Greek Phrygian Mode used since the 18th century



Another aspect that contributes considerably to the tonality and tonal colour of flamenco music is the development of the Spanish guitar. The distinctive character of keys and modes is linked to the intricate tuning of the guitar. Furthermore, the possibility to place the fingers of the left hand in unusual positions within the fret (*per medio*) allows for unique combinations and additions of notes which do not actually belong to the traditional harmonic structure. Martínez (2003:9) provides an example of this and explains that an F[#] chord in flamenco music has an additional note that results in it actually being a combination of F[#]7, B9 and B11.

It was mentioned earlier that the rhythmic patterns, harmonic structures, tonalities and colour of flamenco music correspond with the songs in which they are rooted. The colour of the dances is closely linked to the *flamencura*. Not only the *bailaor/bailaora* (male/female dancer), but also the *cantaor/cantaora* (male/female singer) and the *guitarista* (guitarist) contribute towards and determine the unique character of flamenco. The artistry of the performers is embedded in their ability to embody the rhythmic structure with a flexibility that links intimately with the contexts and meaning of the music.

The discussion above serves to illustrate how rhythmical structures, tonality and tonal colour may be used to articulate meaning in musical genres. The melodic

structure of music may also be used in a similar fashion. The analysis of Bizet's "Habañera" in a later chapter will show how the melodic inflections of this aria, characterized by unique rhythmic patterns and chromatic movement, contribute to the depiction of Carmen's otherness.

Lacombe (2001:200) argues that melodic inflection was the musical device essentially used to create local colour. He describes an exotic melody as containing intervals of augmented seconds, fragmented sequences and ornamental motifs. Lacombe (2001:201) also lists "lowered leading tones, mingled major and minor modes, pedals, and open fifths" as aspects that contribute towards a unique musical language.

The word 'chromatic' is derived from the Greek word *chroma*, which means colour (Taruskin, 2010:203), and the use of chromatic harmony and chromatic melodic lines implies a certain colour characteristic in music perceived to be exotic. Ashcroft *et al.* (2000:37) unintentionally provide substantial proof of the link between the use of chromatic elements in music and the depiction of the female, non-Western Other. They define the term chromatism as the "essentialist distinction between people on the basis of colour" (Ashcroft *et al.*, 2000:37). However, they take the implication of chromatism even further by linking it to *genitalism*, a term that refers to the male/female dichotomy. Therefore, chromaticism is linked not only to racial bias, but also to gender discrimination. A discussion of chromaticism in Bizet's music for Carmen's character will show how this musical device is employed to articulate her identity as the exotic Other.

The tone colour (timbre) of the music is also achieved through the use of specific instruments. Elements from Turkish folk music, such as the use of percussion instruments, were some of the first to be noticed in Western music. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe's fascination with Turkish music as that of the exotic Other is well documented (Bellman, 1998; Bowles, 2006; Head, 2000; Taylor, 2007). Whaples (1998:18) points out that instruments that would have been regarded as traditionally suitable for the 'Turkish' style of music would have included flutes and

kettle drums as used during dervish ceremonies.⁸⁴ Obelkevich (1977:370) refers to Donado who lists instruments used in the private courts of Turkish noblemen.

Besides string instruments, there were also small and large timpani, curved metal trumpets, pifferi,⁸⁵ flutes, tambourines and other percussion instruments (cymbals and triangles), as well as instruments made of metal. The use of these instruments contributed to the perception of exotic Otherness. In fact, Lacombe (2001:202) attributes the expansion of the orchestra in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as well as the new combinations of instruments, to exoticism. Double reed woodwinds, such as the oboe, were regarded as being most effective in contributing towards the perception of exotic Otherness. Other instruments, such as the harp and piccolo, and percussion instruments such as the tambourine and triangle equally contributed to creating local colour. *Carmen's* use of castanets – idiomatically linked to Spanish music – contribute to perceptions of local colour.

3.4 Exoticism in nineteenth-century opera

Opera's ability to successfully articulate the contexts and identities of the Other by means of the integration of Western art music and the music of the Other (Taylor, 2007:49), as well as its musical and non-musical conventions will be discussed in Chapter Four. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many operas were characterized by exotic themes. Lacombe (2001:179) identifies exoticism as one of the most dominant elements of French opera. He marks works such as Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles* (1863) and *Djamileh* (1872) as those with which

exoticism was set loose in every theater and in every genre – and not just with lone anecdotes, mere contrasts between European and natives, or a reflection of the author's own society. Operatic exoticism laid the foundations of a complete imaginary world, sometimes derived from history, and provided genuine subjects rather than a mere pretext (Lacombe, 2001:190).

⁸⁴ A dervish is a member of a Muslim trance dance group. During dervish ceremonies, dancing and chanting form part of the act of worship.

⁸⁵ A piffero is a double-reed instrument that belongs to the oboe family.

The imaginary worlds created by operatic exoticism did not necessarily adhere to the reality of the sources that inspired them. Opera is exceptionally suited to stereotypical depictions of the exotic Other. Locke (2009:82, 83) explains that the traits of such stereotypical characters

are conveyed through prose summary, set design, costuming, and stage movement [...] artfulness in the libretto – including shifts of tone and topic, a character’s declarations and poetic flights, and his/her loaded words and no less powerful silences – but also, of course, artfulness in the music – including vocal lines and orchestral passages that may be resplendent or touching, mystery-laden or spine-chilling – all infected by the technical command and fresh creative nuances of the particular production and performers.

Lacombe (2001:187) confirms Locke’s categorization by proclaiming that areas that need to receive special attention when addressing an exotic subject include “scenic elements such as sets, costumes, and ballet; the libretto; and the music.” Exoticism in the music of operas can be directly linked to the principles discussed in the previous section about musical exoticism. However, in nineteenth-century operas the non-musical elements contributed to a greater extent in establishing a sense of exoticism and caused the visual aspects of opera to become a form of picturesque and magical entertainment.

Designs for sets, costumes and make-up drew on the Other’s customs and contexts and sought to imitate the Other’s physical appearance and natural surroundings, as well as their architecture and material culture. Colourful costumes (often revealing more of the body than Westerners were accustomed to seeing) were combined with dramatic make-up and accessories that were perceived to be indicative of the Other’s customs. Lacombe (2001:189) lists “[p]agados, palanquins, mosques, minarets, huts [and] palm trees” as some of the specifications the librettists would provide in their descriptions of sets.

In earlier operas the exotic did not necessarily permeate a libretto from beginning to end. In *Così fan tutte* by Mozart, for example, interest in the exotic and Oriental Other is reflected in the infatuation of Fiordiligi and Dorabella with two suitors who Despina suspects might be either Wallachians or Turks (Guglielmo and Ferrando in disguise). However, these characters only enter the narrative later in the opera. The

two men's costumes and actions serve to deceive the two ladies and to prove exactly how fickle they are. Not only do they yield to the advances of any man who pays them heed, they would even submit to the exotic Other's seduction.

Furthermore, there were other librettos that employed exoticism in a manner that resulted in the exotic subject serving as entertainment, thereby highlighting differences instead of similarities (Lacombe, 2001:189). The representation of the Oriental Other in *Così fan tutte*, for example, is a typical example of how exoticism was used as a comic device in opera. Comedy was often achieved by parodying, stereotyping and accentuating the differences between the Western Self and the exotic non-Western Other.

The libretti of the *opéra-comique*⁸⁶ further contributed to perceptions of the exotic Other, especially those that included clear indications of what the costume and set designers should create in order to “delimit the visual horizons of the exotic space” (Lacombe & Glidden, 1999:137). This genre included elements such as romanticism, uncompromising morality, enlightened characters and endings in which all lived happily ever after (McClary, 1992:45).

While eighteenth-century exoticism in some operas such as *Les Indes galantes* (1735) by Rameau (1683–1763) and *Idomeneo* (1781) by Mozart (1756–1791) was limited to parodic allusions to the Other's music and lifestyle in opera buffa, opera seria was significantly influenced by exoticism in the nineteenth century. The reasons for exoticism featuring in opera seria include colonialism as national

⁸⁶ Opéra-comique is generally regarded as a French genre. Lacombe (2001:229) provides a translation of Raoul Duhamel's (1932:212) definition of opera-comique.

It is basically a comedy or tragic-comedy with a happy ending in which singing alternates with spoken dialogue and is of more or less the same importance; in which the numbers – composed of short phrases of verse that are easy to understand and that are designed for singing – are in tradition[al] forms: *arias, chansons, couplets, romances, cavatines*, duets, trios, quartets, quintets, ensembles and choruses; in which singing and melody have pride of place; in which melody is always in the form of complete phrases and is ‘a clearly shaped progression of sounds’ that always has a clear form, a simple and straightforward rhythm, lucid tonality without elaborate chromaticism and with modulations that are few and simple; and in which the harmony is always simple and natural, the counterpoint restrained and subdued and the instrumentation always airy, so that the orchestra will support the voice while never obscuring it.

ideology and the change in composition techniques from functional to coloristic harmony (Dahlhaus, 1991:304). Parakilas (1992:201) includes the “political destinies of peoples, the nature of leadership when leaders are representative of their people, and the power struggles of social groups that divide naturally against each other” as examples of ideological and political themes found in nineteenth-century operas. Destinies, leadership and power struggles can be acknowledged or negated, promoted or subverted, criticized or substantiated in opera. Even though contemporary audiences are far removed from the spatial and temporal context of nineteenth-century opera, the themes mentioned above are still relevant in contemporary society, which is why audiences can still relate to them.

In time the musical scores of operas by composers such as Bizet began to express the exotic Other by alluding to musical elements of other peoples and places. The devices used to evoke perceptions of the exotic Other are the same as those discussed in Chapter Three. Exotic melodies were characterized by ornamentation, sequential and chromatic patterns and repetition. Tonality, instrumentation and form served to add exotic colour. Rhythmic structures were derived from dances that were perceived to be suitably savage, primitive or sensual.

As in other art forms, the female Other was a popular object for exoticism in operas of the nineteenth century. Western art music adopted the biased imaginations of the Other and utilised gender long before ethnicity in order to create the Self/Other binarism (Austern, 1998:26). Austern (1998:27) also claims that the relationship between exoticism and gender can be traced back to the Renaissance when the emergence of tonality was conducive to Western perceptions and articulations of differences which led to binarisms of which the Self/Other is an example.

Lacombe and Glidden (1999:157) claim that the most important figure, around which the formulaic writing of exoticism is articulated, is the exotic female. While the topoi of sexuality and eroticism recur in various art forms during the nineteenth century, the genre of opera provides excellent examples of the exotic female Other. Examples include Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata* (1853), Sélika in Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* (1865), Aida (as well as Amneris) in Verdi's *Aida* (1871) and Delilah in

Saint-Saëns's opera *Samson et Dalila* (1877 in Germany; French première in 1890). Chapter Six and Seven will investigate Carmen as the African female Other.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter set out to conceptualize nineteenth-century and postmodern perceptions of exoticism and to examine the manner in which exoticism is used to articulate and shape perceptions of the exotic, non-Western Other. Nineteenth-century exoticism was explained as a device used in literature, the visual arts and music to create perceptions of remote and foreign contexts in which the exotic Other resided. While exoticism in works provided momentary escape from a society confined by capitalism and industrialism, it also succeeded strongly in marginalizing the exotic Other, as well as in articulating and shaping stereotypical perceptions of the Other. The marginalization of the exotic Other thus contributed to imperialist ideologies characterized by asymmetrical power relationships.

Postmodernism is marked by the diffusion of boundaries and the decentralization of the Self. For these reasons, and because it questions the meta-narratives of the nineteenth century, postmodernism has a somewhat different view of exoticism. While not denying correspondences with nineteenth-century perceptions of spatio-temporality, the notions of diffused boundaries and decentralization diminish the divide between the Self and the Other, and allow for differences and commonalities to be acknowledged. Exoticism can thus take on the responsibility of accomplishing reconciliation rather than justifying oppression and degradation.

The exotic Other on which this research project focuses is the Spanish Gypsy woman and, therefore, the chapter considered Spain as an exotic space and the Gypsies as the exotic Other. The eighth-century Arab invasion of Spain, as well as the Peninsular Campaign of 1808–1813 and the Franco–Spanish war of 1823 established perceptions of Spain as an exotic space on the periphery of Western-Europe. These perceptions were confirmed by major national events such as the *Exposition Universelle* in 1889 in Paris.

The uncertainty of the Gypsies' origins, their racial and religious differences and their unique lifestyle contributed to perceptions of their being regarded as the exotic Other. Language and imagery used in literature, the visual arts and in music contributed to generalized perceptions of Gypsies as inferior and uncivilized. Because of gender inequality, the Gypsy woman was particularly subject to marginalization. Not only was she racially and religiously different, but her gender contributed to perceptions of her being a moral threat.

Musical exoticism parallels the principles of general exoticism as discussed in the first sections of the chapter. A *Full Context Paradigm* approach to a study of musical exoticism shows that it creates a sense of local colour by means of alluding to musical elements contained in the music of the Other. The vernacularism of musical exoticism concerns rhythmic and harmonic structures, melodic contours, the use of Phrygian, Dorian and Myxolydian modes, as well as pentatonic scales, and a unique timbre through the use of specific instruments. Sources to which musical exoticism turn include folk songs and dances. In considering the nature of one of the styles to which musical exoticism refers, namely the flamenco, the musical vernacularism mentioned above is clearly illustrated.

The last section of the chapter explained the success of opera in employing exoticism in both its musical and non-musical conventions in order to articulate the Other. The evolution of exoticism in opera from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries shows a change from instances of parodic exoticism in both musical and non-musical conventions of opera buffa to ideological and political themes in opera seria. In the latter cases exoticism in opera often served to contribute towards the marginalization of the exotic Other and the self-consciousness of the Western Self. Once again, as in other art forms, it was the female Other who was the subject of intense exoticizing.

It has become evident from this last section that opera is a social artistic phenomenon which has the ability to articulate human experience, thus establishing it as discourse. The next chapter discusses the reciprocity of opera, as well as the semiotics of opera. This discussion focuses on the manner in which these features of opera contribute towards identity formation.

CHAPTER 4: OPERA AS DISCOURSE

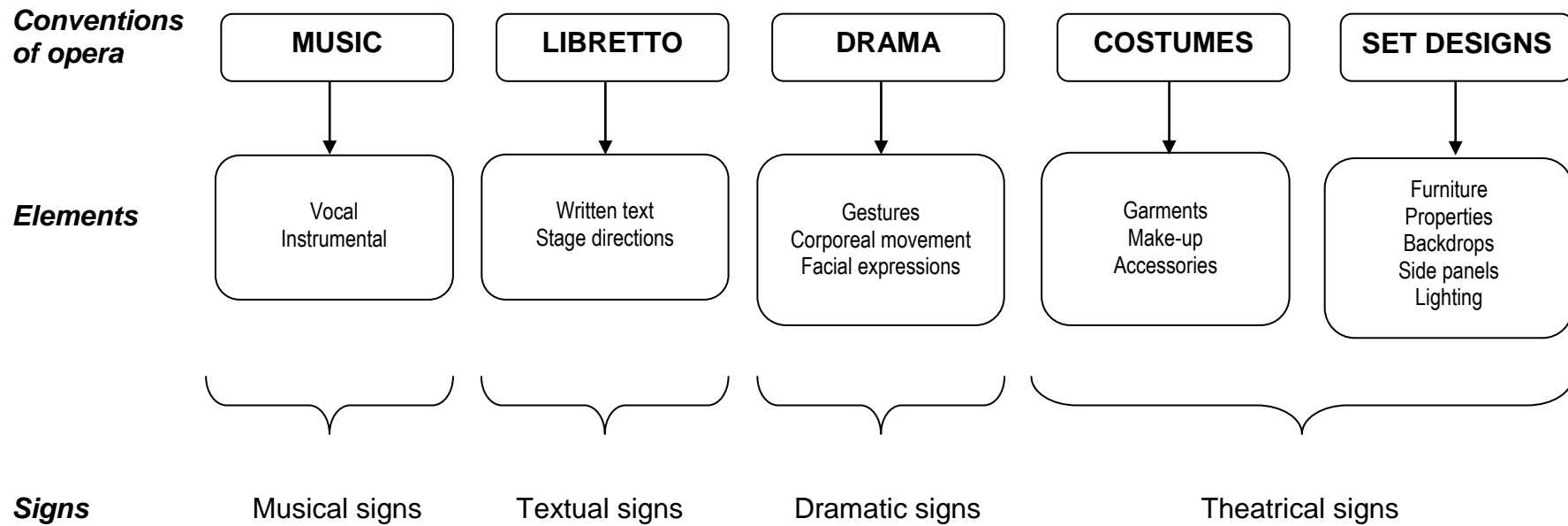
This chapter examines the reciprocal relationship between opera as a text, its contexts, the composer and those people involved in the performance, namely the performers and the audience. Therefore, the initial focus of this chapter is on the reciprocity of opera. It considers the relationship between the composer, the performer and the audience within various contexts. Apart from the obvious affective and cognitive value of opera, its elements also have other functional qualities. Besides the mediation of human experience, opera's core function is facilitating perceptions about identity. Such perceptions are based on the audience's interpretation of contexts embodied in the performance.

Chapter Four then continues to examine how the manipulation of temporal and spatial dimensions allows the musico-dramatic narrative to transcend real time, as well as the restrictions of the stage's physical boundaries, thus constructing alternative contexts. As one of the strategies used to manipulate temporal and spatial dimensions involves intertextuality, this section also considers how intertextuality contributes towards the construction of alternative contexts in opera.

The semiotic value of the elements which constitute the conventions of opera (see Figure 5 on next page) will be discussed. This discussion serves to explain how these elements contribute towards an understanding of how opera mediates human experience. Having briefly considered the nature of musical signs, the discussion focuses on the semiotics of the dramatic, musical (especially acoustic) and theatrical conventions of opera.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ The omission of a discussion on the libretto in this chapter is because it is a written text – an entity which was already considered in Chapter Two.

Figure 5: Conventions, elements and signs of opera



4.1 The reciprocity of opera

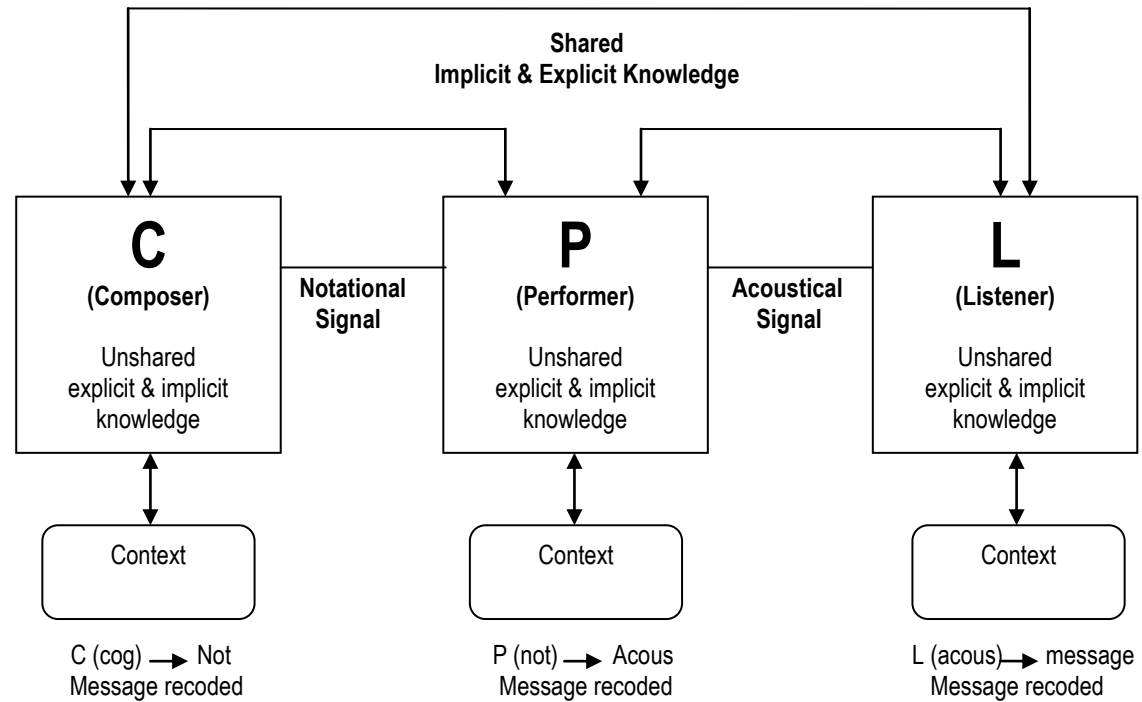
4.1.1 Composer, performer and audience

The basic principles of music communication also pertain to opera. Kendall and Carterette (1990:132) provide a model of musical communication which suggests the sharing of explicit and implicit knowledge between the participants involved in the musical communication process: composer, performer and listener/audience (see Figure 6 on next page). They believe that the codes of the composer's cognitive ideas are re-encoded and realized in notational signals. The performer decodes these encoded signs during the act of interpretation. During the performance these notational signals are re-encoded and realized in acoustical signals. The audience receives these acoustical signals and infers a message by recoding the signals. It is thus a matter of continuous recoding taking place. This recoding also involves the unshared knowledge that each participant has within his own unique context and which informs his recoding.

However, I find the explanation by Lipscomb and Tolchinsky (2005:384) even more valuable in determining the role of each participant in the communication process. The reciprocal relationship between the participants involves a process during which the composer re-encodes his cognitive ideas by encoding them in notational signals. These signals are decoded by the performer during the act of interpretation and re-coded as acoustical signals during the performance. The audience also goes through a process of decoding when they interpret the acoustic signals and recoding when they infer meaning.

While, for the most part, it is accepted that it is difficult to determine the composer's intention, Hargreaves *et al.* (2005:5) point out that the intention of the composer can generally be found in the musical score. However, the composer's intentions might also be found in studying other works from his oeuvre as well as works by his contemporaries – works with similar stylistic characteristics. These stylistic elements may include the employment of specific timbres or instruments and melodic,

Figure 6: Model of musical communication



(Kendall & Carterette, 1990:132)

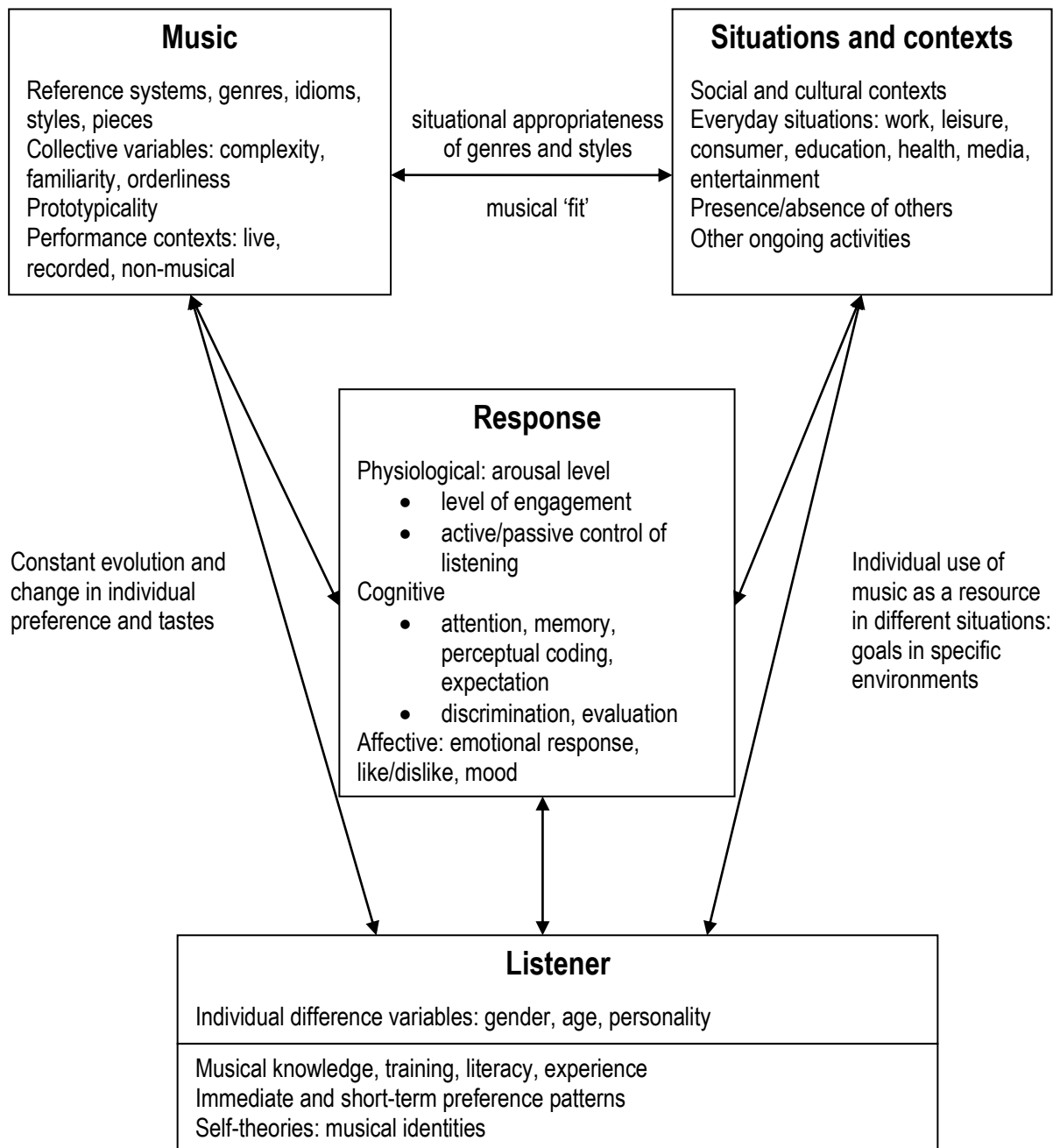
harmonic and rhythmic patterns and motifs which communicate by way of association. Wagner's leitmotifs and Mozart's melodic and rhythmic allusions to specific characters in his operas are excellent examples of this method of communication.

The performer is one of the vehicles through which the meaning of an opera text is communicated. Other elements in which meaning is embedded, such as dramatic and theatrical signs, will be discussed later in this chapter. Because of the performer, the process of interpretation and the derivation of meaning become multiple operations. However, the performer's interpretation of the composer's intention is seldom totally objective and is often informed by the former's musical and general frame of reference as well as the implicit demands of the opera's directors and producers. This frame of reference is determined by the various contexts in which the performer researches and produces his music. However, the derivation of meaning is not only dependent on the performer.

The importance of the audience's response to music is evident in the reciprocal model of musical response provided by Hargreave *et al.* (2005:8). This model (see Figure 7 on next page) will also be used later during a discussion on context (4.1.2 in this chapter) to substantiate the reciprocal relationship between musical text and context. Music's ability to communicate and generate action depends on the audience's susceptibility to it (Blacking, 1995:35, 36). Shepherd (1991:84) points out that the "[s]uperimposition of the structures articulated by a particular musical event onto a suitably predisposed mind is an important aspect of most musical communication". However, an audience's knowledge and understanding of a specific musical style or genre are not necessarily prerequisites for experiencing the affective or cognitive value of the music. Ultimately, the audience will respond on various levels to the decoded meaning obtained from the musical communication: individual, collective, physiological, cognitive and affective (Hargreaves *et al.*, 2005:8).

Furthermore, the audience's response does not necessarily correspond with the composer's or the performer's intentions. Kendall and Caterette's model (1990:132) in Figure 6 indicates that, like the performer, members of the audience have their

Figure 7: Reciprocal model of musical response



(Hargreaves *et al.*, 2005:8)

own contexts. While there may be discrepancies in the respective experiences of the performer and the audience, there is a shared code amongst those involved in musical communication which allows meaning to be derived (Juslin, 2005:86) and response to take place. Meaning is thus informed by the experiences that both the performer and the audience bring to the performance. All these experiences, however, occur within specific contexts.

4.1.2 Context

Opera is a social phenomenon and its social character is in accordance with the reciprocal relationship between art and society. The longevity and value of opera can be attributed to the manner in which it articulates existing social processes by means of its conventions. The discursive qualities of opera render it a social phenomenon which relates to human experience and, from the nineteenth century, librettists and the composers have been increasingly attempting to create works in which drama and music were combined to depict such experiences, more than express fantasy or myth.⁸⁸ Opera has obvious metaphorical qualities and contributes towards shaping and articulating perceptions of reality.

The social aspects of opera illustrate Bakhtin's (1981) theory of dialogics as an interaction between text and context. The manner in which opera can be utilized to articulate and shape human experience is informed by the knowledge and understanding that composers, performers and audiences have of specific social and musical contexts. This multiplicity of contexts is characteristic of the multi-layered texture of opera texts and, therefore, any analysis of opera has to take into account not only the context in which it was composed, but also the one in which it is set and the various contexts within which it is received.

According to the model provided by Hargreaves *et al.* (2005:8), the suitability of genres and styles is determined by the relationship between the work and the

⁸⁸ This statement does not mean to imply that all operas before the nineteenth century were based on fantasy or myths. The increased need for theatrical versions of human experience during the nineteenth century was in response to realist aesthetic philosophies which permeated all art forms.

contexts in which it exists. Because of this variety of contexts in opera, as well as their dynamic nature, it follows that perceptions, especially those relating to identity formation, may vary according to the different contexts (O'Flynn, 2007:9). Any perceived differences and commonalities evolve and change within the dynamic nature of alternative contexts. These contexts and the identity of the Other are perceived to entail emotionally charged differences as well as commonalities from the contexts and identity of the Self (Locke, 2009:47).

Strategies used to create alternative contexts in opera involve the manipulation of temporal and spatial dimensions. The manipulation of these spaces often results in the emergence of intertextual spaces that make it possible to articulate and suggest alternative contexts. The section below will examine the manner in which temporal and spatial dimensions in opera can be manipulated.

In conclusion it can thus be stated that the encoding, decoding and re-encoding of an opera text are executed by the various participants involved in the communicative process, namely the composer, the performer and the audience. Their analyses and perceptions are informed by a variety of musical and social contexts and, during the communication process, the sharing of explicit and implicit knowledge between the participants leads to the construction of alternative perceptions and contexts.

4.2 Time and space

4.2.1 Time

In opera the manipulation of temporal aspects allows the narrative to transcend real time and enables the audience to join the performers from one scene to another without necessarily being concerned with temporal logic. Time also allows for both diachronic and synchronic development of events in the narrative process, which leads to a complex emplotment.

One way in which the temporal dimension might be manipulated is by eliding time. Lacombe (2001:121) lists *dramatic foreshortening* as one of the advantages of eliding time. Dramatic foreshortening allows the narrative process to move rapidly

forward in time by juxtaposing two events taking place at different times, with the implication that a prolonged period of time has elapsed in between them.

Other strategies used to manipulate temporal dimensions involve the insertion of temporal spaces into the narrative process. Past events are recalled in interpolated episodes by strategies such as analepses and interpolations. Analepsis involves characters recalling experiences and events that occurred in the past. Because of the interpolation of the past into the narrative process, an anachronic narrative process is created which allows the audience the opportunity to gain insight into historical contexts. This insight contributes to a greater understanding of situations in the narrative present (Lacombe, 2001:121). In Chapter Six we shall see how the insertion of past events and the eliding of time in the narrative progression create the juxtaposition of two worlds of which Lulamile Nkomo is part in *U-Carmen*.

Lulamile is the character related to Bizet's toreador; almost a mutation of the original character in the opera. He is lured back to the country of his birth and his cultural roots. He enjoys the recognition and admiration that his success as a performing opera singer abroad has earned him. The way in which the toreador character is depicted and treated in *U-Carmen* is different from his depiction in Saura's cinematic adaptation of Carmen's story. McClary (1992:137) points out that, in Saura's film the "prestige of Bizet's music and the power of Mérimée's story lure Antonio [Saura's version of the toreador character] away from his community (its music, its wisdom) and into an obsession that destroys both him and his lover". Contrary to Bizet's and Saura's versions of the plot, the character related to the toreador in *U-Carmen* has nothing to do with Carmen's fate. In Chapter Six and Seven we shall observe how, in *U-Carmen*, Carmen's destiny and her fate seem to be determined more by the contexts in which she exists.

While the temporal and spatial dimensions in opera are discussed separately here, these two dimensions are obviously not really separate entities, but integrate continuously in the operatic narrative process. This integration is often the result of the interaction of two temporal planes (Lacombe, 2001:123): *dramatic time* and *lyric time*. Instances of lyric time drive dramatic time.

In opera this distinction between dramatic and lyric time is most obvious in the sub-genres⁸⁹ known as *recitative* and *aria*. The recitative narrates the dramatic action and progress of the opera, while the aria is a lyrical contemplation of aspects in the narrative. This lyrical treatment of an aria entails the extension or suspension of an instant in time and makes the representation of interiority⁹⁰ possible. In the aria the character's introspection allows the audience to be privy to his innermost emotions and thoughts (Hutcheon, 2006:60). This introspection occurs within a spatial context that is 'shrunk' because the focus falls on the character(s) rather than on the environment (Lacombe, 2001:124).

In the nineteenth century the distinction between recitative and aria gradually became more diffused. This diffusion of composite boundaries resulted in the dramatic time (and character) of recitatives being limited and operatic music being more through-composed, resulting in a seamless expansion of lyric time. This continuation of lyric time required the composer to use the libretto in a manner that deviated from the closed forms of traditional dramas and plays (Lacombe, 2001:130). Consequently, composers began to make use of repetitions: repetition of musical phrases, reprises of sections, one character echoing an utterance of another and so forth.

Lacombe (2001:130) distinguishes between two categories of repetition.

The first, on a large scale, includes repeating one or several lines of text in order to delineate the shape of a standard musical form. In the second, on a smaller scale, the composer makes the characters repeat words because of the temporal requirements of the musical texture encompassing the voices.

Eventually, the increasingly expanded lyric and dramatic time enabled composers to begin moving towards eliminating repetitive lyrics and striving to compose in a style that did not adhere to previously traditional structures. Nevertheless, because of some librettists persisting to write within the parameters of rigid poetic structures,

⁸⁹ Sub-genres refer to those forms that constitute and contribute towards the musical conventions of opera such as recitatives, arias, vocal ensembles.

⁹⁰ The term *interiority*, as used in this thesis, refers to the mental and psychological dimensions of human experience.

conventional musical and stylistic rules and structures still prevailed in the works of many composers (Lacombe, 2001:131).

4.2.2 Space

While it may seem as if the physical boundaries of a stage might place a restriction on the formation of spatial contexts, this is not the case at all. In opera, the scene-changes contribute strongly towards constructing perceptions of spatial contexts. The semiotic value of changes of scene will be discussed in more detail in 4.2.4.2.

Another strategy used in opera to create more than one space on stage involves some characters singing off-stage. Lacombe (2001:127) explains that this strategy, as well as ensemble singing, can contribute towards the coordination of various actions occurring simultaneously in different locations. Verdi's opera *La Traviata* offers an excellent example of how this strategy is used. In the aria "Sempre libera" Violetta contemplates how Alfredo's declaration of love has affected her and considers whether she should submit to her own desire to be in an exclusive relationship. The intimacy of her contemplation within her personal space is interrupted by Alfredo's voice as he sings outside (off-stage). Violetta is moved by Alfredo's declaration that love is simultaneously mysterious, angry and delightful.⁹¹ However, she remains determined to continue her life of unfettered pleasure. The difference in spatial contexts of these two characters serves to emphasize the difference in their attitude towards love. For Alfredo, it makes the universe a place that makes sense, while Violetta regards love as frivolous and of a passing nature.

Another example in which off-stage singing creates the impression of more than one spatial context can be found in Puccini's opera *La Bohème*. At the end of their duet "O soave fanciulla" Rodolfo and Mimi leave the stage while singing the last phrases in which they declare their love for each other. As they disappear backstage, they can be heard, but not seen. The audience can only imagine the intimacy between two lovers within a dusky and secluded space.

⁹¹ *Amore, amor é palpito / dell'universo intero / misterioso, misterioso altero / croce, croce e delizia, / croce e delizia al cor* – Love is beating / the centre of the universe mysterious alternatively / angry and delightful / angry and delightful at heart.

The use of vocal ensembles in opera often causes fragmentation of the spatial impression as various characters each contribute to the narrative, often from various places on the stage. Furthermore, ensembles display a more complex texture in lyric time because of the plurality in musical interaction. Examples of how ensembles contribute towards the complexity of *U-Carmen's* spatial dimensions are provided in Chapter Six. These examples will also show how perceptions of space inform identity formation.

4.3 Intertextuality

The allusion to existing texts in music is not a new phenomenon. Several compositions from the Baroque era were based on existing chorales. Composers such as Bartók, Beethoven, Britten, Mozart and Mussorgsky used folk songs in their compositions. Britten's works include arrangements of folk songs from the British Isles such as *The Ash Grove*, *The Foggy Dew*, *The Salley Gardens* and *Oliver Cromwell*. The *Promenade* of Mussorgsky's piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874), has melodic and rhythmic elements that remind strongly of Russian folk music. It is commonly known that Bartók was a keen collector of folk music and that his music was hugely influenced by Hungarian folk songs.

While I agree with Locke (2009:19, 20) that musical intertextuality is based on three concepts, namely influences, borrowings and appropriations, the plurality and multi-layeredness involved in these concepts surpass the restrictions that their mere denotation suggests. The term *borrowings*, for example, could refer to the *borrowing* of unchanged material by another composer or to *self-borrowing* of material from the composer's own oeuvre. Bizet, for example, was a composer who had used themes, passages and sections from previous works he had either abandoned half-way or had completed.⁹² However, he restricted this self-borrowing to his unpublished and unheard works and, therefore, the audiences of his time were oblivious of this practice. It was only after his death that musicologists' close reading of Bizet's published and unpublished manuscripts revealed the measure in which the self-

⁹² In his article entitled "Bizet's self-borrowings" Dean (1960:240–244) provides a comprehensive list of the original works from which Bizet borrowed for his later compositions.

borrowing contributed to his works. In Leila's aria "O courageuse enfant" from *Les pêcheurs de perles* Bizet again transfers material from an earlier work, *Clovis et Clotilde*, a cantata which was performed only on 3 October 1857 (see Sadie, 1980: 751). One of Bizet's re-creations of a previous work which Dean (1960:239) regards as one of the very few successes is "Ah! chante, chante encore" – the chorus in Act I of *Les pêcheurs de perles*. This chorus is a re-creation of the chorus "Cheti piano!" from Act II of *Don Procopio*, Bizet's unpublished opera buffa, which was never performed in public. It seems that the unintended success that Bizet achieved with this chorus was only repeated in a few instances in his later compositions, amongst which his most famous opera, namely *Carmen* (1873–74).

An *allusion* to material of another composer may be used in its original form or it may be *appropriated*, that is, changed marginally or significantly to suit the intent of the composer. Mozart's Twelve Variations in C, K265 (1778) consists of thirteen sections: the theme and twelve variations of a French folk song, *Ah vous dirai-je, Maman*. The variations involve, for example, the embellishment of the original melody with sixteenth notes (variation 1), presenting the melody in triplets (variation 3), off-beat patterns (variation 5) and in chord format (variation 6). In the eighth variation the melody is presented in the parallel minor (C minor) of the home key (C major). A change in articulation is evident in variation nine when the melody is played staccato.

Opera refers to the principles of intertextuality in general (see Chapter Two), as well as to those in music. However, textuality in opera is characterized by a plurality that relates to its conventions and, therefore, intertextuality in opera relates to these conventions. Klein (2005:4) underscores the presence of intertextual spaces in music when he explains that the referential and variable nature of music relates to the diffusion of its perceived boundaries. The boundaries of opera's conventions are diffused because of their integration. Intertextuality in opera involves the amalgamation of, as well as the allusion to other musical, textual, dramatic and theatrical texts. Musical and textual elements are intertwined and are expressed in the dramatic elements. All these elements are embedded in the theatrical elements of opera. The result is the emergence of intratextuality, a text's allusion to other texts

within itself. Furthermore, intertextuality in opera does not only involve considering the semiotic codes of each of its conventions, but also how these codes are transformed into semantic topoi and tropes⁹³ which contribute towards the emergence of a new text. These topoi and tropes often relate to social processes.

Intertextuality in opera also relates to the dynamic nature of contexts. With the influx of new cultures into a society, for example, musical styles are redefined and new ones emerge. The result is a musical *palimpsest*⁹⁴ where new musical traditions co-exist and integrate with existing ones. This co-existence could manifest in different musical traditions amalgamating within a larger society with an apparently homogenous culture (Blacking, 1995:47). However, it could also be the emergence of a hybrid form which contains musical practices of both cultures as well as new traditions born from the amalgamation.

As in music in general, globalization has had a definite influence on the emergence of a palimpsest of operatic styles characterized by hybridity. This palimpsest reflects the reciprocal relationship between the global and the local. It is not only a matter of the global imposing influences on the local, but the local also appropriates global aspects according to its own identity (Aubert, 2007:7).

In conclusion: it is thus apparent that intertextuality in opera, along with its conventions, renders it a genre with polyglossic⁹⁵ characteristics. These characteristics enable opera to articulate multiple contexts and identities. Furthermore, each of this genre's conventions has unique elements which are the subjects of the study of the semiotics of opera.

⁹³ Hatten (2004:295) describes troping in music as similar to metaphoric tenets.

⁹⁴ The term *palimpsest* derives from literary theory and refers to the layering of new contexts on original ones without the original context being negated (Crang, 1998:22).

⁹⁵ This term is an offshoot of heteroglossia. *Polyglossic* refers to the plurality of (often contradicting) languages/voices within a single text. Heteroglossia refers to the presence of one's own voice and those of others in a text, allowing for the presentation of, for example, various meanings, intentions and ideologies (Allen, 2000:29).

4.4 Semiotics of opera

The polyglossic nature of opera allows us to question Van Baest's (2000:52) statement that opera is the consolidation of music and libretto and that a semiotic analysis of the genre is based upon an analysis of these two conventions. These two conventions are admittedly very important and represent both musical and theatrical elements. However, the moment an opera is staged, additional dramatic and theatrical elements enter the field of play. All these elements contribute towards the emergence of texts and subtexts. To consider music and libretto as the only signifying dimensions of opera would thus lead merely to a structural analysis of an abstract work. Therefore, it follows that a study of the semiotics of opera should consider musical (structural and acoustic), textual, dramatic and theatrical signs.

Opera presents musically with vocal, instrumental and textual signs (graphic musical signs) all of which can be studied at an acoustic level as well. For the purpose of the argument presented here, dramatic signs designate gestures, corporeal language and facial expressions – in other words, the physical and affective signs of the singer-actor(s), while the theatricality of opera involves signs relating to the staging of events, the set designs and costumes.

Together, the musical, dramatic and theatrical signs constitute the conventions of opera. The semiotics of the elements of each of these conventions, excluding the libretto, will be discussed in the following section. A brief consideration of the nature of musical signs serves as basis for this discussion.

4.4.1 Nature of musical signs

Opera is a combination of several musical signs that constitutes a musical narrative. The musical narrative also presents 'events' and, as in its literary counterpart, it does not necessarily place these events in a chronological sequence. This manipulation of narrative aspects contributes to the evolution of a musical work to a text, with similar subversive qualities as literary texts. As a musical narrative, opera has semiotic elements.

The theories of general semiotics, as discussed In Chapter Two, also apply to the semiotics of music. It is self-evident that the semiotic system consisting of graphic symbols in music represents acoustic signs. However, it should be noted that once the graphic symbols are realized through performance, they become an acoustic system of signs which the audience interprets to infer meaning.

Just as in general semiotics, the musical sign can be placed into various categories, namely iconic, indexical and symbolic. This principle is confirmed by Turino (1999:228) who proposes that, as a rule, “musical sounds that function as signs operate at the iconic and indexical levels”. However, these levels are characterized by a sense of integrated plurality. It is possible that, upon hearing an audio sign, memories of a previous sign are elicited and a sense of intertextuality emerges.

Besides being iconic or indexical, musical signs can also be symbolic. A musical element, for example, which is representative of a whole work, is a symbol (Tarasti, 2002:12). The four-note motif with which Beethoven begins the first movement of his Symphony no. 5, opus 67 in C minor (see Music example 3 below) has become a symbol of fate knocking at the door. This is in a large degree due to reports of Beethoven pointing to the motif, saying: “Thus fate knocks at the door!” (Schindler, 2011:147).⁹⁶ Apart from being the major motif around which the opening Allegro is construed, this motif appears in various forms in the other three movements as well.

Music example 3: Beethoven, Symphony no. 5 in c; fate motif



4.4.2 Musical elements in opera

In Figure 5 at the beginning of this chapter it was indicated that the musical conventions of opera include vocal and instrumental elements. The signification of

⁹⁶ Anton Felix Schindler (1795–1864) was a pupil of Beethoven, as well as his secretary and factotum. His biography of the composer was published in 1860.

vocal aspects in opera relates not only to the vocal score – a work of which the signs can be structurally analysed – but also to the voice of the performer. The human voice has the ability to extend to and interactively engage with others at an existential level. A finely nuanced performance of the musical elements of,⁹⁷ for example, an aria, allows the voice to signify human experience and emotions. The timbre of a voice is signification in itself. Tarasti (2002:164) points out the correlation between identity and vocal expression. A lyrical tenor is more suitable to signify the lovesick Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (1832) by Donizetti than a *heldentenor* who portrays the unstable and violent fisherman in *Peter Grimes* (1945) by Britten. Only the most skilled coloratura soprano's voice can signify the innocence of a young priestess who is forced to lure her beloved into danger in an aria imitating bells and birds: "Air des clochettes" from *Lakmé* (1883) by Delibes.

As an acoustic system of signs, the orchestra – just like the voice – signifies affective qualities by means of musical elements and combinations of ensembles. In the second act of *Aida* (1871) by Verdi, Radamès returns triumphantly after having defeated the Ethiopians. The commander of the Egyptian army leads a procession accompanied by two groups of trumpeters. The long tube design of the trumpets enhances the brilliance of their timbre and the unique tonality contributes to the perception of victory and exuberance: the first group of trumpets is in A flat and the group of trumpets that enters second is in B.

In the final scene of *La Traviata* (1853) by Verdi, Alfredo comforts a dying Violetta when her maid, Annina, returns with the doctor and Alfredo's father, Germont. The rapid ascending and descending scales initially performed by the string instruments of the orchestra depicts the urgency of Annina and Germont's entrance with the doctor as well as their flustered concern for her condition ("Ah, Violetta! Voi? Signor?"). This urgency is interrupted by a short passage, sung by Violetta, in the style of recitative secco.⁹⁸ The rhythmic patterns and dark timbre of the orchestra that accompanies Violetta's singing in the section that follows ("Prendi, quest'è l'immagine") is reminiscent of funeral music. As Alfredo and Germont join in duet, the

⁹⁷ In this case, musical elements refer to the pitch, duration, intensity and timbre of sound.

⁹⁸ *Recitativo secco* refers to an unaccompanied recitative.

rhythmic pattern is extended through repetition. Violetta offers Alfredo a photo of herself while singing a poignant melody accompanied again by the string section of the orchestra; the rhythm of death continues its intrusion. The solo-violin which revisits part of a melody from an earlier duet sung by Alfredo and Violetta ("Un dì, felice, eterea") accompanies Violetta's momentary release from painful spasms. The lyric melody in the voice and the violin's moment of nostalgic hankering is replaced by a forceful *tutti* in the orchestra as Violetta's life comes to a climactic end.

4.4.3 Dramatic elements in opera

There is an obvious link between drama and opera. The relationship between the spoken word, poetry and drama is axiomatic. In opera, the libretto embodies the 'spoken' word that articulates human experience. This narrative is sung to instrumental accompaniment. Therefore, it can be argued that in essence opera is a drama in which the affective quality of human experience is articulated by means of music (Kerman, 2005:9, 10).

Besides the obvious musical, textual and verbal signs involved in musico-dramatic works, the signs relating to the performer(s) of musico-dramatic works are contributing factors in the signification of meaning. Nöth (1995:364) points out that "[o]bjects, persons, and their behaviour are the signifiers of the theatrical signs formed by stage properties, actors and actions". As a signifier, the singer-actor in opera represents the signified, which is the character he portrays. In order to do so, the performer, apart from his voice, employs dramatic signs such as gestures, body language and facial expressions as signifiers of the characters' emotions and experiences.

The field of kinesics considers the nature of dramatic corporeal signs and how they contribute towards the expression of emotions. Contemporary scholars of dramatic signs (Eadie, 2009; Harrigan *et al*, 2008; Hayes, 2000; Kendon, 2004) still refer to the categories of dramatic signs proposed by Ekman and Friesen (1969): emblems, illustrators, affective displays, regulators and adaptors. *Emblems* are gestures which can be verbalized and have denotative qualities. A well-known emblem is the V-sign, formed by the second and third fingers of a hand (palm facing forward), which is

universally known as a peace sign. Research done on the lexicography of the gestural emblems of areas in various countries such as France, Italy and Spain, shows that emblems, like all symbols, are culture-specific. *Illustrators* accompany and enforce the underlying intent and implications of verbal utterances. The palm of a hand facing the addressee, accompanied by the word *halt*, enforces the command. Emotional expressions are evident in *affective displays* – often achieved by facial expressions.

Hayes (2000:470) points out that affective displays are often unconsciously executed and can include, for example, “body posture to signal depression, resignation or friendliness; a new style of dress to indicate a fresh approach; agitating fingers or feet to indicate nervousness or impatience”. Effective communication between people is facilitated by *regulators*; gestures which are indicative of a “desire for consent and turn taking” (Nöth, 1995:397). Eye contact is a very powerful regulator, used in various contexts (Hayes, 2000:470). *Adaptors* are signs which signify an unconscious need to adapt to situations which the signifier finds difficult or uncomfortable and can include, for example, habitual sniffing, rapid blinking of the eyes and rapping of fingers.

Nöth (1995:392) explains that gesture, defined conservatively, “is bodily communication by means of hands, and arms and to a lesser degree by the head”. In musico-dramatic works, gestures communicate meaning to the audience. Gestures are functional in the sense that they refer to objects (*referential*), express emotions (*emotive*), appeal to the audience (*appellative*) or regulate communication (*phatic*) (Nöth, 1995:396). Depending on the gestures’ relation to an object, they can further be classified as *indexical*, *iconic* or *symbolic*.

The infrangible link between facial expressions and emotions is axiomatic. Ekman and Friesen (2003) devote a chapter to each of the six emotions which are signified by facial expressions: surprise, fear, disgust, anger, happiness and sadness. Facial expressions can occur spontaneously, but can also be manipulated and, therefore, have the ability to deceive. While facial expressions are closely linked to speech, they are not totally dependent upon it. They can be employed independently as

indexical signs to signify emotions. Furthermore, facial expressions can signify meaning by imitation or mimicry.

While the whole face is usually taken into consideration when studying facial expression as signifier, the facial features probably used most effectively as signifiers are the eyes (including the eyebrows). A frown indicates anger or confusion, while wide-open eyes and raised eyebrows are indicative of surprise or fear. Eyes that are narrowed to almost a slit indicate suspicion and disbelief. Even a gaze can signify meaning, depending on where and how the gaze is directed. Von Cranach and Ellgring (1973: 421, 422) list directions of gaze: one-sided gaze, mutual gaze, eye contact, gaze movement or gaze shift, gaze duration, omission of gaze, gaze aversion and mutual gaze avoidance. The functions of the gaze are classified as “phatic, expressive and conative” (Nöth, 1995:405). The gaze regulates the process of communication by monitoring reciprocity. It also provides information about the emotional state and thought processes of those involved in the communicative process.

The term *corporeal semiotics* is described as a “system of signification that our bodies represent to others who read them as texts” (Hines, 2000:38). The reading may or may not be authorized by the subject being read. In the case of musicodrama, the subject deliberately employs corporeal language in order to be read and interpreted. The range of corporeal semiotics is extended to include *body language* which designates the movements of the body, its posture and its positioning in relation to other subjects or objects. A seated body, rocking and bended from the waist, may signify pain or intense sorrow. Stretched to its full extent with shoulders thrown back and head erect, the body signifies defiance or pride. While accommodating all the dimensions of body language, corporeal semiotics also refers to physical attributes signifying, amongst other things, race and gender. Interpretations of such physical attributes are often significantly influenced by context. An affluent, middle-class white woman may, at a glance, regard a young African-American man – dressed in clothes reflecting a hip-hop style – as threatening. In this case, perceptions are formed by corporeal signs signifying racial, gender and class significance.

4.4.4 Theatrical elements in opera

As mentioned before, there are several semiotic dimensions relating to the theatricality of opera as a musico-dramatic genre. Together with musical and dramatic elements, the theatrical elements in opera add to its communicative efficacy. Costumes and set designs contribute towards the perceptions of identities. They inform perceptions of the Self (Blacking, 1995:33, 35) and the extent to which the Self is different from the Other. Taylor (2007:17) claims that “opera gained a foothold, and then dominance, in western European culture when [it] did because of European conceptions of selfhood and otherness, particularly after the rise of European colonialism” (Taylor, 2007:18). He also suggests that the rise of opera “facilitated representations and appropriations of Europe’s cultural Others” (Taylor, 2007:24). This facilitation included simultaneously commenting on and subverting ideological concepts. By the eighteenth century, operas such as Mozart’s *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782) had begun to articulate the worlds and identities of the non-Western Other. The same composer’s *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) served to subvert the feudal system and the hypocrisy of the aristocracy.

It is thus clear that elements such as costumes and set designs enable opera to represent and remind the *self* of familiar feelings and experiences, while it also provides both the *self* and the *other* with an opportunity and alternative methods of self-realization and self-representation.

4.4.4.1 Costumes

Costumes are emblematic and their connotative semiotics can be indicative of cultural meaning. Costumes designed for female characters can enhance or subvert perceptions of femininity, virtue and beauty. When contextualized, such a costume can also contribute towards perceptions of identity. The traditional Japanese attire of Cio-Cio San (Plates 13 and 14) and Kate Pinkertons’s outfit (Plates 15 and 16) in *Madama Butterfly* (1904) by Puccini serve to underscore the difference between the two women’s identities. Accessorising Lakmé’s (the female lead in the eponymous opera by Delibes) *lehenga* (full-length skirt) or *saree* (dress of light material draped around the body) with a *mang tika* (ornate headpiece), necklace, nose rings, ear



Plates 13 & 14: Anne Sophie Duprels as Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly* (1904) by Puccini¹
Costume designed by Ana Jebens
Production of Opera North in the UK (2007)
Photograph (2007) courtesy of photographer, Robert Workman

¹ Cio-Cio San's elaborately decorated kimonos, her geisha make-up and hair accessories and the Japanese hand fan contribute to the formation of her identity. This is further enhanced by her corporeal language which implies a measure of submission.



Plates 15 & 16: Amanda Echalaz as Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* (1904) by Puccini²
Costume designed by Ana Jebens
Production of Opera North in the UK (2007)
Photograph (2007) courtesy of photographer, Robert Workman

² The colours of Kate Pinkerton's costume remind strongly of the colours of the American flag. The red and white accessories and the blue jacket, together with her fair complexion, epitomize the all-American girl; a stark contrast with the exotic Cio-Cio San.



Plate17: Leah Partridge as Lakmé in the eponymous opera (1881-2) by Delibes³
Costume designed by Mark Thompson
Production of Florida Grand Opera in USA (2009)
Photograph copyright (2009) Deborah Gray Mitchell

³ Ms Partridge's costume is vibrant in colour and richly decorated. It is an excellent example of how the *lehenga*, *mang tika* necklace, ear rings, *bajuband*, *churian* and *kamarband* constructs her Indian identity. This is enhanced by her hands performing a gesture typically used in Indian dances.



Plate 18: Actress and singer, Phyllis Broughton as Catherine de la Rochelle in *Giovanna d'Arco* (1845) by Verdi⁴
Photograph (1891) taken in London by Alfred Ellis
V&A Museum number: S. 135:588-2007
Bequeathed by Guy Little

⁴ Catherine de la Rochelle claimed to be a visionary and that her powers were as divinely inspired as those of Joan of Arc. However, the latter did not trust Catherine's claims and wrote as much to Charles VII in November 1429 (Warner, 1981:79). It is of particular interest that this character's costume implies her as being Gypsy (stereotypical fortune tellers).



Plate 19: *Lakmé* (1881-2) by Delibes
Costumes and sets designed by Mark Thompson
Production of Florida Grand Opera in USA (2009)
Photograph copyright (2009) Deborah Gray Mitchell



Plate 20: *Lakmé* (1881-2) by Delibes
Costumes and sets designed by Mark Thompson
Production of Florida Grand Opera in USA (2009)
Photograph copyright (2009) Deborah Gray Mitchell

rings, *bajuband* (armlet), *churian* (bangles), *anghooti* (finger ring), *kamarband* (golden chain around the waist) and *payal* (anklets) adds to the formation of her identity (Plate 17).

4.4.4.2 Set designs and changes of scene

The set designs and changes of scene are important signifiers of two of the most important dimensions in operas which contribute towards the construction of contexts, namely time and space. It is within these dimensions that the plot and the characters develop and, by manipulating set designs and changes of scene, complex temporal and spatial contexts are created. The furniture, properties, backdrops, side panels and lighting used in set designs all contribute towards perceptions of not only the contexts in which the action takes place, but also the identities of those who perform the actions.

In Florida Grand Opera's production (2009) of *Lakmé* by Delibes, Mark Thompson included a version of Durga, a Hindu goddess, as one of the properties (Plate 19). It is customary for Durga to ride a lion. She has ten arms and holds various weapons in her hands which indicates her role as protector of the righteous and destroyer of evil. The presence of this deity provides a strong religious subtext and confirms *Lakmé* as the exotic Other in the opera. In another scene from the same production, the luscious plants, oversized lotus flowers, the statue outside the temple and the bowing which is a customary sign of respect in Hinduism, all confirm the identity of the exotic Other (Plate 20).

While set designs contribute towards contextual constructions, changes of scene provide the opportunity to construct multiple spatial dimensions. According to Lacombe (2001:120) changes of scene in an opera performance provides a sense of reality and a background against which the action can take place. These changes of scene complement the characters' emotions and environment in which they exist, thus fulfilling a psychological and poetical function. Ultimately, changes of scene have the ability to become part of the dramatic effect of the performance and provide a sense of progression in temporality and spatiality.

This functionality of changes of scene is evident in the 2006 production of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London. This production was recorded live at Covent Garden on 10, 13 and 17 February 2006.⁹⁹ In this production, contrary to traditional practice, the curtains are already up as the overture begins. The stage is a vast space surrounded by flat, vertical surfaces representing large windows (Frame 1). The singer-actors enter this space as the orchestra plays the overture and the temporal and spatial contexts, as well as the characters' identities are immediately evident. It is obvious that this is a large household, belonging to an affluent landowner, with many servants who function in a hierarchal order. As the overture draws to a close, the initial space is invaded and divided by another – the bedroom in which Figaro and Susanna will sleep once they are married (Frame 2). The visual discrepancy between the vast open space of the opening scene and the cluttered, multi-layered duskiness of the bedroom serves to highlight the difference not only of the size and nature of any living space servants were allowed to have, but also of the difference in class between them and their owners.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that opera involves all participants in musical communication, namely the composer, the performer and the audience. This reciprocity takes place within and is informed by contexts that are characterized by a multi-layered quality. The composite conventions of opera consist of various elements signified by unique signs. Because of these signs and their significance, all the discrete components of opera may be read as separate texts.

The musical text of opera is encoded in notational signs by the composer, while the librettist undertakes the encoding of the libretto in linguistic signs. The dramatic and theatrical elements in opera can be inferred from the libretto, but can also be encoded by the way in which the production's director and producer choose to articulate these elements. The performers and those responsible for costume and set designs decode the production team's encoding during the act of interpretation.

⁹⁹ Available on DVD © Opus Arte, OA 0990 D.



Frame 1: *Le Nozze di Figaro* by W.A. Mozart
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Screen grabs taken from DVD © Opus Arte



Frame 2: *Le Nozze di Figaro* by W.A. Mozart
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Screen grabs taken from DVD © Opus Arte

The performers' contribution towards the construction and articulation of meaning is evident in the way they decode the musical and dramatic texts and the manner in which they encode those texts during their performance. The audience decodes the performance and, by attributing meaning, encodes it again.

Because of the multiple variables that have to be taken into account regarding participants, elements and contexts involved in opera, there is a strong likelihood of discrepancies between the knowledge and experiences of the different participants. Therefore, the derivation of meaning should take into account the experiences and contexts of all participants. This consideration renders opera a social phenomenon with the ability to articulate and shape social processes.

The section about time and space has shown how the manipulation of temporal and spatial dimensions in opera manages to construct multiple contexts. The dramatic foreshortening and eliding of time allows the narrative process to proceed quickly, while the interpolation of biographic detail and past events in analeptic episodes succeeds in presenting alternative contexts. Perceptions of spatial contexts in opera are facilitated by strategies such as off-stage singing, ensemble singing and the creative use of space on stage. Ultimately, the manipulation of temporal and spatial dimensions contributes towards the anachronic nature of the narrative process and the construction of intertextual spaces.

This chapter concludes that intertextuality in opera adheres to the general principles of this phenomenon. Allusions to the work of other composers can involve borrowing material and changing it substantially or appropriating it marginally. Some elements are even left unaltered. A composer can also borrow from his own oeuvre. At the very least, there are instances where the influence of pre-existing texts is noticeable in the works of some composers, whether stylistic or structural.

However, intertextuality in opera has added dimensions because of its conventions. The various texts relating to its musical, textual, dramatic and theatrical conventions interact and amalgamate, resulting not only in intertextuality, but also in intratextuality. Intertextuality in opera is further expanded in its allusion to other texts

outside its own parameters and the dynamic nature of all the contexts involved in this genre.

The conventions of opera are signified by unique musical, textual, dramatic and theatrical signs. This chapter has examined these signs in order to determine their semiotic value and their functionality. Besides the graphic and linguistic signs (musical score and libretto), signs relating to the human voice and body are integrated with instrumental sounds, costumes and set designs to articulate a variety of contexts and identities.

CHAPTER 5: MÉRIMÉE'S *CARMEN*

This chapter, and those that follow it, will focus on the analyses of the primary texts. Chapter Five offers a close reading of Prosper Mérimée's *Carmen* in order to determine how the narrative aspects are manipulated in order to articulate specific contexts and identities in his novella. After a brief introduction to *Carmen*, the close reading of the novella shows how Mérimée's use of intertextuality, as well as his treatment of narrative aspects such as the plot, context, characterization and focalization, contribute towards the articulation and shaping of perceptions about Spain and Gypsies as the exotic Other.

5.1 Prosper Mérimée

Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870) was born in Paris. His father was a successful painter who could afford to have his son educated according to the French customs of the time. Although Mérimée completed his legal studies, he never practised as a lawyer but dabbled in various activities until he was appointed *Inspecteur général des Monuments historiques* in 1834. He was responsible for the documentation of French artistic and architectural places and objects (Cropper, 2001:51). Two months after his appointment he began undertaking extensive travels to places in France and the foothills of the Pyrenees Mountains. However, this was not the first time he had travelled towards Spain.

At the age of 27, Mérimée toured Spain for five months – from June to December 1830 – and became one of the first French authors of the Romantic era to spend prolonged time in that country. One of the aims of this trip was to research the history of Spanish paintings. He was to pass this information on to his father who, in return, sponsored his trip (Thompson, 2012:178). His travels took him to Andalusia via Burgos and Madrid, a route normally taken by the travellers of those times, but he returned via Valencia. His experiences during this period were included in three

letters he wrote (*Lettres d'Espagne*) to the various people and which were published from 1831 to 1833 in the *Revue de Paris*.¹⁰⁰

Thompson (2012:179,180) points out how Mérimée's letters emphasize dramatic rites and baneful, insidious events. Depictions of Spanish honour and courage are set within spaces filled with violence and death, themes which feature accounts of three aspects in particular: bullfights, capital punishment and the activities of outlaws such as José-María.¹⁰¹ Mérimée's letters include descriptions of the logic and customs of a bullfight in Madrid, as well as of an execution in Valencia. The letters, and later his literary works, are characterized by attention to detailed description of those involved in these events. However, more than anything else it is the exactness with which the events are contextualized that creates a sense of reality.

Based on his experiences in Spain, Mérimée's literary works echo those of other French Romantic authors such as Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870) and Théophile Gautier (1811–1872), and he introduces readers to contexts filled with danger and obstacles: highway robbers, travels on cumbersome roads and over treacherous mountains either on the back of a mule or in dilapidated vehicles, uncomfortable accommodation, vermin and a lack of contexts filled with danger, obstacles and inconveniences (Chaliand & Mérimée, 1989:12, 20, 21). Like other authors, Mérimée introduces readers to the “sounds and smells of street life, dances, hunts, corridas, and other social festivities” (Thompson, 2012:132). Those of his works which are either set in Spain or have Spanish characters in them, such as *Théâtre de Clara Gazul* (1825), *Colomba* (1840) and *Carmen* (1845), include matadors, bandits with a sense of honour, swarthy ladies with questionable reputations, capital punishment and bullfights. The contexts and identities of these spaces and characters are

¹⁰⁰ When discussing Mérimée's *Lettres d'Espagne*, Thompson (2012) refers to the edition of the letters in Maurice Parturier's 1967 edition of the *Romans et nouvelles*, 2 vols. Paris: Garnier. pp. 379–443. A copy of this title is available in the National library in Canberra, Australia.

¹⁰¹ In one of his letters, written in 1830, Mérimée refers to José María Hinojosa Cobacho (1805–1833), also known as El Tempranillo. He describes him as a notorious bandit who is as courteous as a thief can be (Chaliand & Mérimée, 1989:180).

carefully constructed with purposeful intent and careful consideration of subject matter and style.¹⁰²

Mérimée's subtle use of narrative strategies is employed to focus on social issues. Cropper (2001:51) provides an example when he points out that Mérimée's article "Les Mormons" (1853) is a subversive criticism of Louis-Napoléon's restoration of the Empire. *Carmen* is another one of the works in which Mérimée expresses his personal beliefs and opinions, this time about the Gypsies in Spain.

5.2 Background of *Carmen*

Mérimée's interest in Gypsy culture was initially nurtured by his friendship with the author of *Escenas Andaluzes* (1847), Serafín Estébanez Calderón, whom Mérimée met during his first visit to Spain in 1830. Calderón encouraged Mérimée to visit Triana, an area where Gypsies resided (Chaliand & Mérimée, 1989:16). It was during this time that Mérimée also met Madame de Montijo, wife of Count Montijo, who was the father of Empress Eugénie. Madame de Montijo became a friend to whom he eventually wrote numerous letters. In 1845, fifteen years after having met her, he wrote to her that he had just spent eight days writing a story which was based on an anecdote she had told him in 1830.¹⁰³ According to this anecdote, a man from Malaga murdered his lover. This letter is not only proof of where Mérimée found his original idea for *Carmen*, but also provides insight into his self-proclaimed authority on the identity of Gypsies,¹⁰⁴ their morals and their appearance. Once completed, Mérimée sent Calderón a copy of *Carmen*. In a letter accompanying the novella (Filon, 1909:54), Mérimée refers to the novella as a small souvenir of their former studies on the language of the blacks [Gypsies] and asks Calderón to keep

¹⁰² For a detailed exposition of the form (style and structure) and content (material and purpose) of Mérimée's literary works, see Robert C. Dale's *The Poetics of Prosper Mérimée*, (1966).

¹⁰³ Edward Marielle (1965:11) provides an English translation of this letter in his introduction to an edition of Mérimée's *Carmen and Colomba*. According to Chaliand (1989:19) the letters of Mérimée to the countess Montijo were published in Paris (1930) as a private edition by the Duke of Alba with a foreword by Gabriel Hanoteaux.

¹⁰⁴ "Je viens de passer huit jours enfermé à écrire une histoire que vous m'avez racontée il y a quinze ans et que je crains d'avoir gâtée. Il s'agissait d'un Jacques de Malaga qui avait tué sa maîtresse laquelle se consacrait exclusivement au public...comme j'étudie les bohémiens depuis quelques temps avec beaucoup de soin j'ai fait mon héroïne bohémienne" (Chaliand & Mérimée, 1989:19).

the copy in his library.¹⁰⁵ The first three chapters of *Carmen* were published on 1 October 1845 in a travel journal, *La Revue des Deux Mondes* (Robinson, 1992:1). It was only in 1846, when *Carmen* was published as a book, that Mérimée added the fourth and final chapter.

There are several themes embedded in *Carmen*. The most prominent theme involves the asymmetrical relationship between the Self and the Other. The Self/Other binarism encompasses several dichotomies relating to race, class and gender: Western/non-Western, white/non-white, civilized/non-civilized, patricians/commoner and male/female.

Mérimée uses a first-person narrator in the persona of a French archaeologist to tell the story of Don José and Carmen. The narrator's perceived superiority enables him to control not only his own actions, but also the reader's complete understanding of the text. He is the master translator who, by means of the authorial interruption in the footnotes, enables the readers to completely grasp the intricacies of what they are reading. The hegemonic imperialist ideology implicit in the character of the French narrator demands submission from those who are perceived to be non-Western and racially different. The fact that Carmen is a woman makes the demand for submission even more intense. Don José continuously battles to control and dominate Carmen despite his awareness that she has a propensity towards absolute freedom.

5.3 Intertextuality in *Carmen*

5.3.1 *Carmen's* sources

Colmeiro (2002:134) points out the debt that Mérimée owed to the works of the Englishman George Borrow (1803–1881) with regard to the Gypsies' cultural and linguistic characteristics. Northup (1915:145, 146) quotes from several letters written by Mérimée confirming his interest in at least three of Borrow's works: a translation

¹⁰⁵ "Voici en attendant un petit souvenir de nos anciennes études sur la *chipe callí*, pour lequel je vous demande un coin dans votre bibliothèque" (Filon, 1909:54).

of the Gospel of Saint Luke into caló¹⁰⁶ (1837), *The Zincoli* (1841) and *The Bible in Spain* (1842). With only a few exceptions, most of the Gypsy proverbs, words and phrases in *Carmen* are derived from Borrow's work.

Several of Borrow's works have Gypsy characters, culture and language as central themes. Mayall (1988:72) describes Borrow as the front man for the romanticized advancement of the Gypsy as a character who subverts authority and resists dominant ideologies. Borrow's contact with actual Gypsies, which had given him the opportunity to observe them closely, would have enhanced perceptions of his authority on the subject matter. However, his depiction of their lifestyle, personalities, culture and language was rife with generalizations, omissions, discrepancies and unacknowledged borrowings from other authors' often unsubstantiated observations and claims (Mayall, 1988:72). Despite the obvious unreliability of his rendition of Gypsies, several journalists and authors, including Mérimée, used his works as sources for their own writing.

Taking into account Mérimée's use of Borrow's work, it is ironic that Mérimée openly questions Borrow's perceptions of Gypsy women In Chapter Four of *Carmen*. Mérimée (2007:96) writes:

An English missionary, Mr. Borrow, the author of two very interesting works on the Spanish gypsies, whom he undertook to convert on behalf of the Bible Society, declares there is no instance of any gitana showing the smallest weakness for a man not belonging to her own race. The praise he bestows upon their chastity strikes me as being exceedingly exaggerated.

The sentiments in this extract correspond with those expressed in his letter to Madame de Montijo in 1830 (Marielle, 1965:11). As in that letter, Mérimée continues in the novella to contradict Borrow's proof of Gypsy women's virtue by claiming that it actually takes very little to persuade them to give up their chastity (Mérimée, 2007:96, 97). One is left with the question of whether Mérimée's depiction of the exotic female Other is not tainted by his own male, European perceptions.

¹⁰⁶ Caló is a Spanish dialect containing Romani words (Locke, 2009:155).

Another text that has significant similarities to *Carmen* is Pushkin's *Tsygany* (*The Gypsies*).¹⁰⁷ Lowe (1996:73) contends that claims of Mérimée's *Carmen* being informed by Pushkin's work are based on perfunctory research. However, there is a strong possibility that Mérimée had either heard of Pushkin's work, read a translation of it or had discussed *Tsygany* with other authors (Brown, 1986:238). Although there is not enough evidence to state definitely that *The Gypsies* and *Carmen* are two versions of the same plot, there are strong similarities between the two texts that contribute towards a belief that Mérimée had at least been aware of Pushkin's work.

In *Tsygany* a young man (Aleko) from the bourgeoisie falls in love with a young Gypsy girl (Zemfira) and chooses to stay with Zemfira and her father and adopt their nomadic lifestyle. While the presence of a father figure in *Tsygany* is not paralleled in *Carmen*, there are similarities between Aleko and Don José in *Carmen*. These similarities include the fact that they are both fugitives from the law who go into voluntary exile. Like Don José, Aleko is not a happy man: his heart pines and he is tormented and dismayed (Arndt, 1965: 275). Zemfira shows considerable insight into his disposition and understands that "Not always, though, is liberation / Dear to a man of tender breed" (Arndt, 1965:277).

Aleko, like Don José, is also terribly jealous. An age-old song sung by Zemfira leaves him stricken and haunted in his dreams despite her father's attempt to console him. Eventually Aleko stabs both Zemfira and her Gypsy lover to death and is banned from the Gypsy community for being "fierce and wicked" (Arndt, 1965:289). In *Carmen* Don José does not kill the *toreador* whom Carmen admits to loving, but he does kill her *rom* (husband), Garcia el Tuerto, in an act of premeditated murder before eventually stabbing Carmen to death.

The similarities between Pushkin's and Mérimée's female protagonists are also abundant. Both women are willful and sensual beings with some insight into the male consciousness of their time. Carmen and Zemfira both refuse to be dictated to in their choice of lover and, even in the face of death, they fearlessly defy any

¹⁰⁷ All quotes from Pushkin's *Tsygany* used in this thesis are taken from Walter W. Arndt's translation, *The Gypsies* (1965).

insistence to submit to their erstwhile lovers. However, contrary to Carmen's almost scornful mockery of Don José's bourgeois background, Zemfira seems to allow for the possibility that Aleko might long for the spacious apartments, colourful rugs, the social events and beautiful women that were part of the society and setting that he had left behind (Arndt, 1965:277). The strength of man's innate sense of belonging is evident in the Old Man's account of a legend that is believed to refer to Ovid. Ovid was a Roman poet who was exiled to Tomi on the Black Sea by Augustus in 8 A.D. (Arndt, 1965:278). The Old Man tells the story of a man condemned to live in exile; a frail man who spent his time telling stories and living off the land and the kindness of other people. However, this man forever longed for the land from hence he came.

Throughout his span, with piteous crying
The exile, restless and distraught,
Bestrode the banks of Danube, sighing
For his far city; lastly, dying,
He charged them earnestly to send
To the warm land of his allegiance
His sorrowing bones – this alien region's
Reluctant guests unto the end!

(Arndt, 1965:278)

Pushkin's marginalization of Gypsies as an exotic ethnic group and Gypsy women as the exotic female other is paralleled in *Carmen*. According to Pushkin's depiction, Gypsies are notoriously superstitious, disdainful and carefree and their charming laziness is unchanging (Arndt, 1965:279). Pushkin's description of the Gypsies as a colourful, noisy tribe, consisting of gnarled or semi-naked humans and beasts who act without design and norms culminates in the ambivalent statement in *Tsygany*:

All squalid, savage, all unsettled,
But how vivacious, highly mettled
How alien to our pastimes bleak,
How foreign to those vapid pleasures,
Stale as a slave song's tuneless measures!

(Arndt, 1965:275)

With this description Pushkin echoes the exotic distancing of the non-Western Other from the Western Self that characterizes Mérimée's narrative design in *Carmen*.

In *Tsygany* the marginalization of the exotic female Other is manifested in the explanation that Zemfira's father gives to Aleko after her infidelity. A woman's love is held to be nonchalant and unconcerned while that of a man is perverse, foolish, boring, hard work and full of anguish (Arndt, 1965:283). Pushkin uses the metaphor of the moon that soars and strays across all creation, moving quite indiscriminately from places of beauty to places of squalor, never lingering too long to characterize female perverseness. The perception is that women are fickle and indiscriminate in bestowing their passion on men. The fact that the old man tells Aleko that his own wife, Mariula, was of the same disposition generalizes and enhances the perception of Gypsy women as immoral, unscrupulous and fickle.

Finally, the epilogue of *Tsygany* reveals a self-proclaimed unreliable narrator.

Thus song – craft with its potent magic
From memory's beclouded haze –
Will conjure visions, now of tragic,
Now of serenely shining days.

(Arndt, 1965:289)

Whereas the work up to the epilogue is narrated by an omniscient third-person narrator, the epilogue seems to be delivered by a first person narrator who admits that memories might be clouded and altered with time. Most significant is the admission in the last eight lines that it is possible that the perceived carefree existence of the Gypsies is just that – a perception, because “no one can elude the Fates” (Arndt, 1965:290).

5.3.2 Allusions to biblical events

There are several allusions to biblical events and images in *Carmen*. One of the most significant allusions is the one in which the narrator describes Don José's face which reminds him of Milton's Satan ¹⁰⁸ (Mérimée, 2007:19). The narrator contemplates the possibility that Don José might have forfeited his right to live in the country of his birth because of his refusal to submit to the highest authority. This

¹⁰⁸ “Éclairée par une lampe posée sur la petite table, sa figure, à la fois noble et farouche, me rappelait le Satan de Milton” (Mérimée, 1965:100).

comparison reminds one not only of Satan's exile from heaven because of his refusal to be subordinate, but also of Adam and Eve being exiled from Paradise because they disobeyed God's will. The narrator's metaphoric description of Carmen as the devil's servant¹⁰⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:30) also reminds one of Eve succumbing to the cunning persuasion of Satan. Furthermore, when Don José claims that Carmen is to blame for his ruin¹¹⁰ (Mérimée, 2007:91) we are reminded of Adam who blamed Eve for his defiant behaviour.

5.3.3 Shakespearean elements in *Carmen*

Dale (1966:45.46) confirms Mérimée's admiration for Shakespeare's work, more specifically his intuitive selection, and his economical use and disposition of details. Mérimée had his own criteria for constructing detail that he regarded as significant: the characteristic and distinctive traits of the object; the exact and concise presentation of material that had been thoroughly researched, maintaining simplicity and naturalness in language and centralizing one visual characteristic when giving detailed descriptions (Dale, 1966:48).

The first allusion to Shakespeare in Mérimée's novel involves the French narrator's description of the gypsy girl whom he had met. The manner in which he describes Carmen echoes Shakespeare's sonnet 130.

¹⁰⁹ "allons aujourd'hui prendre des glaces avec une servante du diable" (Mérimée, 1965:110).

¹¹⁰ "Pourtant, tu le sais, c'est toi qui m'as perdu; c'est pour toi que je suis devenu un voleur et un meurtrier" (Mérimée, 1965:164).

CXXX¹¹¹

1. My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
2. Coral is far more red, than her lips red:
3. If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
4. If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
5. I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
6. But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
7. And in some perfumes is there more delight
8. Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
9. I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
10. That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
11. I grant I never saw a goddess go,
12. My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
13. And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,
14. As any she belied with false compare.

(William Shakespeare, 1564–1616)

The French narrator says about Carmen:

For a woman to be beautiful, they say in Spain, she must fulfil thirty *ifs*, or, if it pleases you better, you must be able to define her appearance by ten adjectives, applicable to three portions of her person.

For instance, three things about her must be black, her eyes, her eyelashes, and her eyebrows. Three must be dainty, her fingers, her lips, her hair, and so forth. My gipsy girl could lay no claim to so many perfections. Her skin, though perfectly smooth, was almost of a copper hue. Her eyes were set obliquely in her head, but they were magnificent and large. Her lips, a little full, but beautifully shaped, revealed a set of teeth as white as newly skinned almonds. Her hair – a trifle coarse, perhaps – was black, with blue lights on it like a raven's wing, long and glossy [...] to every blemish she united some advantage, which was perhaps all the more evident by contrast¹¹² (Mérimée, 2007:31).

It is not a resemblance in structure or similarities of imagery that are responsible for perceived likenesses in these two texts. What they do have in common is that they

¹¹¹ Thomas Thorpe published this sonnet in 1609 along with 1543 other sonnets (Sarker, 2006:53).

¹¹² "Pour qu'une femme soit belle, dissent les Espagnols, il faut qu'elle réunisse trente *si*, ou, si l'on veut, qu'on puisse la définir au moyen de sa personne. Par exemple, elle doit avoir trois parties de choses noir: les yeux, les paupières et les sourcils; trois fines, les doigts, les lèvres, les cheveux, etc. Ma bohémienne ne pouvait prétendre à tant de perfection. Sa peau, d'ailleurs parfaitement unie, approchait de la teinte du cuivre. Ses yeux étaient obliques, mais admirablement fendus; ses lèvres un peu fort mais bien dessinées et laissant voir des dents plus blanches que des amandes sans leur peau. Ses cheveux, peut-être un peu gros, étaient noirs, à reflets bleus comme l'aile d'un corbeau, loins et luisants...qu'à chaque défaut elle réunissait une qualité qui ressortait peut-être plus fortement par le contraste" (Mérimée, 1965:111).

both describe swarthy, dark-haired women who are attractive in their own strange way but who, according to the norms of the society in which they live, cannot lay claim to real beauty. While Shakespeare's sonnet is often regarded as a parody of the traditional Petrarchan sonnet, the woman in Shakespeare's sonnet is at least cherished and admired. The French narrator in Mérimée's novella does not love Carmen but regards her as a witch who is wild and fierce (Mérimée, 2007:31, 32). An understanding of this allusion to Shakespeare's sonnet enhances the perception that Carmen is unconventional and uncompromising.

Besides the allusion to the above-mentioned Shakespearean sonnet, one could also find an arbitrary association to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1611) in Mérimée's novella. This association involves the male character shifting the blame to his female counterpart. Don José claims that his love for Carmen was his downfall. The propensity to shift blame echoes some theories posted about Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The seductive female character depicted as the instigator of the atrocious acts leading to a man's downfall is paralleled in Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, where Lady Macbeth is often regarded as orchestrating the murder of the king at the hand of Macbeth. Macbeth's inability to resist executing Lady Macbeth's murderous schemes is echoed in Don José's inability to resist committing criminal acts out of his love for Carmen.

Another Shakespearean element is evident when Don José requests a priest to "say a mass for a soul which is perhaps about to go into the presence of its Maker"¹¹³ (Mérimée, 2007:89). Assured that it will be done, Don José returns to where he has left Carmen and kills her. This incident is reminiscent of the scene between Othello and Desdemona. Othello insists that Desdemona confess her sins and say her prayers before killing her so that her soul may not be doomed forever.

¹¹³ "Pouvez-vous dire une messe pour une âme qui va peut-être paraître devant son Créateur?" (Mérimée, 1965:162).

5.3.4 Paratextuality in *Carmen*

Mérimée, common with other authors such as Charles Dickens, makes use of paratextuality and authorial interruption that result in a polyphonic narrative texture in *Carmen*. This texture aims to substantiate the superior knowledge and insight that the narrator supposedly has regarding the exotic subject matter.

The first example of Mérimée's use of paratextuality can be found in the epigraph to his novella. One of the most interesting aspects of this epigraph is that it is the only quote in the novella that is not translated or referenced in a footnote. Only those who could read and understand Greek (traditionally exclusively men) were privy to its meaning. Conlon (1997:8) translates the quote by the poet Palladas as follows: "Women are as bitter as bile; there are nevertheless two circumstances where they are pleasant: in bed and when they are dead." This epigraph immediately places *Carmen* as the female protagonist within the misogynistic and patriarchal context in which her story will be told and proclaims not only the narrator's but also the author's perception of women in general.¹¹⁴

The other instances of paratextuality in *Carmen* consist of footnotes in which the author/narrator's perceived well-informed knowledge of Spanish and Gypsy culture is made evident. The footnotes include information on, and knowledge of a variety of subjects and aspects: pronunciation of the Andalusian and Spanish *s*, the regions and languages spoken in the Provinces, Gypsy proverbs and terminology, the customs and judiciary system of the region, Spanish naval and military history, architecture and cuisine. One of the footnotes even attempts to endorse the nineteenth-century belief that Spain is part of the Oriental other: "Every traveller in Spain who does not carry about samples of calicoes and silks is taken for an Englishman (*inglesito*). It is the same thing in the East"¹¹⁵ (Mérimée, 2007:29).

¹¹⁴ While records show that Mérimée had many female friends with whom he corresponded, not much is known about any romantic involvements.

¹¹⁵ "En Espagne, tout voyageur qui ne porte pas avec lui des échantillons de calicot ou de soieries passe pour un Anglais, *inglesito*. Il en est de même en Orient" (Mérimée, 1965:109).

One of the most noticeable examples of paratextuality in *Carmen* can be found in Chapter Three where Mérimée interrupts Don José's narration. In this instance of authorial interruption, Mérimée adds a footnote in which he relates the story of a king, Don Pedro, who kills a young man in the streets of Seville. This footnote serves as proof of the narrator's well-informed knowledge of the history and the folklore of not only Spain, but also of Seville. The narrator reports that, when Don Pedro tries to flee the scene of the murder, an old woman recognizes him by the light of a *candilejo* (a small lamp) because of the characteristic cracking of his knees. The officer in charge of investigating the murder knows the king is guilty of the murder and (in order to sidestep the king's decree that all duellists should be beheaded) cuts off the head of one of the king's statues and sets it up in the street where the young man was murdered. The narrator claims that the street, *Calle del Candilejo* – named after the little lamp – along with a statue of Don Pedro can still be found in Seville¹¹⁶ (Mérimée, 2007:55, 56). The narrator extends the narrative surrounding Don Pedro by adding a footnote on the relationship between Don Pedro and “the *Bari Crasilla* – the great gipsy queen”¹¹⁷ (Mérimée, 2007:90) who is claimed to have bewitched the king.

Ultimately, the use of paratextuality in *Carmen* serves to enhance the perception of Mérimée's authority because of his substantiated knowledge of the history and ideology of the Spanish and Gypsy societies. Although the story of *Carmen* is narrated by an omniscient French narrator, Mérimée is the speaker by proxy. In the last paragraph of *Carmen* Mérimée asserts that he is sure that he has “said enough to give the readers of *Carmen* a favourable idea of [his] *Romany* studies”¹¹⁸ (Mérimée, 2007:103). However, he cannot resist throwing in a final Gypsy proverb as

¹¹⁶ “Quoi qu’il en soit, il existe encore à Séville une rue du Candilejo, et dans cette rue un buste de pierre qu’on dit être le portrait de don Pédre” (Mérimée, 1965:133).

¹¹⁷ “On a accusé Marie Padilla d’avoir ensorcelé le roi don Pédre. Une tradition populaire rapporte qu’elle avait fait présent à la reine Blanche de Bourbon d’une ceinture d’or, qui parut aux yeux fascinés du roi comme un serpent vivant. De là la répugnance qu’il montra toujours pour la malheureuse princesse” (Mérimée, 1965:163).

¹¹⁸ “En voilà assez pour donner aux lecteurs de *Carmen* une idée avantageuse de mes études sur le rommani” (Mérimée, 1965:174).

proof of his superior knowledge: “Between closed lips no fly can pass”¹¹⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:103).

5.4 Narrative aspects in *Carmen*

5.4.1 Plot

Mérimée’s novella consists of four chapters which recount the experiences of a French archaeologist who visits Spain in order to search for “the site of the memorable struggle in which Caesar played double or quits, once and for all, with the champions of the Republic”¹²⁰ (Mérimée, 2007:1). The narrator’s search for historical spaces and objects reminds one strongly of Mérimée’s own position as Inspector General of Historical Monuments. During the early stages of his journey, he meets a Spanish bandit, Don José, who has a bounty on his head. Don José invites the narrator to join him at a bug-infected house for the night, but the narrator’s guide, Antonio, is uncomfortable with these arrangements and sets out to fetch the authorities so that he can claim the reward for Don José’s capture. The narrator helps Don José escape the authorities and then continues with his travels.

In Córdoba¹²¹ the narrator meets a gypsy woman called Carmen. He accepts her invitation to read his fortune but, before she can do so, an irate man interrupts them. The man turns out to be Don José – Carmen’s jealous lover. The narrator leaves Córdoba to continue his travels and upon his return finds that Don José has been incarcerated and sentenced to death for Carmen’s murder.

During the narrator’s visit to the prison cells, Don José relates his version of the events that led to Carmen’s death to the French narrator. It would seem that Carmen had coerced Don José to participate in illegal activities along with her husband and

¹¹⁹ “*En retudi panda nasti abela macha. En close bouche, n’entre point mouche*” (Mérimée, 1965:174).

¹²⁰ “je pensais qu’il fallait chercher aux environs de Montilla le lieu mémorable où, pour la dernière fois, César joua quitte ou double contre les champions de la république” (Mérimée, 1965:91).

¹²¹ In her translation of Mérimée’s *Carmen*, Lady Sophia Loyd (1853 – 1936) translates Córdoba, the capital city of Córdoba Province in Spain, as Cordova – an acceptable English translation of the proper noun. However, as there is a port and city in western Alaska named Cordova I shall use *Córdoba*, in order to avoid confusion.

another bandit. Despite his initial resistance, Don José – within this degenerate context of Gypsy culture – had turned to a life of crime. Don José could not resist because of his love for Carmen. Not only had he committed petty theft, but also murdered her husband in order to have her all to himself. Carmen and Don José have a tumultuous relationship and, eventually, Carmen admits that she no longer loves him. In an act of premeditated murder, Don José stabs Carmen to death.

Chapter Four of this novella was added only in 1847 and reads like a polemic documentation of the Gypsies' culture and their use of language. It was not unusual for Mérimée to present his fiction as documentaries, using a French archaeologist as first person narrator (Cropper, 2001:60). In *La Vénus d'Ille*, as in *Carmen*, the narrator is a French archaeologist who documents the events during a visit to Ille in the South of France.

In Chapter Four of *Carmen* Mérimée documents the Gypsies' nomadic lifestyle, their perceived indifference towards evangelical Christian religion, their physical characteristics, their trades, the questionable character of their women, their cultural practices and their language. Usually it is assumed that a documentary work, such as is implied in the last chapter of *Carmen*, would hold a measure of truth and authenticity. However, in considering the authenticity of documentary writing, Wareheim (2001:ix) justifiably points out that “[t]heories of postmodernism have problematized and undermined such ‘truth’ claims, making a powerful case against documentary work.”

5.4.2 Context

To a large extent this novella should be regarded as an example of the genre of travel novels. Both the frame narrator and the male protagonist in this novel are travellers. The events depicted take place in Córdoba, Granada, Seville, Ronda and the Sierra mountains. Cropper (2001:51) points out that “Mérimée’s official travel reports and his fiction would intersect at many points to such an extent that his short stories are frequently read as extensions of his official *notes de voyage*.” As such, *Carmen* has been linked to Mérimée’s visit to Spain in 1845.

Mérimée uses Spain as an exotic geographical context for *Carmen* and succeeds in exoticizing differences between the imperialist Self and the non-Western Other. He depicts Spains as simultaneously enchanting and beautiful, but also ominous and harsh. These paradoxical characteristics of Spain are established early in the novella. At the outset of the narrator's journey, he travels across the Cachena plain, "parched with thirst, scorched by a burning sun"¹²² (Mérimée, 2007:10). Just as he begins to curse his surroundings, he notices a patch of green in the distance. On investigating, the narrator finds an oasis that McClary (1992:4) interprets as "an uncannily feminine landscape". The narrator describes it as follows:

I beheld a sort of natural amphitheatre, thoroughly shaded by the steep cliffs that lay all around it. It was impossible to imagine any more delightful halting place for a traveler. At the foot of the precipitous rocks, the stream bubbled upward and fell into a little basin, lined with sand that was as white as snow. Five or six splendid evergreen oaks, sheltered from the wind, and cooled by the spring, grew beside the pool, and shaded it with their thick foliage¹²³ (Mérimée, 2007:10).

This description of the geographical context reflects the Self/Other binarism found in *Carmen*. It depicts the possibility of the European and imperialist Self to function as an enlightened, superior and controlled being within the degradation, decay, immorality and savagery of the exotic Other's context.

In *Carmen*, the perception of Spain as a violent context is reflected in the use of the space called *Calle del Candilejo*. This space is notorious for the murder King Pedro – committed decades before Carmen and Don José frequent it. Not only do Carmen and Don José spend intimate moments within this space, but this is also the space in which Carmen plots Don José's involvement with criminals like the smugglers.

¹²² "mourant de soif, brûlé par un soleil de plomb" (Mérimée, 1965:92).

¹²³ "A peine eus-je fait une centaine de pas, que la gorge, s'élargissant tout à coup, me montra une espèce de cirque naturel parfaitement ombragé par la hauteur des escarpements qui l'entouraient. Il était impossible de rencontrer un lieu qui promît au voyageur une halte plus agréable. Au pied de rochers à pie, la source s'élançait en bouillonnant, et tombait dans un petit bassin tapissé d'un sable blanc comme la neige. Cinq à six beaux chênes verts, toujours à l'abri du vent et rafraîchis par la source, s'élevaient sur ses bords, et la couvraient de leur épais ombrage" (Mérimée, 1965:92, 93).

5.4.3 Characterization

Mérimée's characterization of Spain and its inhabitants is the one narrative aspect by means of which he succeeds best in constructing the identity of the exotic Other. Throughout the novella, the stereotypical characteristics attributed to Gypsies include their racial difference, their religious indifference, their inferiority of class, and their amoral and immoral behaviour, especially of their women. Carmen and most of her accomplices are exoticized and depicted as proletarian, picaresque,¹²⁴ unscrupulous and immoral¹²⁵ characters because of their race, gender and/or class.

The depiction of the Spaniards and the Gypsies as the exotic Other is the most significant marginalization of a collective identity in *Carmen*, which is the result of the depiction of Spain as an exotic and dangerous space, the juxtaposed correlation between Spain and the East and the stereotypical depiction of individuals' characters and ideologies.

The juxtaposition of Spain and the East, as well as their correlation, is established early in the novella when the narrator explains that "[i]n Spain the giving and accepting of a cigar establishes bonds of hospitality similar to those founded in Eastern countries on the partaking of bread and salt"¹²⁶ (Mérimée, 2007:13, 14). The similarities in the cultural practices of the two spatial contexts imply a commonality in cultural identity. The narrator's knowledge and enunciations regarding the collective identity of Spaniards and Gypsies are deemed credible because he "knew enough of the Spanish character"¹²⁷ (Mérimée, 2007:16). The ultimate depiction of Gypsies as the exotic Other is achieved in Chapter Four of the novella, which will be discussed in greater detail below.

¹²⁴ A picaresque character is a character who is marginalized and abused as a child by the society within which he lives and who is destined to live a life of crime (Viljoen, 2007:2). Such a character usually turns on his society in acts of vengeance. In the case of Carmen, Don José claims that "[i]t's the *calle* [blacks] who are to blame for having brought her [Carmen] up as they did" (Mérimée, 2007:93).

¹²⁵ Gypsies were regarded as immoral because they did not comply with the accepted nineteenth-century European norms of morality (refer to Chapter Three of this thesis as a reminder of nineteenth-century imagination of the Other's sexuality).

¹²⁶ "En Espagne, un cigare donné et reçu établit des relations d'hospitalité, comme en Orient le partage du pain et du sel" (Mérimée, 1965:95).

¹²⁷ "Je connaissais assez le caractère espagnol" (Mérimée, 1965:97).

When the narrator first meets Carmen, he cannot immediately determine her ethnic identity. He considers that she might be either Andalusian, Moorish or Jewish. From the very start, however, he has no doubt that she can be nothing else but the exotic Other. Therefore, he does not find it surprising when she informs him that she is a Gypsy. The narrator describes the Gypsies as extraordinarily dark with large, black, slanting eyes and long dark lashes¹²⁸ (Mérimée, 2007:95). Other women of Carmen's acquaintance, including her landlady, Lillas Pastia, and the women to whose room Carmen takes Don José, are described as "an old fried-fish seller, a gypsy, as black as a Moor" (Mérimée, 2007:53) and "a through-paced servant of the devil"¹²⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:56). Even the old woman in whose house the narrator spends a night with Don José is described as "black as soot, and dressed in loathsome rags"¹³⁰ (Mérimée, 2007:17).

In fact, Mérimée's opinion of the Spanish Gypsy women's beauty is very unflattering and harsh. In the fourth chapter of *Carmen* he claims that "beauty is very uncommon among the Spanish gitanas. When very young, they may pass as being attractive in their ugliness, but once they have reached motherhood, they become utterly repulsive"¹³¹ (Mérimée, 2007:95, 96). He continues to describe the men and women as filthy with unkempt and greasy hair.

Mérimée (2007:98) professes that "[o]ne remarkable feature in the gypsy character is their indifference about religion".¹³² When the narrator tries to guess from where Carmen comes, he claims that she might be from "the country of Jesus"¹³³ (Mérimée, 2007:29). Her answer is representative of nineteenth-century opinion that Gypsies

¹²⁸ "Leur teint est très basané, toujours plus foncé que celui des populations parmi lesquelles ils vivent...Leurs yeux sensiblement obliques, bien fendus, très noirs, sont ombragés par des cils longs et épais" (Mérimée, 1965:167).

¹²⁹ "Lillas Pastia, un vieux marchand de friture, bohémien, noir comme un Maure...vraie servante de Satan, vint nous ouvrir" (Mérimée, 1965:131 & 133).

¹³⁰ "toutes les deux de couleur de suie et vêtues d'horribles haillons" (Mérimée, 1965:98).

¹³¹ "la beauté est fort rare parmi les Gitanas d'Espagne. Très jeunes elles peuvent passer pour de laiderons agréables; mais une fois qu'elles sont mères, elles deviennent repoussantes" (Mérimée, 1965:167).

¹³² "Un trait remarquable du caractère des Bohémiens, c'est leur indifférence en matière de religion" (Mérimée, 1965:169).

¹³³ "Je crois que vous êtes du pays de Jésus, à deux pas du paradis" (Mérimée, 1965:110).

are heathens: “Pshaw! The people here say there is no place in Paradise for us!”¹³⁴ (Mérimée, 2007:29). Mérimée claims that, while the Gypsies are not exactly atheists, they are known to conform to the dominant religious ideology of the space in which they reside. He declares that the extent of their indifference towards religion is reflected in that they do not even replace religion with superstition¹³⁵ (Mérimée, 2007:98).

However, Mérimée’s depiction of the Gypsy’s propensity towards superstition is contradictory. The narrator and Don José, as well as Mérimée (in the final chapter), relate incidents of Gypsy superstitions, magic and witchcraft that were manifested in, amongst other things, incantations, spells and fortune telling. Carmen confesses that she knew beforehand that Don José was going to kill her because she had seen a priest at her door the first time she met Don José. Carmen also saw further proof of what was to come when a hare ran across the road between the feet of Don José’s horse on the night that she was to be killed¹³⁶ (Mérimée, 2007:88). On that fateful night Don José leaves Carmen to arrange for a mass to be said for her soul and, upon his return, finds Carmen performing spells and singing magic songs¹³⁷ (Mérimée, 2007:90).

As mentioned earlier, the emergence of myths, clichés and stereotypical identities is a result of Gypsies being regarded as a religiously alienated minority group. Don José is the character who provides the reader with an anecdote regarding the clichéd identities of the Gypsies. One of the most obvious clichés in *Carmen* is expressed when Don José receives an Alcalá roll from his ‘cousin’ while in jail. He explains that “when [he] tried to cut it, [his] knife struck on something hard. [He] looked, and found a little English file, which had been slipped into the dough before

¹³⁴ “Bah! le paradis...les gens d’ici disent qu’il n’est pas fait pour nous” (Mérimée, 1965:110).

¹³⁵ “Les superstitions qui, chez les peuples grossiers, remplacent les sentiments religieux, leur sont également étrangères” (Mérimée, 1965:169).

¹³⁶ “Un lièvre a traversé le chemin entre les pieds de ton cheval. C’est écrit” (Mérimée, 1965:161).

¹³⁷ “Maintenant, elle était devant une table, regardant dans une terrine pleine d’eau le plomb qu’elle avait fait fondre, et qu’elle venait d’y jeter. Elle était si occupée de sa magie qu’elle ne s’aperçut pas d’abord de mon retour. Tantôt elle prenait un morceau de plomb et le tournait de tous les côtés d’un air triste, tantôt elle chantait quelque-une de ces chansons magiques où elles invoquent Marie Padilla” (Mérimée, 1965:163).

the roll had been baked. The roll also contained a gold piece of two *piasters*¹³⁸ (Mérimée, 2007:50). Carmen had sent Don José the loaf of bread with the file in order for him to escape.

The stereotypical image of a Gypsy woman as a fortune-teller can also be found in *Carmen*. On the evening when the narrator meets Carmen for the first time, she offers to read his fortune. She has all the tools necessary to perform this magical ceremony: “a pack of cards, a magnet, a dried chameleon, and a few other indispensable adjuncts of her art”¹³⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:32). The experience convinces the narrator that Carmen is an accomplished sorceress.

Another issue relating to the formation of the Gypsy identity concerns class difference. This difference is established in the narrator’s description of the clothes Carmen wears when they meet. The Frenchman describes her as being “dressed simply, almost poorly, in black as most working-girls are dressed in the evening.”¹⁴⁰ Women of the richer class only wear black in the daytime, at night they dress *a la francesa*” (Mérimée, 2007:28).

Not only does Carmen dress in a manner that confirms her lower-class standing, but she also dresses in a manner that is distinctly non-French. Once again she is distanced from the European self and marginalized as the exotic Other. Her physical appearance sets her apart to such an extent that, when the narrator takes her to an ice cream parlour in Córdoba, people stare at them because it is not customary for a gentleman to be seen with a lower class *gitana*¹⁴¹ (Mérimée, 2007:30).

¹³⁸ “En voulant le couper mon couteau rencontra quelque chose de dur. Je regarde, et je trouve une petite lime anglaise qu’on avait glissée dans la pâte avant que le pain fût cuit. Il y avait encore dans le pain une pièce d’or de deux piastres” (Mérimée, 1965:128,129).

¹³⁹ “Dès que nous fûmes seuls, la bohémienne tira de son coffre des cartes qui paraissaient avoir beaucoup servi, un aimant, un caméléon desséché, et quelques autres objets nécessaires à son art” (Mérimée, 1965:112).

¹⁴⁰ “Elle était simplement, peut-être pauvrement vêtue, tout en noir, comme la plupart des grisettes dans la soirée” (Mérimée, 1965:108).

¹⁴¹ ““J’eus alors tout le loisir d’examiner ma *gitana*, pendant que quelques honnêtes gens s’ébahissaient, en prenant leurs glaces, de me voir en si bonne compagnie” (Mérimée, 1965:111).

The perceived difference in class is further enhanced in Don José's description of the Spanish soldiers' innate indolence as opposed to his own work ethic: "When Spanish soldiers are on duty, they either play cards or go to sleep. I, like an honest Navarrese, always tried to keep myself busy"¹⁴² (Mérimée, 2007:40). The contrast between Don José's kind-hearted treatment of Carmen during her arrest¹⁴³ (Mérimée, 2007:45) and the crude remarks made by Spanish officers on the patio of the colonel's house also contribute to the perception of class difference¹⁴⁴ (Mérimée, 2007:52).

Don José's comparison between the Andalusian women and the girls from Navarre and the Basque Provinces serves to distinguish between regional classes. He tells the French archaeologist that he "didn't believe in any pretty girls who hadn't blue skirts and long plaits of hair falling on their shoulders. And besides, I was rather afraid of the Andalusian women"¹⁴⁵ (Mérimée, 2007:41). The theme of class differences between regions is also developed in Don José's description of the fight during which he killed Carmen's husband. The imagery used in this description is that of a nobleman from Navarre versus a Gypsy scoundrel. Don José makes a premeditated decision to get rid of Carmen's husband in a manner that befits his own country and culture¹⁴⁶ (Mérimée, 2007:79). During the duel, their respective stances are reflective of their class differences.

Garcia was already bent double, like a cat ready to spring upon a mouse. He held his hat in his left hand to parry with, and his knife in front of him – that's their Andalusian guard. I stood up in the Navarrese fashion, with

¹⁴² "Quand ils sont de service, les Espagnols jouent aux cartes, ou dorment; moi, comme un franc Navarrais, je tâchais toujours de m'occuper" (Mérimée, 1965:120).

¹⁴³ "A la prison, ma pauvre enfant, lui répondis-je le plus doucement que je pus, comme un bon soldat doit parler à un prisonnier, surtout à une femme" (Mérimée, 1965:124).

¹⁴⁴ "Puis j'entendais encore des officiers qui lui disaient bien des choses qui me faisaient monter le rouge à la figure" (Mérimée, 1965:131).

¹⁴⁵ "J'étais jeune alors; je pensais toujours au pays, et je ne croyais pas qu'il y eût de jolies filles sans jupes bleues et sans nattes tombant sur les épaules. D'ailleurs, les Andalouses me faisaient peur" (Mérimée, 1965:120).

¹⁴⁶ "Un jour peut-être je t'en débarrasserai, mais nous réglerons nos comptes à la façon de mon pays" (Mérimée, 1965:153).

my left arm raised, my left leg forward, and my knife held straight along my right thigh. I felt I was stronger than any giant¹⁴⁷ (Mérimée, 2007:80).

The contrast is thus between the animal-like prowling and pouncing of Carmen's husband and Don José's upright and proud stance, which recalls that used in the noble sport of fencing. This image construes a perception of vast differences in origin and upbringing between the two men.

However, *Carmen* does not only reflect on the difference in social and regional class, but also on the European/non-European dichotomy. When Carmen assumes that the narrator must be an Englishman, he replies that he is French and, as a gentleman, will be her servant¹⁴⁸ (Mérimée, 2007:29). The fact that the narrator is a Frenchman who is taken for an Englishman makes him a male European who is in actual fact twice removed from the inferior Gypsy female. Not only is he European – he is also male.

Another stereotypical formation of Gypsy identity in *Carmen* relates to their nomadic lifestyle. The opening paragraph of Chapter Four lists some of the countries in which the Gypsies can be found: “the southern and eastern provinces of Spain, in Andalusia, and Estramadura, in the kingdom of Murcia”¹⁴⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:94). The Gypsies' nomadic lifestyle is also described by Don José who pronounces that Gypsies do not belong to any particular country and “are always moving about, speak every language, and most of them are quite at home in Portugal, in France, in our Provinces, in Catalonia or anywhere else. They can even make themselves understood by Moors and English people”¹⁵⁰ (Mérimée, 2007:45, 46).

¹⁴⁷ “Garcia était déjà ployé en deux comme un chat prêt à s'élaner contre une souris. Il tenait son chapeau de la main gauche, pour parer, son couteau en avant. C'est leur garde andalouse. Moi, je me mis à la navarraise, droit en face de lui, le bras gauche levé, la jambe gauche en avant, le couteau le long de la cuisse droite. Je me sentais plus fort qu'un géant” (Mérimée, 1965:155).

¹⁴⁸ “Français et votre grand serviteur” (Mérimée, 1965:109).

¹⁴⁹ “La plupart demeurent, ou plutôt mènent une vie errante dans les provinces du Sud et de l'Est, en Andalousie, en Estramadure, dans le royaume de Murcie; il y en a beaucoup en Catalogne” (Mérimée, 1965:166).

¹⁵⁰ “Vous saurez que les bohémiens, monsieur, somme n'étant d'aucun pays, voyageant toujours, parlent toutes les langues, et la plupart sont chez eux en Portugal, en France, dans les provinces, en Catalogne, partout; même avec les Maures et les Anglais, ils se font entendre” (Mérimée, 1965:125).

Mérimée (2007:94) underscores the perception of Gypsies as being tinkers, migrant workers and criminals as a result of their nomadic lifestyle.

The men generally call themselves grooms, horse doctors, mule-clippers; to these trades they add the mending of saucepans and brass utensils, not to mention smuggling and other illicit practices. The women tell fortunes, beg, and sell all sorts of drugs.¹⁵¹

Besides using stereotyping as a narrative strategy, Mérimée also uses dehumanization to achieve the marginalization of the exotic Other. He continuously describes characters as devoid of human characteristics. Besides the generalization in Chapter Four when Mérimée (2007:95) compares the Gypsies' glance to that of a wild creature,¹⁵² the first example of this dehumanization is the narrator's use of the word *tame* in his description of Don José's reaction to his own prudent and non-offensive behaviour. Don José, whom the narrator describes as savage, becomes "tamer"¹⁵³ (Mérimée, 2007:13). However, this does not prevent Don José from still exhibiting animalistic behaviour in "[eating] like a starving wolf"¹⁵⁴ (Mérimée, 2007:15), or the narrator's guide, Antonio, describing Don José as a savage brute and declaring that it is necessary to "[rid] the country of such vermin"¹⁵⁵ (Mérimée, 2007:22).

The narrator's description of Carmen's physical appearance includes animal imagery such as the description of her hair as "black, with blue lights on it like a raven's wings"¹⁵⁶ (Mérimée, 2007:31) and by comparing her eyes with those of a wolf – simultaneously sensual and fierce. Mérimée (2007:32) likens the look in a wolf's

¹⁵¹ "D'ordinaire, les hommes exercent les métiers de maquignon, de vétérinaire et de tondeur de mulets; ils y joignent l'industrie de raccommoder le poêlons et les instruments de cuivre, sans parler de la contrebande et autres pratiques illicites. Les femmes disent la bonne aventure, mendient et vendent toutes sortes de drogues" (Mérimée, 1965:166).

¹⁵² "On ne peut comparer leur regard qu'à celui d'une bête fauve" (Mérimée, 1965:167).

¹⁵³ "Évidemment il s'humanisait; car il s'assit en face de moi, toutefois sans quitter son arme" (Mérimée, 1965:94).

¹⁵⁴ "Il dévorait comme un loup affamé" (Mérimée, 1965:96).

¹⁵⁵ "Je suis un pauvre diable, monsieur, me disait-il; deux cents ducats ne sont pas à perdre, surtout quand il s'agit de délivrer le pays de pareille vermine" (Mérimée, 1965:103).

¹⁵⁶ "Ses cheveux, peut-être un peu gros, étaient noirs, à reflets bleus comme l'aile d'un corbeau, longs et luisants" (Mérimée, 1965:111).

eyes to that of a cat prowling and ready to pounce on a sparrow.¹⁵⁷ Carmen has the same look in her eyes and is, by proxy, capable of stalking her prey and devouring him. Even Carmen's sensuality is described using animal imagery. Don José describes her "swaying her hips, like a filly from the Cordova stud farm"¹⁵⁸ (Mérimée, 2007:41). Don José also attributes her refusal to submit to chauvinistic and patriarchal demands with her likeness to cats: they always do the opposite of what you want from them. Finally, Don José describes Carmen's merry behaviour as similar to that of a monkey's silly tricks¹⁵⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:78). The use of animal imagery in describing Carmen dehumanises her to the extent that she is marginalized and dismissed as inferior.

Ultimately, the narrator sees the inferiority of all the Gypsies as such that he laments their collective degradation: "Here's the sole remnant of the ancient populations of Munda Boetica [...] O Caesar! O Sextus Pompeius, if you were to revisit this earth how astounded you would be!"¹⁶⁰ (Mérimée, 2007:17).

Besides constructing the collective identity of Gypsies as the exotic Other, it is in his portrayal of the Gypsy female as an exotic character, that Mérimée achieves marginalization at its most expressive. The young women of Seville are portrayed as *grizettes*¹⁶¹ who have no chastity. Mérimée (2007:96, 97) claims that a young Gypsy women's interest, just like that of anyone of Spanish origin, has to be earned.¹⁶² He points out that these women will settle for as little as a couple of *piastres* and the French narrator claims that the women will settle for a silk mantilla. According to the narrator, men who are interested in benefiting from these women's favours "have

¹⁵⁷ "Ses yeux surtout avaient une expression à la fois voluptueuse et farouche que je n'ai trouvée depuis à aucun regard humain. Œil de bohémien, œil de loup, c'est un dicton espagnol qui dénote un bonne observation" (Mérimée, 1965:111,112).

¹⁵⁸ "et elle s'avancait en se balançant sur ses hanches comme une pouliche du haras de Cordoue" (Mérimée, 1965:121).

¹⁵⁹ "jamais singe ne fit plus de gambades, de grimaces, de diableries" (Mérimée, 1965:153).

¹⁶⁰ "Voilà tout ce qui reste, me dis-je, de la population de l'antique Munda Bætica! O César! Ô Sextus Pompée! que vous seriez surpris si vous reveniez au monde!" (Mérimée, 1965:98).

¹⁶¹ Women of easy morals.

¹⁶² "Il faut leur plaire, il faut les mériter...cet homme immoral aurait eu plus de succès en montrant deux ou trois piastres" (Mérimée, 1965:168).

nothing to do but bend down and pick their fish up”¹⁶³ (Mérimée, 2007:41). Carmen, who is regarded as representative of these women, is dressed in such a way that any honourable man in Navarre would have regarded her as evil enough to cross himself on seeing her.

There is nothing in Carmen’s behaviour that befits a woman from nineteenth-century European society. The fact that *Carmen* is set in the *Occident* allows for the inclusion of overt sensuality that would otherwise have been against the mores of nineteenth-century society. Said (2003:190) claims that during the nineteenth-century, “sex in society entailed a web of legal, moral, even political and economic obligations of an entailed and certainly encumbering sort.” Taruskin (2010:390) includes the “exotic sexpot or sex toy” stereotypical depictions of the Other, along with “acts of despotic violence, depraved luxury, picturesque or orgiastic rites and sacrifices, and so on.” He claims that these stereotypes allowed for moral censure and the indulgence of voyeurism (Taruskin, 2010:390).

Compared to other female characters in the novella, Carmen does not even comply with the norms appropriate to women of her own kind. Other brigands’ women, such as Jose-Maria’s girlfriend, are modest, submissive and tolerant of their partners’ infidelity and abuse. In fact, Mérimée’s novella creates the perception that abuse is acceptable because women do not only accept it, they actually thrive on it¹⁶⁴ (Mérimée, 2007:73). Carmen is quite the opposite from Jose-Maria’s girlfriend. She is depicted as defiant, unscrupulous, immoral and often out of control. She is prone to throwing tantrums, seduces and incites both men and women to commit criminal acts or to look the other way when such acts are committed. Carmen is sketched as prone to childish and destructive behaviour; she thinks nothing of throwing food against the walls, or breaking her host’s only crockery¹⁶⁵ (Mérimée, 2007:57).

¹⁶³ “Il y a peu de ces demoiselles qui refusent une mantille de taffetas, et les amateurs, à cette pêche-là, n’ont qu’à se baisser pour prendre le poisson” (Mérimée, 1965:120).

¹⁶⁴ “Il était toujours à courir après toutes les filles, il la malmenait, puis quelquefois il s’avisait de faire le jaloux. Une fois, il lui donna un coup de couteau. Eh bien, elle ne l’en aimait que davantage. Les femmes sont ainsi faites, les Andalouses surtout” (Mérimée, 1965:148).

¹⁶⁵ “Elle écrasait des yemas en les lançant contre la muraille” (Mérimée, 1965:134).

Carmen's relationship with Don José is one that testifies of contradictory emotions and temperamental behaviour. Don José admits that her "temper was like the weather in our country"¹⁶⁶ (Mérimée, 2007:62). However, Don José is the one person whom Carmen treats with some measure of honesty. She confesses to be a troublemaker and warns Don José that she is not what she pretends to be. She even warns him that getting involved with her would imminently lead to his death by hanging¹⁶⁷ (Mérimée, 2007:65, 72). She does not allow him to think that he is anything more than her *minchorro* – her lover. She has a husband to whom she is loyal and whose orders she would consider following. Don José cannot lay claim to that. Ultimately Carmen becomes representative of everything that characterizes the exotic Other.

It is interesting that Mérimée cannot bring himself so far as to exoticize Carmen's male counterpart, Don José, to the same extent that he does Carmen. There is a perception of Don José's superiority based on his gender. This perception is brought about by the differences in Mérimée's construction of these two characters with the help of the narrator. Although the narrator behaves in almost the same way upon meeting both characters, there are subtle differences.

The first thing that the narrator does upon meeting Don José, standing with his weapon ready to attack, is to offer him a cigar – a token of cultural and male bonding. Upon meeting Carmen, the narrator rapidly gets rid of the cigar he has been smoking, presumably out of courtesy. However, when Carmen indicates that she is not averse to enjoying smoking herself, the narrator offers her a *papelito*. Surely a woman cannot be allowed to enjoy something as masculine as a cigar! In both the case of Don José and of Carmen, the narrator's next act is to offer something to eat. He shares a meal of ham and bread with Don José; food with substance and nutrition. Carmen is invited to an ice cream parlour for a delicious treat that one can forego if necessary.

¹⁶⁶ "mais Carmen avait l'humeur comme est le temps chez nous" (Mérimée, 1965:139).

¹⁶⁷ "Ne t'ai-je pas promis de te faire pendre? Canari, nous nous reverrons avant que tu sois pendu" (Mérimée, 1965:141, 147).

The use of space is significant in both cases and contributes to the male/female dichotomy. While the narrator meets both Don José and Carmen outside in the open air (at the oasis and on a bridge respectively), the action soon moves to more intimate spaces. However, while Don José invites the narrator to share some accommodation where the bug-infested mattress is the biggest threat, Carmen lures the narrator from the ice cream parlour to the intimacy of her room under the guise of reading his fortune. When Don José enters and interrupts their little get together, Carmen's reactions make it clear that the narrator was in mortal danger. Don José leads the narrator outside, thus saving his life. As long as man keeps to the periphery of the female world, he is safe. He can watch from a distance as she bathes, he can escort her to public places, he can watch from outside the cigarette factory and be safe. However, when he dares cross the threshold into her personal space, he is doomed to be seduced and robbed of any free will.

Another strategy used by Mérimée to subtly distinguish between Don José and Carmen is to depict the former as racially, culturally and socially different from the latter. Don José Lizzarrabengoa is a *hidalgo*,¹⁶⁸ a military man with "fair hair, blue eyes, large mouth, good teeth, small hands, fine shirt, a velvet jacket with silver buttons on it, white leather gaiters and a bay horse"¹⁶⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:17). He is a member of the Basque bourgeoisie who could provide proof of his noble genealogy. During the course of the narrative, however, we learn that Don José is a savage-looking liar and as unreliable as the French narrator. Even Don José's title is questionable. The only proof we have that he is a Don is the unreliable narrator informing us of this fact. Don José claims to have proof of his noble genealogy, but would not be able to produce it on demand¹⁷⁰ (Mérimée, 2007:39). Despite his claim off "still [having] a soldier's code of honour"¹⁷¹ (Mérimée, 2007:50), he frequents taverns, gets involved in smuggling, cannot resist beautiful women and eventually

¹⁶⁸ Colmeiro (2001:136) translates *hidalgo* as "son of something". The Oxford Spanish Dictionary (1994:394) denotes it as "gentleman, nobleman (*from the lower ranks of the nobility*)."

¹⁶⁹ "Cheveux blonds, yeux bleus, grande bouche, belles dents, les mains petites; une chemise fine, une veste de velours à boutons d'argent, des guêtres de peau blanche, un cheval bai" (Mérimée, 1965:98).

¹⁷⁰ "Je m'appelle don José Lizzarrabengoa, et vous connaissez assez l'Espagne, monsieur, pour que mon nom vous dise aussitôt que je suis Basque et vieux chrétien" (Mérimée, 1965:119).

¹⁷¹ "J'avais encore mon honneur de soldat, et désertre me semblait un grand crime" (Mérimée, 1965:129).

becomes a murderer. The ultimate denial of his ‘true’ identity lies in the fact that, within the exotic space, he is no longer known as Don José Lizzarrabengoa, but as José Navarro – a notorious bandit without a title.

However, Mérimée provides Don José with at least some justifications for his actions. In relating his very first act of violence – the murder of a lieutenant in his regiment – Don José implies that it was an unfortunate accident. He had merely touched his sword to the body of the lieutenant and the latter ran into it, fatally wounding himself¹⁷² (Mérimée, 2007:63).

Another excuse offered for Don José’s degenerate behaviour is his belief that Carmen is a devilish temptress who has seduced him.

Sir, a man may turn rogue in sheer thoughtlessness. You lose your head over a pretty girl, you fight another man about her, there is a catastrophe, you have to take to the mountains, and you turn from a smuggler into a robber before you have time to think about it¹⁷³ (Mérimée, 2007:72).

This justification belies the fact that Mérimée’s narrative provides ample proof of Don José’s propensity for violence as well as various instances where Carmen’s violent death is foreshadowed. Don José confesses to have felt like strangling her¹⁷⁴ (Mérimée, 2007:66) and tells how he threatened to cut her face and, after a violent argument, he had hit Carmen¹⁷⁵ (Mérimée, 2007:86). Eventually, having threatened to do so, he kills her.

5.4.4 Focalization

The events in *Carmen* are depicted as perceived by a first-person frame-narrator – a French archaeologist who seems to be the epitome of superiority and civilization (McClary, 1992:1). This narrator has the advantage of being male, European and Christian – everything that the exotic Other is not. Furthermore, the narrator is

¹⁷² “puis, comme le lieutenant me poursuivait, je mis la pointe au corps, et il s’enferra” (Mérimée, 1965:139).

¹⁷³ “Monsieur, on devient coquin sans y penser. Une jolie fille vous fait perdre la tête, on se bat pour elle, un malheur arrive, il faut vivre à la montagne, et de contrebandier on devient voleur avant d’avoir réfléchi” (Mérimée, 1965:147).

¹⁷⁴ “Lorsqu’elle parlait ainsi, j’avais envie de l’étrangler” (Mérimée, 1965:142).

¹⁷⁵ “Nous eûmes une violente dispute, et je la frappai” (Mérimée, 1965:159).

presented as having superior intelligence, being well traveled and rather wealthy. His superior intellect and interests are evident in his search for historical facts relating to one of the oldest civilization – that of the Romans – and his intimate knowledge of the Spanish and Gypsy cultures as is evident in the footnotes in the novella.

However, it could be debated whether this narrator is at all reliable. Taking into account the ideological context from which he comes in which Gypsies are regarded as the exotic Other, it is likely that his perceptions and depictions are tainted. He is self-righteous and believes his perceptions to be the only authentic truth. This is evident in his disbelief in geographical authorities' location for the battlefield of Munda and his hope that the paper he will publish on completion of his travels will "remove any hesitation that may still exist in the minds of all *honest* archeologists"¹⁷⁶ (Mérimée, 2007:10, my italics). His arrogance derives from a patronizing and imperialist ideology that is evident in his claim that his findings will "finally settle the geographical problem on the solution of which the whole of learned Europe hangs"¹⁷⁷ (Mérimée, 2007:10). The narrator is also quick to jump to conclusions without possessing the facts. Shortly after having met Don José, the narrator draws a quick conclusion that the latter has to be Jose-Maria, a notorious brigand¹⁷⁸ (Mérimée, 2007:16).

The narrator's compunction about assisting Don José's escape from the authorities, his good manners in extinguishing his cigar when he meets Carmen – an essentially French courtesy¹⁷⁹ (Mérimée, 2007:28) and his sense of propriety in not expecting Carmen to foretell his fortune in a public ice cream parlour are all proof of his superiority. The traits of French civilization, which is perceived to be controlled and with a value system that will withstand scrutiny (McClary, 1992:2), are contrasted to the narrator's categorizing of the characters in *Carmen* into Gypsies and Basques,

¹⁷⁶ "Un mémoire que je publierai prochainement ne laissera plus, je l'espère, aucune incertitude dans l'esprit de tous les archéologues de bonne foi" (Mérimée, 1965:91).

¹⁷⁷ "En attendant que ma dissertation résolve enfin le problème géographique qui tient toute l'Europe savante en suspens" (Mérimée, 1965:92).

¹⁷⁸ "Je ne doutai pas que je n'eusse affaire à un contrebandier, peut-être à un voleur. Si j'étais à côté de José-Maria?" (Mérimée, 1965:97).

¹⁷⁹ "Je jetai mon cigare aussitôt. Elle comprit cette attention d'une politesse toute française" (Mérimée, 1965:108, 109).

and his depiction of the Spanish bandit and gypsy woman as inferior in standing, education and value systems.

The French narrator never becomes part of the misdemeanors in the narrative. He merely observes and relates his observations to the reader. Should he be placed in a situation where his actions might be perceived as suspicious, he is quick to explain and justify. He acknowledges that he had earlier been a scoundrel who had dabbled in occult sciences, but claims to have been cured of his interest in such dubious matters¹⁸⁰ (Mérimée, 2007:30). Another example of the narrator's justification of his actions involves his joining other men from Córdoba to watch some women bathing naked in a river¹⁸¹ (Mérimée, 2007:27); he describes the experience as poetic and fanciful. The fact that it is essentially voyeuristic is downplayed in the light of the men having to strain their eyes to see something, if anything at all. Ultimately his moral lethargy is justified in an attitude that reflects the belief that when one is away from the imperialist civilization, it is understandable and justified to "[eat] supper with a highway robber [or] eat ices with a servant of the devil"¹⁸² (Mérimée, 2007:30). Eventually this voyeuristic narrator has gathered enough evidence through what he has seen and heard to present the reader with overwhelming evidence of his own authority and the exotic Other's dysfunctional character and ideology.

In the third chapter of the novella the French narrator relinquishes his hold on the narrative to another narrator – Don José. Don José is quite the opposite of the French narrator. He is also male but he is a poor non-European, non-Christian, immoral and violent, uneducated and uncivilized man (McClary, 1992:3). The French narrator's biased description of Don José's actions to this point not only causes the reader to question the credibility of Don José's narrative, but also assists the reader

¹⁸⁰ "Sortant du collège, je l'avouerai à ma honte, j'avais perdu quelque temps à étudier les sciences occultes et même plusieurs fois j'avais tenté de conjurer l'esprit de ténèbres. Guéri depuis longtemps de la passion de semblables recherches" (Mérimée, 1965:110).

¹⁸¹ "Au dernier coup de cloche, toutes ces femmes se déshabillent et entrent dans l'eau. Alors ce sont des cris, des rires, un tapage infernal. Du haut du quai, les hommes contemplant les baigneuses, écarquillent les yeux, et ne voient pas grand-chose" (Mérimée, 1965:107, 108).

¹⁸² "Bon! Me dis-je; la semaine passée, j'ai soupé avec un voleur de grand chemin, allons aujourd'hui prendre des glaces avec une servante du diable" (Mérimée, 1965:110).

to interpret the narrated events as substantiating the narrator's depiction of the exotic Other. As such, Don José also becomes an unreliable narrator.

It is only in the final chapter that the focalization changes and it seems as if the French narrator regains control when he writes about not only the nature of the others' language, but also of their propensity for migration, the permissive behaviour of their women, their physical appearance, their religious indifference and their superstitions. The style and register of this chapter suggests the documentation of facts and one cannot help but think that this chapter reflects an authorial view, presented through mouth of the French narrator.

5.5 Conclusion

Mérimée's novella, *Carmen*, is a text in which the collective identity of Gypsies and the individual identity of women are marginalized by depicting them as the exotic Other. This marginalization is achieved by means of narrative strategies such as depicting Spain as the geographical context of the exotic Other, juxtaposing the European Self and the Spanish Other (as part of the Oriental Other), the use of stereotypes, clichés and myths, the dehumanization of characters and the dichotomies involving gender, race and class. Mérimée's depiction is presented by means of an unreliable first-person frame narrator who is continuously interrupted by an authorial voice in instances of paratextuality and documentary writing. The result of Mérimée's depiction of the collective identity of Gypsies is that they are perceived to be unsavoury characters who do not fit in with European mainstream society and who inspire only decay and degradation wherever they go. The Gypsy woman (as represented by Carmen) is a particularly dangerous miscreant who seduces others to their imminent decline.

However, from a postmodernist point of view, Carmen's immoral, subversive and illegal conduct cannot merely be attributed to the innate qualities of her cultural context and her gender. A postmodernist analysis of Carmen's character allows for the possibility that her depiction is rooted in the bigoted perceptions of a prejudiced narrator and author. From a postmodernist perspective, Carmen is representative of all those who are marginalized. She is particularly representative of marginalized

women because of her perceived “liberated eroticism” (Conlon, 1997:8). Carmen is symbolic of a “refusal to obey men’s rules, heed national boundaries, uphold strict identity categories and thus, by extension, Spain’s refusal to be culturally dominated” (Singh-Brinkman, 2007:361).

McClary (1992:9) points out that, had she been male, many of Carmen’s actions would not only have been acceptable, but would also have been admired and praised. She defends her honour by striking out at the offender in a manner any man would and she successfully plans smuggling operations like the best of gang leaders. She succeeds in breaking her husband out of jail and even offers the same service to her lover, Don José. Carmen is the one who provides intelligence for successful robberies executed by the highway gangs. She is a force to be reckoned with and a threat to a chauvinistic male world that insists on being exclusive.

Therefore, there is no alternative but for Carmen to die at the end of this novella. In allowing her to live and to continue with her subversive behaviour, Mérimée would have had to allow the possibility that the imperialist and patriarchal ideologies are questionable and could be repudiated. The identities of Don José and Carmen are two opposite ends of a continuum; a continuum that constitutes some aspects of Spanish identity. In allowing Carmen to live and prosper, Mérimée would have allowed the centralization of a subversive female character who is a threat to the patriarchal society in which she lives. Her death neutralizes her powers and restores patriarchal ideology.

CHAPTER 6: COMPARING CARMEN AND U-CARMEN eKHAYELITSHA

Whereas the previous chapter analysed Mérimée's novella, this chapter focuses on a comparison between Bizet's opera and Dornford-May's film *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*. It is not the intention of this thesis to provide a detailed musical analysis of Bizet's *Carmen* as Susan McClary (1992) has already done so admirably. Therefore, the opera will be used as a matrix for a comparison with *U-Carmen*. The digital versatile disk (DVD) on which *U-Carmen* is captured is the primary text of this adaptation. In order to ensure that the comparison between the various texts is as reliable as possible, this thesis will refer also to another DVD on which a more traditional version of Bizet's *Carmen* has been captured. This DVD of a production at the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden in London was made in 2006.

Following general introductions to Bizet's *Carmen* as well as to Dornford-May's *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*, this chapter sets out to analyse the cinematic adaptation in order to determine how semiotics and narrative strategies are used to articulate contexts and identities. Because the analysis of *U-Carmen* will provide detailed discussions about issues such as contexts, exoticism and intertextuality as pertaining to the film, the introduction to *Carmen* will include brief thoughts on these concepts as well.

The analysis of *U-Carmen* emulates a close reading of a literary text, but takes into consideration the signifiante¹⁸³ of all the conventions of opera, as well as a few cinematic ones. It compares a more traditional approach of a stage production of *Carmen* (see footnote below) with the cinematic adaptation. Film stills (henceforth referred to simply as frames) from the DVDs of *Carmen*¹⁸⁴ and *U-Carmen*¹⁸⁵ will be used to illustrate and substantiate arguments. To structure the analysis as effectively

¹⁸³ The decision to use the term *signifiante* (see Chapter Two, page 19) instead of *significance* is based on the fact that the arguments in this chapter are based on meaning derived from analyses and interpretations of the primary texts.

¹⁸⁴ All film stills from *Carmen* were taken from the stage production at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London. This production was filmed in December 2006. It was directed by Francesca Zambello and conducted by Antonio Pappano. Costume and set designs were done by Tanya McCallin.

¹⁸⁵ All film stills from *U-Carmen* were taken from Dornford-May's cinematic adaptation (2005). The website for enquiries to purchase this DVD is <http://www.mnetcorporate.co.za>

as possible, I shall divide the film into sequences¹⁸⁶ (demarcated by means of duration according to hours, minutes and seconds) and refer to them as such during the discussion. Themes that will emerge during the course of the analysis will be considered In Chapter Seven which will serve as a conclusion to this thesis.

6.1 Bizet's *Carmen*

Bizet entered the opera scene in France at a stage when there was a real need for renewal in this genre. The three theatres in Paris where operatic performances were mainly hosted were the *Opéra*, the *Opéra-Comique* and the *Théâtre-Italien* (Lacombe, 2001:12). These institutions had already retreated into a comfort zone in which they preferred to revisit existing productions rather than perform newly created works. Because of the state's involvement in the theatres by way of subsidies, directors were obliged to adhere to specifications regarding choice of repertoire and staging. In 1863 another theatre, the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, caught the favourable attention of critics and audiences. Its director, Léon Carvalho, had moved the theatre from the auditorium of the *Théâtre-Historique* to the *Place du Châtelet* on 30 October 1862 (Lacombe, 2001:13). Having received a state grant of 100,000 francs, Carvalho commissioned Bizet to compose an opera in three acts and on 30 September 1863 *Les pêcheurs de perles* was first performed in the *Théâtre-Lyrique*.

In 1872, Bizet was commissioned to compose an opera of which the libretto was to be written by Ludovic Halévy (1831–1897) and Henri Meilhac (1834–1908). This commission came from Camille Du Locle, who was appointed co-director of the *Opéra-Comique*. It is believed that it was Bizet who suggested that Mérimée's novella should be adapted for the stage and that, while enthusiastic in principle, the librettists assigned to write the opera and the directors of the opera house had strong doubts about the morbid ending of the opera.

Davies (2005:2) points out that Mérimée's novella and Bizet's opera both allowed "bourgeois readers and audiences to indulge vicariously in low-life pleasures while

¹⁸⁶ Hayward (2006:348) defines a sequence as "composed of scenes, all relating to the same logical unit of meaning."

simultaneously retaining the moral high ground through and anticipated pleasure in Carmen's death". However, as the librettists and directors had feared, the initial reaction of Parisian audiences to Bizet's *Carmen* was not favourable. The opera is composed in the style of an *opéra-comique* but all the elements of this genre, mentioned earlier in this thesis, were developed even more in this daring work. Bizet's fusion of 'classical' music with music usually experienced in venues of ill-repute, such as brothels and night clubs, was found scandalous. Bizet was notorious for frequenting such venues and *Carmen* did not offer "merely characters who behave in unseemly ways but also the songs and dances he had picked up like a virus during his escapades" (McClary, 2005:207). Furthermore, a plot in which the female lead is ultimately murdered was not well received by the target audiences of the opera houses in Paris (McClary, 1992:20).

Bizet's operatic adaptation follows the primary narrative of Mérimée's novella. It tells the story of the destructive relationship between Don José Lizarrabengoa and Carmen, a Gypsy woman. Don José is a soldier who meets Carmen when she is arrested for attacking another woman in their place of employment. While guarding Carmen, Don José submits to Carmen's seduction and helps her escape. He loses his position in the military and becomes a fugitive himself. Over a period of time Don José's infatuation with Carmen results in his renouncing his earlier values and convictions and turning to a life of crime. When Carmen becomes involved with another man, the toreador Escamillo, Don José is consumed with jealousy and confronts Carmen. Her refusal to give in to his unreasonable demands infuriates him to such an extent that he kills her.

As expected, the stage adaptation of Mérimée's novella was a condensed version to allow the story of Carmen to be conveyed in approximately two and a half hours. The most noticeable differences between Mérimée's novella and the operatic adaptation are the omission of the French narrator and the inclusion of Micaëla as a foil for Carmen's character. McClary (1992:21) regards the inclusion of Micaëla's character as an attempt to conform to the strict "guidelines surrounding theatrical works [and thus] Micaëla was designed to contrast with Carmen, as the normative good girl who stands as the ideal against which Carmen herself appears all the more monstrous".

Another difference between the novella and the opera involves Don José. The depiction of this character in the novella elicits perceptions of him being a villain as much as he is a victim. In the opera he is depicted more as a man vulnerable to the cunning seduction of a woman without any scruples. In the opera Carmen's criminal activities are also downplayed and only her involvement with the smugglers is included in the libretto. This was done both out of respect for the sensitivities of nineteenth-century audiences and to limit the duration of the stage production.

There is, however, one element that the opera does have in common with the novella. The strong strands of exoticism evident in Mérimée's work, are maintained in the opera. McClary (1992:53) claims that "the exotic passages in *Carmen* are first and foremost products of Orientalism: they are fantasies about the Other firmly grounded in French culture". This is evident in more traditional versions of the opera, where set and costume designs contribute towards the disseminated perceptions of the exotic Other.¹⁸⁷ Baker (1990) provides photographs of some hand-coloured, lithographic stage designs for, what is believed to be, the 1875 première of *Carmen*. These lithographs are housed in the Choudens archives in Paris. They show the degree to which the set designs complied with the directions in the libretto and the staging manual (Baker, 1990:236, 237). These set and costume designs contributed strongly to the articulation of class, race and gender differences.

It is ironic that Bizet's *Carmen* (1875), commissioned for one of the major opera houses in Paris, was based on the novella of a Paris-born author (Mérimée) adapted by two French librettists and with music composed by a composer born in Paris who had never been to Spain. Even in recent times, more traditional versions of *Carmen*, such as the one at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London (2006) differences in class, still establish race and gender by the theatrical signs. If one looks at the set design (citrus tree and terracotta hue of the walls) and the costumes of all characters on stage in the first image, one can infer a Spanish setting and members from a variety of classes (Frame 3). There are well-dressed ladies and gentlemen from the upper class, soldiers and members of the working class. The

¹⁸⁷ See Chapter Four for a more detailed discussion on the semiotic value of the theatrical elements of opera.



Frame 3: *Carmen* (1875) by Bizet
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Film stills: DVD © Decca



Frame 4: *Carmen* (1875) by Bizet
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Film stills: DVD © Decca

presence of the uninhibited, exotic Other is immediately established with the group of women in the left hand bottom corner who are topless and busy washing themselves in public. This theme is developed even further in the following frame (Frame 4) in the physical positioning and costume of the woman sitting on the watering trough. Her sensuality, the presence of a feminine symbol in the water and the shape of the watering cans render this a feminized space in which moral degradation is unavoidable.

It is not only in the theatrical elements of the opera that exoticism prevails, but also in its musical vernacular and dialects.¹⁸⁸ Bizet's music for *Carmen* adheres to the musical exoticism of his era by linking the musical elements, instrumentation, structures and melodies of folk music in order to imply exotic identities. This can be demonstrated by mentioning only a few examples (see footnote 188).

Bizet employs technical devices such as the augmented second that marks the motif in the *andante moderato* section of the prelude to Act I (Bizet, 2002:4). McClary (1992:65) points out that this motif "has long been associated in Western music either with exotic Others (Jews, "Orientals", gypsies)". The augmented second as signifier of the exotic Other is also noticeable in the music that announces Carmen's entrance on stage (Bizet, 2002:41).

The modality of the aria that Carmen sings when Zuniga comes to arrest her after her altercation with another woman (Bizet, 2002:89), as well as the *Seguidilla* (Bizet, 2002:95), reminds one strongly of the flamenco. These examples are characterized by constant shifts in tonality and chromatic coloration. This chromatic coloration is an echo of the abundant use of chromaticism in the "Habañera". The combination of chromaticism with a functional rhythmic structure renders this aria as the ultimate signifier of Carmen's sexuality. McClary (1992:77) states that Carmen's

descent by half-steps through the tetrachord $d^2 - a^1$ is arranged so that we grasp the outline she implies (and thus are invited to desire the suggested outcome); as she moves through that descent, she alternately

¹⁸⁸ McClary (1992:62–110) provides a particularly detailed analysis of Bizet's musical score.

coaxes and frustrates. What is set up as a normative rhythmic motion from $d^2 - c\#^2$ is halted on c^2 .

It was mentioned In Chapter Three that exotic vernacularism also includes pedal points. There are several examples in Bizet's score where pedal points serve as the central axis. The music that follows the prelude to Act I (Bizet, 2002:5) begins with a pedal point on F, introducing us to an exotic context – a place far and foreign. A pedal point on G (the dominant degree of the home key) also introduces the women of the cigarette factory as the exotic female Other (Bizet, 2002:33). The men's fascination with the exotic female is signified in the pedal point on F (Bizet, 2002:42). A combination of pedal point, idiomatic instrumentation and melodic structure strongly signifies Carmen's sexual powers when Don José submits to her seduction just before he sings his aria "La fleur que tu m'avais jetée" (Bizet, 2002:199ff). An English Horn revisits the motif of Carmen's first entrance on stage, but now there is no reprieve from the anguish signified by the augmented second which is set against a d^b pedal point.

The strongest perception of local colour in *Carmen* relates to Spain. However, claims that the depiction of Spanish colour in *Carmen's* music is rooted in Spanish sources are not beyond scrutiny. The mere use of castanets and tambourines does not constitute Spanish colour. The habañera, for example, did not originate in Spain, but in Cuba. Furthermore, Bizet did not use the undiluted original form for Carmen's "Habañera",¹⁸⁹ but appropriated it to suit a depiction of her as being extremely seductive (McClary, 1992:56). What is undeniable is that Bizet's score "creates vivid images of the Other – Carmen's sexuality, her indicators of racial and class difference" (McClary, 1992:22). It can also be argued that *a priori* knowledge of Mérimée's novella and Spain, as well as general perceptions of Gypsies would have informed the nineteenth-century audiences' reception of Bizet's music. Even if the music was not 'authentically' Spanish, the audiences' filters would have retained perceptions of Spanish colours.

¹⁸⁹ Bizet complied with nineteenth-century customs that required the leading lady to perform a grand aria when she first enters the stage (Tiersot, 2003:568).

McClary (1992:57) points out that Carmen's musical characterization is further defined by her virtuosity in diverse musical languages. Bizet allows Carmen to switch from performing numbers that are infused with exotic colour to others that are more recognizable as belonging to 'high' opera. This musical schizophrenia further enhances perceptions of Carmen being unreliable and irrational.

It has already become clear from the preceding paragraphs that, besides the obvious intertextual relationship between Bizet's libretto, his music and Mérimée's novella, there are also other occurrences of intertextuality in his opera. It is believed that, before composing *Carmen*, Bizet had requested a list of all the Spanish songs available in the library of the Conservatoire in Paris and that the one he was most likely to have seen was *Echos d'Espagne*, published in 1872 (Tiersot, 2003:561). This collection is said to have contained examples of folk-dances such as the Seguidilla and the Habañera, both dance forms that are present in *Carmen*. Elements that some of the music in *Carmen* have in common with the songs in *Echos d'Espagne* include rhythmic and metric structure. For example, there is the 3/8 metre of the *Rondeñas* adopted in "Près des remparts de Séville" (Bizet, 2002:95) and the "Entr'acte" to Act IV (Bizet, 2002:334).

The original material for the "Habañera", in which Carmen declares her intention to make her own choices regarding love, is derived from *El arreglito*, a song by a Spanish composer, Iradier. Locke (2009:315) points out that *El arreglito* posits an "African-derived syncopation", where regular note groups are set against irregular note groups and dotted rhythmical patterns. This rhythmic structure is adapted in the aria and, along with other features such as descending chromatic lines and a melodic mode that coincides with a diatonic scale, renders it exotic in the extreme.

Bizet's propensity towards self-borrowing is also evident in *Carmen*. The first self-borrowing in *Carmen* occurs in Act II in Don José's aria "La fleur que tu m'avais jetée". The original song from which this aria is derived comes from Bizet's unfinished opera *Grisélidis*. However, whereas the aria "La fleur que tu m'avais jetée" is sung by a tenor in *Carmen*, the original song was written in C major and was intended for a baritone (Dean, 1960:244). Sadie (1980:751) points out that the first two themes from the finale of Bizet's *Symphony in C* (1855) foreshadow the music of

the bull-fight and the chorus of children in the opera respectively. The other self-borrowings in *Carmen* are all included in Act III of the opera. It is claimed that the “Entr’acte” to Act III was originally composed for *L’Arlésienne* (1872). Another piece from *L’Arlésienne* that found its way into *Carmen* is the ensemble “Quant au douanier”. In this act *Grisélidis* is also the source for the aria “Je dis que rien ne m’épouvante”. The last self-borrowing occurs in the finale of Act III.

Taking into consideration the discussions presented above, we can conclude that Bizet’s opera, just like Mérimée’s novella, is a text that depicts Spain as an exotic context and Gypsies as the exotic Other. The opera uses the semiotics of its conventions and a specific musical vernacular to marginalize particularly women and to depict them as overtly sexual and morally degenerate. *Carmen* is dangerous and responsible for Don José’s imminent decline.

6.2 Dornford-May’s *U-Carmen*

The cinematic adaptation *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha* (2005) grew out of a stage production of Bizet’s *Carmen* by the South African company, Dimpho Di Kompane. This stage production, sponsored by the Spier Wine Estate, was sung in English and featured a multiracial cast. Dornford-May emphasizes the choice they had made in casting African singers for both Don José and the character that alludes to the Toreador (Lulamile).¹⁹⁰ This choice reduces the emphasis on the themes of class and race evident in both Mérimée’s and Bizet’s texts.

After several performances abroad, the production was adapted for film, the first operatic cinema production shot in Southern Africa. It premiered in the township in which it was filmed, followed by screenings in a variety of locations, such as Burkina Faso, Toronto, Cannes, London, Stockholm and even in the South African parliament. It is a prizewinning production that was awarded the Golden Bear Award for best film at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2005.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with S. Viljoen in Cape Town on 28 July 2009.

This transcultural adaptation, which indigenizes *Carmen* and features an all-African cast, is sung in Xhosa and is set in a township close to Cape Town in the Western Cape, namely Khayelitsha. Chapter Seven will provide a more detailed discussion of this geographical context. The indigenization of *Carmen* means that everyone in *U-Carmen* is part of a marginalized community. Themes relating to racial stereotypes and class differences, as found in *Carmen*, are no longer as salient in the cinematic adaptation. The result is that more focus is placed on an African context in which the African Carmen as the embodiment of the exotic female Other is situated.

Part of the indigenization involves assigning African names to the characters in *Carmen* with the exception of the female lead. The credits of the film provide a peritext that contains a list from which the examples below have been taken.

Don José	Jongikhaya
Zuniga	Captain Gantana
Lillas Pastia	Bra Nkomo
Micaëla	Nomakhaya
Frasquita	Amanda
Mercedes	Pinki
Escamillo	Lulamile Nkomo

The smugglers, El Dancaïro and El Remendado and the guide are renamed: Kayza, Mthur and Azzizo respectively.

Dornford-May fuses and superimposes African music and township sounds with the music of *Carmen*. However, during a post-screening interview in London (2006), Pauline Malefane¹⁹¹ pointed out that the musical director, Charles Hazelwood, had been uncompromising in his request for Bizet's music to be treated with the utmost integrity (Davies & Dovey, 2010:41). While there are some who perceive the use of Bizet's music unaltered as turning "Africans into imitators, compromising their cultural heritage" (Davies & Dovey, 2010:41), the techniques used to incorporate African music and Bizet's music, as well as non-vocal and non-musical sounds, construct the multi-track medium as defined by Hutcheon (2006:42) which is very effective in articulating and shaping perceptions.

¹⁹¹ Pauline Malefane and Andiswa Kedama, both members of Dimpho di Kompane, translated *Carmen's* libretto from English to Xhosa.

The analysis of musical and non-musical aspects in this thesis involves multiple levels of intertextuality. Apart from being concerned with the relationship between the musical and non-musical texts of Bizet's opera *Carmen* with its precursor, that is Mérimée's eponymous novella, it also considers the relationship between Bizet's and Mérimée's texts in Dornford-May's *U-Carmen*. It should also be noted that the term *non-musical aspects* does not only refer to the libretto of the opera or Mérimée's novella; it also refers to the relationship between the texts and the macro-contexts in which they emerged and continue to exist. The level of intertextuality is expanded even more because the use of intertextual strategies of analysis highlights all these relationships .

6.3 Analyses

One of the questions that Locke (2009:11) asks is "whether a given musical influence or borrowing [...] is exotic, and to whom?" Would there be a difference in the perception of *U-Carmen* between, for example, viewers of different races or between those who know Bizet's opera and those who do not? Would the gender of viewers make a difference in how *U-Carmen* is perceived? Is exoticism only perceived from the outside in or is it possible for the Other to regard his own musical context as exotic?

These questions confirm that any attempt at analysing *U-Carmen* in order to determine the identity formation of the exotic Other should seriously consider the point of view from which the analysis is done. One possibility is to examine the work using a framework of Western art music and predominantly Western contexts as an approach. However, such an approach will most definitely contain challenges. A *non-African* audience, for example, has presuppositions regarding Africans and African culture which will strongly inform their interpretation of a text depicting African contexts. While a non-African audience might possibly confront their own prejudices, an *African* audience might not relate to the musical ideologies of either the Western or the non-Western musical vernacular. It is thus clear that this approach to analysis is not necessarily the most ideal.

Another approach involves considering the identity of the exotic Other in *U-Carmen* by taking into account Merimée's novella, Bizet's opera and Dornford-May's re-imagination of the nineteenth-century texts. This is the approach that this thesis takes.

6.3.1 Sequence one (00:44–08:12)

Most of the first sequence is devoted to establishing Khayelitsha not only as the multi-layered context in which the story of Carmen will be told, but also very much as a 'character' in the film. The use of strategies such as misattribution, juxtaposition and intertextuality in both the visual and aural conventions introduces the audience to various social structures, different cultures and the lead female character of this film.

The fluttering piece of red fabric with which the first scene of the sequence opens is reminiscent of flames (Frame 5). The soundtrack features the sound of a loose corrugated-iron plate banging in a howling wind. A subtitle announces the paratext to be presented by a rich male voice: *Carmen* by Prosper Mérimée (1845). By means of cross-dissolving,¹⁹² the face of a woman (Carmen), dressed in red, appears through the 'flames' and a male voice begins to quote the passage from Mérimée's novella which echoes Shakespeare's sonnet 130 (see Chapter Five). Dornford-May¹⁹³ points out that, when they began work on the film script, they did consider Mérimée's novella more than they had done previously while busy with the stage production of *Carmen*. Therefore, some echoes of Mérimée's novella can be detected in the *u-Carmen*. However, Dornford-May stresses the fact that they did not in any way think that they were adapting Mérimée's novella. The main motivation for opening the cinematic adaptation with this passage from Mérimée's work was because *Carmen* does not provide any physical description of Carmen. The fact that this passage describes the features of Pauline Malefane, the female lead singer-

¹⁹² A cross-dissolve involves the "gradual and delicate simultaneous transition from one shot to another" (Kerlow, 2004:407). It is a technique that successfully assists in connecting contrasting temporal dimensions.

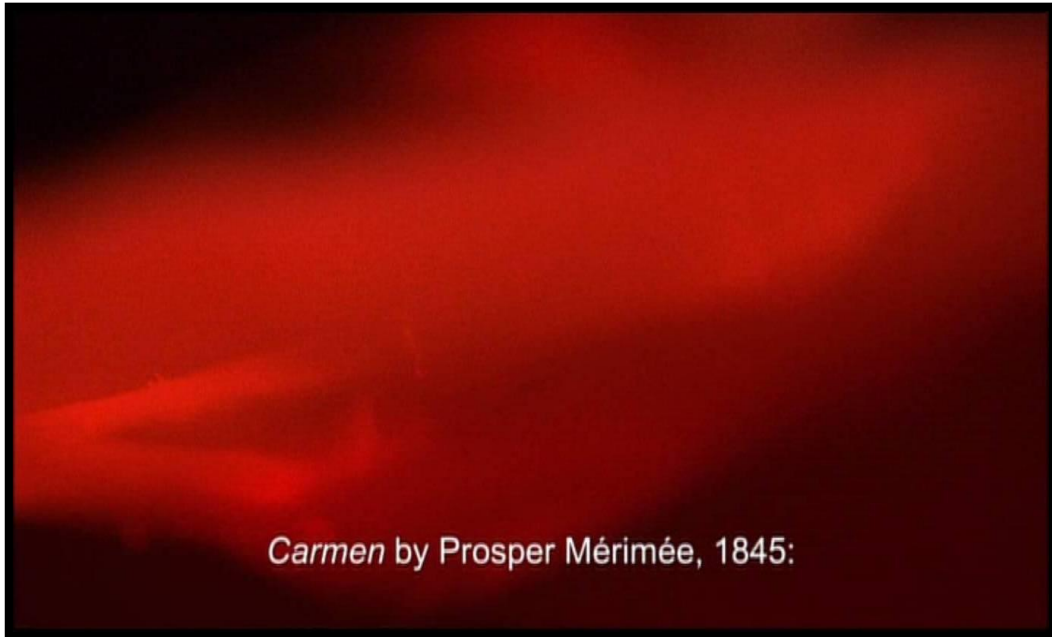
¹⁹³ Unless otherwise stated, all references to Dornford-May's opinions and comments are based on an interview with the author of this thesis, recorded on 28 July 2009 in Cape Town.

actor in *U-Carmen*, quite closely was an added advantage. Regardless of the reasons for including the passage, it introduces the intertextual nature of this cinematic adaptation without any doubt. As we proceed with the analysis of *U-Carmen*, we shall see how intertextual spaces contribute towards the formation of contexts and identities. As the verbal description goes on, the camera zooms in on Carmen's face to allow the viewer to scrutinize her features closely. This establishes a sense of intimacy; the audience can assume that it 'knows' Carmen.

Having described the particulars of her features, the sound of a camera's shutter closing abruptly halts the camera zooming in and leaves the viewer with the image of a film negative (Frame 6) which separates this sequence from the next one. This photo-technique, along with the red dress that the woman is wearing, proves to be rather significant. The film negative still needs to be developed, just as the story of Carmen has to develop. It is also only at the end of the film, when it becomes evident that the red dress Carmen has on in these opening scenes is the uniform all choir members of the Gypsy Cigarette Factory wear, that it becomes clear that the photo session at the beginning of the film probably took place on the day she was murdered. The temporality here is thus ambiguous. While the film negative implies development, the dress indicates that this narrative begins *in media res*.

The next sequence begins with the images moving with increasing speed in reverse motion. This strategy confirms the idea that the events to follow had taken place before the moment in which the photo was taken. The reverse motion out of the bright purple photo studio with its fake and idyllic interior moves rapidly through alleyways, underneath washing lines between shacks made of corrugated-iron and other waste material, past running children and onto tarred roads. The soundtrack accompanying this sequence is a conglomeration of symphonic instruments tuning, children laughing, people talking and the sound of a car horn. This soundtrack reaches a climatic end after a huge crescendo with the sound of a train passing by. Visually, the audience is presented with a panoramic view of the township with Table Mountain as a backdrop (Frame 7).

The inclusion of the symphonic instruments tuning carries great significance. On the one hand, it serves as an instance of misattribution and, on the other hand, it



Frame 5: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 6: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 7: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier

juxtaposes two contexts. It was stated in the previous chapter that one of the characteristics attributed to a cinematic adaptation is that the conductor and the orchestra are not visible. Therefore, the customary tuning of the orchestra, a practice associated very strongly with a Western art form, would not be anticipated in cinematic adaptations. Thus, the tuning of symphonic instruments not only defies specific traits attributed to cinematic adaptations, but also juxtaposes a Western art form with a third-world African milieu. This misattribution and juxtaposition creates an intertextual space in which both the African context and the use of Western art music is introduced.

However, the contextualization for events to come is not yet done. For the next six minutes, a series of emblematic images (see Frames 8–15) and sounds depict life in Khayelitsha. This is Khayelitsha's prelude. Just like a musical prelude introduces thematic material that will be used in opera, township sounds and visual images introduce the context of *U-Carmen*, namely Khayelitsha – a South African township. Pauline Malefane¹⁹⁴ explains that the film presents a different side of Khayelitsha, in fact, of South Africa.

We dance...we...sing...we do everything, you know, any time. I mean, you will see in the film...you see children running across the roads. You'll see children playing and dancing. You'll see people trying to make a living by selling the insides of the sheep...we call it tripe.

(Pauline Malefane, 2005)

The initial sounds, such as a hammer on a roof made of corrugated-iron sheets, children laughing, dogs barking and traffic rushing by (trains, taxis, buses) are replaced by the sudden, almost jubilant entry of Bizet's orchestral prelude to *Carmen*. Davies and Davey (2010:45) are of the opinion that the prelude "brings the forced encounter between aural and visual, European and African to a jarring climax". With the exception of bars 137–164, this prelude is used exactly as Bizet composed it. However, it is not presented on its own. Township sounds and dialogue intermingle and superimposed interpolations serve as building blocks for the

¹⁹⁴ Interview on DVD©Spier bonus features.

construction of contexts. In bar 71 of the prelude, for example, the superimposition of a scene in which Carmen scolds Jongikhaya who is sitting in a police vehicle, reading the Bible, shows her disdain for his profession. Her irritation at and contempt for Jongikhaya are representative of the relationship between the police and some members of society (see 7.3 in the next chapter). In bar 102 a traditional African work song – sung by the women working in the Gypsy Cigarette Factory – is superimposed on the prelude. Initially the orchestra is muted, but in bar 117 it is integrated with the working song so that they become almost competitive. This superimposition of African traditional music on Western art music contributes to the construction and juxtaposition of the multilayered contexts and the equal weighting of musical styles.

It was mentioned earlier that sequence one of this cinematic adaptation introduces Carmen to the audience. The first time Carmen appears on screen (apart from the opening sequence) sets her within the context of Khayelitsha. Most noticeable at first glance is that neither Carmen's clothes nor her body language suggest her being overtly sexual. In fact, a review by Phil Hall (2007) quite harshly criticizes this leading lady.

Malefane, in particular, is a miscast joke – her blubbery figure and air of detached indifference makes her the least appealing Carmen in memory, and it is difficult to understand why the men in the film are in such wild orgiastic fury over such a dull and dumpy woman.

Presuppositions about Carmen being excessively sexual and sensual are something that Hall shares with many other people. The Royal Opera House production carries the theme of womanhood and sexuality to the ultimate in the costumes of female characters as well as in their body language. This production even features female nudity and the *mise-en-scène*¹⁹⁵ is reminiscent of nineteenth-century paintings of women at public baths (see Frames 16–19).

However, the fact that Carmen and the other women in *U-Carmen* do not display this excessive behaviour does not necessarily imply bad acting, but should rather be

¹⁹⁵ Hayward (2006:253) defines *mise-en-scène* as simultaneously connoting “setting, costume, lighting [and] movement within the frame”.



Frame 8: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 9: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 10: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 11: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 12: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompene (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 13: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompene (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 14: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 15: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 16: *Carmen* (1875) by Bizet
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Film stills: DVD © Decca



Frame 17: *Carmen* (1875) by Bizet
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Film stills: DVD © Decca



Frame 18: *Carmen* (1875) by Bizet
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Film stills: DVD © Decca



Frame 19: *Carmen* (1875) by Bizet
Set and costumes designed by Tanya McCallin
Production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2006)
Film stills: DVD © Decca

seen as a choice being made to dilute the perception that womanhood equals overt sexuality. The significance of Malefane downplaying Carmen's sexuality will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Once the prelude is completed, images and sounds again place the focus on life in Khayelitsha. The fusion that characterizes the soundtrack introduces the point where the curtains would open for a traditional performance of a stage production of the opera.

6.3.2 Sequence two (08:13–19:48)

The second sequence of the film begins with Bizet's ensemble for male chorus, "Sur la place". In contrast with the libretto of *Carmen*, which does not refer specifically to female company at the beginning of this ensemble, the policemen in *U-Carmen* confess that they spent their days at the hot, dusty barracks with their main purpose being to "check out the girls and rate their butts".¹⁹⁶ This comment immediately establishes the female Other as the object of pleasure, observed "from [a] position of social privilege" (McClary, 1992:67); from a male-dominated context. The dialogue between two girls is superimposed on Morales's singing as they pass by the barracks while the policemen flirt with them. These instances confirm the objectification of the female body and immediately sets the scene for Nomakhaya's appearance; a scene during which they will try to persuade her to stay with them while she waits for Jongikhaya. At this point, Nomakhaya, just like Micaëla in Bizet's opera, is merely a female object to be solicited. The policemen's behaviour classifies Nomakhaya, even more than Micaëla, as arousing "lust, simply by virtue of being female" (McClary, 1992:70).

In *U-Carmen*, the choir of street boys¹⁹⁷ is cut and the arrival of Nomakhaya (widow of Jongikhaya's deceased brother) at the police barracks is moved forward. By

¹⁹⁶ All quotes from *U-Carmen*'s libretto are taken from the English subtitles of the DVD©Spier.

¹⁹⁷ The presence of children in *U-Carmen* is restricted to their presence in the streets and in a shebeen. Instead of the choir, the boys in *U-Carmen* appear briefly as playing soccer, a favourite sport in African communities.

omitting the children's choir, which serves to provide light relief before the soldiers enter the stage, the sense of male dominance is continued.

Nomakhaya's arrival is marked by signs that immediately establish her otherness. The taxi in which she arrives is decorated with an image of Jesus with a flock of sheep surrounding Him (Frame 20). The phrase "The Good Shepherd" features on the windscreen as well as on the side of the taxi in bright red. These signs signify a religious subtext which will be underscored in a later analeptic episode in this sequence of the film.

Nomakhaya is hesitant, shy and uncomfortable with the unwanted male attention and flees the scene. When Jongikhaya returns to the barracks, Morales describes Nomakhaya being dressed "as if she is from the rural areas". A rural/urban dichotomy is introduced when Jongikhaya immediately realizes that Morales is describing Nomakhaya.

Dornford-May replaces the recitative in *Carmen* that is normally sung by Don José and Zuniga with dialogue between the soldiers. He also manipulates the narrative process of the opera by interpolating a scene in which the women are shown in the cigarette factory at work while singing a traditional African song; this is a scene that foreshadows the context in which Carmen and Jongikhaya will officially meet each other.

The scene is further extended when the policemen arrive at the cigarette factory and a section of dialogue between the police officers is inserted. This conversation establishes the post-apartheid context, as well as the shift in women's positions from the margin to the centre. The newly appointed sergeant expresses his surprise when hearing that there is a cigarette factory in the township.

We're really pasts apartheid now. Factories. Factories in the townships.
Women workers?

The rural/urban dichotomy introduced earlier is developed even further when Jongikhaya states that he prefers not to mingle with township girls because they are not his type.



Frame 20: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 21: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier

The first 21 bars of Bizet's introduction to the male chorus "La cloche a sonné" is cut in *U-Carmen*, but the remainder of the work is sung as composed by Bizet. While the men sing, the girls come outside – all except Carmen. Bizet's "Dans l'air nous suivons des yeux" is sung in its entirety by the women. The physical divide between the women and the men in this scene echoes nineteenth-century traditions. In nineteenth-century opera issues regarding gender, race and ideological differences are often manifested in – and dramatized by the divided chorus. Audience perceptions of the mentioned differences are informed by the manner in which a society is depicted by the divided chorus. Parakilas (1992:200) claims that

[w]hen an opera depicts a whole society constructed without regard to the accepted social differences (as the classless, leaderless, cooperative world of the Gypsy hideout is in *Carmen*), that society is explicitly represented as inhospitable (as the Gypsy world is to both Don José and Micaëla).

The relationship between choir and soloist is important because the soloist's affiliation and representation are established by proxy (Parakilas, 1992:194). This statement is illustrated when Carmen does not enter the stage as indicated in Bizet's score (2002:41) where it clearly states that Carmen enters the stage at the beginning of "La voila la Carmencita!" The significance of the decision not to have Carmen come out at this point becomes evident in the third sequence of the film.

6.3.3 Sequence three (19:49–29:07)

Most of sequence three is devoted to Carmen. The images of her sitting inside with the men on the outside (Frame 21) banging on the window sills and straining to catch a glimpse of her through the steel bars on the windows, is a visual signification of how the exotic is no longer on the periphery but in the centre (Célestin, 1996:220). Carmen is no longer outside the society that marginalizes her, but part of it. It is also within this setting that she begins the aria which probably signifies her unwavering resolve to exercise her freedom of choice, namely the "Habañera".¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁸ Dornford-May explains that they wanted to explore the choices that a working-class girl from a previously disadvantaged community has in terms of freedom. This existentialist notion of a

However, it is not only the *mise-en-scène* of this scene that carries signifiante. The close up shot of Malefane, as well as the considerable vocal restraint with which she performs the opening section of the aria, creates a sense of intimacy and introspection. Carmen displays a measure of interiority normally attributed to the character of Micaëla. While the close proximity of the audience allows them insight into Carmen's innermost thoughts, the men are still waiting on the outside, looking in with anticipation. At this stage there is also no interaction with the men or any indication of the coquettish behaviour which is so often assumed as being essential for performing this aria.

When Carmen does decide to go outside to join the other women from the factory, she continues her nonchalant behaviour towards the men. She dances with a tin cup balanced on her head,¹⁹⁹ surrounded by the other women (Frame 22). These visual images signify that she is in control and the centre of attention. She keeps her distance from the men until almost at the end of the aria when she teases one of them by dancing with her body very close to his. She does not prolong this momentary seductive behaviour and, instead of being surrounded by young men as indicated in Bizet's score (2002:56), returns to stand amongst her female friends. Her behaviour at this point, even when she throws a rose to Jongikhaya, is more defiant than seductive. This last scene in the sequence is acted out with the orchestra playing the twelve bars of Bizet's "Carmen! Sur tes pas nous nous pressons tous!" without the men singing along. Carmen – and only she – is in control of the situation.

The conflict that is to come between Carmen and Manelisa is foreshadowed when the latter offers a condom to Jongikhaya and advises him to use it should he get involved with Carmen. The conflict continues when the women return to their tasks in the cigarette factory. Watching a programme on television, they learn of Lulamile Nkomo's return to his country of birth and that the choir of the Gypsy Cigarette Factory will be performing with him at a concert in Cape Town. Carmen is as excited

woman having the right of choice, especially in a patriarchal system, is an aspect that *U-Carmen* has in common with its precursory texts (interview with S. Viljoen on 28 July 2009).

¹⁹⁹ This image signals a custom in which women, especially in rural areas, carry objects on their head.



Frame 22: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 23: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier

as the other women and is furious when Manelisa turns the television off in the middle of the broadcast. The preliminary altercations between Carmen and Manelisa allow for Carmen's later violent behaviour towards the other girl to seem justified because she has been provoked consistently.

6.3.4 Sequence four (29:08–48:04)

“Quels regards! Quelle effronterie!”, the recitative usually sung by Don José, is cut in *U-Carmen* and sequence four begins with dialogue between Jongikhaya and Nomakhaya. The omission of the recitative is not without significance. In Bizet's libretto, Don José is commenting on Carmen's effect on him. He claims that she is, beyond any doubt, a witch. By not including this description of Carmen in *U-Carmen*, she is not presented to the audience as capable of evil and supernatural behaviour.

Sequence four is devoted to the duet between Jongikhaya and Nomakhaya in which she tells him that his mother has forgiven him and wants him to return home. Dornford-May's version adheres to a large extent to the music, texts and subtexts found in Bizet's “Parle moi de ma mère”. However, this sequence also hosts an intertextual space created by means of the manipulation of external analeptic episodes, flashbacks to past events in Jongikhaya's life.

Hayward (2006:155) explains that flashbacks “are both history and story [...] [b]ut they are a particular representation of the past because it is subjectivized through one or several people's memories.” The flashbacks in sequence four make the audience aware of circumstances that lead to Jongikhaya fleeing his rural home to live in Site D, Seville in Khayelitsha.

In typical cinematic style, images shift from present to the past and back. Any assumptions that the audience might have had about temporality and order are misattributed. The audience is positioned to understand that temporality is fragmented and multi-layered. This fragmentation and layering result in the construction of an intertextual space in which different contexts are juxtaposed. Events in Jongikhaya's past are presented as a text in which several subtexts are embedded.

Just like Don José in Mérimée's novella, Jongikhaya has fled from his past under suspicious circumstances. Jongikhaya had left his mother's home after the death of his brother. The brother's occupation as a minister in the local church is part of the religious subtext embedded in this sequence. This subtext is also present in the duet in *Carmen*, but is extended significantly in *U-Carmen*. The subtext begins when Nomakhaya tells Jongikhaya that his mother had approached her the previous Sunday after church (as is the case with Micaëla in *Carmen*). It is carried on in the image of the two brothers kneeling in prayer in their mother's home, the visual image of the church and the brother's sermon about the sanctity of marriage. The content of his sermon holds the other subtext embedded in the sequence, namely marital fidelity. Jongikhaya's brother emphasises that marriage is a blessing and calls on him to support this claim. Jongikhaya steps up to the pulpit and warns the congregation that "adultery is a great sin".

After the service the two brothers go swimming and an argument ensues when Jongikhaya invites his brother's wife to join them. She claims that she cannot swim and leaves. In a moment of jealousy the brother accuses Jongikhaya of being disrespectful towards his wife and his marriage. The two men argue and begin to struggle.

Up to this point the analeptic episode has been set against the musical background of Bizet's duet for Jongikhaya and Nomakhaya. However, as the film cuts away abruptly, accompanied by the sound of a bird screeching, all music stops. There are no flashbacks, no juxtaposition of contexts; there are only the sorrowful consequences of the row between the two brothers. From the visual images the audience learn that the brother had died (possibly drowned). Just like Don José claimed that the officer he had killed had run into his sword by accident, Jongikhaya claims that his brother had slipped when they went swimming. From his mother's declaration that she had lost both her sons that day, we infer that she does not fully believe his version of what had happened. She disowns him and orders him to leave.

One of the signs confirming suspicions of a love triangle in the depiction of these events is the wedding portrait hanging on the wall of the room in which the body of Jongikhaya's brother lies. While trying to convince his mother that he should not be

blamed for his brother's untimely death, his head hides the image of his brother and the audience is left with an image of Jongikhaya's face next to that of his brother's bride (Frame 23).

The sequence draws to an end in the present with Jongikhaya opening the card, featuring an image of Mother Mary and baby Jesus that his mother had sent him. In it she offers him forgiveness and suggests a levirate marriage with Nomakhaya: "When you choose a wife, let it be your brother's widow." This suggestion has significance in that it articulates an African practice. Mofono (2009:40) explains that levirate marriages allowed a brother of a deceased man to claim conjugal rights from his sister-in-law, as well as to assume responsibility for her. While levirate marriages are not outlawed in South Africa, and a widow has to consent to such a marriage, the deceased's family has the right to revoke lobola should the widow refuse to agree to the levirate union (Bennet, 2004:346).

The scenes that follow are in accord with events depicted in Bizet's *Carmen*. The tension between Carmen and Manelisa is brought to head in a fight between the two women, during which Carmen wounds Manelisa with a knife. The chorus from *Carmen*, "Au secours!" is cut considerably. The opening section in which Zuniga sings a single line is left out and the orchestra begins in bar 15, just before the women begin to sing. This musical ellipsis is most likely part of the attempt to condense the duration of the opera. Even then, Bizet's music does not stand alone but is fused with the voices of men and women fighting fiercely. Bizet's music is further cut from bars 51–139 and the postlude fades until only the commotion of the voices remains. These omissions (musical ellipses) and fusions all add to the articulation of disorder and confusion caused by the free-for-all fighting taking place.

Carmen is taken into custody and put in the care of Jongikhaya, who has to take her to the police station. It is interesting how she plays on his feelings, using all the things that he treasures. She asks him to set her free because her "mother lives alone in the rural areas". She claims to be a rural girl at heart who goes to church; she even quotes from the Bible. Carmen is confident that she has enchanted Jongikhaya and that he will do as she asks sooner or later.

With the exception of bars 60–70, Bizet’s “Mon officier, c’était une querelle”, is cut in its entirety in *U-Carmen*. Carmen sings the theme contained in bars 60–70 with the utmost disdain towards the captain. This cut eliminates those sections in which Carmen normally taunts the officer by flaunting her love life in front of him, causing him and others to recognize her sexuality (McClary, 1992:85). She sings these ten bars while her facial expressions and physical stance signify contempt and lack of respect. Bizet’s music for the Seguidilla and duet, “Près des remparts de Séville”, is kept in its entirety but the libretto is appropriated to suit the context. Instead of a tavern being located “near to the walls of Sevilla” where Lillas Pastia is waiting (Bizet, 2002:95), Carmen sings of a shebeen in the township where she will meet Bra Nkomo. Instead of dancing the “Seguidilla” and drinking Manzanilla (Bizet, 2002:96), she will dance the Twalatsa and drink Sputla.²⁰⁰ This indigenization of the “Seguidilla” firmly establishes the African context and township customs.

Carmen convinces Jongikhaya to let her go and she flees. Contrary to Bizet’s score (2002:107), Carmen begins the reprisal of the main theme from the “Habañera” in bar 48 of Bizet’s finale of Act I. For a brief period of time her interiority is shared only with the sangoma in whose home she is hiding. Then the music of the last thirty-five bars of the finale, just like that in the first forty-seven, fuses with township sounds, human voices and orchestral music, articulating the mayhem as Carmen is chased through the labyrinth of Khayalitsha’s streets.

6.3.5 Sequence five (48:05–1:01:00)

The first group of scenes in sequence five constructs an intertextual space by means of another external analeptic episode. The scenes from this part of the sequence are rich in signifiacnce. In this space, the biographical flashbacks of Lulamile’s life have ideological implications because they do not only contextualize his experiences but also deconstruct South Africa’s apartheid ideology. The fact that these flashbacks are Lulamile’s memories is reaffirmed in the continuous return from past events to the present.

²⁰⁰ The Twalatsa is a dance in which the body, especially the mid-section, is moved vigorously. Sputla is a typical township drink.

Dornford-May explains that they wanted to create a South African context for Bizet's Escamillo.²⁰¹ Although the audience already knows that Lulamile has spent time abroad, they do not know the reason for his departure from his country of birth. This character's background story simultaneously signifies the bridge between African and Western contexts and signifies the history of many who had to flee the country under the apartheid regime (Hayward, 2006:155). It makes him a rounded character, more so than in Bizet's opera.

The entr'acte to Act II of *Carmen* is cut completely. Instead, the entr'acte to Act III is moved forward to accompany a series of events that begin with Lulamile in his car, on his way to meet his friends and family. As he travels along the highway between the airport and Khayelitsha, memories of his past are triggered by a bridge across the highway over which cattle are crossing (Frame 24). From there, the camera shifts to focus on the rear-view mirror of the car in which the bridge with cattle appears again (Frame 25). Lulamile's humble origins are presented while his career as a singer is foreshadowed when the other boy teases him about his singing. The smile on Lulamile's face while recalling these events show that they were obviously happy memories. However, the joy of life in the rural areas will disappear when Lulamile and his family move to a township and are subjected to police brutality.

The second flashback shows Lulamile remembering a stormy night in which his mother is putting him to bed while his father is busy cleaning a pistol (Frame 26). The pistol signifies a context in which danger necessitates the need for protection. There is a paradox in Bizet's music which is almost soothing and the *mise-en-scène* that contributes to the ominous feeling. The sound of thunder and rain pelting down on corrugated-iron sheets as well as images of lighting are superimposed on Bizet's music. These contrasting signifiers can be interpreted as articulating the enormity of the tragedy which is to occur – a tragedy that would change the life of an innocent child forever.

²⁰¹ Interview with S. Viljoen on 28 July 2009.

All of a sudden the police burst into the house with their weapons drawn. It is obviously a raid²⁰² and when Lulamile's father flees, shots are heard outside. Lulamile's mother grabs the pistol, runs outside and is killed. The scene ends with Lulamile screaming for his mother. This scene is a depiction of a far too common occurrence in townships during the apartheid era. In many cases children who were not left orphaned were severely traumatised by such events. The autobiography of Mark Mathabane (1986:16) provides a record of how he experienced a police raid as a child:

For a minute I thought I was dreaming because from outside there suddenly erupted the same volcano of noise of a day ago. Dogs barked. People shrieked and shouted and ran. Sirens screamed. Children screamed. Doors and windows smashed. Feet clumped. I tossed and turned as if in a nightmare, but the persistent pounding and kicking at the door, and the muffled voices coming from the bedroom convinced me otherwise [...] I slowly crept out from under the table; the sheets of newspaper rustled; I felt a tightening in my stomach, as if a block of ice were embedded there and were now freezing my guts [...] I lost control of my bladder.

Following these tragic events, a temporal ellipsis occurs within the analeptic episode and the next scenes are set to take place a few days later. Lulamile's grandfather places him in the care of a priest who will escort the little boy to safety. Before leaving, Lulamile receives a beaded necklace from his grandfather (Frame 27). Dornford-May admits that the inclusion of a priest was a conscious decision to signify the involvement of the church during the apartheid struggle. The colours of the beaded necklace signify the wishes for Lulamile to prosper. Black beads customarily symbolize rain, while the green beads symbolize growth and peace. The white beads are symbolic of purity.²⁰³ It is clear that Lulamile's grandfather sends him away, wishing him a better life than the one he has had thus far.

²⁰² Police conducted pass raids which were carried out to forcibly remove residents in townships who did not have the necessary documents and send them back to the rural areas (Gerhart & Carter, 2010:18). Savage (1986:181) claims that the purpose of pass laws was to maintain white domination because they "occupied the central position in the process of policing the African population and directing them into places dictated by whites." The Pass Law Act was abolished in 1986.

²⁰³ The semiotic value of the colour of the beads was confirmed by Lucy Menzi, a Xhosa woman, during a conversation in Potchefstroom on 11 September 2012.



Frame 24: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



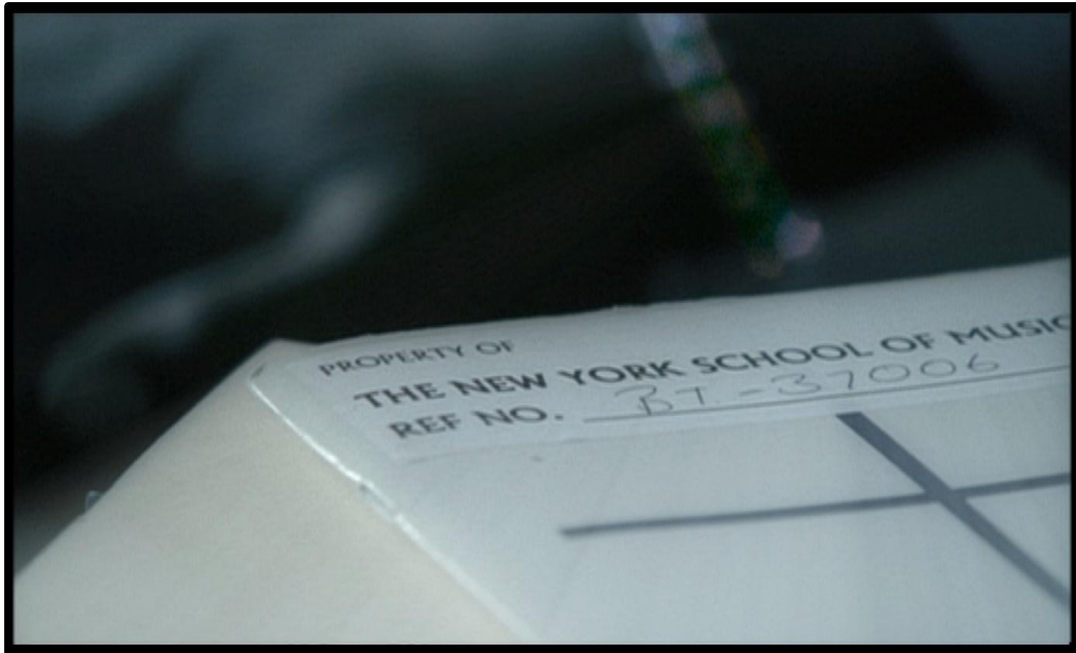
Frame 25: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



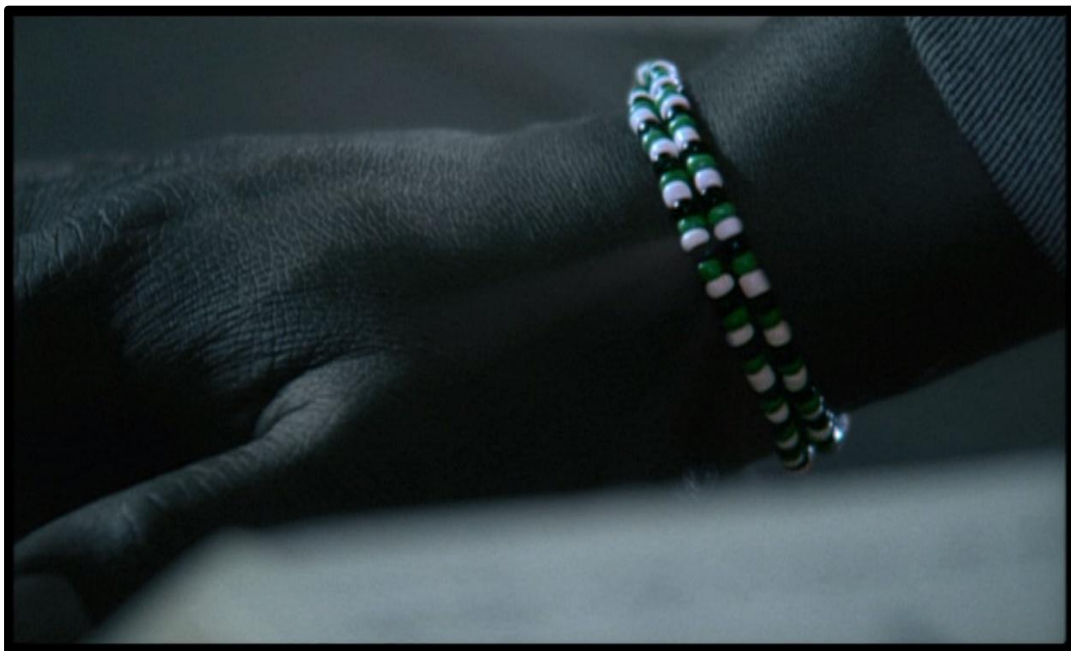
Frame 26: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 27: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 28: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 29: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier

Dornford-May points out the multi-layered intertextuality of this scene which involves elements even beyond what is shown on screen. He explains that the man who plays the grandfather is Joe Magotsi. He was one of the Manhattan brothers, a major group in Sophiatown in the 1950s who had sung with artists such as Miriam Makeba. The man who plays the priest is Manny Mannim, one of the founders of the Market Theatre. There is thus a text relating to the history of South Africa's theatre and performing arts.

After another temporal ellipsis, Lulamile is seen as a grown man, studying singing at the "New York School of Music" (Frame 28). Dornford-May adds a voice to the final bars of Bizet's music as affirmation of Lulamile's training as a singer. Lulamile's eventual success as a performing artist is evident in a scene where he takes a bow as the toreador during a curtain call in a European opera house. The beaded necklace that his grandfather gave him upon his departure is now wound around his wrist (Frame 29). It is simultaneously a symbol of the success he has had, as well as a reminder and confirmation of the lasting link with his origins.

The sequence then moves on to events reflecting those in Bizet's second act. It begins with Bizet's introduction to "Les tringles des sistres tintaient". Dialogue between Carmen and other women who are preparing to go to Bra Nkomo's shebeen for the evening is superimposed on the music. Upon their arrival at the shebeen, they begin to sing and dance. Small appropriations are made to the libretto in order to reflect the context. Instead of guitars, for example, Carmen sings that marimbas are playing.

However, contrary to Bizet's music, the song is not only sung by Carmen, Frasquita and Mercedes but by everyone in the shebeen. The complexity of the scene's spatial dimensions is underscored by increasing the number of people from an ensemble that normally involves three characters to everyone present in the scene. As is normally the case with homes in a squatter camp, Bra Nkomo's shebeen is an informal construction of different spaces. Carmen and her friends enter through the opening of a red and white marquee tent in which chairs and tables are set out. The women then enter the door into a more permanent structure to which the tent is attached. The bar, a pool table and more tables and chairs are the main features in

this space. It is separated from the outside space by a low, wooden structure and dilapidated burglar proofing of varying patterns.

The diversity of material is enhanced by the contrast in lighting and by the mixture of African and Western styles in the women's attire. The light in the tent gives way to duskiess in the bar area, which is in stark contrast with the bright sunny exterior space. The presence of a man capturing the event on camera has significance. The camera is the focalizer and the audience observe the diversity of the context through the 'eyes' of the focalizer. All the dancing and singing take place in the diverse spaces mentioned above. Furthermore, some women are dressed completely according to Western traditions, while others don accessories such as beaded necklaces, head turbans and beaded earrings, which are favourites amongst African women. There are also women whose faces are ornamented with patterns made of white spots – a custom followed by Xhosa women (Frame 30).

When the song ends in jubilant excitement, the police storm in with weapons drawn. Carmen, who is still a fugitive, was spotted by a policeman while she was walking to the shebeen and they have come to arrest her. She tries to flee, but is surrounded. In the ensuing scene, the police captain threatens all those in the shebeen and physically assaults Carmen. The first time he strikes her without provocation. The second time it happens because of a disguised insult; she demeans him by saying that she prefers an ordinary man to an officer because the latter cannot offer her anything. The captain responds in kind and proposes that Carmen has sex with him in return for him dropping all charges against her. Looking around her, she takes responsibility for keeping the peace and consents. During an interview with Malefane,²⁰⁴ she pointed out that Carmen probably felt free to agree because she knew that it would probably not come to pass – she would be protected by her friends who were present to witness the extortion. When she follows the captain, he insults her even further by stopping her and making it clear that he will determine when she will pay her dues; he is in control. Sequence five ends with the police leaving and Carmen's friends comforting her.

²⁰⁴ Interview with S. Viljoen in Cape Town on 24 October 2012.



Frame 30: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 31: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompane (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier

As in sequence four, these scenes are not set against any music from *Carmen*. The context here is purely that of the African woman's position within the social structure of a South African township.

6.3.6 Sequence six (1:01:01–1:25:48)

While *U-Carmen* follows the primary narrative of its precursory texts in this sequence, it is the one that musically deviates significantly from Bizet's score. Most of Bizet's music in this sequence is cut and replaced with dialogue. The musical soundtrack for this sequence largely consists of traditional African music, fragments from a lullaby and snippets of the *allegretto* section from the duet in Act II, "Attends un peu, Carmen" (Bizet, 2002:190).

The sequence begins with a woman announcing that Lulamile is on his way. Everyone except Carmen rushes outside to welcome him. Once again the African context is firmly established in the manner in which he is greeted by his friends. Instead of the aria sung by the toreador, "Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre" (Bizet, 2002:133), the crowd sings a welcoming song (Welcome to the son of KwaJola) in the traditional manner and perform traditional dances accompanied by rhythms beaten out on upturned drums. The replacement of the aria with traditional African music,²⁰⁵ combined with the physical setting of the scene, firmly establishes local colour and the African context of these events.

While the festivities carry on outside, Carmen is inside cleaning the blood from her face. In this scene Carmen's interiority is foregrounded in the signifi- cance of the close-up shot of the camera, a small hand-mirror and the reprisal of the "Habañera"'s

²⁰⁵ Aubert (2007:20) claims that traditional music is "the bearer of a set of values which confer on it identity, originality and symbolic scope." The music is usually linked to a temporal and spatial context and is functional. These functions include articulating and reflecting on a set of values and virtues that relate to the contexts and identity of a specific society. The stylistic rules, performance techniques and repertoire of traditional music are usually conveyed orally from generation to generation. Because of the oral transmission of the repertoire, each performer has the opportunity to bring to the performance a unique quality which then becomes part of the music. This unique quality contributes to the multiplicity and authenticity of the music. The performer's contribution during the transmission of the repertoire contributes to the dynamic character of the music whilst also preserving pre-existing works. This, in a sense, could be regarded as a form of musical intertextuality.

theme. As she looks at herself in the mirror, Carmen is reminded of who she really is. As in the scene inside the cigarette factory, the theme from the “Habañera” serves as a leitmotiv through which the existential truth of Carmen’s life is articulated. The division of physical spaces further serves as signification of Carmen’s search for independence and individuality.

The narrative proceeds, as in Bizet’s *Carmen*, with Lulamile and Carmen meeting for the first time. The difference in *U-Carmen* is that, unlike Escamillo in *Carmen*, Lulamile does not immediately declare his love for Carmen (see Bizet, 2002:151), but approaches her after hearing her sing a lullaby to a sleeping child.²⁰⁶ Malefane explains that someone like Lulamile, who had succeeded in making a career abroad, would not feel the need to impress and seduce any woman.²⁰⁷ His leather jacket and the luxurious German automobile with which he arrived at the shebeen are symbolic of his success. Just like Escamillo in Bizet’s opera, he would probably expect women to be flattered that he pays them any heed at all.

The choice to have Carmen lulling a baby to sleep, instead of attracting Lulamile’s attention by flaunting her sexuality, carries significance. Carmen is depicted as being maternal and tender. In fact, it is only if one watches to the very end of the film that one can infer that the child Carmen is holding is her own; in the peritext after the film, there is a credit that reads “Carmen’s child”. The presence of a child as part of Carmen’s life is in direct opposition to the depiction of her character in the precursory texts.

Furthermore, Lulamile notices Carmen not only for her beauty, but also because she has a beautiful voice. The value of music, especially singing, as an agent of African culture is axiomatic. A respondent in an interview conducted at the University of Cape Town stated that “to black people, singing is culture.”²⁰⁸ Lulamile is a

²⁰⁶ During a conversation with Lucy Menzi (11 September 2012), I was assured that it is not customary for children to be allowed in shebeens. According to law, patrons need to be over 18 years of age in order to be allowed to enter them. Malefane explained (interview, 24 October) that they included children in this scene because it was a celebration in honour of Lulamile Nkomo, not just a night out to the shebeen.

²⁰⁷ Interview with S. Viljoen in Cape Town on 24 October 2012.

²⁰⁸ Interview with S. Viljoen in Potchefstroom on 7 August 2007.

professional performing artist who recognizes someone who has a pleasant voice. While it is possible that he merely uses this as an excuse to make Carmen's acquaintance, it still deviates from the precursory texts which imply that his attraction is based on her overt sexuality.

We also gather some insight into why Lulamile has returned back home. When Carmen flippantly tells him that only in his dreams will they see more of each other, he replies: "Nothing wrong with dreaming. Dreams of my father brought me home." It is clear that Lulamile's connection to his past is still very strong.

Bizet's quintet, "Nous avons en tête une affaire" (Bizet 2002:155), is omitted in *U-Carmen*. This instance of musical ellipsis radically reduces the time frame of the scene in which the smugglers El Dancaïro and El Remendado conspire with Frasquita, Mercedes and Carmen. Bra Nkomo invites the women to join the smugglers at the pool table and they are told about an operation during which drugs, hidden in wax candles will be smuggled into the country. While drug-smuggling is a theme included in its precursory texts, in *U-Carmen* this theme strongly contributes to articulating real human experiences in this Western Cape township. Chapter Seven will provide more detail about crime in Khayelitsha.

Sequence six proceeds with Jongikhaya arriving at the shebeen. To set his jealous mind at ease, Carmen invites him to sit down and proceeds to dance for him. Once again Bizet's music is cut and begins only when Carmen hums the melody from the *Allegretto* section following the recitative, "Enfin c'est toi!" (Bizet, 2002:187). Instead of with orchestral accompaniment, this section is sung *a capella*. This is a moment of intimate communication between two people – a situation stripped of everything else but the message that she wants to send him; she longs for a relationship with this man. Eventually, the other women join Carmen and sing the accompanying harmonies while clapping various rhythmic patterns. The clapping replaces the customary castanets used in this scene and is closer to the African customs articulated in this context. The sequence ends with Jongikhaya rushing off when he hears a transmission on his police transmitter.

Carmen's dance is very sensual and she realises that Jongikhaya has left when the other women begin to laugh and she stops singing. It is obvious that she feels humiliated and she follows Jongikhaya outside. The musical ellipsis that occurs when bars 38–52 of Bizet's music are cut is not the only deviation from the nineteenth-century score. Carmen does not immediately begin to sing the melody as from bar 53. Instead, she returns to the beginning of the *Allegretto* and sings bars 13–20 again before skipping to bar 53. When she has sung only two bars, Jongikhaya interrupts her and tells her to stop. The freedom taken to revisit the beginning of the melodic section has significance. This is the melody to which Carmen wanted to dance and show Jongikhaya how, as women, they pleased their men. When he leaves her so abruptly, she does not immediately act out of anger, but tries to lure him back with the same melody. It is only after she realises that he is not getting out of the police vehicle that she becomes angry and, singing the last two bars, bangs on the windshield.

When Jongikhaya informs Carmen that he has to return to the barracks, she reacts furiously and claims that she has tried everything to please him, but that she is left looking like a stupid fool. She accuses him of leaving her needlessly because his love for her is not strong enough. His love is not to be trusted. Bars 95–26 of Bizet's "Ah! j'étais vraiment trop bête!" (Bizet, 2002:194) are omitted in *U-Carmen*.

The significance of this musical ellipsis lies in its contribution to Carmen's characterization. In the more traditional productions of *Carmen*, such as the production of the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, the music omitted in *U-Carmen* accompanies a scene in which Carmen's anger towards Don José is developed to a point where she succeeds in making him feel so guilty that he is easily manipulated into helping the smugglers. Because of the musical ellipsis, characteristics such as petulant anger and manipulative behaviour that more traditional versions of the opera usually attribute to Carmen is misattributed. This misattribution renders Carmen as more vulnerable and in need of a man siding with her because he truly loves her, not because she has manipulated him.

Carmen's vulnerability is further signified in her facial expressions while Jongikhaya sings the Xhosa rendition of the well-known aria "La fleur que tu m'avais jetée"

(Bizet, 2002:200). Contrary to the more traditional depiction of Carmen, her facial expressions in this case reflect how upset she is about Jongikhaya's lack of commitment, as well as his aggressive behaviour prior to singing this aria. Instead of having her strutting around, her body language signifying anger and contempt, Dornford-May has her sitting crouched over at a table. The subtle change in her demeanour shows how much she wants to believe him when he claims that she holds his life in her hands and offers her a ring.

A close-up shot of Carmen and her facial expression reveals her inner conflict: should she allow herself to believe this is total commitment? When she beseeches him to leave the police force and to join her, her pleas seem born from a sincere need to have him being part of her life. Malefane admits to a subtext involving Carmen's need to believe that this relationship could work, while also having strong doubts because of Jongikhaya's jealous and erratic behaviour.²⁰⁹ This subtext is confirmed when, just as a smile slowly appears on Carmen's face, Jongikhaya jumps up – determined to resist temptation and return to the barracks. Only then does Carmen's anger return, but it is tempered by obvious sadness and disappointment.

As in *Carmen*, the interaction between Carmen and Jongikhaya is interrupted by the arrival of the police officer who has obviously come to claim the promise of sexual favours that Carmen had made previously. Following the primary narrative of Bizet's opera, the officer is apprehended by the crowd but, contrary to *Carmen's* plot, he is not detained for only an hour. He is taken outside and summarily shot. This deviation from the precursory text enhances perceptions of violence permeating life in the townships of South Africa as well as people's distrust of and anger towards the police.

This is one instance where the theme regarding freedom of choice emerges very strongly. While Carmen longs for the freedom to choose her own destiny, Jongikhaya – as a man – has this freedom of choice. The choices he makes will dictate his life, just like Carmen's will determine the course of her life. Malefane²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Interview with S. Viljoen in Cape Town on 24 October 2012.

²¹⁰ Interview with S. Viljoen in Cape Town on 24 October 2012.

points out that the religious subtexts in the opera also serve to enhance the discrepancy between Jongikhaya's upbringing and the choices he makes later in his life. Jongikhaya witnessed the police officer being accosted and murdered and, just as he chose to deny his involvement in his brother's death, he does not act as an officer of the law when the officer is killed; he chooses to join the smugglers. It is not a matter of Carmen using her sexuality to persuade him; it is his uncontrollable jealousy of Carmen and his innate weakness that govern his choices.

With the exception of thirty-four bars (bars 50–83), the finale to Act II – as composed by Bizet – is sung in its entirety. As mentioned before, Bizet's "Entr'acte" to Act III was moved to an earlier spot in the film. Furthermore, the ensemble and chorus at the beginning of Act III, as well as the ensuing recitatives, have also been cut in *U-Carmen*.

The finale of Act II is followed by the insertion of a scene in which Carmen is shown sitting on a bed with Jongikhaya. This is not a scene depicting two lovers. In fact, the tension between these two characters is almost tangible and it comes as no surprise when Carmen leaves. As she walks through the streets, she passes a poster advertising the impending concert in which Lulamile Nkomo and the Gypsy Cigarette Choir will perform. The irony of this poster cannot be denied. Carmen's deepest wish is to be free, to choose her own destiny (Frame 31). This poster states that the concert is to be held on Freedom Day in the Oliver Tambo Hall.²¹¹ Thus, the poster is also a reminder of South Africa's political history. Freedom Day is scheduled annually on 27 April and celebrates the first democratic elections held in South Africa on this date in 1994. These were the first democratic elections in which there was no discrimination based on race.

Temporal ellipses are strategies employed to indicate that events occur at different times. Just like Jongikhaya, the audience is not privy to where Carmen spent the night or what she did. The next scene switches immediately to the following morning and we see Jongikhaya in the streets of Khayelitsha, probably searching for Carmen.

²¹¹ Oliver Reginald Tambo (1917–1993) was a politician who dedicated his life to the ANC and to the abolition of apartheid.

The scene that follows shows her in the house of Bra Nkomo. They are having a meal, but Carmen is too depressed to eat. The women are warning her against her involvement with Jongikhaya. They are convinced that he will beat her again. Their concern is a strong warning against the trustworthiness of men. Even the best of them cannot be trusted: “He uses the Bible to hide his true nature.”

6.3.7 Sequence seven (1:25:49–1:43:59)

Following this scene, the narrative images skip directly to the venue where the drug-smuggling will take place, namely Monwabisi.²¹² The audience is introduced to this space by the sign adorning the entrance to the beach resort and, by means of temporal ellipsis, is then transferred to the evening of the crimes.

The smugglers arrive at Monwabisi and the leader tells the women to stay put. When Jongikhaya wants to follow him, the leader dismisses him as an untrustworthy ‘police boy’ and tells him to stay with the women. This is a blow to Jongikhaya’s masculinity. Bizet’s music is picked up again in the trio usually sung by Frasquita, Mercedes and Carmen, “Mêlons! Coupons! Bien! c’est cela!” (Bizet, 2002:262). However, whereas in Bizet’s opera Carmen’s friends try their hand at fortune-telling, in *U-Carmen* the women refer back to an earlier incident when Carmen had visited an *ithambo*.²¹³ They want to know what he had said to Carmen. Instead of answering them directly, the audience is made privy to what had occurred by means of an internal analeptic episode. After a musical ellipsis (bars 46–151 of Bizet’s music is omitted) Carmen recalls the visit to the *ithambo*. This ellipsis allows *U-Carmen* to place the foretelling of Carmen’s future within an African context. In the operatic version Frasquita, Mercedes and Carmen read the future in a deck of cards – stereotypically according to Gypsy tradition. But within the African tradition, one would go to a diviner (*nyanga*, traditional healer/sangoma) to find out what the future holds.

²¹² Monwabisi is a holiday resort close to Khayelitsha, mostly frequented by African holiday-makers.

²¹³ During a conversation with Lucy Menzi and Sam Mongale (27 September 2012) they explained that an *ithambo* is a diviner. This person will throw the divining dice of goats and a sheep’s tail, sometimes adding shells, and then call on the ancestors to help predict the future. Nattrass (2006) employed quantitative analysis to research who in Khayelitsha are more likely to consult sangomas. The results showed that “sangoma clients are older, disproportionately female, poorer and less well educated than other people” (Nattrass, 2006:1). It also showed that those who receive disability grants are more likely to seek the advice of a sangoma.

During this visit, the *ithambo* had thrown the bones of a sheep's tail and some shells along with the ring that Jongikhaya had given Carmen. The ring, in this case, is also a sign of temporality. It implies that Carmen had visited the *ithambo* in the period between when she had received the ring from Jongikhaya and the night at Monwabisi. This sign contributes to the anachronical nature of the narrative progression. The ring can also be regarded as a symbol of Carmen's sincere wish for clarity about her relationship with Jongikhaya.

Upon her visit to the *ithambo*, he calls on the ancestors to help him predict Carmen's future. During a conversation with Sam Mongale (26 September 2012), a Tswana man claiming to be a prophet who can foretell future events, it was explained to me that an *ithambo* would reveal the future of his visitor either through 'reading' the divining dice or by allowing the ancestors to inform the visitor directly by medium of images in water or a mirror. Sam ensured me that this is customary not only for Xhosa diviners, but for all those across the African cultural spectrum.

This is what happens with Carmen when she visits the *ithambo*. Her future is revealed when he holds a mirror up in which her image is revealed (Frame 32). In 1949, Jacques Lacan revisited a paper he had delivered on 3 August 1936 at a conference of the International Psychoanalytical Association in Marienbad in an essay titled *The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I.*²¹⁴ In this essay Lacan reasons that, during the mirror stage of a child's life, he establishes a *gestalt* through the reflection (as in a mirror) of an external image of his body which will serve as the framework for a sense of Self to develop. However, because a specular image is not an exact replica of reality but rather its inversion, the symbolism of mirrors is regarded as ambivalent. Cirlot (2011:211) explains:

In legend and folklore, [a mirror] is frequently invested with a magic quality – a mere hypertrophic version of its fundamental meaning. In this way it serves to invoke apparitions by conjuring up again the images which it has received at some time in the past, or by annihilating distances when it reflects what was once an object facing it and now is far removed.

²¹⁴ This essay was included in *Écrits*, which was originally published in French (1966). Alan Sheridan's translation, initially published in 1977, is included in *Écrits: A Selection* (2005).



Frame 32: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompene (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier



Frame 33: *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*
Director: Mark Dornford-May
Production of Dimpho di Kompene (2005)
Film stills: DVD © Spier

When Carmen looks into the mirror that the *ithambo* holds up, she is confronted by her Self, her present and her future. The signs of the *ithambo* are revealing her destiny – death. She, as well as Jongikhaya will die despite all her efforts to change their fate. The music concludes in bar 230, cutting the rest of the trio and the ensuing recitative.

In one of the shorter sequences in the film, only two strands of the narrative are developed: the events occurring on the night at Monwabisi and Nomakhaya's attempts to persuade Jongikhaya to return home to greet his dying mother.

At the beginning of the sequence the narrative switches to the narrative present. Carmen decides not to reveal her innermost convictions to her friends, but simply laughs and tells them that they should be ashamed because "curiosity killed the cat." The smugglers return to tell the women to go and work their charms on the three guards down at the beach so that the consignment of drugs can be smuggled into the country. Singing Bizet's music of the ensemble, "Quant au douanier" (Bizet, 2002:281), the women agree that it will be easy to do so seeing as the guards are as gullible as all men and will be easily persuaded by their charms.

This scene follows the temporal parallelism of the operatic version. While the events at Monwabisi are taking place, Nomakhaya arrives at Bra Nkomo's shebeen in search of Jongikhaya. However, she does not enter but leaves after having sung the Xhosa version of Bizet's "C'est des contrebandiers le refuge ordinaire" (Bizet, 2002:299). In the meantime, at Monwabisi Jongikhaya is snubbed once again when he attempts to join the men on the beach and Carmen's willingness to distract the guards fuels his jealousy. When he sees her flirting with one of the men on the beach, he attacks the man. The others pull Jongikhaya off and assault him. He is left unconscious on the sand with waves washing over him.

The rest of the scene follows *Carmen's* primary narrative showing the smugglers returning to their meeting place at Bra Nkomo's shebeen with the drugs, Jongikhaya and Carmen have an altercation during which she tells him that their relationship is something of the past. The incident of the previous evening had been the last straw. Nomakhaya arrives and pleads with Jongikhaya to return home to see his dying

mother. At first he refuses to leave Carmen, convinced that she will find another lover and vowing that only death will separate them. Eventually he agrees to go with Nomakhaya.

While the toreador is not present to sing bars 152–163 of the finale to Act III, the leitmotif associated with this character introduces Lulamile driving his car and arriving at Bra Nkomo's shebeen where he and Carmen meet again. An instance of temporal ellipsis Dornford-May interrupts the narrative progression with a scene which shows Jongikhaya at his mother's deathbed. He is too late and leaves his rural home and Nomakhaya.

6.3.8 Scene eight (1:44:00 to end)

The sequence begins with a scene depicting a *kraal* (Frame 33) in which a bull is fastened to a tree. In rural areas a *kraal* is an enclosure in which animals are kept. However, in this film it signifies a space in which male members of a tribe can meet to perform traditional customs. In an interview with Pauline Malefane, conducted in Cape Town on 24 October 2012, she confirmed that such enclosures were actually built amongst shacks in Khayelitsha specifically so that cultural rituals can be performed there.

The families of KwaJola, Mpondomise, Ngwanya, Qengeba, kwaNgxabane and MphaNkomo are represented by the men sitting in the kraal. Bra Nkomo informs everyone that they are gathering for the sake of Lulamile, his cousin, who has returned home, by his own admission, to honour his father who had appeared to him in his dreams repeatedly. A sacrifice is to be made and the bull will be slaughtered so that the hide can be used to keep the families warm. Lulamile asks them to continue protecting his family just as they had protected him while he was abroad. He also proclaims his wish to be blessed with more luck in the future. He is handed a spear with which to kill. As Lulamile spears the bull, its prolonged bellowing indicates the presence of the ancestors. An elder of the community assures Lulamile that the ancestors have heard his wishes.

The scenes depicting the sacrificial ceremony are continuously alternated with scenes of the women preparing the food for the feast which will follow and scenes of Jongikhaya in a train on his way back to Khayelitsha. Upon hearing the bellowing sound of the bull as it dies, the women break into song and dance, clapping intricate rhythms characteristic of African music. Up to this point the soundtrack of this sequence did not include any musical elements. However, as soon as the women begin to sing, Bizet's "Entr'acte" to Act IV (Bizet, 2002:334) begins to play. This music, together with the women's singing, the elder's dialogue, township sounds and the sound of the train in which Jongikhaya is travelling, creates an 'ensemble' that is an excellent example of how, as mentioned In Chapter Four, ensembles can contribute towards the depiction of experiences in parallel temporal and spatial dimensions.

The construction of spatial dimensions in these scenes carries intertextual significance. The kraal is a privileged, masculine space. In the rural areas of South Africa, Xhosa women are not customarily allowed to be present in the kraal, especially not during sacrificial acts. If a woman wanted to enter the kraal, she has to be "initiated into such categories in an orderly manner, according to custom" (Zenani, 1992:380). However, the kraal in this film is also an indication of contextual hybridity. It is symbolic of the rural elements that are maintained within a township context. The depiction of cattle as a metaphor for a specific cultural background (refer to sequence three) culminates in these scenes. It also provides an alternative version of Bizet's toreador which allows the appropriation of the precursory texts to be more credible.

After a temporal ellipsis, the scenes that follow depict the day on which Carmen dies. Contrary to the operatic adaptation, *U-Carmen* does not feature a bullfight. Instead, it presents an activity that is now synonymous with the African culture, namely a choir festival. Choir competitions and choir festivals are events that not only provide opportunities for shared social experiences, but also for African communities to relate to Western art music. The syllabi of competitions such as the Old Mutual Choir competition and the South African School Choir Eisteddfod include repertoire from

oratorios, cantatas and operas. They also include a section for soloists in which, for example, opera arias and old Italian arias are prescribed.

Musically, the final scenes commence in bar 269 of “Les voici! Les voici!” (Bizet, 2002:347). One of the women warns Carmen that Jongikhaya has been spotted in the audience. The musical ellipsis that occurs from the previous scenes to this point means that all of the music usually performed by Escamillo is omitted. This includes the section in which he and Carmen declare their love for each other. Without this declaration, this musical ellipsis contributes to perceptions that Jongikhaya’s jealousy is unfounded and that it is not Carmen’s infidelity that has driven a wedge between them as much as his unreasonable behaviour. The soundtrack for these final scenes is an excellent example of how the recording techniques contribute towards a sense of intimacy and immediacy in *U-Carmen*. Dornford-May explains that cinematic reality was obtained by recording Pauline Malefane singing live on location. This recording was then overlaid with pre-recorded material. Eventually the edited soundtrack contributes to the sense of immediacy of and close proximity in the scene.

The primary narrative for the rest of the film plays out exactly as in its operatic counterpart. Jongikhaya kills Carmen in a fit of rage because she refuses to sacrifice her freedom by allowing him back in her life. It is truly ironic that on this day – Freedom Day – she obtains true freedom in death.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

In the first chapter, I stated that this thesis focuses on three major markers, namely text, context and identity formation. I shall now use these markers in this final chapter to discuss themes identified during the analysis of *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*.

The first theme involves a discussion of the textuality and intertextuality of *U-Carmen*; this discussion considers how the semiotics of the musical, dramatic, theatrical and cinematographical elements function in this adaptation of Bizet's opera to create intertextual spaces in order to articulate multiple contexts and identities within postmodern spaces.

The second theme is concerned with the articulation of the African contexts in *U-Carmen*. The title of this film, *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*, already indicates that there is a specific geographical context in which this Carmen exists. However, the discussion on Khayelitsha will show that it is not merely a geographical space, but that it is a complex 'character' with a unique African identity.

For over a hundred years Carmen has been an icon of the ultimate *femme fatale*. Her race, class and gender have always served as markers contributing to perceptions of her being the exotic Other. Should *U-Carmen* be analysed using an approach that adheres to nineteenth-century perceptions of the exotic Other, there is merit in Dias's (2006:90) assertions that "[t]he Carmen figure can be linked to the lower-class wayward women of the *Marabi* and shebeen cultures, with their illicit dealings in alcohol and prostitution condemned by the middle class." However, when analysed within the paradigm of postmodernism, as this thesis does In Chapter Six, it can be argued that *U-Carmen* does not articulate Otherness based on class as much as it does on gender. In fact, Dias's argument seems to endorse perceptions of women as second-class citizens.

This is not quite the case in *U-Carmen*. A discussion of Carmen considers how strategies used to undermine characteristics usually attributed to her contribute towards alternative perceptions of her identity.

7.1 Text and intertextuality in *U-Carmen*

The fact that *U-Carmen* is a cinematic adaptation of an opera which is based on a novel, already classifies it as a complex text characterised by intertextuality and multiplicity. When the temporal and spatial contexts of all participants are added to these primary texts, *U-Carmen* emerges as a multi-layered text with a polyphonic texture that employs musical, theatrical, dramatic and cinematographical signs to depict human experiences within an African context. Because of his subtle and respectful treatment of the operatic conventions and original texts, Dornford-May's production does not change the fabric of the genres established by Western culture.

Contrary to Jean-Luc Godard's *Prénom Carmen*, where fragments of Bizet's music are used that make no "substantive contribution to the complex musical agency, the film presents" (Marshall-Leicester, 1994:250), *U-Carmen* uses Bizet's music to substantially contribute towards the musical profile and structure of the film. The use of Bizet's music in *U-Carmen* also differs from Saura's version of *Carmen*. In *U-Carmen*, Dornford-May does not reappropriate Bizet's music in order to display a cultural authenticity, but rather adds a component of authentic African local colour that results in a social palimpsest that creates an enriching and meaningful hybridity.

The integrity with which Bizet's music is used in *U-Carmen* brings the exotic musical vernacular of the nineteenth-century text to the cinematic adaptation. Had there been no other exotic elements in *U-Carmen*, the presence of this vernacular would have sufficed to signify traditional perceptions of Carmen as sultry and dangerous. However, the film's multi-layered soundtrack that features the juxtaposition of Bizet's score with traditional African music and its superimposition over this music, further overlaid with non-musical sounds (noises, street and township sounds), simultaneously signifies multiple dimensions of Carmen's character and contexts, as well as a sense of a complex reality.

Just like opera, the operatic film is a musico-dramatic art form. In the cinematic adaptation of an opera, the screenplay will include elements of the opera's libretto as well as material specifically created for the film. The screenplay, just like the libretto, contains indications of the required dramatic action. As in the case of opera, the

dramatic signs include voices, gestures, body language and facial expressions by means of which singer-actors signify the characters that they represent. In *U-Carmen*, the voices of the singer-actors do not only conform to the style and timbre of Western art music (during their performances of Bizet's music). They also articulate the unique timbre and style of traditional African music, signifying a unique social identity. Gestures, facial expressions and body language signify, for example, the multiple dimensions of Carmen's character (see 7.4 below).

The locations used in filming *U-Carmen*, as well as, for example, the choice of characters' attire and properties (such as the taxi in which Nomakhaya arrives and her clothes) should be understood as equivalent to theatrical signifiers in opera. In *U-Carmen* these elements signify not only temporal and spatial dimensions, but also subtexts. The semiotic value of religious subtexts serves as the genesis for dichotomies such as rural/urban and moral/immoral. The relation between these subtexts and contexts will be discussed in more detail in 7.3 below.

Other signifiers that contribute towards the textuality of *U-Carmen* involve cinematography. It was stated clearly in Chapter Two that the focus of this research project is not on the semiotics of cinematography. However, during the analysis of *U-Carmen* some cinematographical signs were so strong that it was difficult to ignore them. Techniques such as reverse motion movement and close-up camera shots contribute towards the articulation of contexts and characters' interiority (see analysis in previous chapter).

Apart from musical, dramatic, theatrical and cinematographical signifiers, *U-Carmen* is also characterized by the manipulation of temporal and spatial dimensions in both the musical and narrative progressions. The manipulation of these dimensions is achieved by employing narrative strategies such as juxtaposition, parallelisms, analeptic and elliptic episodes, as well as interpolations. The result is the construction of intertextual spaces in which the history and identity of characters and their contexts are articulated.

U-Carmen moves away from mere intertextuality in Bloom's sense (1973, 1975). Saura's *Carmen* and Dornford-May's *U-Carmen*, as well as Peter Brook's *La*

Tragédie de Carmen, deviate from Bizet's opera and Merimée's text. Like Saura's *Carmen*, *U-Carmen* manipulates the narrative and musical progression with interpolated and intertextual spaces that are not in the original texts, thus extending the phenomenon of intertextuality.

The textual multiplicity and plurality of *U-Carmen* and its hybrid nature are already derived from other precursory texts, self-borrowings and socio-historical contexts, and the use of the narrative strategies listed above further extends the intertextuality in the film. As in the case of the exotic vernacular, the intertextual nature of Bizet's *Carmen* (see 6.1 in previous chapter) lays the foundation for the multiplicity of intertextuality in *U-Carmen*. When the multi-layered soundtrack mentioned earlier is added to this foundation, *U-Carmen* proves to be rich in musical intertextuality.

While it cannot be classified as a pure counter-discourse,²¹⁵ *U-Carmen* is a hypertext that is characterized in some measure by the need to exceed the boundaries of a dominant discourse by counter-discursive interpolation (Ashcroft, 2001:23). The cinematic adaptation retains the Self/Other binarism in the male/female dichotomy, but negates opposing concepts based on race and class as a consequence of the decision to use an all-African cast who share the same geographical and social contexts. It appropriates opera as a predominantly Western art form and uses it to articulate an alternative self-representation.

However, *U-Carmen* does not only feature as a hypertext. The intertextual spaces that result from the juxtaposition of Western operatic conventions with traditional African music and social practices, as depicted in songs, dance and symbolic gestures, contribute towards a better understanding of the Self/Other binarism as well as of alternative methods of identity formation. This juxtaposition facilitates the reconciliation between the plurality of identity in multicultural contexts and the uniqueness of the individual's role within that context. The predicted result of this reconciliation is a tolerance and acknowledgement of the Other (Maalouf, 2000:30).

²¹⁵ Counter-discourse challenges hegemonic perceptions based on the articulation of the Self/Other binarism.

Another strategy used to create intertextual spaces in *U-Carmen* involves the manipulation of the narrative and musical progressions. These manipulations provide the opportunity to interpolate intertextual spaces. The interpolation of Jongikhaya's past does not only present the audience with biographical details, but also contributes to the formation of opposing contexts, namely rural/urban. These opposing contexts are developed by, amongst others, religious subtexts and cemented in the interpolated space where a bull is slaughtered inside a makeshift *kraal* within an urban township. Another interpolated space articulates Lulamile Nkomo's history, as well as providing insight into the experiences to which marginalized societies were subjected during the apartheid era in South Africa. Ultimately, *U-Carmen* emerges as a text with uniquely South African and African dimensions.

It can thus be concluded that *U-Carmen* is an anachronical hypertext in which the semiotics of all elements constituting the precursory texts integrate with the semiotics of cinematic adaptations. It is a text that uses, for example, juxtaposition and interpolation to create historical and transhistorical intertextual spaces. Poetic and aesthetic intertextuality is evident when all contributions that the precursory texts, African society and performers bring to *U-Carmen* are taken into account. Ultimately, intertextuality in *U-Carmen* is employed to articulate multiple contexts and identities.

7.2 Khayelitsha as African context

Before discussing Khayelitsha as African context, there is another question that needs to be examined: how does the context of *U-Carmen* relate to the concept of distance or Elsewhere? After all, in *U-Carmen* it is no longer a matter of contrasting spaces between the Self and the Other as there is between the Western Self and the non-Western Other. It is no longer a matter of a geographical difference between 'here' and 'there'. Perceptions of 'here/there' and 'us/them' will depend on the perspective of the viewer. To the African Self, the space (township/informal settlement) and the ideologies of African culture might not be perceived as far-removed. However, to the non-African Self and to Europeans, the spatial and ideological contexts are most likely far removed from their own. The 'us/them' and

'home/away' which constitute the identity and space of the Self/Other are not self-evident concepts in this production. The temporal and spatial contexts of *U-Carmen* include post-apartheid South Africa and, more specifically, a South African township in the Western Cape, known as Khayelitsha. An audience consisting of inhabitants from Khayelitsha might perceive Bizet's music as being more exotic than the interpolated and juxtaposed African music. Furthermore, for this audience, the exotic Other not only involves Bizet's Western art music, but the narrative progression of the opera also involves an identity and ideology that are removed from both that of its European composer and the Spanish subject. On the other hand, an audience consisting of members originating from predominantly Western temporal and spatial contexts and ideologies will perceive the interpolated and juxtaposed elements in *U-Carmen* as contributing to its exotic character.

While it should be recognized that the intertextuality embedded in the cinematic adaptation of Bizet's opera already constitutes multiple historical and musical contexts, it is Khayelitsha that emerges almost as a 'character' in *U-Carmen*. In 1983, Dr Piet Koornhof (Minister of Co-operation and Development) announced the state's intention to build a township approximately 30 kilometres south-east of Cape Town. It was to be built close to Mitchell's Plain, a residential area housing mostly coloured people to form part of the Cape Flats and which consisted of a number of smaller townships.

The initial reason for building this township was for all Africans to be relocated from Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga to Khayelitsha. African urbanization had grown throughout the last four decades of the twentieth century, which rendered many of the townships difficult to govern and resulted in the need for influx control. The intention to contain and isolate marginalized peoples by forcibly displacing them met with public resistance and in April 1986 the National Committee Against Removals issued a bulletin in which they condemned the forcible relocation of people who were evicted from Crossroads (another informal settlement) to Khayelitsha (Gerhart & Glaser, 2010:20). When influx control was abolished in 1986, Khayelitsha and other informal settlements literally burst at the seams as people moved there voluntarily. The increasing migration rates affected Khayelitsha most dramatically. Today,

Khayelitsha is one of the largest townships in South Africa with approximately 750,000 people and it is characterized by social, economic, institutional and cultural exclusion, high crime rates and a high prevalence of HIV and AIDS (Graham *et al.*, 2011:68).

In *U-Carmen* the focalization of the camera contributes strongly to making Khayelitsha one of the most striking features of the film. The camera is almost like an omniscient narrator that has access to everything and everyone. Its reverse motion that ends in a panoramic shot in the opening scenes, followed by the rapid shift from one scene to another, showing daily activities, serves to create a contextual framework for Carmen's narrative on more than one level. This is a place where people work and play; where they share experiences. It is true to its name; it is their 'new home'.

However, Khayelitsha is much more than a geographical context. Earlier in this thesis I quoted Wales (2001) in explaining that a macro-context transcends the situational and communicative contexts to include other temporal, spatial and social contexts. In *U-Carmen*, Khayelitsha is truly a macro-context (see Chapter Two, page 39) in which alternative and dynamic geographical and social contexts are included. In Chapter Two (page 40) I discussed temporal and spatial focalization. The shifts in temporal and spatial focalization, occurring as a result of the analeptic and elliptic episodes and instances of temporal parallelisms discussed in the previous chapter, create a polyphonic texture and multi-layered contextuality in *U-Carmen*.

It was mentioned in the previous chapter that the omission of Bizet's music in scenes showing events such as Lulamile's homecoming and the sacrificing of the bull also contribute towards the construction of African contexts, both rural and urban. These scenes also suggest that Khayelitsha is a context characterized by contrasts and hybridity. Intertextual and interpolated spaces present the audience with alternative contexts, most saliently perceived through the rural/urban dichotomy. Rural wholesomeness is articulated in religious subtexts that are embedded, for example, in images of Jongikhaya and his brother kneeling in prayer in their rural home before going to church and the image of Mary and the baby Jesus on the card his mother sends him. This rural/urban dichotomy is also developed in the scene involving

Nomakhaya announcing that Jongikhaya's mother wishes a levirate marriage for the two young people. In a conversation with Lucy Menzi, a Xhosa woman who lives in a township near Potchefstroom, I was told that levirate marriages still exist, but mostly occur in rural areas.²¹⁶

The presence of a horse-drawn buggy alongside motor vehicles and a make-shift *kraal* amidst township houses, for example, contribute towards perceptions of a hybrid context. The evocation of moral values such as goodness and honesty is contained in religious signifiers such as the artwork on the taxi in which Nomakhaya arrives, as well as the signifiante of her clothes. This is in stark contrast to the articulation of violence and crime in Khayelitsha.

Graham *et al.* (2011:69) provide a list that testifies to the diversity of violence in Khayelitsha: economic violence, violence and substance abuse occurring in informal taverns, domestic violence, gender-based violence, violence in schools, gang-related violence and firearms (2011:69). The police are not always successful in curbing violence and the communities in Khayelitsha have lost faith in the law. On 22 August 2012 Helen Zille (premier of the Western Cape Province) appointed a commission of inquiry tasked to investigate the troubled relationship between the residents of Khayelitsha and the police (Luhanga, 2012). Zille was acting in response to requests by several community organizations who alleged that the South African Police Service in the Western Cape is unsuccessful in investigating and solving crimes effectively.

On 15 July 2010 the Western Cape office of the premier issued a statement²¹⁷ in which some of the statistics indicated that

- research conducted by the Medical Research Council has shown that 98 per cent of tik²¹⁸ addicts who seek help in South Africa come from the Western Cape;

²¹⁶ Conversation with S. Viljoen on 11 September 2012.

²¹⁷ Available on <http://www.info.gov.za/speech/DynamicAction?pageid=461&sid=10171&tid=10188>. Date accessed: 21 September, 2012.

²¹⁸ Crystal methamphetamine is a drug commonly known as 'tik'.

- according to police statistics, almost 50 per cent of all crimes in 2008/09 which were related to drugs occurred in the Western Cape (52 000 cases out of 117 000);
- A survey, conducted in 2004 indicated that more people from the Western Cape reported using drugs than in any other province in the country.

In an interview with SABC 2 News on 26 July 2012²¹⁹ Patricia de Lille – the mayor of Cape Town – pointed out that “Western Cape and especially Cape Town, is leading the highest alcohol abuse and the highest drug abuse in the whole of South Africa.” In her speech during an event in Bellville to mark World Drug Awareness Day, de Lille said the recent studies have indicated an excess of 60 per cent of children in Cape Town between the ages of 13 and 15 years have already experimented with drugs. The statistics above, as well as de Lille’s comments are a clear indication that drug-smuggling in the Western Cape is a real problem.

Furthermore, the violent behaviour of the police officer towards Carmen in *U-Carmen* carries significance. Nowhere in Bizet’s score or *Carmen’s* libretto is there any indication that Carmen is subjected to physical and sexual abuse by Zuniga. Therefore, we can infer that these scenes have specific significance within a South African context. Unfortunately, the police captain’s behaviour towards Carmen is representative of a problem faced by South African women, especially those living in African communities, namely gender-based violence (GBV). The serious nature of violence against women was confirmed by the South African Minister for Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Lulu Xingwana, as recently as 23 April 2012 in her keynote address at the third annual Gender Justice and Local Government summit. This summit was organised by Gender Links (GL), a non-governmental organization that is committed to gender equality and justice. Their aim is to have reduced GBV by 50 per cent in 2015. Together with the Medical Research Council

²¹⁹ This insert from SABC2 News (26 July 2012) is available on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUYq7w0bbRk>. Date accessed: 21 September 2012.

(MRC), GL conducted research in 2010 known as *GBV – The war@home*. The preliminary findings of the *Gauteng Gender Violence Prevalence Study*²²⁰ indicated that 51.2% of women in Gauteng have been victims of violence. 78.3% of men in the same province admitted to being the perpetrators of violent acts towards women. The most troubling statistic though is that only 3.9% of those women who were interviewed had reported these offences to the police.

From the arguments above, it is clear that the director and producers of *U-Carmen* did not choose Khayelitsha only as a location on which to shoot the film. This context is a real-life, complex 'character' with multi-layered dimensions that evince an identity that is characterized by fluidity and plurality.

7.3 African Carmen as exotic Other

An important question would be to determine how perceptions of the female other have changed since the nineteenth century. Contemporary notions lean towards a greater objectivity in perceptions of the female Other, but despite this alternative attitude to gender issues, Franz (2003:734) claims that they have not lain to rest patriarchal behaviour and its consequences. Perceptions of the female Other are considered by research relating to gender issues.

In *U-Carmen* the study of gender issues moves away from traditional strands found in gender research. This text allows a transcendence of the usual areas of gender research as listed by Schick (1999:3): "native women and the feminization of colonies [...] and European women and their role in race relations in the colonies". The treatment of the female Other in Merimée's and Bizet's *Carmen* is racist, colonialist and sexist and contributes not only to the legitimization of the power relationship between male and female, but also between Western Self and non-Western Other. It is different in *U-Carmen*, where class and race are not as salient because all the characters originate from the same racial and social groups. The main issue remaining is that of gender. Therefore, the treatment of the female Other

²²⁰ The report on the preliminary findings of this research can be found at <http://www.mrc.ac.za/gender/gbvthewar.pdf>

in *U-Carmen* highlights a male/female dichotomy where male and female belong to the same racial and social groups.

It should be noted in all fairness that even Dornford-May's Carmen is not at all a saint. She participates in criminal acts and her initial manipulation of Jongikhaya is as cunning as that of her operatic equivalent. She is sensual and, at times, employs her sensuality to attract Jongikhaya's attention. Compared to Nomakhaya, who acts as a foil to Carmen just as Micaëla does in Bizet's opera, she is the more daring and complex of the two. However, there is much more to Carmen than just her darker side and her sensuality.

Pauline Malefane, as singer-actor, is one of the important signifiers in *U-Carmen*. I have already referred to this artist's understated portrayal of Carmen's sexuality. While she participates in the traditional dances of her society and even entertains Jongikhaya by dancing for him, she comes across as sensual, but not more so than other women. When the musical cuts and ellipses that eliminate, for example, any flirting with or declarations of love for other men are added to Malefane's portrayal of Carmen, it becomes clear that she does not have supernatural powers, does not have illicit affairs with other men and does not behave in ways that are pathologically sexual and irrational.

The understatement of Carmen's sensuality in *U-Carmen* does not only frustrate the recurrence of sexual stereotypes, but also manages to emphasise the men's unrestrained male chauvinistic behaviour. It enhances perceptions of male lust as men leer through the windows and call for Carmen to join them. It suggests that Jongikhaya is an unreasonably jealous weakling and exaggerates the pompous and violent behaviour of the police officer. The exploitation of her sensuality is evident when the men who spearhead the drug-smuggling ask her and the other women to distract the guards so that they can carry on with their criminal activities.

The focalization of the camera in close-up shots, the semiotic value of properties such as mirrors, Malefane's subtle use of her voice and the *mise-en-scène* of several scenes are all a part of strategies employed to let the audience gain insight into Carmen's interiority. In such moments both Carmen's resolve and her vulnerability

are noticeable. Because we have insight in Carmen's interiority, the audience can take psychological and sociological factors into account when perceiving Carmen's identity – even if they do so subconsciously. Knowing her fate (having visited the *ithambo*), Carmen can feel entitled to act a bit recklessly – she has nothing to lose. She does not shy away from her destiny but faces it head-on.

In analysing the third sequence of the cinematic adaptation (6.3.3) I mentioned that the *mise-en-scène* of at least two scenes placed Carmen in the centre. When this strategy is combined with the fact that, contrary to the nineteenth-century texts, Carmen is part of the same society as all the other characters in the narrative, it becomes evident that *U-Carmen* no longer posits the female Western Self against the exotic, non-Western Other. Carmen is now in the centre of a community characterized more by Sameness than by Otherness. She is no longer observed from the outside, but from the inside. What transpires is that, as a woman, she is still marginalized because she exists within a patriarchal society in which women are often regarded as inferior.

In conclusion, it can be argued that this production articulates Carmen's identity as complex. During a post-screen interview in London (2006), Dornford-May pointed out the difference between Pauline Malefane's portrayal of Carmen from others. Pauline's Carmen is more than being a *femme fatale*; she is an independent African woman who will not have men dictate to her (Davies & Dovey, 2010:43). She is simultaneously sensual, defiant and vulnerable. However, there is one constant, namely her existential search for freedom of choice. She is still an iconic figure, but not as much of the ultimate *femme fatale*, but rather of the marginalized African female who is desperate for freedom of choice. This semiotic value of Carmen's character in *U-Carmen* is articulated by means of the signs and the narrative strategies employed in the cinematic adaptation. Along with the intertextual spaces that the juxtaposition and superimposition of Bizet's music brings to this character, verisimilitude is added to perceptions that the marginalization of women still takes place within all contexts.

7.4 Suggestions for further study

The initial purpose of this research project was to explore the use of narrative strategies in the articulation of identity in *U-Carmen*. However, in the process of planning the research design, as well as gathering and analysing data, it became increasingly clear that the semiotics of all the conventions constituting the genres involved in this research project are as important in articulating the identity of the Other as the narrative strategies are. As the research project progressed it also became evident how important the use of exoticism was in articulating the Other's contexts and identities during the nineteenth century. The nineteenth-century's focus on women as the exotic Other became one of the most salient themes as the research developed and, therefore, the purpose of the research project was adapted to explore the use of semiotics and narrative strategies to articulate the identity of the exotic, female Other in *U-Carmen*.

The research results have shown that there is a significant difference between nineteenth-century and postmodern perceptions of exoticism. Postmodern perceptions and articulation of the exotic Other warrant further research. Questions that may be asked include

- how can exoticism be defined within postmodern contexts?
- how do other opera texts, set within African contexts, articulate the identity of the exotic Other?
- how can the appropriation and adaptation of Western operas within an African context contribute towards the emergence of idiomatic African operas?

7.5 Conclusion

Carmen's character was traced within a postmodern paradigm in all the primary texts, embodied in different media, by taking into account how the reality of her gender and the various contexts in which her character has been articulated have affected perceptions of her identity. It was established that while *U-Carmen*, on the one hand, articulates the identity of the African woman as the exotic (marginalized)

Other and, on the other hand, evinces her confidence, a subtle shift allows her as an African woman to be perceived as self-affirmative and searching for self-realization.

Both Mérimée's and Bizet's *Carmen* marginalize the exotic Other and offered nineteenth-century European audiences the possibility to enter territory otherwise forbidden or inaccessible. Nineteenth-century social norms and values discouraged Western women from interacting with non-Western cultures, but literature, music and art allowed them to form perceptions regarding the contexts and identities of the other. The fact that their perceptions were informed by art forms that were based on biased perceptions of the exotic Other was not taken into account.

U-Carmen, on the other hand, is closer to a "subversive negotiation rather than escapist relinquishing" (Célestin, 1996:3). It is an introspective exploration and a deconstruction of African contexts and identities. Dornford-May's *U-Carmen* is no longer a representation of the exotic Other according to the nineteenth-century French tradition. In *U-Carmen* it is no longer a matter of contrasting spaces between the Self and the Other as there is between the Western Self and the non-Western Other. It is no longer a matter of a geographical difference between 'here' and 'there'. *U-Carmen* articulates the context and the identity of the exotic Other in such a manner that the periphery becomes the centre.

Regardless of the centralization of Carmen's character, she is still marginalized and seeking for freedom. The external boundaries, forged by a patriarchal society, still confine her and will her to conform to presuppositions of what a woman's role in society should be. However, Carmen's refusal to adhere to gender presuppositions is indicative of the expansion of her internal boundaries. Her innermost thoughts and convictions cannot be confined and will not conform. They exist without bounds. Internal boundaries cannot be contained and are characterized by the ability to transcend external boundaries. Carmen may die at the hand of Jongikhaya, but she does so without compromising her internal freedom.

The final shot of *U-Carmen* shows the camera moving slowly up and away from the place where Carmen's body lies covered by a red tarpaulin to eventually show a panoramic, aerial view of Khayelitsha. This scene strongly signifies the

transcendence of Carmen's internal freedom and echoes the poem by Maya Angelou that I used as paratext before at the start of this thesis. In *U-Carmen*, Carmen defies all gender presuppositions to become the signifier of marginalized African women who, despite of any scorn or disdain, will rise to be the bearers of hope and the future in South Africa.

Ultimately, this thesis has not only established that literary theories and narrative strategies can be applied effectively in the analyses of operatic texts. True to the spirit of postmodernism, this thesis has crossed boundaries between music and literature to indicate that the cross-fertilization of disciplines can be extremely rewarding and provide interesting new perspectives on existing works.

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ADDENDA

Addendum A: Transcript of interview conducted by S. Viljoen (SV) with Mark Dornford-May (MDM) on 28 July 2009

SV *U-Carmen* begins with a quote from Prosper Mérimée's novella *Carmen* upon which Bizet's opera is based. How much of the essence of Mérimée's novella found its way into your production?

MDM No...we...I mean...the film *Carmen* grew out of a stage production of Bizet's *Carmen*. It just so happens...I mean...obviously when we started to work on the film script, we looked a lot more at Mérimée than we had done previously. So the use of Mérimée at the beginning, and some elements of Mérimée throughout, was certainly a constant, but we didn't...we didn't in any way think that we were adapting Mérimée's novel: we were working on Bizet's version of it. Right at the beginning we do go straight back to Mérimée. Um...you know, there is no physical description of Carmen in Bizet so we just used that as a way in. In a way that was simply grounds for a very practical decision that the...the description of Carmen by Mérimée sort of, you know, could have been a description of the actress playing Carmen, so we...we layered that in a way.

SV Do you make a distinction between the actress playing Carmen and the African woman or, in your mind, was the actress equal to the character?

MDM OK, it's a very interesting question. Yes, I suppose that...um...we wanted to show...I mean, one of the reasons we decided on *Carmen* was obviously the strength of Pauline's performance led to the funding of the film...her performance on stage...um... and we wanted to – in the stage and in the film – we wanted to explore...um...the choices open to a working-class, or in this case a previously disadvantaged girl, has in terms of choices for freedom. Um...and you know, you look at Mérimée it was the same and the same for Bizet. Um...you know they're dealing with...um...marginalized groupings on the edge of society and a lot of Carmen's decisions are based on a very strong survival instinct.

SV I also thought her existentialist notion of making a choice or her search for the ability to make choices...from...you know...the freedom to make choices.

MDM Exactly. I mean, I think she is constantly striving to be in a position where she can make choices.

SV Especially within a patriarchal system...

MDM Very much so...

SV not only in the African community, but also in a South African community. It has not yet changed all that much.

MDM Ja...absolutely...no...no...that's absolutely true. I mean, that runs across all the communities...and, of course, runs across Mérimée and Bizet as well. I mean, they both are very aware of that.

SV When I wrote the proposal that I sent you, it was now in the beginning stages of my thoughts and, in the mean time, I have very much realized that the...the whole idea of the exotic Other in Mérimée and in Bizet and in the nineteenth-century has been carried over into the *U-Carmen*, but there are some subtle shifts in focus in the whole thought about exoticism. But I'll get to that one now.

MDM That's true...

SV OK: I have written here: on the one hand, *U-Carmen*, for me, could be regarded as articulating the identity of the African woman as the exotic (marginalized) other. On the other hand – and this is where the shift is for me – it may be perceived as introducing the African woman as self-affirmative; someone who is searching for self-realization.

MDM Definitely...

SV Is that something you hope to evoke with this production?

MDM Definitely! You know, where I suppose we are different and where there is a big shift from Bizet and Mérimée is that – in both Bizet and Mérimée – she is from the other side as it were, you know. She is a Gypsy and she is...um...um... you know...um...um seducing...or whatever you want to describe it, people who are not. But within our *Carmen*, everyone was part of the marginalized community if you like. So that it takes that away and, therefore, you focus more on her, not so much as a racial stereotype, but her struggling within a...you take away the sort of sense of crossing...you know or being exotic in a funny way and what you concentrate then on is the character of the woman.

SV Because, this is what I meant by the shift in the exotic Other now: it is no longer as perceived from the Other, but as perceived from Home.

MDM Exactly. Ja. Absolutely. And that is a big shift. So we look at it...if you like...the world is seeing a lot through Carmen's eyes, whereas in Bizet and Mérimée they see a lot from looking from the outside in.

SV from the outside...because that was one of the questions my supervisor asked me when I came to him with the proposal that I want to do this and he said to me: "OK, who's the director"?. And I had to go and read up on you a little...and he asked me...but do I think that you as a European, white male can really...you know the old question they ask about literature as well: can you tell the story of a black woman from a Western, European, white perspective? And I said that I think this is the one text that is different, because...and I read it as well in other interviews that you had...that it was a collaborative effort by the company. It was a story told from Home.

MDM Absolutely. So in that way I was a facilitator. Um...you know, it is an old argument, but it's a rather boring argument. Um...you know...the...the...I don't have to be a mass murderer to make a film about a mass murderer, for example. Um...there's a certain sense sometimes...of...I think...within certain worlds...um...it's like a great friend of mine is another director called (inaudable) – we all grew up together sort of thing – and another director

called Stephen Daldry who did *Billy Elliot* which was set in the Northern mining community. He's never been in the North in his life. Danny Boyle...just done *Slum Dog Millionaire*, set in India. He's not Indian, he's as British as I am...um...but sometimes the outsider's view can...um...can release the insider's view more cleanly.

SV Right. That's a good argument that I will quote you on. Um...yes...I also find it a bit...um...I don't want to use the word preposterous but, also that's a pre-assumption that a male cannot...perhaps in the nineteenth century, but I think things have changed sufficiently that people can tell each other's stories. Um...I also have here...um...if...I would say that *U-Carmen* is closer to a subversive negotiation. For me it's a negotiation between the audience and the text in which some pre-assumptions are subverted and others are negated. But it's not merely something that...a text in which you can escape and say "aha" at the end. It's really thought-provoking...more so for me than Bizet. I don't know why. I think we have just gotten used to Bizet... you know, beautiful music...

MDM I think that's true...and I think...yes...sort of...a lot of the impact of Bizet nowadays in productions has been lost because it becomes a sort of historical drama, rather than something which is enacted now. So it becomes...you know...um...you very rarely get *Carmens*...you know...break out of that...I mean...a lot of the time it's people who aren't Spanish pretending to be Spanish, as it were. And often that causes real problems.

SV It's actually interesting that Bizet had never been to Spain. He never visited Spain.

MDM No.

SV OK. My approach for this study is a postmodern...from a postmodern literary perspective, which for me...postcolonialism, feminism are all manifestations of postmodernism. So in analyzing *U-Carmen*, I've found quite a few narrative strategies that are used...I don't want to say...it's not exclusively by

postmodern authors or postmodern directors, but it is something that has – in the postmodern era – really come to the front such as the juxtaposition of texts and also a context and misattribution and superimposition and all those things. Did you set out in...to create a postmodern or postcolonial or post-apartheid production?

MDM No. I mean...obviously, all those things were sort of...one was aware of all those things...um...you can't sort of...you know...in making films within a...within a South African context, you can't ignore South Africa's history, you know...it'd be impossible if you're going to set it in a...you know...I mean...the world of Carmen is as realistic as the world of any opera can be. So...therefore, you can't...you can't ignore those things. But we weren't particularly wanting to...we didn't want to set up a situation where it was too easy for the audience to apportion blame. I mean...*Carmen*...why *Carmen* is such a successful piece is because it tells a universal story, you know. It's still about the condition of women in society, you know. Um...it is very difficult. It's easier for women who are wealthy and it's easy for women who've got education but it still is not easy for any woman to achieve the decision making that Carmen wants to achieve, which is really...what Carmen wants to do is achieve equal decision making as to man...I mean...you know...um...if it was a male figure, we would be far less critical of the fact she switches from one lover to another – we'd be far less critical about that. Um...ja you know...her sense of wanting independence, we would not even notice if she was a male figure. So...um...those things were...we needed, I suppose, to...some of the back stories come into this in the sense we invented...well we didn't invent; we took...we took what's there in the moment in Bizet; like Don José having killed someone before...um... and we...we made that real. We...we then sort of cheated...you know...that it was his...he'd murdered his brother, if you like and the Micaëla stuff. But the original impetus for that came from the character note from Bizet which involved...he's run away to join the army. So we had him running away to join the police. The toreador's back story...we wanted to create a South African context for him which would explain his...sort of...um...history in terms of where he got to...you know...in the world. Um...and

so that, that offered that, I suppose and gave him another... The...the toreador...I think...in Bizet is a very plastic figure. We wanted to give him a bit more ...

SV history I think ...

MDM Ja...more of a history and more of a morality in a way.

SV OK. Now...which brings me to one of the...I'm so glad that you...you volunteered to say why you think it is a successful production, because – for me...I've watched quite a few re-visitations and I've listened to the music...sound tracks of those I couldn't find the originals of – and I still think this is the one that stands out for me...you know...I hope to still one day see the Impempe as well. But...um...because there are really exquisite moments, and I want to use the word 'thought-provoking' again. And one of those is the sequence where Lulamile returns home. There are a few things...you know...us literary guys...and um...we read things into it that people might not have even thought of.

MDM Oh absolutely...absolutely.

SV Like the postmodernism. For me...I would conclude then that it's basically a *Zeitgeist* that you fell into, you know and...

MDM Yes, if you like, yes. Absolutely...ja...absolutely.

SV OK...and I wanted to mention some. There are a few scenes in this sequence which really touched my heart. When he looks back in the rearview mirror and the cattle walking across the bridge, for me that is such...because context and identity is now my focus area, and, for me...that was a...um...um...almost a...

MDM a crucial moment. It kicks off his whole memory...

SV And also...for me...it is that he's...despite the fact that he's been abroad so long, he is...this is part of who he is. That's part of his identity and also a part of the identity of the people in Khayelitsha. Um...somewhere in their culture, in

their identity – despite their contexts – there are specific givens, specific things that are constant. Is that what you thought...

MDM Oh absolutely! Absolutely. Definitely. I mean...and if you think it starts with that cattle sequence and then it ends with the...the slaughtering later on.

SV And also the bracelet that he wears later on. I keep getting goosebumps when I...when he...the one that his grandfather put around his neck and later he wears it on his arm. It is something that stays. Um...

MDM Stays all the way through.

SV Um... I think...ja... it is the French philosopher Ricoeur who says that the *ipse* and the *idem* identity where he says that there is something that is you. The other identity can change with context, but the innate identity is a given and, for me, that scene...am I OK in making that inference?

MDM No, absolutely. No that is absolutely right. Absolutely.

SV OK. And then the other one that I also wanted to ask you about – in the same sequence, is the scene where Lulamile's grandfather hands him over to the care of a priest. For me...and I don't even claim to know anything really about the African culture. I've just been teaching them for 17 years now...well, children from their... The church played a significant role in the apartheid struggle. Was the inclusion of the priest a conscious strategy to reflect the church's involvement?

MDM Ja, definitely...deliberate...conscious...

SV So, I did read that one correctly.

MDM Actually that seems quite sweet, because the man who plays the grandfather is Joe Magotsi. He was one of the Manhattan brothers...you know... one of the major groups in Sophia Town in the fifties and sang with Miriam Makeba and everyone. So it's great he's in the scene, and the man who plays the priest is Manny Mannim who's the guy who founded the Market Theatre. So it's quite a

nice little historical theme...there's a real historical...there's a real context and identity thing. There's a reality to it as well in a way, which is quite interesting.

SV If you give me permission, I am going to write to you again and we'll go into that one as well.

MDM Right...ja.

SV Also...now, another scene...as he returns and he arrives at the shebeen where they have just had the violent incident...with the abuse of Carmen. They are singing this jubilant welcoming song and, juxtaposed to that, Carmen is humming the theme of the Habanera. Why? Was there a conscious...?

MDM Ja, what we wanted to show was, I suppose...she's cleaning her face while she...um...she has already done...you know...the Habanera, but it's a reprise if you like. But we wanted to show her isolation against the jubilation of the crowd, because often it's seen that she...she's caught up in the response to the toreador and we wanted to divorce her from that response so that she makes a conscious decision to become involved rather than she's just swept away in sort of a group emotion if you like.

SV Because I also interpreted it as this is what sets her apart.

MDM Exactly.

SV For me the Habanera is a symbol almost of her sensuality and her defiance.

MDM But of course...ja, it's something she...yeah, it is. So when she's cleaning the blood off her face singing that, she is...I don't know...comforting herself in a way, by re-establishing her strength.

SV Maybe a little bit of self-affirmation?

MDM Ja. Exactly. That's what I mean. That she's hanging onto that. Without that she's not safe, but if she can do that, then she can carry on.

SV OK...um...about the music. I'm not only concentrating on music, because for me context and identity is also the spatial aspect. So for me it is so great...the township sounds that are incorporated already from the overture and absolutely juxtaposed and superimposed on it. So...and then they start with the choir, where the young man conducts the female choir. I thought...or am I correct in my thoughts that you used the choir culture of the African community also as part of articulating their identity in this.

MDM Ja, of course. Definitely. Absolutely. And that's why consciously we show that right at the beginning of the scene. To show where she fits in.

SV Ja and at the end?

MDM Ja, absolutely. At the sport stadium

SV Um...the music that they sing in, for example, while they're working...the women. There's the music of Bizet, but there's also the...

MDM Overlaid, ja...

SV Overlay by the African music. Was the music composed for this production or does it come from the oeuvre of the traditional songs?

MDM No, it's all...there's nothing specially composed in terms of the traditional songs. They're all traditional, so that's a traditional work song. Later on...when the slaughtering...there's a traditional song. No they're absolutely traditional songs which we throw together quite dramatically against the Bizet. So you get that clash and which is fantastic.

I mean, in terms of sound, the film is certainly considered groundbreaking, because often with opera film you get a flatness of impact on an audience because the music is recorded in a studio and so it's perfect. So that someone who is walking along...um...doesn't...you know, you're not aware of the space they exist in...it makes no difference. They just carry on singing in the same way. And...I spent a lot of time talking to a director called Alan

Parker who had...um...has done a lot of musicals...um...you know...throughout his life...an extraordinary director. And when they were filming...he did...uh...Evita with Madonna and all those sort of things. And he found...what he did was...he decided what shots he was gonna use, so he decided if it was going to be a close-up or a long shot. And then the sound, the prerecorded sound was matched to that. So if he, for example, was going to do a close-up of Madonna, she was close-miked. If he was going to do a long shot, she was long miked, which gives that film...um...and if we look at that film, bad as some of the music is, you get a much more immediate effect of reality.

So we took that idea and extended it by then saying, OK well, we're going to prerecord our sound, we're gonna do what he did. So we thought well, there's gonna be a close up of Pauline's face now, so we're gonna very close-mike her. So when she's singing...like when she starts singing at the beginning in the Habanera...you...it's...you know...you're very very close in and it sounds like you're listening to her singing very very quietly.

SV Very intimate

MDM Very intimate. And...uh...so we did that. But then...where we took another...um...there's a fantastic other sound editor, an editor called Walter Murch, and you should get his book if you can. He has written a book...I can't remember what the title is...but it's MURCH, Walter Murch. And he did the sound editing, or was part of that team, on the Godfather film. And you know at the beginning of the Godfather, there's that rather haunting Italian theme which they use all the way through. Then what Walter had done was...they hired just a basic Italian band. They recorded that Italian sound with a very sort of accomplished group of session musicians. For the shoot they just hired an Italian band which was messier and not quite as musically astute. What he did was...he recorded it on set and then mixed it in with the previously recorded, so you get a different immediacy. So we took these two ideas and we put them together. So on set...at times...Pauline was literally singing, was really, really singing...and then...um...that was overlaid with something we may have prerecorded and then, on top of that, we spent a long time later on

the editing. So, for example, the one people always pull up, is the stairway scene at the end where you get the sense that they're singing on the stairwell, because the sound is then treated to make it sound as if it's absolutely there and there and there. And that gives the film an immediacy which...a lot of people aren't aware of why they think it's...um...um...more lively or more...I don't know...you know... more real than a Carmen they see on stage. A lot of it has to do with the understanding of the sound. They may not get...

SV Which also contributes to the contextual identity.

MDM Absolutely...sorry, I was carrying on...

SV not at all!

MDM ...but I was trying to explain that that is absolutely central to that whole area of the film.

SV The nineteenth-century idea of exoticism is a degrading distancing from the Self – the imperial Self, which I don't think you did in *U-Carmen*. I don't think it was your intent to do that.

MDM No, never. In fact, like I said...we deliberately took that away. If we wanted to do that, we obviously...and it would have been possible. If you think: if we just shifted in back a decade, it would have been possible and...you know...at the beginning some people arguing much more interesting, if Don José and the Toreador were white. So we made a deliberate decision not to do that in order to take away these...

SV And that's especially what Mérimée does...

MDM ...and he does it deliberately.

SV He has this hierarchy of the French archeologist and the semi-noble Don José and the Gypsy.

MDM Absolutely...that's right.

SV and also the distinction between the various classes...

MDM and the Toreador crosses the road into the Gypsy camp. No...absolutely.

Addendum B: Transcript of interview conducted by S. Viljoen (SV) with Pauline Malefane (PM) on 24 October 2012

SV Was it a conscious decision to downplay Carmen's sexuality in *U-Carmen*? If so, why?

PM Yes. That's the shortest answer to that. It is yes. Because...for me...you know I grew up with lots of women around me. Strong women...uhm...sometimes weak women...uhm...sometimes women who are not weak or strong, but who are just trapped in situations where they can't...you know...easily get out of. Uhm...you know...it depends on what the situation is. And so, I thought, it can't be that when Bizet wrote this opera...uhm...I forget who the librettists were...but you know, they just saw women as...as...sexual...you know...there must be something beyond...uhm...you know...sexuality...you know...that made them...compose this opera. And...the way I look at it...you know...the way I want to look at it is...I want to...you know...we did *Carmen* at a time when women were starting to be recognized more in the country...within the country. Uhm...lots of women...you know...going into business...uhm...being CEO's...lots of women...you know...in politics...you know...having...you know...leadership roles. But also in the townships...you know...people who have been struggling all their lives, but have managed to turn their life around. And so those people for me are a role model. I wanted to capture a bit of that, so that...uhm...people who still are trapped or people who still feel they can't do things...you know...could look up to this...you know...this Carmen, to this woman, and relate, because she's not perfect...you know...she is not perfect. That's the thing about her: she is not perfect, but...in the end...she knows what she wants. And she says in the end...you know...: "Free I was born and free I will die" ...you know...so, it doesn't matter who you are...Frank or Tom...you know...I'll take what I want from you...you can take what you want from me too, if you want to, but this is what I need from you. And...you know...I'm not going to be your prisoner...you know...I've got my own mind...you know...God has given me a gift ...you know...of life and I need to celebrate that life. You know...one cannot change...cannot

change...uhm...cannot predict what life brings...you know...you might know in ten year's time you want to be...you know...I want to be a world-renowned...you know...business woman and this is 2012. In 2022 I want to be that and you know you're going to be one. But you cannot predict that what it's going to take you. It might take you five years or it might take you the ten years or you might not even make it. So one never knows. But what I like about, and what I wanted to instill in Carmen, is...you know...the sense of womanhood...you know...respect yourself and...and things will...you know...but just shut them off...you know...get up and go. You know what you want. If this doesn't work out, try something else. If that doesn't work out, try something else...you know...I wanted to capture...you know...those things.

SV What was the motivation for performing the extracts from “Enfin c'est toi!” a capella?

PM I'm sure there was a reason. I think...I think that scene was more sexual than anything else in the...because she's dancing for him...you know...and...and I think the director wanted it to be just naked...you know...so it's like...forget about everybody else in the room...you know...it's just the two of them, where (hums the melody) ...you know...sometimes things don't really start that haaaagh (huge sigh)...they start from a very small...

SV I got the impression that the relationship between Carmen and Jongikhaya is not a manipulative thing. She really feels for him – the intimacy.

PM No she does but...you know...things go wrong...you know...I don't know...but I think...the way I played it, if I remember correctly...it was some time ago...uhm...people do fall in love. And people do have good relationships. You know...you know as well. And...and...after thirty years or after twenty years, people separate...you know...obviously there was a time where everything was fine...you know...So there was...between Carmen and Don José...you know...definitely...you know...between *U-Carmen*...our Carmen and Jongikhaya there was ...you know...the chemistry...the love. They shared something. Maybe they were not in love, maybe they thought they were in

love. But there was something that attracted them to each other. But, I think, because of the background of Don José...of Jongikhaya...you know...the past always haunts you...you know...so if you had a violent past or if you had a sad past...you know...sometimes...you know...in your present, you get flashes of sadness or of violence. You know how people say these days...you know...if a child grew up in a house with violence he will also abuse...so I think that was the situation with Jongikhaya as well and Carmen didn't want any...you know...she was not ready to settle down. She loved the company...you know...in this day and age, it would be like going out...parties, clubs...doing that. She loved that, but she didn't want to suddenly have a man tell her what to do, where to go, when to do it and how to do it...you know...So, I think that was the thing that brought the clash between the two of them. Because the other one is "No I'm not going to do that" and the other one says "I'm the man...I'm the African man...you have to do it...you know...I tell you to do this and you do it". And she is...you know...an independent young woman and...you know...who has seen these relationships...you know...break up and she doesn't want it...you know...maybe...if we assume that she has grown up in an environment like that...you know...

SV Referring to the scene in the shebeen where Jongikhaya proclaims that his life is in Carmen's hands and then he hands her the ring. Is Carmen's reaction (she seems truly sad/hurt) genuine or her request for him to stay with her an attempt to manipulate him?

PM You know...maybe I was just one-sided, but I didn't want to...but other people will look at it anyway because that's the script...that's how people have played it...that she is manipulative. But I...for me, manipulation was not there from the beginning to the end. Because I knew; when somebody else was watching it, they would see different things and they would definitely see manipulation as well, even if it was not intended. At that moment...you know...each and every girl...you know...longs for marriage...you know...they want to get married and have children and...you know...it's nice...it's how we grew up and she realizes that this cannot work.

SV Can I suggest the thought that it might be that the expectations of...I do not want to say the African woman, because I cannot presume to know what the African woman wants, but that – as a woman – the expectations have changed of relationships and that Jongikhaya's expectations are still the expectations of the African male.

PM That is exactly it, because ...you know...she's thinking "It's not going to work...you know... "I've got a child already" ...you know..."I love my child...but it is not ideal for me to have a child at that particular time and now I know how hard it is...you know...to raise a child and I know that this man is not perfect. And we are going to have children together. Is he going to abuse our children? Is he going to hit them? Is he going to come home drunk? Is he...you know...going to...am I going to have to hide from him? You know...because I have seen the qualities...you know...that he has...you know...I've seen him around me...you know...As soon as a man...you know...looks at me...you know...he gets very angry. Why is he looking at me...why...why...you know...When I lived at my mom's house...my parents' house...the neighbour...a married couple...and the husband was...they were both quite jealous...you know...so it was difficult. I remember one day she came to my mom and she said "You know, we were in the lift and this woman came in. And you know what he did? He looked at her!" You know...if somebody comes in the lift, we're all going to look at her...you know...So...you know...he is very jealous, Jongikhaya. And some people, some women...black or white...don't catch those signs...you know...they...uhm...I don't say they block them but, for some reason...maybe the love...the feelings they have for this person do not allow them to see who the real person is or what that person can do...you know...or how...I don't know...its quite sad...it's very sad when you see someone trapped in a situation like that...you know...so that's what it was to me...you know...

SV It is only when one watches the credits at the end of the film that one realizes that the child on Carmen's lap (in the shebeen) is hers. What was the motivation for having children present?

PM And that particular day was not a normal shebeen day. It was a celebration day. And that is why the children were there. Otherwise we don't...

SV Carmen's search for freedom is so strong. Why does she agree to the police captain's suggestion that she offers him sexual favours in return for her freedom?

PM You know why? Because she knew she wasn't going to do it. She has her friends around her...the two guys that's doing the drug dealing...so she knows...that...uhm...she's got to...you know... talk to her friends and her friends will sort out the policeman so that she doesn't have to do it...you know...because – if she didn't say she was going to do it to the policeman – then maybe the policeman would have sent her to jail or maybe the policeman would have hit her or...you know just...or...you know...cause police can be corrupt. We do get those who are like that one and...obviously we can't generalize. There are many of them who are very good and, sadly, now they are being killed. Especially here in Cape Town. I was at a funeral on Saturday of one of the policemen that was killed. But anyway...so uhm...going back to the uhm...question...no I ...you know...I knew I wasn't going to do it...you know...I knew I had these friends...you know...uhm...what can I call them? Thugs...who will sort him out.

SV In Bizet's *Carmen*, Escamillo's interest in Carmen is based purely on her being female. Upon their first meeting, Lulamile tells Carmen that she has a beautiful voice. Is this merely a pick up line or was it intended to shift the focus from Carmen's sexuality to something which is commonly appreciated by the African community: a good voice.

PM You know...Lulamile is a typical...uhm...what can I call him? He is one of those...you know...people who grew up in the township and went somewhere else and now...you know...has come back with money and...you know...flashy things and...you know...and he knows that he doesn't have to flirt with any girl...you know...the fact that he drives this big Audi and the fact that he wears

this leather jacket. He is playing it down...you know...with Carmen, wanting her to make a move for him. But she doesn't do it.

But you are right as well. Because he could have...he could have said: "You have beautiful eyes" but that would have been sexual. He is saying "You've got a beautiful voice", but he is not saying that. He just...you know...saying...you know...the body that's carrying the voice...

SV Referring to the scene outside Bra Nkomo's shebeen (just before the altercation with the police officer) a cameraman is seen recording the singing and dancing. Was there a specific reason for including this character in these scenes?

PM Because he is capturing the moment...you know...in the traditional things...weddings...or even funerals these days...is on camera so that people can watch afterwards...uhm...so that people can watch it. But also it has something to do with how the shot looks...you know...something to do with the photographing...you know...how the scene looks as well...I think. I think also...you know...the director wanted you to think that you are seeing it in the photographer's eyes.

SV So it's kind of the camera is the focalizer?

PM Yes. For your eyes – yes.

SV In your opinion: is Jongikhaya's choice to turn to a life of crime the result of his own innate weakness or is he the victim of Carmen's manipulation?

PM You know...we can argue...we can argue about him, first of all being evil, because he is evil and he is not because, when he killed, it was a mistake...you know...it was an accident. But the evil thing was hiding it and not coming upfront so that he can go and serve his term...you know...his time in prison, because he had killed someone so he had to pay the consequences. So...in life...as it happens...if you don't pay...if you don't pay in one way, you'll pay in the other way. So he paid by...you know...his life not

being perfect...not being...you know...his life full of...he's just angry...you know...all the time. He's unhappy all the time, even...you know...when he's about to be happy, something wrong happens. So in that way he pays...you know...for...for...for his brother's death...you know...But also, I think, because Carmen is not obedient...you know...to...you know...to him...she doesn't do what...what...what...he wants and so that side of him, which is buried...you know...very ready to explode any time. Carmen...you know...keeps...uhm...stirring it up...you know...keeps...uhm putting fire in the flame by saying "No, I'm not going to do it. You might as well go and kill yourself...you know...I'm not your child, I am not your wife or I'm not your..." So that drives him into doing it again, but this time he's going to go to prison. Because he has done it in front of...he has done it again. It's like history is repeating himself.

SV Instead of asking a question I will just ask if I am reading it correctly. When, for example, Lulamile arrives at Bra Nkomo's shebeen and when the bull in the kraal is slaughtered, Bizet's music is omitted completely. My assumption there was that it was stripped from everything Western – that it is purely African culture. Is that correct?

PM That's correct. That's very correct. I mean, we do that even with Magic flute...with Sarastro. Uhm...Sarastro is unaccompanied. He is accompanied by the men. They are sitting in the kraal and talking about...how to...to run the village...you know...or, in this case, they were talking about Tamino and Pamina. Uhm...that was stripped from...you know...the music was still there...in this one...because he still sings the aria, but instead of him being accompanied by...uhm...the...Mozart's music, he is accompanied by the men but using...uhm...Mozart and in the end it breaks into a dance...you know...and everything. So we...we...when it comes to the celebration of typical traditional gatherings, we always...uhm...try and put a lot of traditional stuff in there, just to...if it works. If it doesn't, we don't do it.

SV I have to ask a question because my supervisor and I had a disagreement. I talk in my thesis about a *kraal* because that's the way I learnt it...

- PM** Yes...
- SV** and he says it's not a good term to use. So I said to him I think we might be overly sensitive; we want to be too politically correct, because it is a *kraal*.
- PM** It is!
- SV** Are there really such enclosures in Khayelithsa?
- PM** We make ones. When there is a traditional thing, they make it...yes...they make it...and they know...and women are not allowed in there.
- SV** OK. That was another question I wanted to ask...
- PM** Mmm...women are not allowed in there. When it is a normal day or whatever you can walk...you know...it's your house...it's fine...but when it is a traditional thing...you know...you can't...you can't go in there.
- SV** I heard about that...
- PM** Mmmm...and then it's not...it's not like in the rural areas, where it's built already...you know...there's cows, there's sheep, there's whatever...
- SV** It's something that's constructed specifically for...I think that's wonderful. There are quite a few signs indicating the presence of religious subtexts in *U-Carmen*, for example, the Bible that Jongikhaya has with him, the fact that his brother was a minister of the church, the presence of the priest that takes Lulamile away. Was there a specific reason to include these signs in *U-Carmen*?
- PM** I think it's...it's maybe merely the fact that...you know...the township is...is...full of churches and religion is very, very prominent.
- SV** It's not more in the rural areas than in the townships?
- PM** No...no. You know people drink, they go to shebeens. But there's lots of people who go to church. So it's still...uhm...if you're capturing the township,

we felt, you should capture...you know...the whole thing...you know...and also to make Jongikhaya's story strong as well and not just make him evil...you know...because...you know...uhm...it's true people grow up in...in good families but they end up being bad people...you know...it doesn't mean you were taught to be bad at home...you know...they were taught to pray and...and they were taught about God and Jesus. They used to go to Sunday school, but somehow, somewhere in their lives, they decided to take another route. So we wanted to capture that as well...you know...with Jongikhaya. That's the situation. The church is very, very important in the township...you know...it's where people...you know...most people draw...uhm...their strength...you know...I don't know how religious you are, but...uhm...you know...I'm a Christian and I'm religious. I believe...you know...and I know that a lot of people will not survive if they weren't going to church; whether the church is corrupt or not. But it is one fulfilment when you go to church.

SV In Bizet's *Carmen* the female Other was exoticized based upon her race, class and gender. In your opinion: does *U-Carmen* show the African woman as the exotic Other, not as much based on her class and race, but because she is a woman within a patriarchal system?

PM The sad thing...you know...you can expect...you know...the male thing from male to female, but the sad thing is female to female. That's what I find unfortunate, is when women themselves are...uhm...you know...look down...you know...upon themselves...you know...if you're both...if you both grew up in the same street and...and you're successful and I'm not; and I would (inaudible) and I would..."Oh, she's not a nice person; she was never a nice person" or this and that and that. "You should see her house...you know...she's driving a...whatever...but you should see her house"...you know...and things like that. Things you would...you'd expect African women...you know... with all the hardships that we've been through to stick together. One woman who came to our church as a guest speaker...uhm...said that the one thing that she hates...you know...is when you're driving as a woman and, she says, sometimes it's a woman and a man

and you're driving...which happens that you are driving with somebody; a friend or whatever...and a woman in the other car...you know...makes a mistake and the man will go "Ag, typical woman – they can't drive"...you know...and she says "I hate...I hate that statement, but I don't care. I expect it's from a man...you know...they're pigs, she said...and...but "What I...", she said "What I hated the most, is hearing a woman laugh when a man says that"...you know...as if it entertains her. Instead of...she...because the man is not just saying it to that woman, but he is saying "women...are useless drivers". That's what basically he is saying. So, why are you not standing up for that woman...you know...especially if that other woman didn't do...you know...it was just a mistake or it could just be somebody else's mistake that you just saw that person...you know...things like that...you know...

SV Monwabisi is a well-known landmark in Cape Town. Is there a reason why this specific venue was chosen as the setting for the drug-smuggling activities?

PM I think because it's in Khayelitsha. It's one of the things...you know...that came out afterwards...did you know? No, we didn't. It's a beach in Khayelitsha, it is close to them...uhm...it's very quiet at night, so you can do your thing there.