

**POLYPHONIC CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN NOVEL AND
FILM: *HEART OF DARKNESS* AND *APOCALYPSE NOW*; *NA
DIE GELIEFDE LAND* AND *PROMISED LAND***

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Abstract

This dissertation attempts a Bakhtinian analysis of the polyphonic dialogue between Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, Karel Schoeman's *Na die Geliefde Land* and Jason Xenopoulos' *Promised Land*.

Specific Bakhtinian concepts are employed to determine whether the films are "apt" adaptations of the literary texts; how the stylistically hybrid texts engage in conversation with different movements, genres and trends; how the polyphonic conversations between different texts and discourses, such as literature and film, or colonialism and postcolonialism, can provide insight into the variety of discourses, textual and ideological, of a postcolonial, post-apartheid South Africa; and how identity crises experienced by key characters can be explained using the notions of hybridity, "The Marginal Man" and liminality. All four texts have key characters that experience identity crises that spring from cultural hybridity; their cultural hybridity has the potential to either render them marginally stagnant or lead them to liminally active participation within their imagined communities.

This dissertation argues that even though there are major differences between the films and the literary texts they are based upon, they are relevant to a specific target audience and therefore enrich the ur-texts. Salient characteristics of realism, symbolism, impressionism, modernism, postmodernism, postcolonialism and the apocalyptic dialogise one another within the four texts, thereby liberating the texts from one authorial reading. The dialogue between the discourses of literature and film supplement an understanding of the dialogue between war, imperialism, colonialism, postcolonialism and the Will to Power.

Keywords: Mikhail Bakhtin, dialogics, dialogism, polyphony, polyphonic, hybrid, hybridity, identity, marginal, Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, Francis Ford Coppola, *Apocalypse Now*, *Apocalypse Now Redux*, Karel Schoeman, *Na die Geliefde Land*, Jason Xenopoulos, *Promised Land*.

Opsomming

Die doelstelling van hierdie verhandeling is om 'n Bakhtiniaanse analise te maak van die polifoniese dialoog tussen Joseph Conrad se *Heart of Darkness*, Francis Ford Coppola se *Apocalypse Now*, Karel Schoeman se *Na die Geliefde Land* en Jason Xenopoulos se *Promised Land*.

Spesifieke Bakhtiniaanse konsepte word gebruik as instrumentasie om vas te stel of die films "geskikte" verwerkings is van die literêre tekste; hoe die stilisties hibriede tekste in gesprek tree met verskeie strominge, genres en neigings; hoe die polifoniese gesprekke tussen die verskillende tekste en diskoerse, soos literatuur en film, of kolonialisme en postkolonialisme, tot nut kan wees vir 'n postkoloniale, post-apartheid Suid-Afrika; en hoe sleutelkarakters, wat identiteitskrisisse ervaar, in gesprek tree met hibriditeit, "Die Marginale Man" en liminaliteit. Al vier tekste het sleutelkarakters wat identiteitskrisisse ervaar wat spruit uit kulturele hibriditeit; hul kulturele hibriditeit het die potensiaal om te lei na of marginale stagnasie of liminale deelname binne hul verbeelde gemeenskappe.

Alhoewel daar belangrike verskille is tussen die films en die literêre tekste waarop hulle gebaseer is, argumenteer hierdie verhandeling dat die verwerkings relevant is vir 'n spesifieke teikengehoor en dus die oer-tekste verryk. Daar is bevind dat pertinente kenmerke van realisme, simbolisme, impressionisme, modernisme, postmodernisme, postkolonialisme en die apokaliptiese, mekaar binne die vier tekste dialogiseer, en dus die tekste bevry van een outoritêre interpretasie. Die dialoog tussen die diskoerse van literatuur en film vul mekaar aan ten einde begrip te kweek vir die dialoog tussen oorlog, imperialisme, kolonialisme, postkolonialisme en die Wil tot Mag.

Sleutel terme: Mikhail Bakhtin, dialogisme, polifonie, hibried, hibriditeit, identiteit, marginaliteit, Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, Francis Ford Coppola, *Apocalypse Now*, *Apocalypse Now Redux*, Karel Schoeman, *Na die Geliefde Land*, Jason Xenopoulos, *Promised Land*.

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1. CHAPTER 1 – ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1. Orientation

This dissertation deals with the polyphonic conversations between the discourse of literature and the discourse of film, in particular the novella *Heart of Darkness* (1899) by Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) that inspired director Francis Ford Coppola's film *Apocalypse Now* (1979)¹, and Karel Schoeman's (1939–) novel *Na die Geliefde Land* (1972) adapted to a film by the name *Promised Land* (2002) by director Jason Xenopoulos. All four texts² are also in conversation on a theoretical and historical level and can therefore be analysed within a Bakhtinian framework, as will become evident further on in the study.

It is the year 2006 and South Africa has enjoyed twelve years of democracy. Even though the previously oppressed now live as emancipated South Africans, the horrible injustices of apartheid cannot be erased. Consequently, a new generation seems to be emerging from amongst some of the youths of today. Some white South African Afrikaners seem to be torn between a guilty conscience for the apartheid wrongs committed by their white, European and Afrikaner ancestors on the one hand, and a white, Afrikaner, postcolonial culture that wants to be freed from the political baggage of the past, on the other. Rather, they feel part of a hybrid culture, a hybrid culture that strives to redefine and reconstruct a new identity for themselves.

Personal identity refers to a sense of sameness or continuity of the self despite environmental changes and individual growth. An *identity crisis* is experienced by an individual if environmental changes threaten the continuity of personal identity, forcing the individual into a new identity formation: the restructuring of all previous

¹ *Apocalypse Now Redux*, re-released in 2001 with extra footage, has been used for this study.

Apocalypse Now thus actually refers to *Apocalypse Now Redux* throughout the whole dissertation.

² It is important to note that I regard both the novella and the novel, and the two films under discussion, as texts. Stam and Raengo (2004:6) state that Roland Barthes, Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier, and several others, advanced film as *écriture* in the 1960s and 1970s, and labeled films as "texts" and I also find myself in their camp. Because films abound in language – semiotic, symbolic and actual words – I will refer to the films under discussion as "texts" for they have to be "read", decoded and encoded by each reader/viewer.

identifications in the light of the anticipated future (Corsini and Auerbach, 1996:443-444).

Much (needed) attention is nowadays given to literature that appeared after 1994 and is centrally concerned with this process of identity formation, resulting from the experience of an identity crisis because of the crossing of boundaries. J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* (2000), Zakes Mda's novel *The Madonna of Excelsior* (2002), André Brink's *Devil's Valley* (1998), *The Rights of Desire* (2000) and *The Other Side of Silence* (2002) are but a few examples of novels in which the crossing of various boundaries means that authors and characters alike find themselves in new spaces where they have to forge new identities for themselves by means of narrative.

But what about texts that appeared before 1994? Were there texts that used or anticipated this identity crisis, particularly the identity crisis of one who experiences socio-politic environmental changes and consequently finds himself/herself torn between two cultures, as leitmotif?

Heart of Darkness and *Na die Geliefde Land* have the identity crisis of the cultural hybrid as central theme: Marlow is confronted with the horrors of imperialism and is himself a descendant of imperialists, whilst George struggles to identify with both his Afrikaner ancestry and an "other" culture who has now come to power.

Hybridity, be it racial, national, gender, etc., often leads to an experience of marginality – neither truly belonging to either sphere it is torn between, nor being totally apart from it. This feeling then often leads to an identity crisis in which a reconfiguration of identity is needed. Seeing that hybridity is no longer regarded as a wholly negative concept that could have given rise to feelings of stagnation previously, it now has the potential to allow exchange and interchange between these two spheres. Hybridity could therefore result in liminality – a rite of passage in which the person that experiences an identity crisis actively participates in redefining his/her identity, and transgresses the

dichotomies that have caused divided feelings. The concepts of hybridity, marginality and liminality will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

Before all four texts are added to the polyphonic conversation, it is first pertinent to ask whether it is even possible to compare these two literary texts, seeing that they have been written by two authors who were, it seems, eons apart in time and place.

If one takes into account that these two literary texts share four important traits, I would definitely answer in the affirmative: They were written by authors who struggled with the issue of being cultural hybrids themselves (discussed in Chapter Two); they are stylistically hybrid texts that are predominantly symbolist, apocalyptic and anticipate postcolonialism (discussed in Chapter Two); the texts' symbolist, postcolonial and apocalyptic literary techniques lend themselves to filmic adaptation (discussed in Chapters Two and Three); and, as mentioned before, all protagonists and some key characters of the literary and filmic texts undergo identity crises (discussed in Chapters Four and Five).

Several polyphonic conversations abound between different discourses: literature and film; different salient characteristics of different movements, periods and trends; different histories; imperialism, colonisation and war; as well as European and African identities. This will be discussed in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

1.2. Problem statement

Given the context outlined above, the following research questions arise:

- Are the films under discussion apt or distorted adaptations of the literary texts? If one were to argue that they are indeed relevant adaptations, why would this be?
- What can an analysis of these four texts, according to the Bakhtinian concepts of intertextuality, polyphony, heteroglossia, centrifugal and centripetal voices, ironic inversion and the carnivalesque, reveal about these texts?

- What new insights will a Bakhtinian analysis yield of the transposition of these stylistically hybrid literary texts into stylistically hybrid filmic texts?
- What new insights are to be found in the different depictions of the identity crises experienced by the protagonists and key characters of the four texts in the literary, written space and the visual, filmic space respectively, and how can these new insights be useful to a postcolonial, post-apartheid people?

1.3. Aims

1.3.1. General aims

In this dissertation it is my aim to prove that Marlow, Willard and George are indeed marginal men who each experience an identity crisis as a result of a guilty conscience and the desire to be freed from a guilty conscience. They display the inability to fully identify with another culture whilst being unable to wholly identify with their own culture. My aim is to attempt a Bakhtinian analysis of the identity crises experienced by the marginalised figures in the four texts. A comparison between the literary and filmic texts serves to find why and how the literary and filmic texts differ and to establish what (if anything) has been gained by the filmic adaptations.³

1.3.2. Specific aims

1.3.2.1. To determine whether the films under discussion are apt or distorted adaptations of the literary texts, and to motivate why they are relevant adaptations.

³ It is important to note that the objective of this dissertation is not to establish the set of semiotic principles and conventions the respective films share with other films of the same style, period or genre. Although there is an occasional discussion of the semiotics that is generated specific to the context of each film as individual artwork, the goal is not to do a semiotic study of the films, or the novels for that matter. The focus will rather fall on an analysis of the parallels that justify a filmic adaptation of the novel, as well as on an in-depth discussion of specific characters and the identity crises they experience as a result of hybridity and liminality. Specific Bakhtinian concepts will also be included in the analyses.

- 1.3.2.2. To determine what the significance of an analysis of these four texts is according to Bakhtinian concepts such as intertextuality, polyphony, heteroglossia, centrifugal and centripetal voices, ironic inversion and the carnivalesque.
- 1.3.2.3. To determine what new insights a Bakhtinian analysis will yield of the transposition of these stylistically hybrid literary texts into stylistically hybrid filmic texts.
- 1.3.2.4. To determine what new insights are to be found in the different depictions of the identity crises experienced by the protagonists and key characters of the four texts in the literary, written space and the visual, filmic space respectively, and how they can be used by a postcolonial, post-apartheid people.

1.4. Thesis statement

This dissertation will argue that the four works under discussion all engage in a Bakhtinian polyphonic conversation with one another on several hierarchical levels. The transposition of the literary texts into filmic texts creates a polyphonic conversation between the discourses of literature and film and the discourses of war, imperialism, colonialism, postcolonialism and the Will to Power. All four texts have key characters that add to the dialogue through identity crises that result from cultural hybridity. Their cultural hybridity causes torn feelings of belonging between different imagined communities about specific issues, which in some cases result in marginalisation and a lack of participation. Some characters, however, transcend their cultural hybridity through liminality, which results in active participation and, ultimately, in healing to the land and to themselves.

The Darwinian strength of the literary texts lies in the fact that they are stylistically hybrid texts that comprise several salient characteristics of realism, symbolism, impressionism, modernism, postmodernism, postcolonialism and/or the apocalyptic. Even though the literary texts were written several years ago in different socio-historic conditions, their stylistic hybridity lends these texts to multiple filmic adaptations that might be more

relevant to the socio-historic context of modern times. The symbolist, postcolonial and apocalyptic characteristics in particular of all four texts, engage in conversation, paradoxically enriching and relativising one another, in that the texts cannot be reduced to one authorial voice or reading.

Francis Ford Coppola's decision to place *Apocalypse Now* within the context of the Vietnam War instead of the Congolese jungles of Africa as Joseph Conrad did with *Heart of Darkness*, adds the discourse of war, the Vietnam war in particular, to the already existing conversation between the discourses of imperialism and colonisation voiced in the novella. Similarly, Jason Xenopoulos chose to set *Promised Land*, based on Karel Schoeman's *Na die Geliefde Land*, within a much more particular socio-historic context – a post-apartheid, postcolonial South Africa. Thus the symbolist discourse of the novel engages in conversation with the tangible discourses of apartheid and colonisation in South Africa post-1994.

The transposition of *Heart of Darkness* to *Apocalypse Now* and *Na die Geliefde Land* to *Promised Land*, should not be lamented for what has been lost during the transposition process, but celebrated because of what has been gained by the filmic adaptations.

1.5. Method of study

The books of Stam and Raengo (2005: 2004) and Allen and Gomery (1985) will be used as basis for the slight references to stylistic filmic techniques and concepts, such as camera-angles, camera-shots, lighting, soundtracks, etc. Attention will be paid to how and why specific events and characters of the literary texts have been altered in the filmic text. The research will therefore be comparative in nature.

The study will mainly use a Bakhtinian analysis as method. Because of the polyphonic conversations between all four texts on different hierarchical levels, a Bakhtinian framework will be used to analyse them. This dissertation will thus be a comparative

analysis of the polyphonic conversation between text and film; that of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (*Apocalypse Now Redux* will be analysed for the study), as well as Schoeman's *Na die Geliefde Land* and Xenopoulos's *Promised Land*. Literary as well as filmic methods of analysis will be utilised and special attention will be paid to concepts of hybridity, boundaries, marginality, liminality and identity-construction, as well as Mikhail Bakhtin's theories on dialogics, intertextuality, polyphony, heteroglossia, ironic inversion and the carnivalesque, within a symbolist, apocalyptic and postcolonial framework.

I shall concentrate more on the filmic than on the literary texts. The reason for this is that I regard *Heart of Darkness* to be a well-known ur-text that has been studied in much more depth than *Apocalypse Now*. *Na die Geliefde Land* has not been studied with the same intensity as *Heart of Darkness*. The depth and breadth of literary criticism on *Promised Land*, of which there is a hiatus of research, pales in comparison with research done on its ur-text, *Na die Geliefde Land*.

Chapter Two will consist of a theoretical overview of Bakhtinian theory applicable to these four texts and will discuss the literary concepts of hybridity, "The Marginal Man" and liminality and how they link up with identity. The rivalry between novels and films and the emergence of a visual culture will also be discussed. In Chapter Three I shall give a theoretical overview of how Realism, Symbolism, Impressionism, Modernism, Postmodernism, Postcolonialism and the Apocalyptic link up within the four stylistically hybrid texts. Chapter Four will comprise the identity crises experienced by the protagonists and key characters in *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* as well as the mutual dialogue between several discourses and some salient characteristics of symbolism, postcolonialism and the apocalyptic within a Bakhtinian framework. The same analyses will be made in Chapter Five as pertaining to *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*. Chapter Six will summarise the conclusions and findings this dissertation yields.

2. CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF HYBRIDITY, “THE MARGINAL MAN”, LIMINALITY, IDENTITY AND BAKHTINIAN THOUGHT

2.1. Introduction

In the introduction to his book, *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said (1994:xii) argues that cultural forms like the novel were immensely important in the formation of imperial attitudes, references and experiences. In other words, literature played a role in strengthening and perpetuating imperialist beliefs, attitudes and experiences in asserting colonisers' identity and the existence of their own history. If this is true, cultural forms like the novel and film must certainly facilitate debate about former representations of identity and history in the present.

Oscar Wilde once said: "The only duty we owe history is to rewrite it" (The Quotes and Sayings Database, 2006). And it seems that the filmic adaptation of literature does exactly this; it pays homage to the chosen literary text written in a specific socio-historic context and regards it worth adapting, yet simultaneously it "rewrites it" from a different point of view. Because I believe both the novel and film to be hybrid mediums, and because hybridity is the element that leads to the identity crises experienced by many of the characters in the texts under discussion, it is necessary to discuss the concept in greater depth. In this chapter I aim to discuss in more detail the concepts of hybridity, "The Marginal Man", and liminality respectively, and how they link up with the concept of identity. An overview of the Bakhtinian concepts that are of importance to this study will also be given and discussed, after which the role that film plays in the 21st century will be debated.

2.2. Hybridity, "The Marginal Man" and liminality

Seeing that *Na die Geliefde Land* is part of the Afrikaans literary canon and the novel is set within a South African context, just as *Promised Land* is, the novel is especially relevant to the concept of hybridity. Although *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* are not set within a South African context, both are also relevant to the concept of hybridity: Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* is part of the British imperialist culture who is confronted by a colonised culture he both sympathises with and does not understand;

whilst *Apocalypse Now*, which is set during the Vietnam War, takes as basis a war fought for political power and causes the narrator, Willard, to experience mixed emotions. The characters of the texts thus find themselves in a liminal space or a 'no man's land' between two cultures.

The protagonists and key characters in all four texts (two literary and two filmic) each undergo an identity crisis. All four texts seem to have the identity crisis of key characters as basis and all four texts deal with countries that have been ravished by imperialism or dominant political ideologies: The British Marlow's journey into the heart of colonial Africa – the Congo; Willard's part in the Vietnam War which was ultimately a political, imperialist war; George's return to a South Africa in which the dominant political ideology of the previous oppressors has been replaced by the dominant political ideology of the previously oppressed. The environmental elements outside the characters in the public sphere cause conflict inside the private sphere of the self – an identity crisis ensues.

It is necessary to look closer at the origin and historical development of the concepts of hybridity, "The Marginal Man" and liminality.

2.2.1. Hybridity

Mikhail Bakhtin (as quoted by Hawthorn, 2000:159) defines a hybrid construction as "an utterance which belongs to a single speaker, but that actually contains two utterances mixed within it; two speech manners, two styles, two 'languages', two semantic or axiological belief systems". Hawthorn (2000:159) also states that hybridity has experienced its fullest upsurge of popularity since the rise of postcolonialist theory and criticism and quotes Homi K. Bhabha saying that "hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects". Note that the concept of hybridity is to be found in both Bakhtinian theory and postcolonial theory.

According to Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2001:221), hybridity in cultural studies “denotes a wide register of multiple identity, cross-over, pick-‘n’-mix, boundary-crossing experiences and styles, matching a world of growing migration and diaspora lives, intensive intercultural communication, everyday multiculturalism and erosion of boundaries”. Papastergiadis (2000:168) makes the statement that there has barely been a debate on cultural theory or postmodern subjectivity in the last decade that has not acknowledged the productive side of hybridity, and describes identity as being in some form of hybrid state.

The concept of hybridity has not always been viewed in a positive light, though. Hybridity is a concept that has originated out of negativity. Although racial hybridity is not a new phenomenon, colonisation and imperialism have been major contributing factors to the scale and rapid pace that racial hybridity has spread across the world over the last few centuries. Papastergiadis gives a concise overview of the attributing factors which had given rise to the concept of hybridity, covering theories put forward by George Morton, Charles Darwin, Brace etc. (see Papastergiadis, 2000:170-174). What is most important, to my mind, is the eugenic movement that was founded by a cousin of Darwin, named Francis Galton, in 1883. Eugenics was the science of “good breeding” and it became the most sophisticated justification for the maintenance of purity in the white race, and was even advocated by Adolf Hitler. It was believed that purity of (the white) race ensured racial quality, a quality that was threatened by the genetic mixing with other (black) races. The fear of racial hybridity was, it seems, merely a guise in order to maintain white supremacy over other races.

Papastergiadis (2000:175) states that racial classifications and the mythology of white supremacy reached their apex in justifications of slavery and imperial conquest. Notions of superiority were built on alterity, exclusivity and purity. Yet in postmodern times, the notion of hybridity has come to be regarded in a more positive light. Papastergiadis (2000:168) stresses that one of the achievements of post-structuralist theory was to liberate the subject from notions of fixity and purity in origin.

Whereas hybridity was once regarded as a threat to static racial purity which equaled genetic quality, progress in the New World is marked by the dialectic of adaptation and transformation (Papasterigadis, 2000:177). Anthropologists like Gilberto Freyre, Jared Sexton and N.D. Chandler celebrate the positive aspects of hybridity: Freyre feels that a new order can be realised that will integrate and maximise the European spirit, and that mixture overtakes purity because it can outperform it (Papasterigadis, 2000:177). Sexton (2003:247) believes that racial purity was promoted in the past in order to sustain white supremacy. He contends that the mixture of two or more genetic pools do not lead to an inferior being, but leads to hybrid progeny which delivers a mutable, more malleable species with a rich gene pool. Chandler (1997:248-249) prophesies that new mixed races are, on a biological level, a type of ethnic cleansing that does not just strive to equal white supremacy, but to dethrone it altogether. He even goes as far as to propose that interraciality could overcome racism, for racism cannot take place if such a thing as pure race no longer exists. It is important to add here that purity in any race is a myth, but is more evident if one has a white skin colour.

In his article "Hybridity, so what?: the anti-hybridity backlash and the riddles of recognition", Nederveen Pieterse (2001:226) contends that hybridity is a notion dependent on boundaries: "the mongrel, half-caste, mixed race, *métis*, *mestizo* was a taboo figure in the colonial world" and "when so much pathos was invested in boundaries, boundary crossing involved dangerous liaisons". Nederveen Pieterse (2001:226) goes on to contend that hybridity as a point of view is meaningless without the prior assumption of difference, purity, and/or fixed boundaries. Without an existing regard for boundaries, the point of hybridity would not be worth making. But it indeed is a point worth making, for hybridity, whether it be racial, cultural, disciplinary etc., problematises set boundaries.

Do poststructuralist thought and hybridity imply that borders and boundaries will become redundant, be destroyed or vanish? I do not believe so. Borders give a sense of security, of having control over one's life and one's environment. Animals use excretion to mark their territory, human beings do it through mapping, fencing, etc. The world

seems too vast and daunting otherwise. Borders are helpful and positive, but could easily become useless and negative. It is when one believes that one's space in this world seems threatened and fear kicks in, that injustices easily seem justified. Apartheid, which is not at all justified, might have been the result of fear and pre-emptive acting on those fears.

In a survey of literature on the concept of hybridity one thing has become evident time and again: boundaries are dynamic and forever changing. I agree with Nederveen Pieterse (2001:237-238) that the meanings of boundaries are by no means constant and that boundaries do not fade or vanish, but are transformed, changed or shifted; reevaluated, renegotiated or re-encoded. Nederveen Pieterse (2001:238) claims that

hybridity is a terminology and sensibility of our time in that boundary and border-crossing mark our times: class and gender boundaries are less strict than before. Aesthetic boundaries are increasingly permeable, with high and low cultures mingling. In the sciences, disciplinary boundaries are increasingly old-fashioned. And so on.

It has been established that hybridity is not a new concept, but what is new is the scope and rate at which it is spreading to all phases of life, and hybridity has shed its label as being regarded as wholly a negative concept.

2.2.2. Marginality and liminality

Like the term hybridity, marginality is also a concept that is not new. Hawthorn (2000:191) discusses the concept of liminality as follows in *A Glossary of Contemporary Theory*: According to him the recent growth of interests in thresholds and boundaries associated especially with postcolonialist theory has brought the word liminal back into common usage in literary-critical and cultural-theoretical circles. Part of the current postcolonialist interests stems from the post-structuralist concern to reject binary distinctions and the black/white categories which go along with them, but a more general interest in the *marginal* has also led to a greater reliance upon the term.

Although there has been a recent upsurge in the use of the concepts of hybridity, liminality and marginality, the concept of “The Marginal Man” has enjoyed some attention very early on in the 20th century, which bears witness to the importance of this issue within society. As early as 1928, Robert E Park, leader of the Park School of sociology of the University of Chicago, used the term ‘marginality’ to describe ethnic immigrants to the United States in relation to the dominant Anglo-Saxon majority.

Racial or cultural hybridity often leads to what Park⁴ referred to as the “marginal man”: a person who is condemned to live in two different, antagonistic cultural worlds, but does not fully belong to either (Duling, 1995:361). Building on Park’s term, Everett Stonequist (1937:xiv-xv) went on to describe the marginal man as a person who finds himself/herself torn between two cultures, feeling himself/herself neither wholly part of nor apart from the two cultures he/she is torn between.

Stonequist (1937:xiv) further explains that colonisation has contributed to what he calls “The Marginal Man”. He states that “Europeans have invaded just about every part of the world, and that no part of the earth has escaped the disturbing, even if vivifying, contacts of European commerce and culture. The movements and migrations incident to this expansion have brought about everywhere an interpenetration of peoples and a fusion of cultures”. Consequently, the marginal man is born, one whose fate has condemned him to live in two societies and in two, not merely different but antagonistic cultures. “In that case, his mind is the crucible in which two different and refractory cultures may be said to melt and, either wholly or in part, fuse” (Stonequist, 1937:xv). Similar to colonisation, technological advances have also contributed to the interpenetration of peoples and the fusion of cultures. In a global, postmodern, post-colonial era in which technological advances like the internet and the mass media make the world much smaller in that it brings different cultures in contact with one another, people are more open to other views or perspectives.

⁴ It is important to note that the original writings of Richard E Park could not be found in South Africa. I therefore consulted and relied on Dennis C Duling’s (1995) interpretation of Park’s concept.

In 1964 Fairchild defined the marginal man in the broadest sense, as a person who is not a fully participating member of a social group. This is a term often used in connection with immigrant groups in which there has been a considerable mixture of different cultures, so that attitudes, values and resultant behaviour patterns are characteristic to neither; the group occupying a sort of 'no-man's land' (Fairchild, 1964:134;182).

More recently, Germani (1980:49) defines marginality as "the lack of participation [exercise of roles] of individuals and groups in those spheres in which, according to determined criteria, they might be expected to participate". Duling (1995:361) states that the lack of participation in Germani's definition means the inability of persons to conform to expected social roles with respect to sex, age, civil life, occupation, and social life in relation to levels of status in the social system.

Whereas marginality suggests a static state of a lack of participation, liminality suggests a dynamic process of participation and, ultimately, change. It is because of this that Aguirre *et al.* (2000:6) prefer the term of liminality over that of marginality. They believe that "liminality", unlike "marginality", designates a concept that suggests the existence of a second territory on the other side. A border is viewed as the imaginary line which separates two spaces, whilst a *limen* or threshold is the opening which permits movement back and forth between the two. New definitions of the concepts "marginality" and "liminality" are thus needed and indeed proposed:

A definition of marginality invites or requires the postulation of a closed binary system the two constituents of which (centre, margin) deny, oppose or, at most, interact with each other.

A definition of liminality invites or requires the postulation of an open, plural system the constituents of which include a known area A and, at least, a poorly understood area B, plus a recognition of a threshold separating but also relating A and B, the threshold, the threshold itself having a variable breadth (Aguirre *et al.*, 2000:8).

It is necessary to make the links between hybridity, marginality and liminality clearer: hybridity suggests an in-between state between two positions. Take the positions of centre and margin for example. The child of interracial parents is a racial and cultural hybrid, often stuck in a no man's land between black and white, which are two binary oppositions: not entirely accepted by the white community, and not wholly accepted by the black community.

Oprah Winfrey interviewed the cast of *Crash*, a film about stereotypes and racism that won the Oscar for best film in 2006. During the talk show, cast member Terrence Howard, explained how racial hybridity has impacted negatively on him. Terrence experienced his own "Crash moment" at an extremely young age, and says it radically changed his life's course:

I'm the product of a mixed marriage: My father's actually mixed and my mother is mixed but my father looks more white than my mom. We're at a department store in 1972, right before Christmas, and my mom's taking us all around to go get clothes and my dad's standing in the Santa Claus line. ... My dad is 5-foot-8, weighs 125 pounds. There's a guy standing behind him [who is] 6'-4", weighs about 260. The man said, 'Why did you let those niggers cut you?' And my daddy said, 'This is my wife.' ... The man turned around and my father turned back to talk to us. The next thing you know, this guy has picked up my father by the throat from behind and takes him over to the wall and has my father pinned up on the wall like a rag doll. And my father turns around and tries to get away and the guy picks him up again and is holding him on the wall, strangling my father. ... Now, this man didn't come there to do that. This man was in the Santa Claus line with his family. My father, after the man had kneed him in his groin enough times that blood was streaming down his leg, finally grabbed something and started sticking the man, trying to get him to let him go. He stuck him in his legs but the man still wouldn't let go. And all I remember is my father standing over him, the man collapsed [the man later died, and Terrence's father was sentenced to prison], and my father screaming, 'Please don't die! Please don't die!' And so the police come [and take] my father away, to prison. My father was an insurance salesman at the time, and we lived in the suburbs. But when my father went to prison, we were forced to move into the projects, which subjected us to more racism. Here I was this light-skinned, green-eyed kid in the middle of the projects in the 1970s when being light-skinned and green-eyed wasn't good in the black community. And that family lost their husband because we got in front of him and he thought we were cutting him because my father was in line (Oprah, 2006).

Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction, as explained by Murfin (1989:200), is important here. Derrida argues that we tend to think and express our thoughts in terms of opposites or mutually exclusive pairs of dichotomies like beginning/end; black/white; self/other; presence/absence; speech/writing etc. But they are not simply opposites, they are also little hierarchies. In other words they contain one term that a culture views as being superior and one term viewed as negative or inferior. In postcolonial works, for example, white is regarded to be positive or superior to black, which is regarded as negative and inferior. White is regarded as the self/centre, and black is regarded as the other/marginalised. Because white is regarded as superior to black in the black/white dichotomy, white is positioned as centre because the centre is regarded as superior to the margin in the centre-margin dichotomy.

The racially hybrid child is torn between the positive and negative positions of his/her position and is marginalised. Is the child, however, doomed? Indeed, the answer is no. Hybridity previously equaled an exclusive border that only separates, e.g. black and white, literature and journalism, male and female. But now it equals an inclusive *limen* which permits movement back and forth between the two; a mixing and an acknowledgment of both races or cultures one is part of – resulting in racial hybrid children, literary journalism, even transgender persons.

As a result, a third space becomes possible where the binary oppositions of hybridity and the hierarchies that are intrinsically apart of it, are transgressed and dissolved through a dynamic process, called liminality. Nederveen Pieterse (2001:238) contends that hybridity is to culture what deconstruction is to discourse: transcending binary categories. Bhabha speaks of a third space of enunciation, a progressive dynamic space where cultural transformation can take place.

According to Homi Bhabha (1994:34), there is a difference between cultural diversity and cultural difference: cultural diversity refers to an object of empirical knowledge, whereas cultural difference is the "process of enunciation of culture as 'knowledgeable',

authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification". This means that cultural diversity implies a neutral knowledge of the multitude of cultures, whilst cultural difference not only suggests an acknowledgment of the differences between cultures, but also taking in a position towards that difference, often resulting in an ethnocentric superiority of one's own culture.

The production of meaning lies, for Bhabha (1994:36-37), in the passage of information through a contradictory and ambivalent "third space of enunciation", which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity, that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricised and read anew. The meaning attached to certain signs depends on the perspective of the culture that views them, e.g. the difference in the use of gaze between middle-class Americans and working-class Blacks. According to Katz and Katz (1983:64), "whites interpret gaze avoidance as shame, evasiveness, or submission, while Blacks interpret middle-class face-to-face gazing as a putdown or a confrontation". Thus, the same sign or body gesture has been given a different meaning, thereby liberating it from one fixed, authoritarian meaning.

"Increasingly, the issue of cultural difference emerges at points of social crises, and the questions of identity that it raises are agonistic; identity is claimed either from a position of marginality or in an attempt at gaining the centre" (Bhabha, 1994:177). There is a continuous movement in which binaries continually undo their own fixity.

Cultural translation desacralises the transparent assumptions of cultural supremacy (Bhabha, 1994:228). In other words, to deconstruct the authority of a statement, the statement has to pass through to the "other", be recycled in the "other's" own language, and sent back to the "self" who has now become the "other" from the viewpoint of the "other".

2.2.3. Identity

Keeping with the example of the racial hybrid child, the child betwixt and between two races, cultures, and the statuses they occupy, could start to experience an identity crisis and ask questions like: Who am I? Where do I belong? How do I resolve the conflicting positions that are a part of me? Consequently, the state of liminality would be apart of a rite of passage to a redefined identity. Either physical separation (keeping to oneself) or mental separation (introspection and focus on oneself) could initiate the process. Separation would give the racial hybrid child perspective on his/her situation as well as on space and time to redefine who he/she is. A transition is bound to take place in which the hybrid child comes to terms with who he/she is, and transgresses his/her conflicting selves. Lastly, changed by the introspective process and at ease with a redefined identity, the hybrid child would be reincorporated into society, ready to face the world as a redefined person.

I agree with Papastergiadis (2000:170) that hybridity is not confined to a cataloguing of difference, but emerges from the process of opening what Homi Bhabha calls the “third space of enunciation”, within which other discourses encounter and transform each other’s statement. Not only is hybridity the assemblage that occurs whenever two or more elements meet, but it is also the initiation of a process of change.

Whenever the process of identity formation is premised on an exclusive boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’, the hybrid, which is born out of the transgression of this boundary, figures as a form of danger, loss and degeneration. If, however, the boundary is marked positively – to solicit exchange and inclusion – then the hybrid may yield strength and vitality. Hence the conventional value of the hybrid is always positioned in relation to purity along the axes of inclusion and exclusion. In some circumstances, the curse of hybridity is seen as a mixed blessing (Papastergiadis, 2000:174)

Just as liminality is a state that is part of a process, so too identity is an ever continuous process. Stuart Hall (2000:42) believes that identity is not fixed, but is a continuous, self-sufficient, developmental, unfolding, inner dialectic of selfhood. We are never quite there, but always on our way to it, and when we get there, we will at last know exactly

who it is we are. Bhabha also places great stress on the “fact” that identity is never fixed once and for all, and it never coheres into an absolute form, as Papastergiadis (2000:192-193) helps me to understand: “The misfit between the formal structures that confer identity in fixed terms like nation, class, gender, race and more fluid practices by which identity moves across certain positions and manoeuvres around given borders is not taken as an index of modern freedom but rather highlighted in order to draw attention to the complex dynamics of agency.” That is – change. Not just change, but also the movement between a sense of location and a relationship with others always presupposed by identity.

The concept of identity is a very complex one. Identity is not entirely who you are, but rather who you are becoming. It is a constant deferral ultimately reached through death. Furthermore, it is not just who and what you are, but who and what you are not; not just who and what you are to yourself, but who and what you are in the eyes of others. For the inward gaze of the subject on the self is also influenced, changed or even distorted through the outward gaze of the object as perceived by others. Before getting too philosophical, suffice it to say that identity always presupposes a sense of location and a relationship with others. And in between these spheres, is the *limen* that allows interchange; a progressive dynamic space where transformation, negotiation and exchange can take place.

I find identity to be a very ambiguous term. It is a constant process of deferral. It is a process in which one constantly strives to grow more into one’s own skin; to consciously reach the essence of oneself. It is a process ultimately reached, I believe, in death. But amidst this, one is continually shaped by one’s environment, one is changed by experiences, and one grows. Yet there is an essence, which I believe to be one’s soul, which paradoxically grows whilst still remaining the same.

From the surveys of literature on marginality and identity, I believe that key characters in the texts under discussion find themselves torn between two different, antagonistic cultures and experience resultant identity crises: In his journey up the Congo, Marlow in

Heart of Darkness simultaneously experiences epistemological frustration because of an “other” native culture he is unable to understand, as well as existential isolation from his “own” culture that wreaks imperial havoc. Marlow is unable to identify with his own “culture” for he finds it more difficult to condone the practice of imperialism and the implications that it has for human beings, while at the same time he is disgusted with another culture he is unable to understand or identify with. Likewise Willard, in *Apocalypse Now*, is confronted with a war in Vietnam he is unable to comprehend or justify and a Vietnamese culture foreign to him.

George in *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* similarly experiences this division between his own cultural heritage, which he now perceives as being barbaric, and his newly constructed identity as white, liberal European. Seeing that he returns to a South Africa that has been taken over by the formerly marginalised other, he finds himself a descendant of a white Afrikaner culture which has now become powerless and statusless.

What, then, serves as basis for a comparative analysis between the four texts under discussion?

2.2.4. Conrad and Schoeman as marginal and liminal figures

What serves as basis for the discussion of the literary texts in a single dissertation, is the fact that one can argue that the writers of the original literary texts, or ur-texts as Stam and Raengo (2005:5) call them, are marginal and liminal figures themselves.

Lothe (2000:160) states that Zdzislaw Najder (1997) has convincingly shown how his Polish background was marked by events and traumas related to imperialist oppression. Najder (1997:11) writes that Joseph Conrad was born as Jozef Teodor Konrad Nalecz Korzeniowski in 1857 in Russian-controlled Poland. Conrad and his parents bore witness to the devastating effects of colonisation from the time they were born. Poland, at one time the largest country in continental Europe, was annexed by Russia, and in

1795 Poland was not an independent country any more. Poles lived in three occupied zones: "Austrian ('Galicia') in the south, Prussian in the north-west and Russian, by far the largest and most backwards politically and economically."

Apollo, Conrad's father, was one of the leaders of the extremist patriotic party called the "Reds", which campaigned for both the emancipation of the serfs and for national independence. Apollo was also the instigator of the underground committee which led to the "bloodily suppressed insurrection of 1863" (Watts, 1993:13). In 1861 Apollo was arrested and imprisoned, and he, Conrad's mother, Ewa, and four-year-old Conrad were exiled to the Russian province of Vologda for their subversive campaigns. The exile drained Ewa of her health and she died of advanced tuberculosis in 1865, after her return, at the age of only thirty-two. Consequently, Conrad was left with a "brooding, melancholy figure" for a father, which seemed to be obsessed with "a rather morbid religiosity" (Watts, 1993:13).

Conrad wrote a lot of himself into his novella *Heart of Darkness*. Compare for example Marlow's musings over his passion for maps and exploration:

'Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for *maps*. I would *look for hours* at South America, or *Africa*, or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look that) *I would put my finger on it* and say, *When I grow up I will go there*' (Conrad, 1973:11, my italics)

with Conrad's own writing about his childhood dream, which was taken from the record of his own personal impressions in letters, journals, and essays:

It was in 1868, when nine years old or thereabouts, that while *looking at a map* of Africa of the time and *putting my finger on the blank space* then representing the unsolved mystery of that continent, I said to myself with absolute assurance and an amazing audacity which are no longer in my character now:

"When I grow up I shall go there."

And of course I thought no more about it till after a quarter of a century or so an opportunity offered to go there – as if the sin of childish audacity was to be

visited on my mature head. Yes. I did go there: there being the region of Stanley Falls in '68 was the blankest of blank spaces on the earth's figured surfaces (Conrad, as quoted by Kimbrough, 1988:148, my italics).

The comparison of these two passages not only proves that Conrad drew on his own experiences in his writing of the novella, but the second quoted passage also proves that Conrad was altered by his trip to Africa. Watts (1993:60) believes that even though Conrad was a proud British patriot in many regards, he clung to the view that "imperialism in itself was always suspect and that the world would be a better place if there were no imperialism at all".

As a seaman in the British merchant marine, Conrad got a contract to sail to the Congo and stay in Central Africa for three years. Kimbrough (1988:155) states that Conrad's six month stay in the Congo, from 12 June to 4 December 1890, had a great impact on him physically and morally. Although he left for Africa inspired by idealist notions of a "civilising mission", he returned to Europe dangerously ill. He was never able to regain his good health, and his moral disillusionment shined through his most famous work, *Heart of Darkness*, and his other denunciation of colonialism, *An Outpost of Progress* (Kimbrough, 1988:155). His idealist and romantic views of exploration were replaced by the stark reality and the atrocities of colonisation and imperialism, for he admits that his childish absolute assurance and amazing audacity which was previously part of his character have given way to mature realisations about life.

Consequently, one can argue that Conrad was a "marginal man": he was torn between idealistic notions and the immoralities of reality on the one hand, and torn between his patriotic pride of Europe and his disgust at the atrocities of imperialism on the other. In a certain sense, Europe was doing to Africa what Russia did to Poland, and therefore he was haunted by a guilt of complicity as Kimbrough (1988:194) calls it. Kimbrough (1988:194) also quotes Conrad's thoughts on the expedition of the Katanga Company in 1890-1892 as Conrad writes in *Heart of Darkness*: "It was reckless without hardihood, greedy without audacity, and cruel without courage...with no more moral purpose at the back of it than there is in burglars breaking into a safe." *Heart of Darkness* seems to be

Conrad's exorcising of his demons and cathartic working through his guilt of complicity. Lothe (2000:160) captures the essence of his divided loyalties in the following passage:

Conrad's country had vanished from the map of Europe after being annexed by Russia from the east, Prussia from the west, and Austria from the south-west, and his own family had suffered deeply as a result. Nor was Conrad in a position to identify with the victims of colonialism and imperialism: partly because his background was that of the Polish ruling class (the *szlachta*), partly because he, as an officer in the British merchant marine, was an integral part of an enormous imperialist system towards which his attitudes were mixed (that is, neither unambiguously supportive nor wholly critical), and last but not least because as a writer he was dependent on the interest and sympathy of his readers in order to survive and support his family.

Karel Schoeman is also a figure that was, and still is, torn between opposing feelings. He was born on the 26th of October 1939 in Trompsburg, South Africa. During his lifetime he has lived in both Europe and South Africa for lengthy periods of time, but has finally come to retire in South Africa in his town of birth (Burger and Van Vuuren, 2002:14). In his paper on Schoeman's autobiography entitled "Die 'outsiderskap' van Karel Schoeman na aanleiding van *Die laaste Afrikaanse boek*" ("The 'outsidership' of Karel Schoeman with reference to *The last Afrikaans book*"), Chris van der Merwe (2004) emphasises Schoeman's hybrid ancestry.

He was born of an Afrikaans father and a Dutch mother, the hybrid product of an Afrikaner and European marriage. He could not deny that Europeans were colonisers, whilst Afrikaners were hybrids themselves who were both the victims of colonisation and the perpetrators of it. As a result he felt himself estranged from white Afrikaans and English speaking South Africans, and isolated himself from them. The fact that he is homosexual further widened the gap between himself and conservative Afrikaner Nationalists. He was negative towards the patriarchal order of the Afrikaner man, as well as of apartheid. Van Der Merwe (2004) claims that writing became therapy to Schoeman, a means for him to exorcise his demons about his parents' failed marriage, and of his alienation from "his own people". There are many paradoxes to be found in his personality: he spoke Dutch with his mother, but wrote in Afrikaans; he toured Europe, yet always returned to South Africa.

Because he felt himself an outsider both in Europe and in South Africa, and because he had these paradoxical thoughts and feelings within him, he suffered a want of identity, or rather, a lack of identification. As a result Schoeman always found himself a liminal figure on the margins of society; a “marginal man” in a no-man’s land of belonging. He was what was regarded as “impure” for he was a white South African male that favoured men, and a white South African that sympathised with the oppressed blacks. Van Der Merwe (2004) believes that Schoeman is an example of the Bakhtinian hero – a hybridity or contradiction within the self on which closure is never begotten in one’s own life – and that is what spurs some authors on to write.

In his autobiography Schoeman (2002:418) talks of his love for the cinema. He writes that the cinema spoke to him because he had a predisposition for the visual, and says that is why it must have had a profound influence on his writing. People that had a lot to do with film often remarked that his novels read like film scripts. The advantage of cinema to Schoeman was that camera-shots, tricks of montage, lighting and perspective could be used to replace the customary narrator or add to actions (Schoeman, 2002:418).

Seeing that film provides a different conceptual and semiotic framework from that of a literary text, and taking into account that we live in a world where a visual culture seems to be emerging strongly because of technological advances such as television and the computer, the mass media and the IT-revolution, I am interested in the following questions: In which way is the leitmotif of identity crisis and identity reconfiguration transposed and *re-represented* from a postcolonial perspective when filmed? Are the characters in the literary texts the same characters in the filmic adaptation? How do their identity crises differ? How does the representation of marginalisation differ? How is identity reconfiguration represented in the literary and filmic texts, respectively? Why are certain episodes added, altered or left out? etc. These questions will be discussed and answered in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

It is now prudent to discuss Bakhtin's ideas on dialogics and carnival, because it will aid in the understanding of how hybridity and liminality link up to this process of identity (re)formation, as well as to the polyphonic conversations between texts.

2.3. Bakhtinian thought

Mikhail Mikhaïlovitch Bakhtin (1895-1975) was a very important literary theoretician in the twentieth century, a Russian literary critic and theorist, whose work was hardly known outside a small group of friends for most of his life. Only after his death has his work started to emerge, be debated and discussed. His work has proven to be very influential in literary circles. One of his fields of research was literary criticism; he attempted to rewrite the history of Western European literature in the light of two interconnected ideas: the dialogic nature of language and the carnivalesque tradition in culture (Lodge, 1990:1-2).

The Bakhtinian terms that will be discussed in greater detail in this dissertation to be used for a Bakhtinian analysis of these four texts are: polyphony, intertextuality, heteroglossia, centripetal and centrifugal voices, ironic inversion and the carnivalesque.

2.3.1. Dialogics

From a survey of literature on Bakhtin, it is evident that the golden strand running through Bakhtin's work is that of Dialogism. Dentith (1995:13) states that the dialogic relationship or artistic form and meaning that emerges between people is undoubtedly a central emphasis throughout Bakhtin's writing. What exactly does this dialogism mean?

In 1929 Bakhtin published a book on Dostoevsky (1821-1981) that has been translated into English as *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Bakhtin criticises poetic genres – epic, lyric, tragedy – for their monologic character; he feels that they employ one style

and express one world-view. In contrast, he praises the novel for its polyphonic character:

The possibility of employing on the plane of a single work discourses of various types, with all their expressive capacities intact, without reducing them to a single common denominator – this is one of the most fundamental characteristics of prose. Herein lies the profound distinction between prose style and poetic style. For the prose artist the world is full of other people's words, among which he must orient himself and whose speech characteristics he must be able to perceive with a very keen ear. He must introduce them into the plane of his own discourse, but in such a way that this plane is not destroyed. He works with a very rich verbal palette (Bakhtin, 1984:200-201).

Whereas poetic style, Bakhtin believes, reduces multiple discourses to one single discourse, multiple languages to one single language, multiple histories to one single history, novels can incorporate multiple discourses, languages and histories into a text. They acknowledge the richness and diversities of life, but even more than that, they open up a dialogue between these discourses, languages and histories, between characters mutually, and between the author and the characters.

Bakhtin claims that Dostoevsky's novels are distinctively polyphonic for he writes that they are

A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels. What unfolds in his works is not a multitude of characters and fates in a single authorial consciousness; rather a plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event (Bakhtin, 1984:6).

Polyphonic means that "they grant the voices of the main characters as much authority as the narrator's voice, which indeed engages in active dialogue with the characters' voices" (Dentith, 1995:41). Not all novels are polyphonic, though, for Bakhtin criticises implicitly authoritarian forms of novelistic organisation which retain the final word for the narrator. The dialogue of the polyphonic novel is authentic only insofar as it represents an engagement in which, in various ways, the discourses of self and other interpenetrate

each other (Dentith, 1995:42). Lodge (1990:86) goes on to equate Bakhtin's 'polyphonic' with 'dialogic'. Bakhtin believes that one can locate meaning in the dialogic process of interaction between speaking subjects, between texts and readers, between texts themselves, and I believe, between text and film.

Realist novels, for example, are not inherently polyphonic or dialogic. The author presents only one type of speech in the text – that is his/her own. There is no character focalisation, in other words, no thought is experienced or expressed through the eyes of the characters, only authorial focalisation. The speech is mainly informative and mostly doesn't serve a suggestive purpose or deeper meaning; the emphasis is on denotation and not connotation. At the end of the novel there is almost always resolve within characters or closure within plot – a luxury that reality seldom provides.

Bakhtin was, however, very aware of the realities that make up part of life; the devastating effects of oppression and totalitarian rule. In the 1920s and 1930s he was oppressed in Russia, his works were never published and this explains his involvement with Marxist and other political movements. Bakhtin wanted to deconstruct autonomy within language as well as in everyday life.

Murray (1987:115-119) explains some very important concepts within dialogics, such as *heteroglossia*, *centripetal* and *centrifugal forces*. *Heteroglossia* refers to the multiplicity of overlapping and often conflicting versions of language (official, vernacular, technical, literary, the jargons of different age-groups etc.) in which we experience and represent the world to ourselves and others. This multiplicity of interacting languages, otherwise known as heteroglossia, is always implicitly present when any one of them is used, and any utterance takes its meaning from its relation to the various other languages with which it is inevitably in dialogue.

An utterance refers to any speech act, much like the concept of *parole* of linguist Ferdinand Saussure. *Dialogics* then, Murray explains (1987:116), is "the study of the way meaning is constructed out of the contending languages within any culture –

contending because there is a constant cultural tendency to try to unify languages within an official or unitary language, which is undermined by the endlessly changing conditions of the society, which generates new languages and new relations between them”.

Bakhtin believed that language is a material and constantly changing practice in which two contending forces are constantly operating. *Centripetal* forces work towards a unified and static language, and *centrifugal* forces endlessly develop new forms which parody, criticise and generally undermine the pretensions of the ambitions towards a unitary language. This interaction or dialogic tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces, between two languages and two belief systems, permits authorial intentions to be realised in such a way that we can acutely sense their presence at every point in the work (Dentith, 1995:208).

What was of primary importance to Bakhtin was the fact that no utterance or speech act takes place in a vacuum and that it cannot be removed from the speaker; an utterance or speech act always takes place within a specific social, historical or concrete dialogic situation: “Not a single instance of verbal utterance can be reckoned exclusively to its utterer’s account. Every utterance is the product of the interaction between speakers and the product of the broader context of the whole complex social situation in which the utterance emerges” (Bakhtin, 1984). Meaning, then, is socially produced and inherently heteroglossic.

Heteroglossia, according to Dentith (1995:218), is another’s speech in another’s language; such speech constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse which serves to express authorial intentions in a refracted way: “it serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author”. Consequently, two voices, meanings and expressions are involved that are in dialogue with one another.

This double-voiced discourse can be equated to a linguistic hybrid. Bakhtin (1981:358) explains that hybridisation is a

...mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor.

Such mixing of two languages within the boundaries of a single utterance is, in the novel, an artistic device (or more accurately, a system of devices) that is deliberate. But unintentional, unconscious hybridization is one of the most important modes in the historical life and evolution of all languages. We may even say that language and languages change historically primarily by means of hybridization, by means of a mixing of various 'languages' co-existing within the boundaries of a single dialect, a single national language, a single branch, a single group of different branches or different groups of such branches, in the historical as well as paleontological past of languages – but the crucible for this mixing always remains the utterance.

Intertextuality is a French word that has been introduced by Julia Kristeva. Bakhtin's theories influenced Kristeva's thoughts on intertextuality. In the introduction to the English translation of Kristeva's *Desire in Language*, Roudiez (1980:15) reminds us that the concept of intertextuality has generally been misunderstood. It has nothing to do with matters of influence by one writer upon another, or with the sources of a literary work, but involves the components of a textual system such as the novel, for example. In *The Revolution of Poetic Language (La Révolution du langage poétique)* Kristeva defines intertextuality as the transformation of one or more systems of signs into another, accompanied by a new articulation of the enunciative and denotative position. Any signifying practice is defined as a field in which various signifying systems undergo such a transposition. The phenomenon that the concept of intertextuality is not exactly understood as Kristeva intended it to be, is indeed an example of intertextuality. To Kristeva the concept has a particular meaning. This meaning has been conveyed by the subject, absorbed and transformed by the addressee with his/her own system.

Hawthorn (2000:182) understands intertextuality to mean "a relation between two or more texts which has an effect upon the way in which the intertext (that is, the texts within which other texts reside or echo their presence) is read". Any individual text can

be read in a manner determined by its relation with other texts. Hawthorn (2000:184) also quotes John Frow who defines the intertextual strategy as a phrase which is used to describe the process of rewriting classic or canonical texts so as to subvert or appropriate their ideological force.

What, then, is the true meaning of intertextuality? Is it the original meaning as Kristeva intended it, or the transformed meaning as some addressees understand it? The answer is: both. The new utterance of intertextuality is the product of the interaction between Kristeva as subject and others as addressees and the product of the broader context of the whole complex social situation in which the utterances emerged. Besides, Bakhtin (1981:282) contends that no two interlocutors ever coincide precisely and that the act of comprehending always involves an act of assimilation; one always strives to understand but never understands absolutely.

Van der Merwe and Viljoen (1998:48) discuss the concept of intertextual literature as part of the "Library of Babel": the postmodernist sees literature as a gigantic web of texts that interrelate and that are in conversation with one another. "The universe (which others call the Library) is composed of an indefinite and perhaps infinite number of hexagonal galleries..." writes Jorge Luis Borges's in his short story "The Library of Babel".

Bakhtin furthermore believes that language changes, as Murray (1987:121) explains, and that these changes cause the decentring of official languages and the disintegration of verbal-ideological systems. Speech diversity reflects social diversity and the struggle for dominance of the social classes; therefore the dialogic nature of language is part of this struggle. There is a struggle for dominance between the carnivalesque and the canonical as well.

2.3.2. Carnival

Many literary critics and theorists agree that the concept of *carnival* is “the weakest, least consistent, and most dangerous category in Bakhtin’s arsenal” (Dentith, 1995:65). Bakhtin’s book on Rabelais and carnival, translated into English as *Rabelais and His World* in 1968, marks Bakhtin’s attempt to locate the work of Rabelais in the popular cultural forms that surround him; among others, those of carnival. The term *carnivalesque* refers to the varied popular-festive life of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, whilst carnivalised writing refers to “writing which has taken the carnival spirit into itself and thus reproduces, within its own structures and by its own practice, the characteristic inversions, parodies and discrownings of carnival proper” (Dentith, 1995:65).

In the chapter entitled “Bourgeois Hysteria and the Carnivalesque”, Stallybrass and White (1986:382-388) state that carnival had always been an unbound fusion of procession, feasting, competition, games and spectacle, combining diverse elements from a large repertoire and varying from place to place. But before long, carnival came to be marginalised both socially and geographically; the middle class was disengaging from it slowly and unevenly and feasting became separated from performances, spectacle from procession. Carnival contained an utopian urge for Bakhtin; it displaced and even inverted the normal social hierarchies; it was a time which encouraged bodily needs and pleasures different from those called upon by the ordinary rhythm of labour and leisure.

Because of its subversive nature, the term carnival has acquired a strongly derogatory or narrowly burlesque meaning in society (Moi, 1986:49). Rabelais is famous as the writer who celebrates the body which eats, digests, copulates, and defecates, but who does so in a wild, exaggerated and grotesque way. He used carnival imagery in his great sixteenth-century novel to mobilise popular-festive forms against the official culture of the Middle Ages (Dentith, 1995:66). Although the notion of grotesque realism of bodily functions was met with disdain by many theorists and writers, Bakhtin criticises

them for considering the grotesque solely in a negative or satirical manner. He insists on the “positive, regenerative forces that are also present in Rabelais’ images” (Dentith, 1995:225).

Lodge (1990:89) rightly states that Bakhtin’s thinking about language and literature is essentially binary – monologic/dialogic, poetry/prose, canonical/carnavalesque. And here Derrida’s belief in the hierarchies that accompany dichotomies apply; one polar opposite is regarded as the superior of the other inferior polar opposite. Instead of regarding one as superior to the other, these dichotomies should rather be seen as complementing and replenishing each other; dissolving into temporary equilibrium, much like yin and yang within Chinese and Japanese belief systems. Yin and yang are two basic principles or characteristics which form a part of everything. They are polar opposites, yet at the same time, they replenish one another. Yin is dark, passive, feminine, and is associated with the night and the moon. In comparison, yang is light, active, masculine, and linked to day and the sun. Each one possesses a fragment of the other; a dark night (yin) also has light in the form of stars (yang), for example (Wikipedia, 1996).

Therefore, degradation is inevitably linked to regeneration, death spells new life, the material spells the spiritual and there is a constant motion between the two binaries. Bakhtin, who was against the reduction of voices to one authorial voice and the closure it implied, celebrated the element of becoming attached to the grotesque body: “it is a body in which becoming rather than completion is evident, a body whose openness to the world and the future is emphatically symbolised by the consuming maws, pregnant stomachs, evident phalluses and gargantuan evacuations that make it up” (Dentith, 1995:68). The living/dead opposition involves the opposition of something moving, warm, breathing, to something immobile, cold and not breathing. That is why the body which eats, digests, copulates, and defecates, is a positive sign of life, of movement and dynamism.

It has to be said though, that this dynamism has to be controlled and contained. Although bodily pleasures are an important part of life, self-restraint has to be uppermost. Without self-restraint, the balance between stoicism and hedonism will surely be disturbed. Boundaries are needed, especially in this day and age. A good example of this fine balance can be applied to sex. Sexual repression is negative for it denies a natural act, yet with HIV and AIDS that threaten to become an epidemic, one cannot recklessly sleep around any more – not without negative consequences, anyway. If anything is taken to an extreme, it becomes negative. Therefore, one has to strike a fine balance between dichotomies, and the boundaries between spheres should be *limens* that allow exchange and interchange to take place.

Returning to Bakhtin, what he realised was that Rabelais used parody and laughter to dialogise, at least partly, the authorial official spirit of the time. Laughter is often used in social or political commentary, because it is safer than outright criticism. It gives people the chance to laugh at their own faults from a non-threatening distance, whilst still spurring on serious change in thought and behaviour. Parody, irony and satire are tools often used to sugarcoat social or political commentary.

Parody, as defined by Lodge (1990:60), is when another's discourse is borrowed but turned to a purpose opposite to or incongruous with the intention of the original. Parody creates new fiction through the rewriting of the old, it makes a mockery of the old, but relativises it at the same time by giving it prominence; thereby keeping it alive. Reduced to a very simplistic meaning, *irony* has the frequent and common definition of saying what is contrary to what is meant. Irony can mean as little as saying, "Another day in paradise", when the weather is appalling (Colebrook, 2004:1). Verbal irony is also defined by Abrams (1999:135) as a statement in which the meaning that a speaker implies differs sharply from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed. *Satire* is verbal aggression in which some aspect of historical reality is exposed to ridicule. It is a mode of aesthetic expression that relates to historical reality and involves at least implied norms against which a target can be exposed as ridiculous (Fletcher, 1987:ix). In short, satire can be described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by

making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn or indignation (Abrams, 1999:275).

Rabelais' writing and carnival forms are examples of an attitude in which the high, the elevated, the official, even the sacred, are degraded and debased, but as a condition of popular renewal and regeneration (Dentith, 1995:68). In the comic novel the incorporation of heteroglossia is characterised by two distinctive features: the incorporation of a multiplicity of languages and verbal-ideological belief systems, and secondly, these languages and socio-ideological belief systems are unmasked and shown to be false, hypocritical, greedy, limited etc. (Dentith, 1995:206). In other words, Rabelais uses grotesque realism to unmask hidden truths; through degrading or satirising Rabelais actually masks political and social criticism. By subjecting truths about official discourse to (regenerative) laughter, new attitudes might be born. New insights can lead to new behaviour. Ultimately, the goal is change. The potential is there for hierarchies to be deconstructed, metanarratives to be called into question and authorial power to become democratic. Because carnival upturns everything official, authoritarian and one-sidedly serious at least temporarily, it is a technique often used in postmodern texts.

Guimond and Maynard (2001:321-323), as do I, choose to make a Bakhtinian analysis of *Heart of Darkness*. They feel that Conrad's novels are excellent examples of conflicts between the centripetal forces in language, history, and society that produce what Bakhtin described as monoglossia and the opposing, centrifugal forces that create heteroglossia and polyphony.

There is a dialogue between the discourses of literature and film as well as literary scholars and film critics that warrants attention.

2.4. Literature and film

There is often a struggle for dominance between the discourses of literature and film, as well as between the voices of literary critics and film critics. There seems to be an imbalance of power between the two discourses in that many literary critics regard literature to be superior to film, which results in many film critics having to justify film as medium, especially film adaptations based on literature. I believe that both mediums are equally important, but feel that I have to voice a stronger case for film to counterbalance the imbalance of power. I believe that the emergence of visual arts and the popularity of *Apocalypse Now* and *Promised Land* prove the current importance of visual media, and that prejudices and hostilities against film as “impure” medium are unjustified because literature and film are both hybrid mediums. When criticising a filmic adaptation of a literary text, it might be prudent to find a new gauge to judge it with, because visual arts seem to be very popular in this day and age.

2.4.1. The emergence of visual arts

In their biography of Bakhtin entitled *Mikhail Bakhtin*, Clark and Holquist (1984) state that genre, for Bakhtin, is “a crystallisation of the concepts particular to a given time and to a given social stratum in a specific society”. Genre, in other words, reflects the society of the time. Bakhtin furthermore shows a marked preference for some forms over others, and to account for this preference one must keep in mind that language is a material and constantly changing practice in which centripetal and centrifugal forces contend (Murray, 1987:119).

The second half of the twentieth century has witnessed an aggressive upsurge of marginal forms of culture. The ‘career’ of cinematography is a case in point: from being a fairground spectacle, free of all theoretical restrictions and regulated only by technical possibilities, it turned into a central art-form, and, what is more, especially in recent decades, into one of the most *written about* of art-forms (Lotman, 2000:134). Although books are still hugely read, it seems that film or the visual media is the new medium of

choice for most people. Visual media are the dominating preference and language or signifying form at present.

Although a search for statistics about the rivalry between the visual and press media did not yield South African data, it is true that South Africa is a globalised country that is much influenced by American culture, and therefore American statistics are, I believe, admissible to argue my point. The American Census Bureau's 1997 Statistical Abstract reports that the average American spent 1,595 hours or just under 4.4 hours a day watching television during 1997, while 2.9 hours per day were spent on radio, 45 minutes a day listening to recorded music, 27 minutes a day reading a newspaper, 17 minutes per day reading books and 14 minutes a day reading magazines (United States Census Bureau, 1998:7). A time-use survey by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor in 2003 reported the following: Reading as primary leisure activity varied from an hour per day by the oldest age group (65 years and older), to about eight minutes per day for the youngest group (15-24 years of age). The average American, however, spends an average of 2.5 hours per day watching television (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005:10).

During the 19th century the novel displaced the epic as the characteristic modern genre (Dentith, 1995:49). So too, has visual imagery displaced the novel as the dominant modern genre of the 21st century:

Global mass culture is dominated by the modern means of cultural production, dominated by the image which crosses and re-crosses linguistic frontiers much more rapidly and more easily, and which speaks across languages in a much more immediate way. It is dominated by all the ways in which the visual and graphic arts have entered directly into the reconstitution of popular life, of entertainment and of leisure. It is dominated by television and film, and by the image, imagery, and styles of mass advertising. Its epitome is in all those forms of mass communication of which one might think of satellite television as the prime example. Not because it is the only example but because you could not understand satellite television without understanding its grounding in a particular advanced national economy and culture and yet its whole purpose is precisely that it cannot be limited any longer by national boundaries (Hall, 2000:27).

Is it just to contend that the cinema dominates the written word in the 21st century? I propose that the answer to this questions is yes. If so, then why do I believe that visual imagery is more immediate than the written word? Next, I shall give some reasons to back my claim:

Firstly, it might be that people have become lazy and that visual representation is much easier to absorb, compared with the active participation of imagination and brain power that reading requires. With the technological advances with regard to special effects, many films are carried, not by plot or narrative or artistic techniques, but by the appeal that special effects have to a mass culture. Yet, when one takes into consideration the complexity involved in some art films, it is just as difficult, if indeed not more so, than reading. But mainstream blockbusters are more prominent and numerous than art films. The popularity of film might also arise from the fact that we live in a fast-paced world where a two hour film is more relaxing and less time consuming than a two hundred page novel which requires imaginative participation.

Secondly, it might also be because film is a more social medium than a novel. Many people can watch a film and experience it at the same time, whereas only one person can read one single copy of a book at a time. For numerous people to read a novel at the same time, multiple copies are needed. Because people read and digest information at different tempos, it is almost guaranteed that none of these people will finish at exactly the same time. When an audience or group of friends watch a film, given that they all pay attention, they start and finish at the same time. It is true that some people belong to book clubs and get together weekly or monthly to discuss a book that they have read. The average person would rather watch a film to socialise, than get together with others to discuss a book. Friends often have gatherings where they watch videos or DVD's and snack to relax. Fewer friends get together to discuss a book they have recently read.

The third reason might be the literacy situation in South Africa at present. According to a study done by Carstens (2004:460-461) in which she tries to establish the manner in

which print materials could be tailored to match literacy levels, she gives the results found in the 2001 census – 17,9 percent of the South African population received no formal schooling, and 16 percent received some primary schooling, but did not complete primary school. If a definition of functional literacy is taken as being able to read at the Fifth Grade level or higher (Doak and Root; Harley; as quoted by Carstens, 2004:460), it means that about a third of the South African population is functionally illiterate. The implication is that a third or more of adult South Africans cannot read newspapers, health instructions, agricultural extension materials or directions on a box of cake mix, among other things, let alone read a novel. These figures may lead one to conclude that print (including formats such as pamphlets, package inserts, posters and flip charts, newsletters, fact sheets, booklets, and training manuals) is not an appropriate medium to use for instructional material in South Africa.

The fascination with celebrity culture might be the fourth reason for film's dominance over the written word in the 21st century. Just like people sometimes base decisions of which book to read on its author, so too, many people choose to watch *Kill Bill* for example, because it had been directed by the auteur and cult director Quentin Tarantino, or base their decision on a specific actor that plays in a film. It might be that *War of the Worlds* was not the deepest or most thought-provoking film ever made, but many people chose to watch the film because they were fans of Tom Cruise. Tabloids and gossip columns that abound and the increasing popularity of reality television shows, bear witness to the average person's fascination with "real people" – the people behind the characters. The average person would, I believe, rather read a tabloid than a newspaper or magazine review of a film.

Gouldner (1976:167-172) contends that modern ideologies were made available first to readers – a relatively well-educated but small sector of the society – through newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, leaflets, etc. and then through them to a larger public. Dense information of complex ideologies were transmitted or "filtered down" to mass audiences by the media and through a mediating intelligentsia. Because of this, one can deduce that the future prospect of ideology transmission will thus depend, in

part, on the future production of writing and the consumption of written objects. With the emergence of television as a historically new mass experience, may we therefore expect a decline in the manifest connection between ideologies and history, or people's social position in historical processes? Many would argue that television is a "you-are-there" participatory and consummatory activity, and that one is therefore not commonly left with a sense that one needs to do something actively after a viewing; the viewing is often an end in itself.

I beg to differ, however, and side with Stam, Raengo and Metz: Films are more directly implicated in bodily response than novels; reading a book about Gene Kelly dancing, for example, does not necessarily make the reader want to dance, yet seeing him perform often generates a contagious energy that makes the viewer feel like he/she has to get up and dance (Stam and Raengo, 2005:6). Christian Metz also claims that film images have generally been proclaimed more of a universal language, because visual perception varies less throughout the world than languages do (Metz, 1974:64).

I, however, feel that the two films that will be analysed in this dissertation, are bearers of ideology and do not only make people understand themselves and their socio-historic context better, but also spur the viewers on to behavioural change and action. Even though film is a language all its own, it is only the conversion of signs into a new communicative sign system or language. Gouldner (1976:169) argues that television watchers must integrate and resonate residual iconic imagery or "pictures-in-the-head" which is generated by media-transmitted films as well as by their own "personal experience".

The constant struggle for dominance between literature and film as "pure" art seems unwarranted when one takes into account that both are hybrid mediums.

2.4.2. Novel and film as hybrid mediums

According to Papastergiadis (2000:182), the language of hybridity becomes a means for critique and resistance to the monological language of authority; the hybrid text always undoes the priorities and disrupts the singular order by which the dominant code categorises the other. The hybrid nature of the texts that will be analysed in this dissertation is evidence of this; the texts are composed of a multitude of salient characteristics of different movements, trends and genres that seem to flow into one another without definite boundaries. They include the movements of both symbolism and modernism, for example, as well as the specific historical conditions in which they arose, whilst at the same time they are not exactly symbolist or modernist in nature. The salient characteristics of the movements, trends and genres that are included are compared: the similarities as well as the juxtapositions. Consequently, this initiates a dialogue in which the interdependence of the movements, trends and genres become evident, whilst transforming one another into something new.

It seems that there exists the belief that, similar to eugenics, literature must be kept apart from film, to ensure artistic quality, a quality that is supposedly threatened by the mixing of different art mediums. Filmic adaptations of literature are regarded by many as hybrid artworks, which decadently spells the “degradation” of literature as pure art. Seeing that progress in the New World is marked by the dialogue of adaptation and transformation (Papastergiadis, 2000:177), it is only fitting that old novels be adapted, transformed and reinterpreted through other mediums, of which film is most important to this study. It is true that filmic adaptations of literature problematise boundaries between literature and film as different mediums with different stylistic devices. But is this problematising necessarily bad? I do not believe so, for the problematising of boundaries are not necessarily problematic; challenges fight a static state of art forms and mediums. Adapting novels into films blend what is, generally, regarded as “high” art and “low” art. Many would argue that literature has a higher artistic value. Although one has to admit that populist, popcorn, feel-good or entertaining films are the order of the day, one also has to admit that many soft-cover books, like *Mills and Boon*, for example,

capitalise on this need for the ordinary as well. Even though I do not regard cinema as inherently “low” art, many scholars and literary critics do, and therefore the hybrid mingling of novels and films at least challenges perceptions and traditional beliefs. Traditional beliefs about novels and films are shattered by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo.

Stam and Raengo (2005:1) remind us that film is a form of writing that borrows from other forms of writing – screenwriting, books that some films are based on, etc. Film is the culmination of writing and the visual, and therefore it is a hybrid medium. Stam and Raengo (2004:16) use montage sequences as an example of film’s hybrid nature, for montage sequences “interweave intertitles and filmed scenes to form hybrid verbal-visual ‘sentences’ governed by verbal syntax”. And herein lies the strength of film, and as Stam and Raengo rightly point out (2005:2), it “brings out the Darwinian overtones of the word ‘adaptation’ itself, evoking adaptation as a means of evolution and survival”.

Stam and Raengo (2004:2-4) argue that neither the medium of the novel, nor the medium of film is verbally or imagistically “pure”, for films, although dominantly visual, abound in words such as dialogue, subtitles, etc., while novels, although dominated by words, create visual and spatial effects through ekphrasis. Pure arts have traditionally been esteemed greater than hybrid arts, and therefore both novels and films have been compartmentalised to fit into a box of semiotic and aesthetic purity (Stam and Raengo, 2004:5). But it seems that more recently it is increasingly acknowledged that the strength of film actually lies in the fact that it is a hybrid medium. In chapter one of *A Companion to Literature and Film*, Stam and Raengo (2004:1-17) set out to demonstrate that both the novel and the cinema are hybrid and interdisciplinary mediums that cannot be segregated into word and image camps.

Literature, of which poetry and novels are examples, as well as film, all have their own “language”. Poetry makes use of stylistic devices such as metonymy, synecdoche, metaphor, alliteration, assonance, personification, etc. to bring across a certain message or meaning to the reader. Novels also use literary devices such as

characterisation, focalisation, repetition, indirect and direct depictions of characters and events, etc. to convey meaning. Just like poems and novels, films also have their own semiotic codes or languages which the reader has to decode or encode: Code systems like lighting, colour, camera-shots, camera-angles, editing, etc. are but a few elements the director uses to send multiple messages to an audience. The various combinatory possibilities of shots and sequences in a film such as the straight cut, dissolve or wipe, as well as film lighting, are but two ways in which meaning can be produced through a director of a film (Allen and Gomery, 1985:77-78).

Even though film can be rich in meaning, it is often regarded as inferior to literature. What then are some of the prejudices and hostilities against films?

2.4.3. Prejudices and hostilities against filmic adaptations of literature

Filmic adaptations of literary works are often met with prejudice, for adaptation criticism has predominantly been moralistic, implying that the cinema has in one way or another done a disservice to literature. The standard rhetoric of adaptation criticism has mostly deployed an elegiac discourse of loss, and Stam and Raengo (2005:3) echo my thoughts exactly, when they state that instead of celebrating what has been gained in the transition of novel to film, most critics just lament what has been lost.

Stam and Raengo (2005:4-8) list eight prejudices and hostilities against adaptation that renders it “inferior”: The first is based on notions about anteriority and seniority; there is an assumption that older arts are necessarily better arts, and that the younger art of cinema is therefore inferior to the esteemed art of literature. There is, secondly, some dichotomous thinking that surmises bitter competition for dominance between film and literature: “The inter-art relation is seen as a Darwinian struggle to the death rather than a dialogue offering mutual benefit and cross-fertilization” (Stam and Raengo, 2005:4). The third form of prejudice or hostility resides within *iconophobia* – the fear that contemporary visual arts and the mass media have the power to corrupt the audience through delusional fictions, and that film and other visual media threaten to dethrone the

hierarchy of the written word. Closely related to *iconophobia* is *logophilia*, which is “the valorization of the verbal, typical of cultures rooted in the sacred word of the ‘religions of the book’” (Stam and Raengo, 2005:6) – the glorification of the written word as privileged medium of communication. Anti-corporeality is listed fifth: The concrete visual nature of film that lies in the screen, the characters, the props, etc. is regarded as inferior to the nature of novels that is more abstract and allow for information to be absorbed through the mind’s eye. The sixth prejudice/hostility listed is what Stam and Raengo (2005:7) call the myth of facility, which is the puritanical presumption that films are easy to make and pleurably easy to watch. What is ignored is that in the hands of the right director, a film can be a laborious work of art, and on the reception side, that the perceptual and conceptual labour of decoding and encoding a film could be very complex. Seventh is the class prejudice that is associated with the medium of literature and the medium of film: “Through a class-based dichotomy, literature pays indirect, and begrudging, homage to film’s popularity, while film pays homage to literature’s prestige” (Stam and Raengo, 2005:7). In other words, film is associated with popular culture, whilst literature is regarded as elitist by nature. Eighth, and lastly, adaptations are accused of being parasitical on literature, leaching on its originality and stealing from it.

2.4.4. Redefining what “fidelity” means in filmic adaptations of literature

Maybe the answer to finding a new gauge to judge a film lies in redefining what “fidelity” means in the dialogue between novel and film, or replacing it with the word “integrity”. Perhaps any film that borrows from an *ur-text*, yet explores themes and issues that are relevant for a specific socio-historic audience, adds to the “world” of the novel. Stam and Raengo (2005:15) contend that cinema has been held to an unfair and absurdly rigorous standard of “fidelity”; a standard that is not applied to other mediums such as theatre or popular music. The very act of adapting a novel without changing the story-line, for example, already presupposes “infidelity”, because novel and film are two different mediums. Stam and Raengo (2005:17) state that “fidelity in adaptation is

literally impossible” because “a filmic adaptation is automatically different and original due to the change of medium”.

Filmmaking consists of thousands of choices which would differ with every director, such as the choice of actors, the budget, the locale, the costumes and décor, props, etc. To illustrate this point, Stam and Raengo (2005:17-18) compare a passage from John Steinbeck’s *Grapes of Wrath* with the film version in which Ma Joad muses over her memorabilia before leaving for California. Where Steinbeck merely writes “photographs” in his novel, director John Ford, has to choose specific photographs. So too, Ford has to choose a specific newspaper, specific headlines, illustrations, fonts, etc. in the newspaper account of Tom’s trial. Due to time constraints of the film as medium, it is also impossible to transpose every scene of a novel to film, and the director has to choose which scenes he/she wants to shoot, whilst the editor ultimately decides what scenes to put in or leave out and in what order to put them. Thus, even with a “faithful” rendition of the realist/naturalist novel by a realist director such as Ford, “cinematization” automatically generates difference. One must rather look at the dialogue initiated between novel and film in filmic adaptations of literature, and at the conversations different discourses and histories engage in.

2.4.5. Bakhtinian overtones in filmic adaptations of literature

Bakhtin believes that words are saturated with “accents” and “intonations”, and as Stam and Raengo (2005:19) point out, film makes use of verbal and non-verbal signification to inform the viewer – verbal dialogue, facial expressions or bodily postures, music, noise, written materials, costumes, props – all aid to tell the story, to create a certain mood or feeling, or to convey the social and personal dynamics operating between interlocutors.

In their discussion of Bakhtin, Stam and Raengo (2005:27) state that Bakhtinian “dialogism” refers

in the broadest sense to the infinite and open-ended possibilities generated by all the discursive practices of a culture, the matrix of communicative utterances which 'reach' the text not only through recognizable citations but also through a subtle process of indirect textual relays. Any text that has 'slept with' another text, as a postmodern wag once put it, has also slept with all the other texts that that other text has slept with. It is this textually transmitted 'dis-ease' that characterizes the intertextual daisy-chain that Derrida called 'dissemination'.

Rather than use the trope of "fidelity" when speaking of filmic adaptations of literature, notions of dialogism and intertextuality might help to escape this rigid constraint. Stam and Raengo (2005:27), however, prefer Gérard Genette's term, as do I, which builds on Bakhtin's dialogism and Kristeva's intertextuality. Transtextuality refers to "all that which puts one text in relation, whether manifest or secret, with other texts". Stam and Raengo (2005:27) sum up the five types of transtextual relations that Genette posits:

Intertextuality is the effective co-presence of two texts in the form of quotation, plagiarism and allusion. Paratextuality is the relation between text proper and its "paratext" within the totality of a literary work, such as titles, prefaces, postfaces, epigraphs, dedications, illustrations, etc. (The longer version of *Apocalypse Now* released in 2001 as *Apocalypse Now Redux* which gives a sense of the director's cut, paratexts the original release and inevitably reshapes our understanding of the text itself). Thirdly, metatextuality is the critical relation between one text and another, whether the commented text is explicitly cited or only silently evoked. Critical rewritings are especially associated with metatextuality. The fourth type of intertextuality is "architextuality", which is defined as the generic taxonomies suggested or refused by the titles or subtitles of a text. *Apocalypse Now*, for example, is a renamed adaptation of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. It is, however, the fifth category that Genette lists, that is the most relevant to adaptation. "Hypertextuality" refers to the relation between one text, the "hypertext", and a former text, the "hypotext", which the former transforms, modifies, elaborates, or extends.

Stam and Raengo (2005:20-24) contend that in some instances, the cinema has greater resources for expression than the novel: Its multitrack and multifformat nature enables it

to multiply times and spaces – the dialogue between that which one sees on the screen, and that which one hears. It has a capacity to blend seemingly contradictory times and temporalities; a film's multitrack nature allows to stage ironic contradictions between music and image. Cinematic adaptations allow for a multiplication of registers, the past for example, can be conveyed through titles, colours, the cosmetic ageing of a character with the use of make-up, costumes, paintings, props, music, etc. Unlike a novel, a film can also be played backwards. While novels only have a single entity – the character – a filmic adaptation have both a character and a performer who is an interpreter of the character; they give life to a character through ways of talking, walking, facial expressions, gestures, postures, etc. Film is also synesthetic in that it has the capacity to engage various senses at once such as sight and hearing. "It has available to it the visuals of photography and painting, the movement of dance, the décor of architecture, the harmonies of music, and the performance of theater" (Stam and Raengo, 2005:24).

Film foregrounds the process of writing in that all films, even non-adaptation films, adapt a script. Hypotexts are transformed by selection, amplification, concretisation, actualisation, critique, extrapolation, popularisation, reaccentuation, transculturation, etc. In relation to Bakhtin, the original novel can be seen as a "situated utterance, produced in one medium and in one historical and social context, and later transformed into another, equally situated utterance, produced in a different context and relayed through a different medium" (Stam and Raengo, 2005:44-45).

2.4.6. How *Apocalypse Now* and *Promised Land* were received by the general public and literary or film scholars

It is necessary to look at how these films were received by the general public and literary or film scholars because their response is a barometer for the popularity of the films and the consequent impact of the filmic texts on society.

Both the novels and the films were generally well received: *Heart of Darkness* is Conrad's best known work and still forms part of many schools' and universities' literary curricula; *Apocalypse Now* grossed over \$150 million at the box office (Worthy, 1996:155); *Na die Geliefde Land* is Schoeman's second most translated novel, published in England, America and Russia (Burger and Van Vuuren, 2002:57); *Promised Land* has been awarded internationally (Pretorius, 2002:9); and many overseas audiences have found the film very topical (Pretorius, 2002:19).

Even though *Apocalypse Now* won three Golden Globe and two Academy awards, and grossed over \$150 million, there are many scholars that have a negative view of the film. Sharrett (2001:73) states that "the final reel brought the most critical barrages, many feeling that the intellectualisms were more than strained, providing little closure". Renowned critic of *The New Yorker*, Pauline Kael (as quoted by Sharrett, 2001:73), termed the film a "nearly complete failure" when it was originally released. Even though Sadashige (2001:1919-1920) states that *Apocalypse Now*, in its original form, was "already too big, too abstract, and too ambitious to contain" and Vincent Canby criticised the effect of the film to be "something borrowed and not yet fully understood", she states that many film critics have praised and welcomed the newly restored version of *Apocalypse Now Redux*.

Promised Land also received some negative criticism, even though it was shown to buyers at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival (Muller, 2002:10), drew two packed public showings at the 2002 Toronto Film Festival (Pretorius, 2002:19), and won the award for best film script at the 15th international Tokio Film Festival in 2002 (Pretorius, 2002:9). Paul Boekkooi (2003:28), however, rated the film five out of ten and feels that the film distorts Karel Schoeman's intentions. He also criticises some alterations that seem to serve no purpose, like the physical relationship that develops between George and Carla, and the brutal bloodbath at the end of the film. Are these alterations justified? If they are, what purpose do they serve? And is it just to discard the whole film altogether because Xenopoulos made some seemingly unwise choices? I will answer these questions in Chapters Four, Five and Six of this dissertation.

I believe it would be fruitful to analyse the ways in which events, characters, dialogue etc. in the literary texts have been altered or transposed to film, and find the possible reasons behind these alterations and transpositions. I believe that a reading of literature can be supplemented and enhanced by a truly artistic reading of film, because the author and director might choose different voices and discourses – social, historical, etc. – to dialogise one another. For example, I find *Promised Land* to be a helpful adaptation of *Na die Geliefde Land*, which actually enhances and highlights some themes in the original text, whilst simultaneously adding new topical ones, and also seems, in my opinion, to be more accessible to the general public because of its visual nature.

I furthermore believe that the findings of my study will indeed be fruitful in that even though it cannot provide scholarly answers or solutions to the problems we face as a postcolonial, post-apartheid people, it does assist one in understanding oneself and the world around one better. I believe that many people will be able to identify with the protagonists of these four texts and this identification might help one to step out of the confusion experienced over identity in a postcolonial country and assist one in reconfiguring a new, emancipated identity.

2.5. Conclusion

I argue that marginality is a state facing many people in a postcolonial, post-apartheid and ever globalising world, especially in South Africa. The individual could easily feel himself/herself torn between different cultures which might result in a lack of participation – a static no-man's-land. Yet, it seems that hybridity might lead to the transgression of binaries, by means of a dynamic process of liminality that results in regenerative change and active participation. The authoritative notion that one cannot reconcile binary categories within oneself might just be decanonised or carnivalised. Just like hybridity has a regenerative potential to overcome binary oppositions, so too

carnival has the power to deconstruct stale and authorial one-sided meanings. The tension between binary opposites propel forward change and exchange (the *limen*); it prevents a static state of being that rather results in a dynamic process of becoming – just like one’s identity is an ever dynamic process of becoming.

I believe that each text has its own “identity” due to its medium, its characters and histories, and that this identity is always in a state of becoming, because it changes with every reader/viewer that receives it, due to different life and world-views, experiences, biases, etc. (reception-theory). When a lot of time has elapsed, the literary texts can, however, regress into stale and static “official” readings by literary scholars. And this is where the films come into play, for they might liberate literary texts from stale and static “official” readings, and make them relevant to the audience of the time.

It seems as if film has replaced the novel as the preferred genre of our times. Both novels under discussion have been transposed to film. The authority of the original works are thus called into question and opened up to debate. The filmic adaptation of both *Heart of Darkness* and *Na die Geliefde Land* seem to liberate the written texts from an authoritative elitist supremacy; the written word is deconstructed and subjected to visual representation. Why and how are the novels transposed to film? And what does the transposition of the novels to film do to the “identity” of the original artworks? The films under discussion recycle the novels in their own semiotic language and open up a dialogue, not only between the literary and filmic texts, but also between literary scholars/critics and filmic scholars/critics. The hypertextuality between text and film has the potential to transform, modify, elaborate and extend the ideology of the novel into something new and relevant to a specific socio-historic context.

Film has become a very popular and powerful medium in which representations of identity can be called into question, criticised and judged. Yes, of course it also has the power to reinforce stereotypes. But in the hands of the right director it has the power to strengthen and enforce positive and dynamic roles and behaviours, and question, criticise or judge negative and static ones. It also has the potential to strengthen or

perpetuate existing beliefs, attitudes and experiences, as well as assert one's identity and the existence of one's history, like Said believes. Cultural forms can spur on a mind shift and ultimately, a change in identity and behaviour. Although the written word in the cultural form of the novel has already been doing this for hundreds of years, film seems to be the more accessible medium at present. The heteroglossic dialogue between the different languages of each respective medium, and the mutual dialogue between the different characters of each text, or the characters of the different texts, are centrifugal forces that allow new forms of identities and histories.

Each of the four texts contains one or more characters that feel pressured by their imagined communities to conform to expected social roles, and the resultant dichotomy between their true social roles and the expected, imposed social roles lead to their identity crises. In Chapters Four and Five, these identity crises will be discussed. A comparison will also be made between the filmic texts and the literary texts they are based upon.

3. CHAPTER 3 – THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF MOVEMENTS WITHIN HYBRID TEXTS

3.1. Introduction

At the time of the transition from the 19th to the 20th century a multitude of movements existed in literature and the arts, so much so that general trends are not clearly distinguishable from one another. In order to systematise the abundance of literary texts that exist at a certain time, literary history is divided into periods and movements. Fokkema and Ibsch (1984:9) contend that people speak of periods with regard to European literature of the 18th and 19th century, like Romanticism, Realism and Symbolism, whilst literature of the 20th century is rather referred to as movements, of which Futurism, Expressionism and Surrealism are named as the best known examples. I take *period* (as well as movement and trend for that matter) to refer to what Weliek (1984:18) calls a “time-section dominated by a set of norms (conventions, genres, ideals of versification, standards of characters, etc.) whose introduction, integration, decay, and disappearance can be traced”, yet I am much more sceptical about tracing the introduction and disappearance of each period. This statement will be elucidated later on in the chapter.

The objectives of this chapter are twofold. Firstly, it will provide a brief summary of each period, movement or trend under discussion. I do not profess to give a detailed, clear-cut and full definition or span of Realism, Symbolism, Impressionism, Modernism, Postmodernism, Postcolonialism or the Apocalyptic – I merely intend to give what I regard as the most important characteristics of a certain period which are of importance to this particular study. The reason for the concise discussion of the periods, movements or trends is mainly because the main focus of this study is not on a detailed description of the periods, but to use these descriptions of the periods, movements and trends to prove that the texts under discussion are stylistically hybrid. Therefore, the discussion is admittedly concise, limited and selective. The discussion of the salient aspects of each movement, period or trend⁵ will provide a conceptual grid which will form the basis of comparison in order to prove that these texts are indeed stylistically

⁵ It is important to note that when I use a capital letter, e.g. Symbolism, I refer to the whole period or movement, its history and characteristics, and when I do not use a capital letter, e.g. symbolism, I merely refer to the salient characteristics of the period or movement.

hybrid. I contend that the four texts under discussion are hybrid in the sense that they are composed of fictional techniques which manifest the salient characteristics of two or more, if not all, of the movements or trends that will be discussed.

The second objective of this chapter is to prove that the texts under discussion are stylistically hybrid. As concluded in Chapter Two, the concept of hybridity or mixing is not new; rather, what is new is the scope and speed of mixing of disciplines, class boundaries, etc. due to mobility, migration and multiculturalism in a global world (Nederveen Pieterse, 2001:231). What is significant about the concept of hybridity is that it problematises boundaries that formerly upheld race, class, national, disciplinary and many other distinctions. The meanings of boundaries are by no means constant, and nowadays the meanings of boundaries, the consequences thereof and the boundaries themselves are continually changing, renegotiated and shifted.

3.2. Periods, movements, trends

As an organising principle, the movements will be discussed chronologically, after which they will be mixed up during the analyses of the texts, seeing that the reader will already have been oriented with regard to the chronological order.

There is, however, much difference of opinion and still much debate over the precise date(s) when a specific movement commenced and ended. Seeing that movements often overlap and therefore cannot be restricted to a specific period, it may be that there is much difference of opinion over the chronological sequence chosen in this study. I do not profess the chronological sequence in which movements are discussed in this dissertation as the only right one, but use it functionally as an organising principle.

The fact that the texts are stylistically hybrid, problematises readings of these “transitional” texts: divergent periods, movements and trends flow, it seems, seamlessly, over from one into the other.

Realism, Symbolism, Impressionism, Modernism, Postmodernism, Postcolonialism and the Apocalyptic will now be discussed.

3.2.1. Realism

Abrams (1999:260) sums up literary critics' definition of realism as an attempt "to identify a movement in the writing of novels during the nineteenth century that included Honoré de Balzac in France, George Eliot in England, and William Dean Howells in America" amongst others, and "to designate a recurrent mode, in various eras and literary forms, of representing human life and experience in literature". In his survey of literature on Realism, Van Der Elst (1992:417-418) also states that Realism in literature, which became predominant in the 19th century, is concerned with a truthful depiction of reality which is not tainted by the idealised depiction of Romanticism. Realistic fiction, which is often opposed to romantic fiction, is said to *represent* life as it truly is, whereas romanticism is said to *present* an idealistic picture of life as one would have it be which is "more picturesque, adventurous, or heroic than actuality" (Abrams, 1999:26).

As with most of the literary movements that will be discussed in this chapter, realism defies a neat, clear-cut definition. In her article *Philosophical Realism and Postmodern Antirealism*, Ruth Ronen (1995) argues that, although realism has preoccupied philosophers, literary and art theorists for generations, realism has yet to reach a conclusive state or clear definition. It ventures a definition of literary and art theory realism to refer to the ability of signs and images to accurately or convincingly represent a reality. In turn, Morris (2003:6) admits that realism is a notoriously tricky term that eludes a water-tight definition, yet as a starting point defines literary realism as "any writing that is based upon an implicit or explicit assumption that it is possible to communicate about a reality beyond the writing".

According to Morris (2003:9), Realism was informed by secular and rational forms of knowledge which constituted the Enlightenment and sprang from the spread of scientific understanding in the eighteenth century. Morris (2003:9) goes on to define Enlightenment philosophy as “an optimistic belief that human beings can adequately reproduce, by means of verbal and visual representations, both the objective world that is exterior to them and their own subjective responses to that exteriority”. Enlightenment thought is, in other words, built on “certainty” – an ontological belief that an objective reality exists which can be objectively known through empirical observation, experience and experiments from which generalisations and universal laws can be deduced.

Aesthetic evaluations of realism are frequently informed by or entangled with views on the development of the Enlightenment, the expansion of capitalist production and the emergence of mass culture. As Morris (2003:10) explains, the novel, which is the literary genre most closely associated with realism, developed during the eighteenth century. It has developed alongside Enlightenment belief and capitalism - the most secular mode of human existence.

Realism as a literary form insists that art cannot turn away from the more sordid and harsh aspects of human existence. One of the driving forces behind realism was the belief that powerful representations of suffering and injustice could act as a vehicle for social reform and change, “that graphic accounts of injustice could shock the public conscience into more progressive attitudes and behaviour” (Morris, 2003:21). Although the belief that informed realism was admirable, one has to ask: Is it indeed possible to represent life as it actually is? I have to concede that it is not, and agree with Morris (2003:4) that realist novels can never give or reflect a true account of reality, for literary realism is a representational form and a representation can never be identical with that which it represents. In fact, no novel can ever give a true account of reality. Furthermore, words function completely differently from mirrors in that writing involves selection and order which always entail the values and perspective of the describer. The Modernists, however disillusioned, realised this and turned away from giving a

reliable presentation of external instances, objects and characters, and refused to impose an order on reality which it does not have.

There is a difference of opinion whether realism is followed by symbolism or whether the two movements developed interwoven side by side. Because realism and symbolism cannot be discussed simultaneously so as not to confuse the boundaries, I think it prudent to place symbolism after realism.

3.2.2. Symbolism

Wellek (1984:28) contends that the movement of Symbolism is perhaps the most global of all literary movements, and because of its widespread geographical interpenetration with other movements, is almost impossible to define. Viljoen (1995:269) supports the notion that it is almost impossible to define. The international movement of Symbolism “that spans the continents and includes all or almost all literatures” became predominant between 1880 and 1920 (Wellek, 1984:28), yet had its impetus in Paris and within the context of the development of French poetics (Wellek, 1984:9) and only later flowed over into other mediums such as art, music, theatre and the novel. Even though Baudelaire’s anthology *Les fleurs du mal* (first edition, 1857) is regarded as the first symbolist work, Symbolism as movement only gained prominence in the 1880s, with Verlaine and Mallarmé as main exponents (Hurst, 1992:485).

Other than realists’ concern with a truthful depiction of reality, these symbolist poets, much like the romantics, believed in “suggestion and indirection rather than explicit statement; they conceived of a further reality beyond the reality of the senses, which could be approached only in special states of consciousness, such as poetic inspiration” (Kershner, 1997:48). The main goal in the poetics of Symbolism was never to present a faithful depiction of reality, and unlike the language of the Naturalists, the purpose of the Symbolists’ language was not meant to copy the world, but to create another, poetic world (Vajda, 1984:31).

Viljoen's (1995:269-291) summary of the main characteristics of Symbolism aids a comprehensive understanding of this movement: Symbolism is ambiguous and opaque because writers strove towards saying that which cannot be said directly. Instead of calling the concrete "thing" directly and concretely by its "name", symbolists rather aspired to abstractly suggest and evoke an idea. Transcendent Symbolism and Immanent Symbolism are usually distinguished within Symbolism. Immanent Symbolism refers to a representation of another world beyond the reality of that what is seen, that what is felt rather than observed. Transcendent Symbolism, on the other hand, refers to the artist's longing for a paradise ideal, the restoration of a lost fatherland. Because the "poet" or artist possesses a fine sensibility or intuitive ability, he/she is regarded as the mediator between this world and another, enabling the audience of his/her art to experience higher visions of poetic reality. This is often the reason why isolation is another key characteristic of symbolism. The poet or artist is not part of the visionless masses, but is an isolated prophet who is able to experience visions beyond this world.

An extreme trend within the Symbolist movement is that of Aestheticism or Decadence which predominated the later years of nineteenth-century Symbolism. Important traits of Decadence were the ambiguous nature of beauty: beauty is positive, yet negative, and there is beauty to be found in the negative aspects of humankind. Together with this, Decadence also entails a macabre imagination, as well as a propensity towards death and exoticism (Viljoen, 1995:289). In her summary of what decadence means, Bisschoff (1992:66) states that it stems from the Latin word *de-cadere* which means "to fall". Thus, the term is used to refer to something or a period that is characterised by decay. Decadence works towards a break-down, so that reform is needed. The decadent writer views the world from a critical perspective, and looks at the reality wherein he/she finds himself/herself with superiority and contempt. Abrams (1999:54-55) also states that the Decadence attempted to achieve "the systematic derangement of the sense" following French poet Arthur Rimbaud: "The thoroughgoing Decadent writer cultivates high

artifice in his style and, often, the bizarre in his subject matter recoils from the fecundity and exuberance of the organic and instinctual life of nature, prefers elaborate dress over the living human form and cosmetics over the natural hue, and sometimes sets out to violate what is commonly held to be 'natural' in human experience by resorting to drugs, deviancy from standard norms of behavior, and sexual experimentation...". The emphases of the Decadence thus falls on drugged perception, sexual experimentation, and the deliberate inversion of conventional moral, social, and artistic norms.

Although there is much debate about the definition of the term 'symbol', seeing that words are arbitrary symbols themselves, I regard symbol to mean what Wellek (1984:20) defines as the simple replacement of one object by another; a comparison or representation of a complex idea by a simple, easily comprehensible one. Whether a symbol is easily comprehensible is debatable though, for I believe that a single symbol can generate a multitude of meanings, and although there are certain universal symbols, e.g. a heart which is symbolic of love, symbols are specific to the frame of reference of the sender or the perceiver. Not only does the Symbolist symbol have its special character of replacement, but also the suggestion of the mystery, as Wellek (1984:27) points out. Any thing can become the vehicle, but will always suggest the concealed tenor: the mystery of life and the world.

Whereas symbolism is preoccupied with allegorical and symbolic modes that reach out to a higher realm beyond the limitations of sensory perception, impressionism is preoccupied with the world of here and now and the limits of sensory perception that it entails.

3.2.3. Impressionism

Impressionism was initially a short-lived painters' movement in France between 1870 and 1880. It was the painters' goal to reproduce what they saw in nature as immediately and directly as possible on canvas, without reflection or interpretation. More important

than the object itself was the light that danced over it, so as to capture the fleeting moment on canvas, where the impression of light and brush strokes are dominated by the prevailing mood of weather conditions or the disposition of the artist (Grové, 1992:182).

Whilst philosophising about the meaning of the word “impression”, Brettell (2000:15) finds the fourth definition in the Oxford English Dictionary, of which the use dates between 1390 and 1888, to be the most satisfactory: “the effect of something on something else; influence; the result of an effect; a change stirred in a passive subject through the influence of an external cause”. Brettell (2000:16) goes on to say that one of the most important developments of the past 100 years is that Impressionists were perceived as artists who aspired to capture their observations on canvas without afterthought or a preconceived plan. They longed to serve as passive instruments that relayed sensations without conscious intervention of themselves as artists. But this goal in itself does not seem feasible, for a subjective observer can never be removed from the limited and preconceived ideas that taint perception, not under normal states of consciousness anyway.

In contrast to naturalism (and realism for that matter) which emphasised the objective documentation of external facts of the physical world, impressionism thus stressed the inward, human, variable perception of things and events – a perception altered radically by “point of view, external conditions, and the temperament of the perceiver” (Kershner, 1997:49).

There is a difference between Impressionist art and Impressionist literature, though. The literary Impressionists, as Matz (2001:1) explains, meant that fiction should locate itself where one has impressions, “not in sense, nor in thought, but in the feeling that comes between; not in the moment that passes, nor in the decision that lasts, but in the intuition that lingers”. Matz’s idea of literary Impressionism as finding the locus between sensation and thought, mind and heart, sounds a lot like the sensibility of 16th and 17th century Metaphysical Poets. Matz (2001:16) argues that this in-betweenness is

essential, as an impression according to him, is never simply a feeling, a thought, or a sensation: "It partakes, rather, of a mode of experience that is neither sensuous or rational, neither felt nor thought, but somewhere in between."

The goal of the impressionist writer is so to speak "to paint with words". He/she has a hyper-sensibility to perceive and register the fleeting moment consisting of an interplay of light, colour and movement, just like the impressionist painter. The focus does not necessarily fall on objects, but on states of being, not on ideas, but on moods. In order to achieve this goal, the impressionist must make use of words, often resulting in an abundance of adjectives, present participles, neologisms, strange sentences structures and word formations (Grové, 1992:183).

Although there is a lack of consensus on what Impressionism means in literature and even in art, the common denominator between different views seems to be the relationship between or the point where impressions of the outside world or external objects, and their influence on the psyche or feelings of the internal self of the subject observer, meet.

Although Impressionism is a literary movement in its own right, it is often regarded as a trend within the Modernist movement.

3.2.4. Modernism

There is much debate about and divergent views on when the movement of Modernism commenced. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane (1976) are of the opinion that Modernism spanned from 1870 to 1930, whilst Fokkema (1984:13) expresses his difference of opinion from Bradbury and McFarlane and regards Modernism as "a forceful code in literary history in or about 1910". In his acknowledgment of the indeterminable nature of Modernism, Kershner (1997:31) simply chooses the year 1900 as a "comfortable" dividing line of the modern break, which is strengthened by Graham

(1996:203) who takes Modernism to mean “certain fundamental and more or less shared characteristics of those writers, thinkers, and artists of the period 1900 to 1930”. Even if there were to be an exact span of Modernism, which I greatly doubt, the ‘when’ of that period is not as important as the ‘what’ of that period: What was Modernism about?

Bradbury and McFarlane (1976:23) contend that the term Modernism has already been used to cover a wide variety of divergent movements such as Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Expressionism, Futurism, Symbolism, Cubism, Imagism, Vorticism, Dadaism, and Surrealism. Modernist works, in a nutshell, bear witness to a consciousness of the complexity of things, the refusal to impose an order on reality that it does not possess, the fragmentary description of inner experience in opposition to Realism’s description of outer instances and objects, as well as the consciousness of the inability of language to express the complexity of reality (Liebenberg, 1992:317). The characteristics of modernism are, in my opinion, exactly those characteristics that differentiate and set it apart from realism namely a new perspective on the complexities of life and sensory experience which cannot be captured or give a reliable imitation of those complexities.

Modernism begins with the move away from a belief in a world of ideas or substances which may be objectively known in themselves, to the apprehension of a world which can be truly known and experienced only through individual consciousness (Hawthorn, 2000:211). Following Albert Einstein’s (1879-1955) theory of relativity, reality is relative in that an object is not fixed, for it changes with the perspective of each individual that lays eyes, or ears or fingers or any other sense for that matter, on it. I believe that the (inter)relationship between the self in here (subject), and the world out there (object), is paradoxically an intimate and distant one. It is intimate in that every individual has a unique (inter)relationship with the object that it alters in a specific and unique way, and it is distant in that the subject regards the object as something apart from itself, as a gulf that has to be crossed. This theory is also applicable to impressionism.

Modernists realised that nothing is certain and that individual awareness influences one's observation or perception of an object. Modernists' interpretation of the world, which was much more provisional and fragmentary, was in opposition to Realists' celebration of certainty. Belief in definite explanations about the world were replaced by scepticism and distrust; dogmatism by hypotheses. Modernists were rather intrigued by the numerous ways in which knowledge of the world was communicated through the use of words (Fokkema and Ibsch, 1984:11).

Another salient characteristic of Modernism that Fokkema and Ibsch (1984:31) point out is that of detachment. The death and destruction brought about by World War I (1914-1918) destroyed the belief in the possibility of peaceful progress in which all civilised nations could share. As a result, Modernists wanted to detach themselves and their texts from nationalism, culture, etc. They wanted to distance themselves from labels that might cause ethnocentrism or any divide amongst people. The artwork itself had to be able to stand on its own, in its own right, and was regarded uppermost.

Modernists' sense of detachment of own nation and fatherland in order to keep the peace was admirable, but their elitist nature seemed to contradict the essence on which detachment was based. Postmodernists, however, bridged the divide between the elite and the ordinary, as will become clear in the discussion of Postmodernism.

3.2.5. Postmodernism

Modernism is regarded by some as a reaction against Realism, whilst there is still much debate over whether Postmodernism, in turn, is a reaction against Modernism or a renewed continuation thereof. The term "postmodernism" was used in the 1930s (Barry, 1995:86), whilst the term only entered Anglo-American critical discourse in the 1950s, and only in a significant way in the 1960s (Hawthorn, 2000:215). But its current sense and vogue can be said to have begun with Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Barry, 1995:86; Hawthorn, 2000:216).

The traits that Postmodernism, Symbolism and Impressionism share are, in my opinion, a liberating consciousness of the untrustworthy nature of language, a renewed consciousness of form, an emphasis on technique and experimentation, and an acute awareness of the subjectivity of individual perspective. Establishing the link between Modernism and Postmodernism is harder, though. Hawthorn (2000:211) admits it is not easy to define Modernism and Postmodernism independently because the boundaries between the two terms vary according to different usages.

In Hawthorn's (2000:211-219) discussion of the terms modernism and postmodernism, he states that both terms reach beyond national-cultural and generic boundaries that describe artistic and cultural artifacts and attitudes of predominantly the twentieth century which possess certain family resemblances. Modernism begins with the move away from a belief in a world of ideas or substances which may be objectively known in themselves, to the apprehension of a world which can be truly known and experienced only through individual consciousness.

In his book *Postmodern Fiction*, Brian McHale (1987) argues that the modernist novel of the twentieth century is above all concerned with epistemological questions, in other words, questions which have to do with knowledge and interpretation, so that the plurality of techniques in the modernist novel is induced by anxieties about what can be truthfully known, understood and communicated about the world. The modernist novel is, therefore, primarily concerned with the limits and possibilities of individual consciousness, or the difficult relationships between separate subjectives. McHale (1987:10) further suggests that this kind of epistemological concern has given way to an ontological concern in the postmodernist epoch.

Postmodernism is a term that defies clear-cut definition as Jean-François Lyotard's definition of the term as an "incredulity towards metanarratives", paradoxically points out. References to this term are not restricted to art or culture, but can encompass a wide range of aspects of modern society. Although postmodernism defies definition,

Andrew Goodwin (2001) succeeds in summing up what I find to be the main characteristics of postmodernism: the refusal to acknowledge cultural boundaries; the abandonment of grand narrative structures; the borrowing of other texts; the loss of past, present and future in a potpourri of images; and the creation of a nihilistic amoral universe.

The predominance of epistemology during modernism gives way to the predominance of ontology in postmodernism. Where epistemology is the study of knowledge and understanding, ontology is the study of the nature of being and existence. The ontological character of the postmodernist novel is shown in its concern with the making of autonomous worlds. The questions asked in postmodernist fiction are: What is a world? What kinds of worlds are there, how are they constituted, and how do they differ? What happens when different kinds of world are placed in confrontation, or when boundaries between worlds are violated? (McHale, 1987:9).

I think that Peter Barry captures the two most important differences between modernism and postmodernism in his introductory book *Beginning Theory*. Firstly, Barry (1995:84) contends that the modernist laments fragmentation and has a pessimistic sense of nostalgia for a time ruled by absolute laws, 'truth' and certainty, whilst the postmodernist celebrates fragmentation and finds it an "exhilarating, liberating phenomenon, symptomatic of our escape from the claustrophobic embrace of fixed systems of belief". Secondly, the modernist is repulsed by 'lower' forms of art such as popular culture and opts for an elitist and pure sense of art, whilst the postmodernist rejects the distinction between 'high' and 'popular' art which is so important in modernism, and celebrates "excess, gaudiness, and 'in bad taste' mixtures of qualities". Modernists were hostile towards and suspicious of developments in contemporary science and technology as a result of a revulsion against the destruction technology brought about in the First World War, and as Hawthorn (2000:214) rightfully points out, a disgust at commercialism is one of the clearest ways of distinguishing modernism from much postmodernism.

Turning to cinema, Sarah Flanagan (2002) lists five features that will aid to identify a postmodern film: First is playfulness and self-reference. Postmodern film deliberately draws attention to itself and its modes of construction and does not pretend to be “real life”. Consequently, the viewer is distanced from the film and reminded not to take the film too seriously. The second feature Flanagan lists is generic blurring and intertextuality. Postmodern film blurs the boundaries between “pure” genres. Steven Spielberg’s *Minority Report*, for example, is a hybrid of science fiction, film noir, a love story and a murder mystery thriller. Intertextual references to other films, television genres, ideas and icons from popular culture, etc. also abound in postmodern film. The third feature is that popular and commercial media meet “high culture”. Boundaries between what was previously considered “high culture” (opera, classical drama and literature, fine art etc.) and those entertainment and commercial forms enjoyed by the so-called masses (pop music and video, advertising, mainstream film, computer games and most forms of television), are eroded, or played with. The fourth feature entails fragmentation and the death of representation. Fragments from other texts, genres and cultural influences also apply to representation. Media representations have come to dominate one’s effort to make sense of reality to such an extent that one has come to “read” the world, not through first-hand life experiences, but through media representations that ultimately refer to other media representations, or imitations that refer to other imitations – a copy is a copy of a copy of a copy... Uncertainty and the loss of context is the last feature Flanagan lists. Postmodern filmmakers challenge traditional belief systems or notions of history, science, politics, and even truth and identity. Because of the other listed features, generic rules no longer apply and representations only refer to other representations, which sounds a lot like Derrida’s ultimate deferral. Postmodern films subvert their viewers’ traditional beliefs and roles, and leave them with a sense of uncertainty.

Now that the most important differences between modernism and postmodernism have been discussed, it is time to focus on the link between postmodernism and postcolonialism.

3.2.6. Postcolonialism

The advent of Postcolonialism differs from literary critic to literary critic and from country to country. Although the inspiration behind postcolonial theory are the theories and processes of decolonisation of the 1950s and 1960s (Quayson, 2005:96), the term “postcolonial” only emerged in the 1980s (Larsen, 2005:41), while Barry (1995:191) is of the opinion that postcolonial criticism emerged as distinct category only in the 1990s. Although Gandhi (1998:43) marks the 1980s as the decade in which postcolonialism developed, she acknowledges that it goes even further back. Gandhi (1998:25) states that even though Edward Said’s publication of *Orientalism* in 1978 is “commonly regarded as the principal catalyst and reference point of postcolonial theory, insufficient attention is given to the fact that this ur-text (and its followers) evolved within a distinctly poststructuralist climate, dominated in the Anglo-American academy by the figures of Foucault and Derrida” and it therefore draws on a variety of Foucauldian paradigms. Even though the decolonising phase was the period primarily in the 1970s, it began in the 1950s.

Even though one can then argue that technically, *Heart of Darkness* and *Na die Geliefde Land* were not written in a postcolonial era, one can argue that they at least anticipated postcolonialism in that they display several postcolonial characteristics. It might not be all that unjust, then, to call these texts postcolonial in a sense, or rather discuss the ways in which they engage in conversation with the postcolonial. It is also important to make clear that Postcolonialism is not a period like Realism or a movement like Modernism, but rather a critical paradigm of looking at literature and culture.

Quayson (2005:93) ventures a possible working definition for the highly eclectic and difficult to define the term *postcolonialism*: “...it involves a studied engagement with the experience of colonialism and its past and present effects, both at the local level of ex-colonial societies, as well as at the level of more general global developments thought to be the after-effects of empire.” It furthermore often involves the discussion of slavery, migration, suppression and resistance, difference, race, gender, place, etc.

Barry (1995:198) sums up postcolonial criticism in six characteristics of which only four will be listed here which are relevant to this study: 1. An awareness of representations of the non-European as exotic or immoral "Other". 2. Seeing that language is tainted with binary oppositions of which one is always regarded as superior to the other, language is tainted with this power struggle and distorted perspective or view of reality. Language itself then, is a second area of concern in postcolonial criticism. 3. The emphasis on identity as doubled, or hybrid, or unstable is a third characteristic of the postcolonial approach. 4. Cross-cultural interactions are emphasised in postcolonial criticism. The notion of the double, or divided, or fluid identity is very strong in postcolonial criticism.

Van der Merwe and Viljoen (1998:169) discuss the notion of the divided identity within a postcolonial framework as binary opposites: The western "self" is placed in opposition to the exotic/barbaric "other". The other is often represented in a distorted and humiliating fashion. The definition of the "other" is in actuality also a definition of the "self": The ignorant colonial subject is set against the imperial self, and in the process negative aspects of the self is projected on to the "other". Consequently a system of oppositions arise: white/black, good/bad, superior/inferior, civilised/uncivilised or barbaric, rational/sensual etc.

Edward Said, in his seminal book *Orientalism* (1978), views Orientalism as a particular and long-standing way of identifying the East as "Other" and inferior to the West. The East becomes the repository or projection of those aspects of themselves which Westerners do not choose to acknowledge (cruelty, sensuality, decadence, laziness, etc.). The "other" tends to be seen as homogenous, dehumanised, anonymous, faceless masses rather than individuals, their actions determined by instinctive emotions (lust, terror, fury, etc.) rather than by conscious choices or decisions (Barry, 1995:192).

Louise Viljoen (1998:73) discusses the ambiguous or hybrid nature of the Afrikaans language and Afrikaans literature with regard to postcolonialism: White Afrikaans

speaking South Africans have been both *colonised* as well as *colonisers* in the course of history; Afrikaans is simultaneously the product of both Dutch colonisation as well a hybrid that developed in Africa out of Dutch and other influences; Afrikaner nationalists regard Afrikaans as the language which provided them with a specific identity and right to existence, whilst more than half of Afrikaans mother tongue speakers are coloured people who have been excluded by African nationalism; thus Afrikaans is regarded as the language of the white oppressor, whilst also being the language in which the oppressed registered their resistance to oppression. Afrikaans literature has been both a supporter of Afrikaner nationalism and the carrier of resistance against the power of nationalism.

Bertens (1997:3) declares that even though postcolonial theorists have almost unanimously construed that postcolonial literature should under no condition be confused or equated with postmodern literature, there are "excellent arguments for placing much of postcolonial literature in a postmodern framework". Let us now explore some of these resemblances.

The term Postcolonialism can be used in two different contexts; it can either be used in a neutral descriptive sense to refer to literature emanating from or dealing with the peoples and cultures of lands which have emerged from colonial rule, or it can be used to imply a body of theory or an attitude towards that which is studied (Hawthorn, 2000:269).

Van der Merwe and Viljoen (1998:167) explain the *post-* in postcolonialism to signify that this type of writing and theorising follows on the heels of a colonial period. It rejects and is critical of colonialism and its malpractices, but is, at the same time, a continuation thereof. Colonialism causes an interpenetration and diffusion of cultures which continues long after liberation and independence has been attained. The *post-* in postcolonialism, therefore, indicates the continuation and interspersion of cultures. Van der Merwe and Viljoen (1998:169) go on to say that the confusion over identity is central in postcolonialism. The colonial subject has projected all of his/her own negative traits

onto the native 'object', developing an oppressive, marginalising representation of natives that consists of binary oppositions such as self/other, white/black, good/bad, superior/inferior, civilised/barbaric, rational/sensual. The heritage of colonial supremacists is therefore accepted and rejected or rewritten simultaneously.

The European colonising power has devalued the past of the nation it has infiltrated, occupied and dominated, so much so, that children, both black and white, will have been taught to see history, culture and progress as beginning with the arrival of the Europeans. "If the first step towards a postcolonial perspective is to reclaim one's own past, then the second is to begin to erode the colonialist ideology by which that past had been devalued" (Barry, 1995:192). One method of reclaiming the past is through writing, in actuality, rewriting the past.

In the introduction to his book, *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said (1994:xii) argues that cultural forms, like the novel, were immensely important in the formation of imperial attitudes, references and experiences. In other words, literature played a role in strengthening and perpetuating imperialist beliefs, attitudes and experiences and in asserting colonisers' identity and the existence of their own history. Said (1994:xiii) goes on to contend that nations themselves *are* narrations. The power to narrate or block other narratives from forming and emerging is very important to culture and imperialism. The postcolonialist narratives that emerge nowadays must therefore be regarded as narratives of "emancipation" and "enlightenment" which mobilise people in the colonial world to liberate themselves from imperial subjection.

And it is exactly this that postmodernism and postcolonialism alike, promulgate: that there is not only one History, as perpetuated by white imperialist supremacists, but a multitude of histories. It is a fact that human perception cannot be detached from perceptual limitations, absolutisms, ideologies, cultural frameworks and preconceived notions or biases. Therefore, there is not merely one absolute "reality" of history as object, but merely observations, versions and interpretations thereof.

The central crisis in language that emerged during Modernism and which is still of importance in Postmodernism is: How can words be stable if they signify an unstable universe? Words are already removed from reality seeing that they are merely arbitrary signifiers as Sheppard (1991) suggests in his article entitled "The Crisis in Language", and reality (if indeed such a thing actually exists) is unstable and indeterminable seeing that it changes with the perspective of the perceiver (following Albert Einstein's theory of relativity). The first trait that both postmodernism and postcolonialism share is thus their "incredulity towards metanarratives", dethroning oppressive one-sided versions of (white imperialist) history.

The dawn of a new postmodern culture rejected what it saw as the elitist and repressive liberal humanist culture of the establishment and its institutions, and opposed eclecticism and radical democracy to establishment elitism and to its repressive tactics (Bertens, 1997:4). Seeing that postcolonial literature is aimed at "destabilising white hegemonic accounts of the past by reviewing history from the perspective of the previously marginalised" (Brink, 1997:475), it becomes evident that both Postmodernism and Postcolonialism strive to rewrite elitist literature for the intellectual minorities, and produce literature that is accessible to and aims to give a voice to the masses. That then, is the second trait that these two movements share.

Although I concede that the similarities between postmodernism and postcolonialism must not be exaggerated and that postcolonial literature is not necessarily postmodern in its strategies and techniques, it cannot be ignored that the dawn of postmodernist thinking created a fitting environment for postcolonial literature to arise. As a result, "History" is now being rewritten from the perspective of those 'histories' of the previously marginalised who have once been excluded from "History": blacks and coloureds, women and homosexuals. The emancipation of the oppressed is the goal of postcolonial literature, but one has to weigh Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's contention that the subaltern cannot really speak. Spivak (1995:25) disagrees with Foucault and Deleuze, who believe that the oppressed, if given the chance, and on the way to

solidarity through alliance politics, can speak and know their conditions. She feels that "the intellectual is complicit in the persistent constitution of Other as Self's shadow" (Spivak, 1995:24). Because the postcolonial intellectuals are ideologically programmed to perpetuate the hierarchies that dominated the oppressed in the past, such as male versus female, or white versus black, upper class versus lower class, they cannot entirely escape their way of thinking. Therefore, the notion of what the work *cannot* say becomes integral (Spivak, 1995:28). Spivak's ideas will be explained further in Chapter Four. Guimond and Maynard (2001:322) reminds one that

imperialism seeks to silence contending viewpoints, or to transmute them into mere dialects of itself, by proclaiming itself the "voice" of civilization, order, racial superiority, and/or material progress whereas its colonized subjects are supposedly barbaric, stagnant, or disorderly and therefore inferior.

From the passage quoted above, it is evident that Bakhtin's concept of polyphony can link up with postcolonial criticism and that these two literary frameworks can both be applied to *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*. I furthermore believe that polyphony is evident in *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*, although it is a polyphony with a twist; there is an ironic inversion of power in that the white Afrikaner's centripetal political force has given way to centrifugal forces; the white Afrikaner is stripped of his/her previous position as dominant, superior centre.

Not only can many of Bakhtin's concepts be linked to postcolonial concepts, but also to some postmodern features, listed by Hassan (1987:18): irony and carnivalisation. The postmodern rejection of an autonomous poem, self, or culture results in a preference for irony, parody, generic hybridisation and eclecticism. These postmodern literary terms link up with Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogics in that postmodernism has reacted in innumerable ways against the "autonomous, heroic, individual creative artist" perceived to "be central to the modernist ethos" (Cheetham, 1997:169). Dialogics thus insists on multiple "voices" making up part of a text or an artwork and rages against one superior, autonomous "voice" or artwork.

Linda Hutcheon (as quoted by Broich, 1997:253) points out that the intention of postmodernist writers is often “to expose dominant discourses, literary conventions and genres as bourgeois, as logocentric, as male-dominated etc.” and that Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism, from which the postmodernist concept of intertextuality has been derived, has a similar function.

The concept of postcolonialism has been discussed and it can also be linked to the apocalyptic. Sometimes apocalypse is used in literature as a retribution for past injustices committed against the previously oppressed and marginalised as Brink (1997:488) declares, linking apocalyptic literature to postcolonial literature.

3.2.7. The Apocalyptic

Before a comparison is made of the general traits that apocalyptic literature share, it is firstly important to state that apocalyptic literature is by no means a period or movement, but rather a genre within literature.

In his book *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*, Northrop Frye (1982:135) defines *apocalypsis* as the Greek word for revelation which “has the metaphorical sense of uncovering or taking a lid off, and similarly the word for truth, *aletheia*, begins with a negative particle which suggests that truth was originally thought of as also a kind of unveiling, a removal of the curtains of forgetfulness in the mind”. A term that one also has to be aware of when dealing with apocalyptic literature, is that of *eschatology*, which, as defined by Just (2004), has to do with any teaching about the “end” times and/or the future world beyond the end of normal time.

The idea of apocalypse, shaped by Judaism from which Christianity emerged, is hard to define. Nel and Human (2002:1058) contend that since 1980 researchers have come to agree that the apocalyptic cannot be ascribed to one dominant forefather. The origin has to be sought in a complex of factors and the researcher cannot find a description of

the factors anywhere else than the apocalypse itself. The following characteristics do, however, seem to recur in apocalyptic literature:

Meeks (2000:462) admits that a strict definition of apocalyptic discourse has proven notoriously difficult, and therefore resorts to emphasising three important characteristics of apocalyptic speech: it is revelatory, interpretative and dualistic. *Revelatory* is the word given to the genre by modern scholars and was taken by the incipit of the first word of the Bible book John of Patmos. Apocalypse presents itself as a medium of transcendence and lays claim to a form of knowledge not accessible to ordinary ways of knowing. Apocalyptic discourse is *interpretative* in that it recycles earlier revelatory literature and appropriates and transforms its images and the traditional ways of reading them. It further narrates interpretation often through allegory or dreams. The power and danger of apocalyptic literature, for Meeks (2000:462), lie in the fact that it lives on because it is pregnant with an almost infinite number of possible rereadings. Meeks (2000:463) furthermore contends that apocalyptic discourse is *dualistic* temporally, spatially and socially: “it divides this world from the world to come, earth from heaven, and us from them – dwellers in heaven from dwellers on earth, children of light from children of darkness”.

According to Nel (2002:459), apocalyptic literature pretends to be godly revelations in the form of dreams or visions. The dreams and visions are interpreted by an angel. Godly secrets about the future, the destination of humankind and the end of the earth are revealed through mysterious language. These descriptions are meant to comfort the oppressed and suffering. Meeks (2000:461) argues that there is some tension between the words “apocalyptic” and “goodness”; the word “apocalyptic” is often synonymous with “megadisaster” in movie titles, whilst in scholarship the word also seems more nearly the antithesis of “moral”. Nel (2002:459) also discusses the dualistic and pessimistic view apocalyptics have of the world: the world is evil and terminally sick and only after God has defeated Satan and his demons, will the old world be destroyed and will a new heavenly “world” emerge. The righteous will live whilst the godless will be judged.

It is evident that the apocalyptic originates from a radical break with and reinterpretation of the present and past in the light of a new future (Nel, 2002:1058). Apocalypticism is the result of a combination of factors: the eschatological interests and godly inspiration of classical prophecy, the *mantic wisdom* of the seer, the passion to unravel the truth of Scripture that is given through imagery laden with a hidden and mysterious meaning, as well as the need for certainty in an uncertain time (Nel, 2002:1071).

From the survey of literature above, it can be deduced that apocalypse always has to do with the eschatology or end of times as humankind knows it, envisaged by prophets, hidden within mysterious imagery, symbols, myths or writing, and a break with the past of which sense can only be made in hindsight from the perspective of a new future.

3.3. Stylistic hybridity

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad is generally accepted to be a modernist novella (Graham, 1996:211; Kershner, 1997:54). Liebenberg (1992:317-320) declares that even though Modernism is a term that is used in the discussion of twentieth century literature, it is (as in the case of Postmodernism) hard to pin-point or distill and reduce into a clean-cut definition. In general it refers to any movement that stood for renewal in literature during the first decades of the twentieth century in Western Europe and North America. In their book, *Modernism 1870-1930*, Bradbury and McFarlane (1976) show that the term has already been used to refer to divergent movements, or period codes as Fokkema calls them, such as Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Expressionism, Futurism, Symbolism, Cubism, Imagism, Vorticism, Dadaism and Surrealism.

At a time when literature was characterised by a multiplicity of –isms, Modernism was thus only one of the movements, or often referred to as the umbrella term under which the other divergent movements or period codes such as Symbolism, Impressionism etc. reside. Each artistic movement not only differs in time or length of period, but also emphasises different stylistic techniques which make it distinguishable from the rest.

Some of the distinguishing stylistic characteristics of modernism, as Liebenberg (1992:317) rightly states, in opposition to the stylistic characteristics of realism, are: modernist works bear witness of a consciousness of the complexity of things, the refusal to impose an order on reality which it does not possess, the fragmentary description of inner experience in opposition to realism's description of outer instances and objects, as well as the consciousness of the inability of language to express the complexity of reality.

Virginia Woolf believed the conventions of Realism to be an injustice to the complexity of human experience. She propagated: "let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness" (Woolf, 1972:89) and became famous for the stream-of-consciousness-technique. Conrad also makes use of the stream-of-consciousness-technique in *Heart of Darkness*, especially in the episode where Marlow and his shipmates are being shot at. Marlow first mistakes the little arrows for sticks, and only realises after a period of delayed decoding and reading the situation around him, that: "Arrows, by Jove! We were being shot at!" (Conrad, 1973:64).

The divergent interpretative possibilities of the novella serve to suggest that *Heart of Darkness* is not a pure modernist text, but a hybrid modernist text. Ian Watt categorises *Heart of Darkness* as both an impressionistic and symbolist text (Watt, 1979:311-336), whilst J.H. Miller (1989) interprets *Heart of Darkness* as an apocalyptic text. The word apocalypse means "unveiling" in Greek, and Miller (2002:25) contends that *Heart of Darkness* is definitely a failed apocalypse – then again all apocalypses fail to lift the last veil.

A typical symbolist stylistic characteristic is the "poet's" isolation – he/she feels an exile from his fatherland. The "poet" has a fine sensibility and there is an irreconcilable difference between the "poet" and his/her society. The "poet's" continual longing for something else, for certainty and stability amidst a world of change, links up with the

idea of the apocalypse – a longing that is never fulfilled, the promise of a revelation which is never revealed. Miller (2002:32) states that the structure of *Heart of Darkness* is the structure of the “endlessly deferred promise”. Throughout the novella Marlow desires to see Kurtz for who and what he truly is, yet even after his death Kurtz remains inscrutable, an enigma which Marlow merely remembers as the “appalling face of a glimpsed truth” (Conrad, 1973:101).

Although *Na die Geliefde Land* appears to be a realist text on the surface, there is a deeper level of meaning underneath to suggest that it might be interpreted as a symbolist text. The symbolic interplay of light and darkness, the irreconcilable difference between the protagonist George and the racist society he finds himself in as well as George’s continual longing for something else, for certainty and stability amidst a world of change – which links up with the idea of the apocalypse in that the longing is never fulfilled – are but a few examples to suggest that it might be interpreted as a symbolist text.

The literary classification of Karel Schoeman’s *Na die Geliefde Land* is also open to debate. André Brink describes *Na die Geliefde Land* (1972; *Promised Land*, 1979) as a “focus on apocalypse as a retribution for past injustices visited specifically on Afrikaners” (Brink, 1997:488). The apocalyptic idea of the deferred promise is also evident in *Na die Geliefde Land*. After returning to a South Africa where an isolated group of farmers have become powerless and status-less, George finds himself caught up in this political turmoil and longs for some certainty and stability. Yet at the end of the novel, after an attempt to overthrow the government has failed, stability is not restored; the white Afrikaners remain powerless and George returns to London which he now regards as *home*: “Vanaand vertrek die vliegtuig; môreoggend sal hy by die huis wees” (“The plane left that evening; tomorrow morning he’d be home”) (Schoeman, 1972a:152, Schoeman, 1972b:205).

Both literary texts have apocalyptic characteristics and deal with ethnic or national eschatology – the end of a nation or an empire – and “such is one vision of the negative

pole of apocalypse in which the typological fulfillment of history is just another name for the endless series of acts of imperialism” (Robson, 1995:62).

Na die Geliefde Land, like *Heart of Darkness*, is a stylistically hybrid text, as will become evident in the discussions and analyses of the texts to follow under 3.4 and 3.5. These stylistically hybrid texts which defy categorisation are characteristic of one of the defining elements of postmodernism. But how does postmodernism link up with modernism and is the postmodern at all applicable to these two texts?

Even though *Heart of Darkness* and *Na die Geliefde Land* can certainly not be labeled postmodern in style, the texts share two defining postmodern elements: they are stylistically hybrid and defy categorisation, and secondly they explore the confrontation between two different worlds, that of the East and that of the West.

In his book *Postmodern Fiction*, Brian McHale (1977) argues that the modernist novel of the twentieth century is above all concerned with epistemological questions, in other words questions which have to do with knowledge and interpretation, so that the plurality of techniques in the modernist novel is induced by anxieties about what can be truthfully known, understood and communicated about the world. Modernist literature is therefore primarily concerned with the limits and possibilities of individual consciousness, or the difficult relationships between separate subjectives. McHale (1977:10) further suggests that this kind of epistemological concern has given way to an ontological concern in the postmodernist epoch.

Whereas epistemology is the study of knowledge and understanding, ontology is the study of the nature of being and existence. The ontological character of modernist and postmodernist literature is shown in its concern with the making of autonomous worlds. The questions asked in modernist or postmodernist literature are: What is a world? What kinds of worlds are there, how are they constituted, and how do they differ? What happens when different kinds of worlds are placed in confrontation, or when boundaries between worlds are violated?

Mark Cheetham (1997:167) distills his reading and interpretation of Jean-François Lyotard and John McGowan's writings on postmodernism into the following definition: "Postmodernism is known for its distrust of generalisations, for its disbelief in the existence or even the desirability of an Archimedean point, for its attempts to short-circuit or circumvent what Lyotard famously calls the grand narratives of Western culture." André Brink (1997:483) declares that the postmodernist turn in Afrikaans and English South African literature has been marked by "the coincidence of the shift from modernism (and in some instances *directly from realism*) to postmodernism with the shift from colonialism to postcolonialism". Bertens (1997:3) declares that although postcolonial theorists have practically unanimously stated that what they regard to be *postcolonial literature* should not be "confused" or "equated" with postmodern literature, there are excellent arguments for placing much of postcolonial literature in a postmodern structure or framework. What are some of these arguments then?

Taking into account the four characteristics of postcolonial criticism listed by Barry (1995:198) which was discussed under 3.2.6, and my previous discussion on stylistically hybrid texts, two things are evident. Firstly, postcolonial works are postmodern in that the inability of critics to definitively categorise Conrad and Schoeman's texts is characteristic of the postmodernist notion of *pastiche*; the fusion of different genres so as not to favour one metanarrative over another. In this, postcolonial literature is postmodern; it decentres the dominance of literature and literary movements which were previously dominated by the "white male elite" as Bertens (1997:13) labels them. With the liberation of South African minorities, previously oppressed because of race, class or gender, postmodern literature has been emancipated from dominant social, religious, racial or gender structures. Not only does postmodern literature allow minorities to "destabilise white hegemonic accounts of the past by reviewing history from the perspective of the previously marginalised" as Brink (1997:485) states, it also erodes the distance between the elitist high culture of Modernism and low or popular culture. Modernism, and even postmodernism in its earlier stages, was almost completely dominated by writers who were white and male and who originated to a disproportionate

amount from North America (Bertens, 1997:6). In addition, modernist literature was highly intellectual and obscure and its difficulty made it accessible to only a small literary elite.

Heart of Darkness and *Na die Geliefde Land* can both be placed within a postcolonial framework. Even though postcolonial criticism only emerged as a distinct category in the 1990's (Barry, 1995:191), I believe that these two texts anticipated postcolonialism. The evidence, taken from the texts, to support this statement will be discussed later on under 3.4. and 3.5 of this chapter as well as in Chapters Four and Five.

To sum up so far, *Heart of Darkness*, which is generally regarded as a modernist text, is actually a stylistically hybrid text which allows for symbolist, impressionistic or apocalyptic readings. *Na die Geliefde Land* is also a stylistically hybrid text which comprises realistic (against which modernism rebels), symbolist (which resides under the umbrella term of modernism) and predominantly apocalyptic characteristics. I do believe, however, that both texts anticipate postcolonialism.

The stylistic hybridity of the literary texts lends itself to specific kinds of filmic adaptations. Seeing that the postmodernist era's "incredulity towards metanarratives" fuels a movement which feeds on the interdisciplinary and that postmodernists, as Fokkema (1997:35) states, do not fear the technological reproduction of their work and ideas in film and the media in that they regard cultural heterogeneity to be a principle that opens up unthought-of opportunities, it is not unexpected to find that both literary texts have been transposed to film.

What is evident is that the respective texts and films were published or released years apart: *Heart of Darkness* was published in 1899 and thus qualifies as a modernist text, whilst *Na die Geliefde Land* was published in 1972, right before the advent of postmodernism in its current sense and vogue (Barry, 1995:86) in the 1980s in an apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, *Apocalypse Now* appeared in 1979, the adaptation of a modernist text right before the advent of postmodernism, whilst

Promised Land appeared in a postmodern, post-apartheid, postcolonial South Africa in 2002. Seeing that we now live in a global, postmodern era where technological advances and the mass media leave one open to be influenced by other cultures, the films rewrite the texts at a later period in history and thus they rewrite the past from a specific perspective.

Apocalypse Now is inspired by *Heart of Darkness*, even though it has been altered significantly (such as placing it within the context of the Vietnam War) and is pulled together by the leitmotif of Kurtz and what he stands for. *Promised Land*, the filmic version of *Na die Geliefde Land*, also deviates from the novel it is based on, but is truer to the original novel in its interpretation than that of *Apocalypse Now*.

Like the original texts, these two films cannot easily be categorised within a certain stylistic framework and it is only fitting that the stylistically hybrid literary texts be transposed into filmic texts which are stylistically hybrid themselves. Do the films indeed have the same stylistically hybrid nature as the literary texts that they are based on? Yes, indeed. This is best illustrated by a short discussion of how the salient characteristics of different periods, movements and trends are intermingled within the literary and filmic texts.

3.4. The intermingling of artistic movements in *Heart of Darkness*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*

3.4.1. *Heart of Darkness*

Although Joseph Conrad is not regarded as a 'pure' modernist, his work is acknowledged as substantially modernist in nature (Watts, 1993:44; Kershner, 1997:38; Du Plooy, 1995:350). Graham (1996:204-205) admits that Conrad's work might be seen to continue the nineteenth-century realist tradition entertaining nineteenth-century images of heroism, personal responsibility and moral action, yet he believes that Conrad is "a Modernist in his capacity to tear away the surface of things and to show certain of

his characters hypnotised and fatally becalmed by the falling-away of physical appearances". Appearances are indeed deceiving, and therefore, if one does not look beyond the words on the pages written by Conrad, one might easily be tempted to reduce his work to single-minded ideological writing.

Returning to the novella as an example of modernism, Graham (1996:205) goes on to state that Conrad's novels and tales contain vestigial images or even parodies of their nineteenth-century forerunners. The prevailing pessimistic mood of *Heart of Darkness* is typical of Modernist scepticism, the shifting presentation of Kurtz is also specific of the modern hero: "diabolic in the concentration of this deviant will and his intellectual gaze, pursuing forbidden experience with the inverted dedication of a questing knight-at-arms, contemptuous of others and of himself, radical and unsatisfied, without outer convention or inner core, the lonely alien in our midst" (Graham, 1996:210-211).

The text also depicts a Modernist consciousness of the inability of language to express the complexity of reality. Wolfreys (1998:172) gives a whole list of words that are repeated time and again in *Heart of Darkness*. Some of these words are "interminable", "immensity", "imperceptible", "immutability", "inscrutable", etc. The repetition of these types of words constitutes the idea of that which is infinite or boundless, an idea that is also characteristically symbolist. Most words speak of that which cannot be experienced first-hand, or which cannot be expressed directly, something that cannot be put into words. Each word promises to signify the next in an endless cycle without end or centre, making the text complex, obscure and unfathomable.

Symbolism is vague, ambiguous and opaque by definition (Viljoen, 1995:269). Marlow's quest to get a grip on Kurtz's persona is symbolist in the sense that Kurtz, he later learns, cannot be penetrated or fathomed. After Kurtz has died, while speaking to an organist who called himself Kurtz's cousin, Marlow recaptures the conversation that took place between them:

Incidentally he gave me to understand that Kurtz had been essentially a great musician. "There was the making of an immense success," said the man,

who was an organist, I believe, with lank grey hair flowing over a greasy coat-collar. I had no reason to doubt his statement; and to this day I am unable to say what was Kurtz's profession, whether he ever had any – which was the greatest of his talents. I had taken him for a painter who wrote for the papers, or else for a journalist who could paint – *but even the cousin (who took snuff during the interview) could not tell me what he had been – exactly* (Conrad, 1973:103, my italics).

Even though Conrad had nothing overtly good to say about the Symbolists, several critics acknowledge the symbolist nature, be it deliberately or unknowingly, in his work (Graham, 1996:208; Kershner, 1997:48; Watt, 1979:320). The incidences of interplay of light and darkness that permeate the novella, which are too many to reduce to a few examples, can be interpreted as symbolic of the balance between good and evil. Yet, one must be cautious to not restrict symbols to one, definite meaning, for the possibilities of interpretations are boundless.

Another cardinal characteristic of the symbolist writer is his isolation – an exile from his fatherland (Viljoen, 1995:283). In his journey into the heart of the Congo, Marlow finds himself alien to the natives, faced with an unbridgeable cultural gap, whilst also admitting of his own race that “the conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much” (Conrad, 1973:10). Although Marlow lacks the prophetic vision characteristic of symbolism, he does have a fine sensibility of the tragic predicament of words in the form of writing or speech:

‘...No, it is impossible; it is impossible to convey the life-sensation of any given epoch of one's existence – that which makes its truth, its meaning – its subtle and penetrating essence. It is impossible. We live, as we dream – alone...’ (Conrad, 1973:39).

The Impressionist movement also played a decisive role in the transition in art from trying to portray what all men know, to trying to portray what the individual actually sees (Watt, 1979:313). Mist or haze is a very persistent image in *Heart of Darkness*, as Watt (1979:312) rightly points out, and in the novella much of what Marlow observes is obscured by his representation of the atmospheric conditions through which they were

observed and/or his point of view which is infiltrated by bias, preconceived ideas and a closed-off cultural framework. Conrad often makes use of the literary technique of what Watt (1979:319) calls delayed decoding, to signify the forward temporal progression of the mind as it receives messages from the outside world with the much slower reflexive process of making out their meaning.

Take as example the well-known and much discussed passage from *Heart of Darkness* where Marlow is bombarded with sensory impressions of little sticks flying about the ship they are sailing on whilst on the river. At first Marlow describes what he sees as little sticks; both Marlow and the reader are not sure what is actually happening. Only after Marlow's sensory impressions have been interpreted, do he and the reader realise that the little sticks are in fact arrows and that his boat is being attacked by men on the river banks: "Arrows, by Jove! We were being shot at" (Conrad, 1973:64).

The mist or haze is also symbolic of Marlow's inability to see things for what they really are. His viewpoint is tainted with preconceived ideas, biases and judgments; he therefore fails to see the natives as human beings and reduces them to animal-like representations: "While I stood horror-struck, one of these creatures rose to his hands and knees, and went off on all-fours towards the river to drink" (Conrad, 1973:25). Descriptions like these have instigated much debate on whether *Heart of Darkness* is a racist text (see Said, 1994; and Achebe, 2000). Are they over-sensitive due to their disposition, or am I merely ignorant due to my position? For I suspect that Conrad used Marlow as a vehicle for exposing the injustices of imperialism based on attitudes of arrogant ethnocentrism. Is it possible that Conrad anticipated postcolonialism? This question will be discussed later on.

Lastly, *Heart of Darkness* seems to lean towards the apocalyptic: The symbolist artist's continual longing for something else, for certainty and stability amidst a world of change, can link up to the idea of the apocalypse – a longing that is never fulfilled, the promise of a revelation which is never revealed. J.H. Miller (2002:25) contends that if one were to name the genre to which *Heart of Darkness* belongs, the answer would be that it is a

failed apocalypse, or since, according to him all apocalypses ultimately fail to lift the last veil, it is a member of the genre of apocalypse.

Taking into account that *Heart of Darkness* possesses modernist, realist, symbolist, impressionistic, postcolonial and apocalyptic characteristics, one is then left to ask: Is it at all postmodern? The short answer is no. *Heart of Darkness* is certainly not a postmodernist text, but what it shares with postmodernist texts is a celebration of impure versatility and hybridity; it seems to be a pastiche of different literary movements, characteristics and genres which defy clean-cut categorisation. Another trait it shares with postmodernism is intertextuality: even though it was never written with the intent to be intertextual, it is indeed echoed by other artworks and art-forms: T.S. Eliot has used the phrase "Mistah Kurtz – he dead" (Conrad, 1973:100) as epigraph in his anthology introducing the section "The Hollow Men" (Eliot, 1954:65), and the film *Apocalypse Now* has been based on the central theme and idea of *Heart of Darkness*.

3.4.2. *Apocalypse Now*

Kershner (1997:54) states that a good many modern writers have been described as using cinematic effects in their writing and Conrad is regarded as one of them. The word 'cinematic', according to Kershner (1997:53), refers to novels which are intensely visual and documentary, novels that dramatise more, offer more dialogue, rely less on synopsis and often make use of an ironic juxtaposition of scenes. *Heart of Darkness* fits Kershner's definition of the word 'cinematic', and because it lends itself to a filmic adaptation it is not surprising that *Apocalypse Now* is based on the novella.

The film is, however, a far cry from the original text it is (loosely) based on, seeing that it is set in the space and time of the Vietnam War. Although it doesn't focus on colonisation *per se*, it does deal with the common denominator of colonisation and war: power. Bertens (1997:6) states that, if representations do not represent the world, they must represent something else and in so doing they will inevitably be political, always

emerging within a time- and place-bound ideological framework. The focus, then, is on power. Representations do not only reflect power and power relations – they are vehicles of power and violence. This postmodernism, of which Bertens (1997:6) contends Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) to be an early influential example, "works to expose and undo hierarchies of power and advocates difference in order to let the countless victims of representations speak for themselves". It is in this regard that I believe *Apocalypse Now* to anticipate postcolonialism and postmodernism.

Hutcheon (1988:118) points out that, through the employment of parody and other destabilising techniques, postmodernism "establishes, differentiates, and then disperses stable narrative voices (and bodies) that use memory to make sense of the past"; *Apocalypse Now* definitely uses parody and irony, which will be discussed in Chapter Four, to alternatively recount a history predominantly portrayed from an American perspective. Said (1994:xix) believes that an anger pervades *Apocalypse Now*; it offers a profoundly unforgiving view of Western imperialist illusions where unscrupulous power-mad officers manipulate natives and well-intentioned Americans alike.

Apart from postcolonialist and postmodernist tendencies, *Apocalypse Now* also has apocalyptic and symbolist characteristics. Miller (1989:25) is of the opinion that *Apocalypse Now* was aptly named except for the word "now". Miller believes that an apocalypse is never now, that "it is always to come, a thing of the future, both infinitely distant and immediately imminent". Yet Just (2004) cautions that not every apocalypse is purely eschatological for it might also interpret past or present events, and not only the future. Is it perhaps possible that the title of the film was named with a deliberate paradoxical intent, seeing that paradox is a beloved topic and/or instrument of postmodernism? Or is it possible that Just is in the right and that *Apocalypse Now* is a reflection on past events and on the devastating effects of power-seeking action, an interpretation of past events as to caution against destructive actions that might mean the end of a nation or empire, or even worse, the entire world? I think the latter, for I believe Coppola wanted to warn his audience against the scale of destruction that another "Vietnam" could have on the world.

Apocalypse Now is, to my mind, too absurd, hyperbolic and off-beat to be regarded as realistic. It does, however, share many of the symbolist traits that Graham (1996:208) points out in *Heart of Darkness*: the insertion of dream-like experience, of hallucination (Willard's dream-like, hallucinatory experience of the war), the effects of sudden loss of practical will (Willard's pessimism and scepticism), the sense of the world's reality falling away (the absurd and carnivalesque surfing scene amidst death, war and destruction), the disorienting effects of the river's fog and the imminent encroachment of darkness (the absence of light in most scenes).

Apocalypse Now is filled with symbols and hidden truths which will be discussed in more detail later on in this dissertation. For now it is sufficient to say that *Apocalypse Now* is exemplary of Aestheticism or Decadence which prevailed the later years of nineteenth-century Symbolism. True to Decadence, *Apocalypse Now* is gruesomely violent and dark, filled with death and destruction, and portrays Kurtz who encapsulates everything that is negative as a "god" who is adored by his followers.

3.4.3. Na die Geliefde Land

Du Plooy (1990:91) regards the renewal introduced to Afrikaans literature by a generation of young Afrikaans writers called the 'Sestigters' ('Sixtiers') to be in many respects equivalent to the movement of Modernism overseas. Even though Brink (1997:484) contends that the Sestigters' revolt against Afrikaner hegemony through an iconoclast approach to dominant religious, moral, sexual, and literary taboos enables a postmodernist reading of their texts, he concedes that their narrative strategies were still largely informed by realistic and modern examples, as well as elitist, and therefore are rather modernist in nature.

Even though the complexities and stylistic experiments of the Sestigters are not evident in Karel Schoeman's work and he therefore cannot be construed as a Sestiger, it is also

true that many of his earlier novels are modernistic in the sense that central figures within the texts operate individualistically, and they include an emancipatory discarding of own family, land and nation (Jooste, 1999:545).

Schoeman's novel *oeuvre* can be divided into three main categories: firstly, the writing of realistic novels in the sixties which is situated within a South-African reality. Secondly, novels written in the seventies which are situated in foreign countries and recount events that take place there. Thirdly, novels that appear after these two phases which dig deep into the heart of Africa. Jooste (1999:548) places *Na die Geliefde Land* within the second category. Even though it is set in South Africa, it is seen through the eyes of a foreigner. Typical of his novels is narration that involves an anonymous narrator that does not take part in the story, but merely focalises what is observed through a main personage (Jooste, 1999:546). His earlier novels in which the personages display a vagueness, and an inability to validate themselves as people to be reckoned with, of which *Na die Geliefde Land* is an example, anticipate a postmodern conception of the fading of the narrative personage as fictive individual, as well as a reduction of the role to mere voice, which is evident in his later work (Jooste, 1999:549). The role of individual experience, in other words, is stressed to the point that the personages' voices become linguistic constructs that are used to establish the text.

Louise Viljoen (1998:84) uses 1994 as the deciding year for the emergence of postcolonialism in South African literature, however not before making one aware of the ambiguous nature of postcolonialism in the South African context. When did postcolonialism in Afrikaans South African literature commence? Is it 1994, the year of the first democratic election in South Africa, which ended white hegemonic supremacy? Or is it 1961 when South Africa became a republic free from British rule, even though it meant a continuation of colonial rule for people of colour?

Even though *Na die Geliefde Land* was published in 1972, long before the democratisation of South Africa in 1994, I believe that the text deals with issues that are central to postcolonialism: race, gender and cultural issues are addressed. The

protagonist, George Neethling, returns to South Africa after having migrated to Switzerland as a young boy. With his return he is faced with a group of Afrikaners who cannot accept things as they now stand. In an ironic inversion they are now the suppressed and plan a rebellion against the new oppressors. The text never specifies the isolated group as Afrikaners, but I believe one can infer from the text that they are Afrikaners. George is forced to face his feelings about "his people" he cannot identify with and increasingly feels himself alienated from his homeland.

It appears, however, that symbolist characteristics are predominant in this text. George is a foreigner who returns to a land, nation and culture he finds strange and is alienated from. He becomes an outsider who does not feel part of the society he now finds himself in, which is typical of symbolism. Jooste (1999:545) contends that some characteristics of aestheticism and decadence are to be found in Schoeman's work, and in *Na die Geliefde Land* particularly, an elitist anxiety of belonging to the unseeing and closed-minded masses, which leads to dandyism (an aversion and distancing of the uniformity and mediocrity of the masses, like George and Paultjie who want to distance themselves from the rest of the isolated community members, such as Gerhard and Johannes). Unlike the stereotypical outsider figure, Schoeman's main personage, in this case George, does possess the ability to rise above the suffering caused by his experiences, or travel further despite a feeling of pessimism and withdrawal (Jooste, 1999:547). George remains the constant traveller, searching for something more, wanting for something to happen, for a change in or an epiphany about the world. *Na die Geliefde Land* is exemplary of Transcendental Symbolism, which Viljoen (1995:281) defines as a longing for an ideal paradise. George longs for a lost fatherland and his inability to identify with this 'other' fatherland denies him salvation. George ultimately never finds what he has come to look for in his fatherland, and this longing that is never fulfilled can link up with J.H. Miller's idea of an apocalypse as deferred promise, a revelation which is never revealed.

3.4.4. *Promised Land*

Promised Land is a relatively new South African film (2002). The film has already been viewed by audiences at the Cannes Film Festival in France, the Toronto Film Festival in Canada and has even won the award for best script at the 15th international Tokio Film Festival. Reports on how the film was received are predominantly positive (Pretorius, 2002:9; Pretorius, 2002:19).

One of the producers of the film, Moonyeenn Lee, has exclaimed in several interviews that the film has yielded much interest. According to Lee, several people in Toronto said they felt that the film addresses current affairs, especially with the increase in right-wing activity in Europe and America, yet stays universal in that it could have taken place in any country (Pretorius, 2002:19). Van Rensburg (2002:14) states that it is a must-see film for every South African, especially Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, and says it cuts into the being of every generation. Paul Boekkooi (2003:28), however, differs in opinion. He feels that the film distorts the original novel to such an extent that Schoeman's intentions with the original text are ultimately lost. Although Boekkooi has some valid points with which I agree, I think it imprudent to totally discard the film. The reason(s) for this will become clearer as this dissertation progresses.

Promised Land is much more explicit than *Na die Geliefde Land*: the latter never reveals or openly says to what race those who have recently come into power belong. The novel is filled with mere subtle suggestions and insinuations. The film, on the other hand, has put the text within a postcolonial, post-apartheid South African framework where an inversion of power has taken place; whites are now subservient to a black hegemony. I agree with Jooste (1999:553) that *Na die Geliefde Land* can be read as a warning from a European perspective: after a revolution white Afrikaners can become exiles within their own land. But one has to be careful not to superimpose merely one possible interpretation onto the text, for the subtle suggestions and insinuations in *Na die Geliefde Land* open it up to multiple interpretations, and Schoeman's central focus might have been on power and power relations in general, rather than on apartheid specifically. This topic will be investigated in more depth later on in the study. For now suffice it to say that *Promised Land* displays a direct involvement with the political

problems of South Africa seeing that the functioning and the effect of apartheid and the ideology that informs it is criticised. The film, therefore, can be read within both a postcolonial and realistic framework.

The film can, furthermore, also be put within a symbolist framework: George is an outsider who cannot come to understand his surroundings or those people he is surrounded by, especially Gerhard; there are several objects in the film that serve a symbolic purpose open to multiple interpretations such as the AWB-signs, the chicken's foot George is forced to eat, etc. The novel is very subtle about death and gruesome details, whilst the film is dark, bloody and violent. George strives to understand the world around him, but fails, and therefore returns home to remain the constant traveller searching for truth or reconciliation.

George's longing for something else, for certainty about his own identity amidst a world of change – a longing for reconciliation which is never fulfilled and the promise of a revelation which is never revealed – also links up with the idea of apocalypse. Many will say that *Na die Geliefde Land* is apocalyptic for it projected a future that has come to be true: white power has been superseded by black power in a postcolonial, post-apartheid South Africa. If one is to agree with Just (2004) that not every apocalypse is purely eschatological, *Na die Geliefde Land* might be regarded as a prophetic prediction of ironic power inversion, whilst *Promised Land* might be regarded as the revelation and interpretation of this (now past) prediction.

Consisting of realist, postcolonial, symbolist and apocalyptic tendencies, *Promised Land* is a hybrid text which, as said earlier, is typical of postmodernism. The fact that George in the novel (Jooste, 1999:548) and George in the film have not yet figured out their own identity, is also postmodernist in that epistemological uncertainty (prevalent in modernism) leads to an ontological crisis (prevalent in postmodernism) and to questions such as: Who am I? Where do I belong? Why can't I identify with the 'Other'? etc.

3.5. Dialogue between movements in a single quoted passage from *Heart of Darkness*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*

To prove that all four texts under discussion are stylistically hybrid texts, I shall use the same passage or scene from the literary and filmic texts respectively, and make a very short analysis of each according to different characteristics of several or all of the literary movements, genres or trends that have been discussed. The analyses will not be in-depth and merely serve to show that the same passage or scene could as easily be analysed according to modernism or postcolonialism or symbolism etc. Different movements, genres or trends dialogise one another which prevents a monological reading of the texts.

3.5.1. *Heart of Darkness*

The following quoted passage is an excerpt from the first part of Conrad's novella. Marlow is telling the crew on board the *Nellie* about his trip to the Congo, and connects the Belgians in the Congo to the Romans in Britain. Lothe (2000:175) states that he intertextually links the text to Virgil's epic *Aeneid* (19BC) which also "involves not just the use but also the possible abuse of power" and thus establishes a connection between the "Roman empire 1,900 years earlier and modern European ones". The use and abuse of power seems to repeat itself cyclically throughout the history of the world:

'I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago – the other day... Light came out of this river since – you say Knights? Yes; but it is like a running blaze on a plain, like a flash of lightning in the clouds. We live in the flicker – may it last as long as the old earth keeps rolling! But darkness was here yesterday. Imagine the feelings of a commander of a fine – what d'ye call 'em? – trireme in the Mediterranean, ordered suddenly to the north; run overland across the Gauls in a hurry; put in charge of one of these craft the legionaries – a wonderful lot of handy men they must have been, too – used to build, apparently by the hundred, in a month or two, if we may believe what we read. Imagine him here – the very end of the world, a sea the colour of lead, a sky the colour of smoke, a kind of ship about as rigid as the concertina – and going up this river with stores, or orders, or what you like. Sand-banks, marshes, forests, savages, - precious little to eat fit for a civilized man, nothing but Thames water to drink. No Falernian wine here, no going ashore. Here and there a military camp lost in a wilderness, like a needle in a bundle of hay – cold, fog, tempests, disease, exile, and death – death skulking in the air, the water, in the bush. They must have been dying like flies here...' (Conrad, 1973:8-9).

The colonists have been sent on a mission to a strange country they do not understand, but try to make sense of. They become sick from strange water and food, and cannot adapt to the harsh landscape. This leads to epistemological frustration and existential isolation, so prominent during Modernism. Marlow's romantic ideals about Europe's "civilising mission" are starkly juxtaposed with the realities of colonisation and imperialism. Through the very naïve eyes of Marlow, Conrad criticises the ignorance and smugness of Europeans who are under the misconception that they carry a torch of enlightenment into a dark, uncivilised wilderness. Marlow describes the military camps as "lost in a wilderness, like a needle in a bundle of hay". This description invokes the minuteness of the camps when compared with the immensity of the uncultivated landscape and links up to the other words that permeate the text and constitute the modernist and symbolist idea of that which is infinite or boundless: "interminable", "immensity", "imperceptible", "immutability", "inscrutable", etc. The colonists, who have to adapt to the unforgiving landscape, are callously described as "flies" dying in the masses; not quite the romantic vision of colonisation Marlow initially has of their "civilising mission".

In the passage Marlow speaks of the Romans' first colonising conquest. Conrad drenches the novella in historical fact and draws on his own life experiences in the Congo, which explain the novella's realist tone. But the novella is more than realist, it is also subjective and therefore it has many impressionistic and apocalyptic characteristics. The sea is described as the "colour" of "lead" and "smoke". The sea is the coloniser's passage way to colonise, yet the sea is not referred to in clear terms; it is described as dark and unclear. The military camps are also described as being lost in the "fog". As said earlier, mist or haze is symbolic of Marlow's inability to see things for what they really are, for his viewpoint is tainted with preconceived ideas, biases and judgments.

The line in which Marlow speaks of Britain as "the end of the world" has an ambiguous meaning that can be understood differently in different contexts. It might mean that the

new colonised space is regarded as an insignificant, isolated and barren country which is marginalised and uncultivated, or it might refer to the natives' apocalyptic end of their existence as they have come to know it. It might refer to the apocalyptic eschatology of the natives' life before their lives were changed by the hands of colonisation and imperialism. To the naïve Marlow, the end of their "savage" existence heralds positive change and progress. In this passage Marlow ignorantly clings to enlightenment, yet at the end of the novella it becomes apparent that he is disillusioned by reality. He finally realises that evil and darkness lie within the European himself/herself and later on he laments the end of an untouched Africa – he continually longs for something, an epiphany about Kurtz maybe – yet never finds it.

The dichotomy between good and evil is symbolised by the references to light and darkness: "Light came out of this river since"; "a flash of lightning in the clouds"; "We live in the flicker"; "darkness was here yesterday". The flickers and flashes of light are also symbolic of epiphanies – when Marlow starts his mission his life and world view are blurred by prejudice. It is only later in the novella that he manages to untangle his viewpoint for fleeting moments and realises that what the Europeans are doing is wrong. He decadently refers to "disease, exile, and death", death which skulks "the air, the water, in the bush". Marlow speaks about the soldiers' deaths very unfeelingly and ironically mirrors what leaders like King Leopold II would say to the British soldiers they sent on colonising missions – that their deaths are merely a by-product of a very noble cause and a necessary price to pay for progress.

3.5.2. *Apocalypse Now*

One particular scene that is a great example of the stylistic hybridity of the film is the helicopter scene in which Kilgore orders an attack on a Vietnam village. Because the film deals with the Vietnam War, it is rooted in reality and history. But it is definitely not realist. The scene is reminiscent of symbolist decadence, for Cuddon (1979:178) defines Symbolism as "...the need for sensationalism and melodrama, egocentricity, the

bizarre, the artificial...". The whole scene is totally absurd. Camera shots focus on an elementary school courtyard that is about to be attacked. It is ironic that the hedonistic Kilgore, who is a "hollow man" without any depth, chooses Richard Wagner's high art composition "Ride of the Valkyries" to get his adrenaline pumping, and it is bizarre that he manages to get such a kick out of attacking defenseless and harmless women and children.

It is not only bizarre, it is despicable, revolting and cruel. *Apocalypse Now* has to do with a colonial war and it deals with topical issues found in postcolonial literature that often lead to oppression, hatred and war. From the helicopter-attack scene, it is evident that Kilgore is unable to show any remorse for what they are doing, because he does not regard the natives as people. To him they are merely "ants" scurrying for cover, soulless vessels that form a unified body – the enemy. They are dehumanised because of their nationality, their race, and their culture. He cannot and will not identify with the "Other".

With this scene, Coppola tries to warn the viewer against the destruction wrought by war. Due to technological advances more powerful machines and bombs are available than ever before to use during warfare. Thus war, indirectly, has the power to bring an end to a nation or an empire, or even the entire world. But what is most dangerous during warfare is humankind's propensity to lose all restraint and human compassion and this might mean the end of humanity altogether. *Apocalypse Now* is an apocalyptic film with which Coppola warns his public of a future that could potentially end in disaster if one were not careful.

3.5.3. *Na die Geliefde Land*

In the quoted passage to follow, which takes place at the Kommandodrift-gathering, Gerhard confronts George about his plans to sell Rietvlei:

'Did you undertake this whole journey for a visit of a few days?'

'Yes. Perhaps it was sentimental, but I wanted to see the farm once more, for the last time. You could call it a pilgrimage.'

Gerhard wasn't listening. 'Wouldn't you feel a traitor to your family if you were to sell it?'

'The farm was my grandparents' whole life, and my mother grew up there; she had her memories and she wanted to preserve this bond; however symbolic it might have been, she didn't ever consider severing it. But I have my own life and Rietvlei is no part of it. It belongs to my youth, and my youth is past.'

'You were born here. You can take up your life here where it was interrupted.'

'No. That's no longer possible: it was too long ago and meanwhile too much has happened. Nothing of what there was has survived unchanged.'

'The land is the same.'

'I am not a farmer, nor do I want to be one.'

'The country is the same... Do you feel nothing for the country?'

'It's become an alien land to me. It's only now and then that I recognize something, and every time it happens I'm startled' (Schoeman, 1978:168).

The Afrikaans passage is to be found on page 125 to 126 of the 1972 edition of Schoeman's novel. The novel actively deals with physical and biological certainties like family, nation, state, race and gender, which is characteristic of realism. Even though the novel was published a long time before postcolonialism emerged as a distinct literary category, and therefore cannot be labeled postcolonialist, these issues of family, nation, state, race and gender are issues that are central to postcolonial criticism.

Furthermore, *Na die Geliefde Land* is modernistic in the sense that George operates individualistically and discards his own family, land and nation. Even though his mother "didn't ever consider severing" her bond with her homeland, he not only considers it, but has in fact already severed his ties. He has travelled to South Africa in order to pay

respect to the land of his birth, for he calls his journey a "pilgrimage". But he does not find what he searches for.

Many symbolist characteristics abound in this passage: George finds the country, nation and culture of the small group of Afrikaners strange; he cannot identify with them or with the land and feels himself alienated from them/it. He becomes an outsider figure and polar opposite of the members of this imagined community. They are patriots of this country and he is not, they are proud farmers and he has no interest in becoming one. This dualism is also characteristic of apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic literature is dualistic socially and divides *us* from *them*. Aesthetic and decadent characteristics therefore also come into play, for George has an elitist anxiety of belonging to this low-class imagined Afrikaner community, which ultimately leads to dandyism, an aversion and distancing of the uniformity and mediocrity of these closed-minded and backward community members. This passage is also exemplary of Transcendental Symbolism – George travels to his country of birth in search for a lost fatherland, but his inability to identify with it, prevents him from gaining salvation.

George's inability to find what he searches for – a longing that is never fulfilled for he returns home unfulfilled at the end of the novel – is characteristic of Miller's idea of apocalypse as a deferred promise or revelation that is never revealed. The novel is exemplary of nationalistic eschatology, for "nothing of what there was has survived unchanged." The Afrikaner community's existence is threatened by totalitarian and governmental powers and their existence, as they once knew it, has been drastically altered. They fight for their survival and fear that they will be wiped out. Typical of apocalyptic literature, this passage also reflects a radical break with the past, for George says that "it belongs to my youth, and my youth is past" and "nothing of what there was has survived unchanged". The past is temporally dualistic for it is compared to the present, and the present is temporally dualistic for it is linked to the uncertain future. Also, the country is spatially dualistic, for the farm Rietvlei, of which only rubble remains, serves as example of the decadence of the landscape that once flourished.

3.5.4. *Promised Land*

In one part of the film, George takes Mrs. Henning, Carla and Paul to visit aunt Miemie on Moedersgift, on his way to Rietvlei. During their journey George spots a farm and asks them: "Who owns that farm?", to which Mrs. Henning replies: "*They* do now" (Xenopoulos, 2002). A close-up shot reveals the new owners of the farm to be black people. As is characteristic of apocalyptic literature, the word "now" insinuates that there has been a definite break from the past when the farm was owned by whites. In contrast to Schoeman's novel which remains vague about the new powers that be, the film gives a face (and a race) to them. It is clear that the film draws on South Africa's colonial history and that the film is set in a postcolonial, post-apartheid South Africa, where farms have indeed been given back to black owners as part of the land reform project, to redress the injustices of the past.

Mrs. Henning's bitter tone of voice when she sees the black owners, and their reciprocal hostile stares, capture the tension between them. But there is not just tension between black and white. There is tension between the old and new generation within the same imagined community as well. They listen to kwaito music that George bought at the airport, and Mrs. Henning and Paul struggle for control over the volume of the music; she keeps on turning the volume down, whilst Paul keeps turning the volume up. The power struggle for volume control is symbolic of the younger generation's quest for independence from their older, closed-minded forefathers. It also foreshadows the conflict between mother and son that ultimately ends in Paul's death. In the following scene, Paul stands up in George's cabriolet with his arms stretched out sideways – this body choreography of a bird in flight is symbolic of his desire to be free from their rural and monotonous existence and his willingness to embrace other cultures.

George wants to travel to Rietvlei to help him decide what to do with the farm. Even though his first instincts tell him to sell the farm, he still longs to find some connection to or bond with the land, the country and its people, because his mother had that longing for her homeland until her death. He longs for a lost fatherland he can identify with, but

true to Transcendental Symbolism, it evades him. There is a divide between George with his expensive cabriolet and these earthly uncultivated people.

George has been told that they have to travel by day, because it is unsafe to travel by night. He heeds their pleas, but he does not understand their fears and their paranoia. They are a small and isolated minority that have cut themselves off from the rest of the world, and they fear their end at the hand of the "Other".

3.6. Conclusion

From the brief survey presented it is evident that all four texts under discussion are hybrid texts; they are composed of four or more of the following: modernism, realism, symbolism, impressionism, postcolonialism and the apocalyptic. Although none of them are truly postmodernist in technique, they share with postmodernism a predilection for not being pure, but hybrid, and they defy categorisation.

The texts are made up of contrasts and contradictions, true to the postmodern epoch: characteristic of symbolist texts is that they ask to be cut loose from their historic context, to be removed as far as possible from actuality (Viljoen, 1995:289-290). All four texts have symbolist characteristics, yet none of them can be read separate from their historic space and time – *Heart of Darkness* is set in the Congo in imperialist Africa, *Apocalypse Now* is set in the context of the Vietnam War, *Na die Geliefde Land* is set in South Africa and seems to be a denouncement of apartheid and the abuse of power, and *Promised Land* is rooted in postcolonial, post-apartheid South Africa. Whereas the symbolist writer regards an artwork as an autonomous entity, the modernist rejects the idea of a superior, unchangeable idea. Whereas the symbolist turns away from life, the modernist aspires to address the world, he/she wants to travel to find the answers instead of meditating on it (Du Plooy, 1995:350). Although all four texts have symbolist characteristics, they engage so intensively with real life and real issues (with history, with imperialism, apartheid, etc.) that they cannot be regarded as purely symbolist. Furthermore, whereas realism glorifies family ties and nationalistic emotions, the

modernist writer emphasises departure and detachment from these family ties and nationalistic emotions. The modernist writer does not want to be bound by family, nation or state and for them humanity resides within the independence of a definite or fixed restrictive environment and social background (Du Plooy, 1995:351). Seeing that these texts turn toward life to address the world, they are not purely symbolist for symbolist texts tend to turn away from reality, but so does modernism. They are furthermore modernist in that family ties and nationalistic emotions are not glorified in either one of the four texts, yet the texts deal actively with the inevitable ties to physical and biological certainties like family, nation, state, race, gender, etc., characteristic of realism.

It has been determined that all four texts are indeed stylistically hybrid texts that consist of a hodge-podge of characteristics from different literary movements and genres. Several salient characteristics of realism, impressionism, modernism and postmodernism engage in polyphonic conversation with the predominant symbolist, postcolonial and apocalyptic underpinnings of the texts. The fact that the texts are stylistically hybrid, problematises readings of these “transitional” texts: divergent periods, movements and trends flow, it seems, seamlessly, over from one into the other. As a result readings of these texts are much more complex and difficult to categorise into neat little “boxes”. Does this, however, mean that the fact that these texts are stylistically hybrid then should be regarded in a negative light? I don’t think so. I believe it liberates the texts and opens up possibilities for a multitude of readings, and therefore enriches the texts with literary, cultural and social value. This topic will be discussed in much more detail in the reading of the texts themselves in Chapters Four and Five.

Next to follow is an overview of Bakhtinian thought applicable to these four texts as well as the literary concepts of hybridity, liminality and “The Marginal Man” and an investigation of their relation to the notion of identity.

4. CHAPTER 4 – POLYPHONIC CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN *HEART OF DARKNESS* AND *APOCALYPSE NOW*

4.1. Introduction

Heart of Darkness was written by the Polish writer Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) and was published in 1899. The film *Apocalypse Now*, directed by the American Francis Ford Coppola, was released in 1979 and is loosely based on Conrad's novella. Even though the novella and film seem to be poles apart, there are polyphonic conversations on different hierarchical levels between the two that I believe are worth analysing. The most important common denominator between the literary and filmic texts is the protagonists, Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* and Willard in *Apocalypse Now*, that have to confront the life and world view that make up their identities whilst venturing into a liminal space.

This chapter will give some historical background on events that informed both the novella and the film; make a Bakhtinian analysis of the dialogue between the novella and the film on different hierarchical levels; discuss the identity crises of key characters in the texts; discuss intertextual echoes the texts engage in conversation with; and discuss the dialogue each respective text has with apocalyptic, symbolist and postcolonial characteristics.

4.2. Historical background of the novella and the film

The novella is set in the Congo during 1890 when colonisation was at its peak. In his review of Adam Hochschild's study of Belgium's King Leopold II, who created the Congo Free State, Nolan (1999) describes how King Leopold II ruthlessly exploited the land and its people through slavery. European countries rushed to claim territory in Africa, for ivory and rubber ensured a lucrative basis of world power. Fifteen to twenty million African people were killed or starved to death in the course of the ivory rush (Worthy, 1996:156).

The film, however, is built around the Vietnam War. Rotter (1999) and the site Digital History (2005) shed some light on the causes and the effects of this war. Although most

wars can be traced to a definite beginning, there is no fixed beginning for the U.S. war in Vietnam, as the Americans entered the war incrementally in a series of steps from 1950 to 1965. The Vietnamese waged an anti-colonial war against France between 1945 and 1954. The United States backed them with \$2.6 billion in financial support. After the Vietnamese defeated the French at Dienbienphu in 1954, a peace conference followed in Geneva, in which Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam received their independence and Vietnam was temporarily divided into an anti-Communist South and a Communist North. In 1956, South Vietnam refused to hold unification elections with the Communist North, and America backed them. By 1958, Communist-led guerrillas known as the Viet Cong had begun to battle the anti-Communist South Vietnamese government. Sending in 2000 military advisors to aid South Vietnam's government was the beginning of the longest war in American history and the most unpopular war of the twentieth century. "It resulted in nearly 60 000 American deaths and an estimated 2 million Vietnamese deaths. Even today, many Americans still ask whether the American effort in Vietnam was a sin, a blunder, a necessary war, a noble cause, or an idealistic, if failed, effort to protect the South Vietnamese from totalitarian government" (Digital History, 2005). According to statistics on a website covering all aspects of the Vietnam War (Otherground, 2003), two out of three American Vietnam veterans suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and 70 percent of them currently have a problem with alcohol overuse or dependence. These statistics show the devastating effects that war still has on its participants long after it has ended.

I mentioned earlier that this dissertation uses *Apocalypse Now Redux* as basis for analysis. What voices does *Apocalypse Now Redux* engage with which are not be found in *Apocalypse Now*?

4.3. Polyphonic conversations between *Apocalypse Now* and *Apocalypse Now Redux*

My focus will fall mainly on *Apocalypse Now Redux*, because it is most relevant to the generation of our time. The original film was released in 1979, whilst *Redux* was re-

released in 2001 with 53 minutes of new footage. Corliss (2001) summarises the differences between the two: “The new material includes scenes on the boat, as Willard gets to know its crew (including a very young Larry Fishburne); the crew’s sexual encounter with two of the Playmates, who, like the young men, are in Vietnam on a mission of mercy that will degrade them; a new scene with Kurtz, in which he puts Willard in a cage and reads from a *Time* article about the war; and a long, ghostly reverie set on a French plantation. There Willard finds a fractious old colonial family and is seduced by a young widow.” The sequence of some scenes, such as Kilgore’s and Lance’s absurd surfing scene, has also been rearranged for greater effect. *Redux* thus engages in conversation with the original, and enriches it with added material.

4.4. Cartographic construction of physical and cultural boundaries

Maps and cartography are some of the by-products of colonisation. I believe it is important to discuss cartographic construction, because cartographic construction was a monoglossic and centripetal act by Europeans in earlier times: “...the landscape – be it the river on which Conrad is manoeuvring or the plain Livingstone is traversing – is being mapped for the benefit of later European travelers. The implied reader is a European rather than a ‘native’...” (Lothe, 2000:162). The only dialogue that exists is between Europeans; the subaltern natives are totally ignored and therefore the voice of the Europeans regresses into a one-sided monologue. In Chapter Two I quoted a passage taken from autobiographical writings of Conrad, in which his own voice can be heard in Marlow’s fascination with and passion for maps.

Maps, according to Meyer (2001:xii), are man-made ordering concepts which allow us to understand the universe, and which organise social interaction in ways which make life more manageable for human beings. In his book *Post-Colonial Transformation*, Ashcroft (2001:128-134) discusses the concept of cartography. He states that “the development of world maps during the Renaissance arose from the voyages of discovery which produced a wealth of knowledge about a globe that was finite and

potentially knowable”. He goes on to say that maps have “continued to be a prime means of ‘textualizing’ the spatial reality of colonised peoples, by enforcing a Eurocentric view of spatiality, and naming, or renaming, existing places as a demonstration of power.”

It is a demonstration of power because the dynamic process of naming becomes a primary colonising process for it “appropriates, defines, captures the place in language”. Ashcroft concludes his discussion of cartography with the contention that “to name place is to announce discursive control over it by the very act of inscription, because through names, location becomes metonymic of those processes of travel, annexation and colonization which effect the dominance of imperial powers over the non-European world”. Lothe (2000:169) points out that the title of a map of the Congo, “A Map of the Congo Free State 1890”, is very ironic for the territories which were 76 times the size of Belgium were not at all “free” but under King Leopold II’s centripetal power.

The names of some places are thus products of certain ideologies at a certain point in history (time) within a certain social and economic context (place). This is why the names of certain cities within South Africa have been changed post-1994; the previously marginalised and oppressed see the liberation of city names from their pre-1994 fixed status as a celebration of democratisation. Consequently, a city name like *Pretoria* might be changed to *Tshwane* to reflect the new demographic and political set-up of South Africa. The reference to maps in *Heart of Darkness* is therefore symbolic of power, especially Eurocentric imperialist power and the ideologies that accompany that power.

Lothe (2000:176) argues that the mapping of a geographical space, as Michel Foucault put it, denotes “the area controlled by a certain kind of power” (Foucault, 1980:68). The operative logic in *Heart of Darkness* is that of war/warfare, which Lothe (2000:176) contends became thematically productive for Coppola as director of *Apocalypse Now*.

Maps reflect humankind's need to bring order to chaos, to structure and control. Humankind innately fears that which they do not understand. Mapping and naming not only gives humankind a more tangible "hold" on life and the earth, but it also gives a sense of boundaries. As Ashcroft (2001:162) states: "Boundaries are critical in the colonial taming of the wild and the control of space." Even into the late nineteenth century, European explorers felt compelled to fill blank spaces on maps with names and colonisers to "develop" that land. The threat that boundlessness posed was a threat to control, order and civilisation, as seen from a Western viewpoint. Natives that did not 'develop' the land according to European standards were regarded as 'primitives' that had no right of possession to that "uncultivated" land.

That some 'primitives' had a different standard of living, and a different vision for their homeland, based on a completely different life and world view, was regarded as "wrong" by Europeans. Truth is, primitives were quite content with their existence before Europeans came to claim their land, fuelled by monetary motives – ivory and gold are but two commodities that contributed to financial gain. "Primitives" that lived close to the land and to nature did not feel the need to seek financial gain, and from their perspective what Europeans viewed as 'progress' was not progress at all, as Moore-Gilbert *et al.* (1997:2) clearly state, for they call postcolonialism a period that is characterised by a suspicion of progress:

After all, it was in a period of so-called progress for the West that the rest of the world had its development arrested, its resources exploited, and its people enslaved. What was done in the name of progress, of historical advance, can be seen now as backward, degrading, reactionary.

It is thus ironic that it was primitives that were judged as barbarians. Guimond and Maynard (2001:321) argue that irony infects and erodes the authority and legitimacy of proclamatory voices and viewpoints, thereby discrediting them. The proclamatory voices of imperialism discredit themselves through their efforts to impose themselves on discourses of the "other" (Guimond and Maynard, 2001:322). Lothe (2000:159) concurs with Guimond and Maynard; he believes, as do I, that Conrad uses irony as a formal

element to express imperialist critique. There will be several references to the irony Conrad uses for these purposes throughout this chapter.

Returning to the monoglossic act of cartographic construction by imperialist whites, it also implied imaginary cultural boundaries, for, as Ashcroft (2001:130) points out, “the separation of space into North and South, West and East was not simply a division of empty space, but the establishment of a boundary between the civilized world (the northern hemisphere) and its nether regions, a physical boundary which intimated a cultural distinction between Europe and its others”.

In her article, Kim Worthy (1996:153-167) examines the white, middle-class, patriarchal influences which she believes underpin *Apocalypse Now*. She also argues that madness is the result of the disintegration of abstract boundaries thought to be absolute for the colonialists in Africa, the Americans in Viet Nam and the film crew of *Apocalypse Now* on location in the Philippines.⁶ “The ceaselessly repeated cultural coordinates whereby masculine/feminine, self/other have specific segregated roles could not be sustained by the Belgians in the Congo, the Americans in Viet Nam, or Coppola” (Worthy, 1996:153).

⁶ Orson Welles planned to film *Heart of Darkness* in 1939, but his plans fell through and Francis Ford Coppola finally made *Apocalypse Now* in 1979. Fax Bahr and George Hickenlooper are the directors of the 1991 documentary about the making of *Apocalypse Now*, called *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse*. Francis Ford Coppola is quoted as saying: “*Apocalypse Now* is not a movie about Vietnam. My movie is Vietnam. We had too much money, too much equipment, and little by little we went insane” (Worthy, 1996:153). Coppola and his cast and crew spent nearly a year and a half shooting in the Philippine jungle. In concordance with the Vietnam War, a guerilla war was also going on in the Philippines during filming. Coppola also had to put up with a typhoon that nearly destroyed all of the sets, a cast intoxicated on either drugs or alcohol or both, he had to mortgage his house to cover the ballooning costs, fired his first leading man (Harvey Keitel) whilst a heart attack struck down his second leading man (Martin Sheen). This brought Coppola close to his own “apocalypse” and at one point he told his wife: “I’m thinking of shooting myself” (Johnson, 1992; Corliss, 2001:83). Eleanor Coppola, Francis’s wife, is the narrator of the documentary and repeatedly calls the making of *Apocalypse Now* a journey into Coppola’s inner self (Worthy, 1996:154).

4.5. Polyphonic conversations between *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*

The title of the novella, *Heart of Darkness*, can be read on two levels: it might refer to the centre (heart) of the unknown (darkness) which lies within the wild jungle that Marlow has to confront. Or it might refer to the evil (darkness) that resides within the soul (heart) of humankind. Conrad attempted to show that the "heart of darkness" lay deep within the Europeans who exploited the land and people of the Congo.

Lothe (2000:177) is of the opinion that the numerous repetitions of "darkness" throughout the novella is symbolic of "brutality, exploitation, racism, false morality, exploitation of natural resources for short-term profit", yet acknowledges that these are merely some of the constituent aspects of this complex symbol.

Cahir (2004:181) analyses the narratological parallels between the novella and the film and states: "The novella is a frame-story, wonderfully entangled by a narrative within a narrative, a flashback within a flashback, a series of quotes within quotes." The narrator tells the reader the tale as told to him that evening aboard the *Nellie*. Cahir (2004:181) contends that Conrad's narrative structure is inherently cinematic:

The recording eye of Conrad's anonymous narrator functions much in the same way as the camera functions in the film: Both interpose themselves (near-invisibly) between the teller and the listener; both function as narrators who control what we hear and what we see; and both are subtle, ongoing structuring presences which somehow fade from our consciousness.

Coppola's and Conrad's stories (the "who, what, when, and where" of the work) are radically different, yet the narrative of each work ("how" the "story" is presented) is much the same, for the mediating narrator is simultaneously present and not present in the text, whilst the tale is narrated in first person retrospect and the pattern of tale-telling is similar to a large degree, as Cahir (2004:182) explains: In both the novel and the film the first view of Marlow/Willard is "that of a man radically altered by a past experience"; each "tale-proper" furthermore begins with Marlow/Willard explaining "how he got the appointment which necessitated his excursion up a river"; each river excursion is made

up of three⁷ scheduled stops; and both the novel and film use “similar patterns of symbology” and each employ “the effects of sound and lighting in similar ways”.

Both the novel and the film are journeys into chaos, which start off much in the same way as they end. The novel opens aboard the *Nellie* and “the Thames stretched before” the men on board “like the beginning of an interminable waterway” (Conrad, 1973:5). The air is dark and a “brooding gloom” seems to hang over the waterway which leads into the heart of Africa, away from the direction the *Nellie* is headed. At the end of the novel, after the narrator has recounted Marlow’s story, the crew is still on board the yawl. What is different, however, is that the narrator now observes that the impenetrable and gloomy darkness seems to hang, not in the direction of Africa, but in the direction they are headed – the heart of London. This is symbolic of Marlow’s realisation that evil does not (necessarily) reside in the hearts of the “barbaric” natives in Africa, but in the hearts of the hypocritical, seemingly civilised, power-hungry and greedy colonisers that would annex innocent people’s land for their own gain.

Guimond and Maynard (2001:321-322) point out that “imperialism seeks to silence contending viewpoints, or to transmute them into mere dialects of itself, by proclaiming itself the ‘voice’ of civilization, order, racial superiority, and/or material progress whereas its colonized subjects are supposedly barbaric, stagnant, or disorderly and therefore inferior”.

The film, like the novel, also has a circular structure regarding the beginning and the end of the story, for as Greiff (1992:188) rightly points out, the rock group The Doors provides entrance and exit into *Apocalypse Now*:

Thus, the film’s very first line is Jim Morrison’s “This is the end, beautiful friend”. The beginning announces itself as the ending, just as in *Heart of Darkness* the initial scene on board the *Nellie* occurs, chronologically, long after the events recounted in Marlow’s yarn.

⁷ Note that only three stops are scheduled and that the other stops are unscheduled.

There is, however, also a difference between the opening of the novel and the opening of the film: The “calm and orderly serenity apparent outside of Marlow creates an effective contrast to the tumultuous chaos within him” (Cahir, 2004:183) for the “day was ending in a serenity of still and exquisite brilliance” (Conrad, 1973:6). The “brooding gloom” holds the possibility of chaos to erupt, whilst *Apocalypse Now* starts off with that tumultuous chaos: the chaos of war and the emotional chaos within Willard. The film begins with visuals of green palm trees blowing in the wind. The sound of helicopter blades breaks the silence and the viewer soon realises that the movement of the palm leaves are artificially induced – they are caused by war helicopters. With The Doors’ song announcing that “this is the end”, the shot dissolves from the external to the internal, from the open plains of war to the circumscribed space of Willard’s hotel room and his tumultuous psyche. A sequence of dissolve shots are used to reflect Willard’s state of mind that is chaotic, unstable, turbulent and confused. He has just been petitioned for divorce by his wife; his divorce as well as his psychological state of mind and emotional state of being are possibly linked to his inability to come to terms with his experiences during the war.

The plot structure of the novel and the film also seems to share similarities, for “each river excursion is distinguished by three scheduled stops (a number rich in mythic significance); the third and last stop for each is the soul-altering confrontation with the mysterious Kurtz” (Cahir, 2004:183). The two scheduled stops before reaching Kurtz’s inner station are respectively: Marlow visits the government seat and the outer station, whilst Willard rendezvous with Captain Kilgore and stops to refuel as well as to stay over at the Rubber plantation.

In both the novel and the film the boat crew fare beyond the boundaries and rules of civilisation. The river, the overgrown jungle and the heat figure in both the novel and the film and usher them in on their journey beyond the beyond. Low-angle camera angles are often used in the film to evoke a feeling of awe at the overwhelming immensity of the jungle and the minuteness of the river crew by comparison.

It is thus established that *Apocalypse Now* and *Heart of Darkness* share a similar cyclical plot structure as well as narratological parallels, thereby, in my opinion, stumping claims that Francis Ford Coppola sacrilegiously distorted *Heart of Darkness* with the adaptation of *Apocalypse Now*. Yet, despite the similarities in plot and narration, one has to ask: Are there any other similarities or differences? What purpose does the dialogue between them serve and how do they influence the respective works?

The dialogue between the characters as well as individual events of the novella and the film warrants investigation. In the following discussion, the dialogic conversation between characters of the novella and film will be analysed, after which certain absurd scenes will be discussed through a Bakhtinian analysis.

4.5.1. Polyphonic conversations between Lance and Kilgore, Chef and Chief Phillips

In this discussion of the characters of Lance, Kilgore, Chef and Phillips in *Apocalypse Now* and their respective 'counterparts' in *Heart of Darkness*, I have used the article of Louis K. Greiff (1992:188-198) entitled "Soldier, Sailor, Surfer, Chef: Conrad's Ethics and the Margins of *Apocalypse Now*". There is tension between Lance and Kilgore, as representatives of "hollow" men, and Chef and Chief as representatives of men of substance, which results in dialogue that is worth analysing. "Hollow" men and men of substance are voices that are in dialogue, but struggle for dominance regarding morality.

Four men make up Willard's crew on board the PBR (River Patrol Boat): Clean is a black seventeen-year-old boy, who kills the civilians on board the sampan, and is himself killed on board the PBR. Lance is a famous, white Southern Californian surfer who often trips on LSD, rides the waves on Kilgore's demand, tans on board the PBR, water-skis behind the boat and ultimately wants to join Kurtz's Cambodian tribe. Chef is the older, white Southerner who had been a saucier in New Orleans before he was drafted into the Navy and became a machinist; he is beheaded at Kurtz's station. Chief

Phillips is the older, black, Navy enlisted man who is the real captain of the PBR, even though he is outranked by Captain Willard. He takes his responsibility as chief very seriously and has a professional sense of duty towards his crew members, yet is killed on board the boat. Colonel Kilgore, like Lance, is a Southern Californian, who is not a member of Willard's river boat crew. He is the Army Colonel who is responsible for the air strike on the Vietnamese elementary school, a bizarre and callous militaristic man.

Coppola initially presents the crew as naïve and ignorant, for as Lothe (2000:189) argues, they "do not appear to understand anything about the war they themselves are taking part in, nor do they seem to comprehend their situation as dangerous at the beginning (one of them goes water-skiing)". As they journey deeper up-river, however, the impending danger becomes clearer.

A moral conflict between the good craftsman and the hollow man is embodied in the characters of Chief Phillips and Chef, as well as in Kilgore and Lance respectively. Chief and Chef are very different – Chief is a black man with so much discipline and self-control as to seem unfeeling, whilst Chef is a white Southerner from New Orleans who is never far from hysteria and "wrapped too tight for Vietnam" (Greiff, 1992:191; Coppola, 2001). These two poles represent the dichotomy within Marlow which he struggles with, with regard to his identity.

One can argue that Chief Phillips incarnates Marlow's black helmsman in *Heart of Darkness*. Although both these characters are killed by the spears of attackers in the bush – the "little sticks" episode in *Heart of Darkness* (Conrad, 1973:64) – the resemblance is merely superficial (Greiff, 1992:191). For, in *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow's black helmsman remains a flat character looming in the background of the story, while Chief is a rounded character who "speaks". Chief does not fight the war because of a lust for battle, but out of a commitment to his professional duty and a human concern for the safety and well-being of his crew.

Chief's cold self-restraint and good work-ethic is counterbalanced by the artistic and imaginative core of Chef, who before being drafted, had been a saucier who planned to go to France to complete his education. He is gentle and sensitive and has erotic fantasies in which he finds wild mangoes in the jungle, cooks them into a paste and rubs it over his and Raquel Welsh's bodies. Chief has a humanist concern for his crew, whilst Chef has an essential religious concern for he believes that human beings possess souls and that good and evil exist tangibly and absolutely (Greiff, 1992:192).

Lance and Kilgore, on the other hand, reflect the opposite ends of the American military spectrum – the youngster forced to deal with war, and the old caricature of the military persona that is “all swagger, spit and polish” (Greiff, 1992:193). Furthermore, both are Southern Californians who share an identical passion for surfing. As inferred from the discussion of the absurd situations of which Lance and/or Kilgore are part (the surfing scenes, the helicopter massacre of Viet Cong civilians, etc.) under the heading “Identity, Willard and *Apocalypse Now*”, one can deduce that these two characters are hollow shells, lacking the substance of Chief or Chef. Perhaps the word “surfer” suggests “surface”, lacking depth (Greiff, 1992:193).

Lance undergoes some character development during the film. At first, he is introduced to the viewer as the innocent and frivolous blond beach boy working on his tan and water skiing behind the PBR. During the scene where he water skis behind the river patrol boat, the frivolous rock 'n roll song “I can't get no satisfaction” plays over the radio and a yellow colour filter is used to evoke the idea of idyllic carefree days filled with fun, sun and surf.

During the journey his moral fibre deteriorates absolutely; “he begins to evolve towards the primitive, so that by the time he reaches Kurtz's outpost there is little to distinguish him from the Cambodian tribesman he encounters there” (Greiff, 1992:194). Vietnam “has become the Disneyland of his hollow spirit, so that he finds beauty at the nightmarish Do Lung bridge, fun in the primitive attack on the boat during which Chief is killed” (Greiff, 1992:194). Despite his growing savagery, Lance never harms anyone.

Kilgore, on the other hand, embraces and loves the war, and remarks with regret that “some day this war’s gonna end” (Coppola, 2001).

In contrast to Lance and Kilgore, Chef and Chief, the two men of substance, hate the war. “Coppola has ingeniously centered the ethical issue by appearing to marginalize it” (Greiff, 1992:195). Chief and Chef, unlike Lance and Kilgore, move towards brutal deaths despite their moral integrity (Chief is killed by a spear and Chef is beheaded by Kurtz’s followers). In an ironic inversion, Chief and Chef, characters with depth and substance, aren’t protected from destruction. Yet, hollow shells like Kilgore and Lance, apparently live and flourish.

But what about the protagonists of the texts?

4.6. Identity

Both *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* are narrations in the form of journeys: *Heart of Darkness*’ protagonist, Marlow, is an experienced sailor who has been hired by a European trading company to transport the ivory collected in Africa back to the European company. On his journey he meets Kurtz, an ivory hunter who is now taking company-owned ivory for himself. Captain Benjamin Willard (played by Martin Sheen) in *Apocalypse Now* is an assassin in the American Army, hired to “terminate with extreme prejudice”, Colonel Walter E. Kurtz, Operations Commander in the Special Forces, who has allegedly gone insane in the Cambodian jungle.

Thus both texts are physical journeys into unknown landscapes; the Belgian Congo and Southeast Asia respectively, down an unknown river and into an unknown forest. But even more than this, these journeys are also inward journeys into the self. They are psychological, emotional and individuating journeys of the emissaries sent on missions of grave importance.

In his foreword to Thomas Meyer's *Identity Mania: Fundamentalism and the Politicization of Cultural Differences*, Hartmut Elsenhans (Meyer, 2001:xii) discusses what Benedict Anderson refers to as "imagined" communities: All cultures invent a sense of community, for "particular cultures are the basis of group creation, and reinforce group creation by allowing individuals to identify with others and thus, ultimately, by creating the feeling of belonging to a community". People constantly try to create and adopt viable identities and have a need and want for identity, because "we cannot endure our meaninglessness". Aristotle once remarked that we are all social beings, and therefore we are inclined to identify ourselves with larger groups and feel comfortable being part of a group (Meyer, 2001:xiii).

We not only create imagined communities, but also use cartographic constructions of the world to create and signify imaginary cultural boundaries. As said earlier, the separation of the globe into North and South, West and East, is not simply a division of empty space, but the establishment of a boundary between the "civilised" world and the "uncivilised" world (Aschroft, 2001:130).

Taking into account one's desire to belong, one must ask the question: What about the "prophets" with a finer sensibility? Do they also have a desire to belong? As discussed in Chapter Three, the "poet" or artist has a fine sensibility or intuitive ability which distinguishes him/her from the visionless masses and therefore leaves him/her isolated and alienated from the rest of society. I believe that the "prophet", "poet" or artist does experience a desire to belong, but not at the cost of being untrue to himself/herself or a higher ideal, and this results in the experience of dichotomies within the self.

I furthermore believe that the protagonists of the books and the films under discussion are people with a finer sensibility who experience identity crises, because they cannot reconcile themselves with the ideologies, world views or actions of their so-called imagined communities, and simultaneously cannot wholeheartedly step over the imaginary cultural boundaries to fully identify with the "other". The identity crises

experienced by Marlow and Willard will now be discussed within a Bakhtinian framework and with regard to concepts such as liminality, boundaries and marginalisation.

4.6.1. Identity, Marlow and *Heart of Darkness*

Marlow's journey is a journey on a physical and metaphysical level: as he ventures further up the Congo, crossing cartographic boundaries, he encounters many people and situations that force him to reassess his own life and world view, morals and principles. The journey changes him and his notions of his own identity, but unfortunately, not for the better.

At the outset of the journey, Marlow is a very romantic soul who is sure of his identity and as Greiff (1992:189) points out, "the consummate salt-water sailor who has crafted his own identity in the very act of perfecting his trade" whose "fullness of character" enables Marlow "the necessary integrity and strength to resist evil and, ultimately, to survive the African ordeal reasonably intact". Greiff goes on to compare Marlow to an artist in two ways. Firstly, Marlow approaches his seamanship in the same way an artist would approach his medium – as part craftsman and part lover. Secondly, in "deepening and completing his humanity along with his craft, Marlow has come to be blessed or cursed with the skill of storytelling".

Before long, Marlow experiences situations and people that threaten the stability of his identity. As stated earlier in Chapter Three, mist or haze is a very persistent image in *Heart of Darkness* (Watt, 1979:312). Much of what Marlow observes in the novella is obscured by his representation of the atmospheric conditions through which it was observed and/or his point of view which is infiltrated by bias, preconceived ideas and a closed-off cultural framework. What starts off as a journey supposedly into light and clarity, quickly turns into a journey of persistent fog, mist and haze: "The edge of a colossal jungle, so dark-green as to be almost black, fringed with white surf, ran straight, like a ruled line, far, far away along a blue sea whose glitter was blurred by a creeping

mist" (Conrad, 1973:19). Marlow's journey is not just a physical journey, but also an epistemological journey. Confronted with a culture he does not understand and an enigma of a man called Kurtz, he tries to make sense of his surroundings and his feelings.

Marlow's journey is a liminal one. He ventures into a new physical space where different rules apply and where nothing seems to make any sense. At the first ivory station Marlow is confronted with absurd and surreal nightmarish experiences. The white colonialists suffer under the staggering heat and biting insects as well as from disease. They are intruders who do not belong there; they are "firing into a continent" (Conrad, 1973:20) with violence and skewed world views that justify oppression.

Marlow is torn between a sense of humanistic sympathy and a lack of empathy for the natives; he experiences contradictory feelings for the natives. A boat from the shore, paddled by black natives stirs all sorts of feelings within Marlow (Conrad, 1973:20): he is appalled by their faces that look like "grotesque masks", yet at the same time, admires that "they had bone, muscle, a wild vitality, an intense energy of movement, that was as natural and true as the surf along their coast". Marlow realises that "they wanted no excuse for being there" (Conrad, 1973:20) and seeing that it is their home, they don't need one. The truth, that colonisation goes against the grain of all humanity, would stare Marlow in the eye like "a world of straight-forward facts; but the feeling would not last long" (Conrad, 1973:20). Even though Marlow is conscious of the atrocities of colonisation and imperialism, he is unable to totally cross the divide between self and other, evident from his words: "The man seemed young – almost a boy – but you know with *them* it's hard to tell" (Conrad, 1973:25, my italics).

Not only are the natives oppressed by the colonists, but they are also totally dehumanised. Throughout the novel there are many references to the natives likening them to animals, or animal-like imagery is used to describe them:

A slight clinking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path. They walked erect and slow, balancing small

baskets full of earth on their heads, and the clink kept time with their footsteps. Black rags were wound round their loins, and the short end behind waggled to and fro *like tails*. I could see every *rib*, the *joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope*; each had an *iron collar on his neck*... (Conrad, 1973:22, my italics).

They were dying slowly – it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthly now – *nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation*, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom. Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all the legality of time contracts, lost in uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient, and were *then allowed to crawl away and rest* (Conrad, 1973:24, my italics).

While I stood horror-struck, one of *these creatures* rose to his hands and knees, and *went off on all-fours* towards the river to drink. *He lapped out of his hand*, then sat up in the sunlight, crossing his shins in front of him, and after a time let his *woolly* head fall on his breastbone (Conrad, 1973:25, my italics).

These descriptions even go as far as to dehumanise them to such an extent that they become mere objects rather than animals: “nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation” (Conrad, 1973:24); “these creatures” (Conrad, 1973:25). Because the natives are seen as objects rather than subjects, dialogue is blocked off (Murray, 1987:128). Marlow voices the white imperialists’ impressions of the black other, but never gives voice to the black other’s impressions of the white imperialists.

Seeing that the narrative is a retelling of a tale told by Marlow, the story is told through the focalisation and perspective of Marlow, and not through that of the unknown narrator that retells his story. The three quotes above are therefore his own reactions to the visual images he encounters and he encapsulates his own world and life view. Even though his descriptions of what he sees are offensive and politically incorrect, there is a hint of judgment of the absurdities that accompany colonisation – if not in Marlow’s observation of what he encountered, then in the way Conrad describes what Marlow perceives. For, taking into account quote one, how can imperialists have the audacity to annex other people’s land, force the natives to work for them, make rules by which they must abide and then treat them as criminals when the natives do not adhere to their regulations? Or how can the white colonial imperialist have the audacity to “allow” a

people (quote two) that are totally dehumanised by their gaze (quote three), to “crawl away and rest” when the power that they have over them was not theirs to take in the first place? The colonialists are not emissaries of enlightenment, but murderers and oppressors.

The tension between order and chaos, as well as between appearance and reality, is emphasised when Marlow meets the Chief accountant. Amidst the chaos where “everything else in the station was in a muddle – heads, things, buildings” (Conrad, 1973:26), Marlow has great appreciation and admiration for the accountant for keeping up his appearance “in the great demoralization of the land”, for Marlow “respected his collars, his vast cuffs, his brushed hair” (Conrad, 1973:26). The internal confusion of righteousness within the accountant is hidden under an external layer of precision. He so much desires to be precise in his work that he loses all compassion, perspective and common humanity, for he states: “When one has got to make correct entries, one comes to hate those savages – hate them to the death” (Conrad, 1973:27).

Yet, is the oppression and destruction brought about by the social community to whom the accountant and Marlow belong, not the epitome of being uncivilised? The exactness of the accountant is in sharp contrast with the indefiniteness of what the colonialists are doing – is it right or wrong? This indeterminacy alludes to the opaqueness and enigmatic mystery of Kurtz, who is also introduced into the story by the accountant. He introduces Kurtz as a “first-class agent” who is a “very remarkable person” and who “sends in as much ivory as all the others put together...” (Conrad, 1973:27). The flies that buzz around peacefully might be a foreshadowing and foreboding of Kurtz’s death, for he seems to be the “Lord of the Flies” or Beelzebub, a term that is a literal translation of the Hebrew word for devil, who is drawn into the darkness of unrighteousness.

Kurtz is an ivory-hunter who is in charge of a very important trading post. The ivory represents something that is beautiful, but costly. Even though it is expensive and lavish, and symbolises luxury and “cultivated” taste, it is acquired through bloodshed, inhumanity, cruelty and uncultivated violence. The act of ivory-hunting is also symbolic

of the act of colonisation – “raping” and “pillaging” land or animals and taking, by brutal force, that which does not belong to one. According to Lothe (2000:163), the ivory metonymically represents the elephant and symbolically in a certain sense represents all of Africa, for the Belgians’ ruthless and violent exploitation of Africa was driven by a struggle with competitors for natural resources (Lothe, 2000:163). All this taken into account, Kurtz still manages to intrigue Marlow.

As if the madness and absurdity of the accountant’s justification for the (in no way noble) “cause” of the imperialists is not bad enough, it is very ironic that he should find something “Christian” in the jungle: “Perhaps on some quiet night the tremor of far-off drums, sinking, swelling, a tremor vast, faint; a sound weird, appealing, suggestive, and wild – and perhaps with as profound a meaning as the sound of bells in a Christian country” (Conrad, 1973:29). Not only do the imperialists superimpose their religion on the natives, but they also distort the very principles of Christianity to suit their needs. It is absurd that they can believe that they are obedient to the creed “love thy neighbour as thyself” when they are the instigators of oppression, slavery and greed. The painting done by Kurtz symbolises this contradiction.

When Marlow enters the manager’s room he finds that “native mats covered the clay walls; a collection of spears, assegais, shields, knives was hung up in trophies” (Conrad, 1973:34). One of the consequences of colonisation is the interpenetration and fusion of cultures which, as discussed in chapter 2, continues long after liberation and independence have been attained. It is the start of an interspersion of cultures that will continue long after liberation. The natives are changed by the infiltration of the white colonial culture and vice versa. The native mats, spears, assegais, shields and knives are appropriated by the white imperialist manager; they lose somewhat of their native cultural meaning and simultaneously attain a new meaning within a new white, imperialist cultural framework. Consequently, both the natives and the colonialists are hybrid people – appropriating cultural artifacts, norms and behaviours of the “other”, thereby relativising their fixity and decanonising their old, fixed meaning(s).

It is here that Marlow spots “a small sketch in oils, on a panel, representing a woman, draped and blindfolded, carrying a lighted torch” (Conrad, 1973:36). The blindfolded woman represents the colonialists that blindly believe their cause is righteous and just, and that they are “helping” the “barbaric” native to attain a higher status of cultivation and progress, no matter the means by which it is attained. One then has to ask: is the colonialist’s perception of progress the same as that of the native’s? The answer, of course, is no.

Throughout the novel Marlow is confronted by these contradictions and increasingly finds himself changing. After his white companion, who had come to the Congo “to make money” (Conrad, 1973:29) gets killed, Marlow remembers the old doctor who wanted to measure his cranium before leaving for the Congo, for it would be “interesting for science to watch the mental changes of individuals, on the spot” (Conrad, 1973:17). Marlow admits that *there are internal changes taking place inside him*, for he says: “I felt I was becoming scientifically interesting” (Conrad, 1973:29).

Going further up the river, Marlow realises that he is part of an imagined community that are imposters, for they fancied themselves to be “the first of men taking possession of an accursed inheritance, to be subdued at the cost of profound anguish and of *excessive toil*” (Conrad, 1973:51). He comes to the realisation that the natives are not inhuman, for “what thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity – like yours – the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar” (Conrad, 1973:51). By admitting to himself that there is in him the faintest trace of response to the terrible frankness of the noises of the jungle and its people, he admits that there is also something savage inherent in all humankind. Yet, the borderline that distinguishes the *civilised from the uncivilised is that of self-restraint*.

It is ironic that the colonisers show no self-restraint, while the natives do. As the steamboat makes its way to the last station, Marlow is joined by a boilermaker, a helmsman, several pilgrims, several deckhands (cannibals) and the manager of the second station. Conrad illustrates Marlow’s changing perspective in this scene involving

the cannibals. Even though the cannibals are practically starving – the hippo meat quickly turned rotten in the jungle heat and they were not paid enough to afford to buy rations at the periodic stops, the cannibals have enough self-restraint not to attack their fellow crewmembers. “Marlow comes to realise that these cannibals have a code by which they live that prevents them from attacking the men on board” and “Marlow, who lives by his own strict code of ethics, admires the strength he sees in the cannibals’ fortitude” (Novelguide, 2005).

Whereas Marlow perceived the maddening chaos of the jungle before, he now appreciates the primordial aspect of it, for he exclaims: “The smell of mud, of primeval mud, by Jove! was in my nostrils, the high stillness of primeval forest was before my eyes; there were shiny patches on the black creek” (Conrad, 1973:38). Marlow now admires the forest because it is untouched by human “progress” and cultivation (until now). This, in my opinion, links up intertextually with the Bible and the idea of prelapsarian times, before Adam and Eve unknowingly chose to end immortality through a lie – lying to God about eating from the Tree of Knowledge, Good and Evil. In fact, Marlow talks about this further on in the page:

I would not have gone so far as to fight for Kurtz, but I went for him near enough to a *lie*. You know I hate, detest, and can't bear a *lie*, not because I am straighter than the rest of us, but simply because it appalls me. There is a taint of *death*, a flavour of *mortality* in lies – which is exactly what I hate and detest in the world – what I want to forget. It makes me miserable and sick, like *biting* something rotten would do (Conrad, 1973:38, my italics).

Yet, in the end, Marlow commits the sin that he hates and detests most – he perpetuates the lie of Kurtz. Throughout the novel Marlow develops a greater awareness of the contradictions that are inherent in the actions of colonisation and men such as Kurtz, yet in the end he fails to act on it. In the end Marlow can no longer excuse his actions due to the fact that “ignorance is bliss” and he is fully accountable for “biting into a rotten apple”. Colonisation is greed and power-seeking masked in a lie – an ideology of “enlightenment”, “good intentions” and “progress” is used as an excuse

for injustice. Colonisation is a masked lie, just as Marlow's reply to Kurtz's Intended (his girlfriend or fiancée) is a lie.

After returning to London, Marlow goes to see Kurtz's Intended. His Intended believes Kurtz to have a "generous mind" and a "noble heart" and she fears she will forever mourn his death. She regrets that she could not have been with him during his death and asks Marlow to repeat his last words. Instead of telling her the truth, that he exclaimed "The horror! The horror!", he tells her that "the last word he pronounced was – your name" (Conrad, 1973:110). The question remains: Did Marlow lie in order to save her from the darkness that consumed Kurtz? Or did he lie because he did not want to face up to the reality that evil resides within the heart of humankind?

According to Murray (1987:129), Marlow is subjected to Kurtz's "monoglossia and the tyranny that goes along with it" when he "is himself subjected to it and manipulated by it at the end of the book when Kurtz's fiancé *forces* him to lie, and obliterates any possibility of the truth forcing itself into their conversation, and dialogizing her version of Kurtz".

The fact remains that Marlow commits the atrocity that he hates most. His experience has changed him. He has journeyed through a physical and metaphysical liminal space beyond the usual categories of civilisation – he has journeyed into the Congo (separation), he has been altered by his experiences (transition) and he has gone back to London (re-incorporation). And from his lie, it seems that he still has to come to terms with what has happened and that the journey to self-acceptance and enlightenment has just started; the journey to reconcile himself with his white ancestral roots and his sympathy (not empathy) for the black native "other". Not only does Marlow have to deal with his encounters in the Congo and his participation in the atrocities that occurred there, but he also has to come to terms with his participation in perpetuating the lie and the fact that he broke his own code of ethics.

4.6.2. Identity, Willard and *Apocalypse Now*

Whilst *Heart of Darkness* begins with the ethics and morals of the protagonist, Marlow, intact, *Apocalypse Now* begins in *medias res* with the protagonist, Willard, experiencing absolute turmoil. Like *Heart of Darkness*, however, the film should also be read as an interior journey, as Grant (2003:214) remarks in discussing the film's opening: "Willard is seen waking with a start from what seems to be a bad dream: close-up shots of his face invite us to see the superimposed images as part of his private vision of war; he burns a hole in his wife's photograph; he smashes his image in the mirror."

The first close-up shot of Willard's face is upside down. This is symbolic of the fact that Willard's life has been turned on its head: He has just received a letter from his wife petitioning for divorce and he seems to be going insane. There are short close-up shots of the chaos around him; letters are strewn about the room and empty liquor bottles are scattered everywhere. At one point he is doing martial arts in his underwear, at another he is butt naked and crying. He even breaks a mirror and wipes his face with his blood, as one would do in a war scene when painting one's face to camouflage oneself. When he looks into the broken mirror, multiple reflections stare back at him. The broken mirror might be symbolic of introspection and Willard's identity crisis as a result of his inability to come to terms with the images of war that still haunt him. The lighting of the room gives the impression that it is evening outside. But when Willard looks through the closed blinds, the viewer realises that it is day and the darkness of the room is in stark contrast with the sunlight outside. The closed blinds and the diffuse lighting is symbolic of Willard's attempt to keep "the world" out.

Like *Heart of Darkness*, the narration of *Apocalypse Now* is told in retrospect, for Willard states: "I *was going* to the worst place in the world, and I *didn't even know it yet*. Weeks away and hundreds of miles up a river that snakes through the war like a main circuit cable plugged me straight into Kurtz" (Coppola, 2001, my italics). But the telling seems to be closer to the protagonist's personal experience than that of Marlow in the

novella, because Willard retells his experience himself through voice-over narration, whilst an anonymous narrator retells Marlow's retelling in the novella.

Saved from his solitude and growing insanity, Willard is taken from the circumscribed space of his hotel room in Saigon, to meet American officers. There he is delegated the mission to follow Kurtz, infiltrate his team and terminate his command. Kurtz, a former Operations Commander in the Special Forces, now lives as a god among the natives of Cambodia. He has supposedly organised the execution of Vietnamese Intelligence agents, which he believed to be double agents. Thus, Willard is an assassin, which is strongly in contrast with the romantic and ethical soul of Marlow.

Before setting out on his mission, Willard remarks of war: "Charging a man with murder in this place is like handing out speeding tickets at the Indy 500" (Coppola, 2001). Those that take part in the war are all guilty of murder. Yet it is murder that is born out of "necessity" and the Darwinian survival of the fittest, the Nietzschean Will to Power, and the ideology of "either you or me". When Willard finally leaves Saigon to start his mission, the scene reminds one of the opening of *Heart of Darkness*.

As Willard departs it seems to be daybreak; the sun breaks through the clouds in the distance in the direction Willard is headed. The silhouette of the river patrol boat is half illuminated by the sideways rays of the breaking sun. Like *Heart of Darkness*, the journey that seems to be a journey into light, shortly becomes a journey into persistent smoke, purple haze, dust and fog. At almost every stop Willard and the PBR crew make, their vision is impaired by fog, the dark lighting of an overcast sky, the black smoke that results from explosions and fire, or the dust that is swept up into the air by helicopter blades. Their impaired vision symbolises the crew's attempts to make sense of the things they experience or come across; they constantly travel into the unknown and they are fearful of it.

Whereas Marlow sets out on his journey on board a steamer, Willard starts his mission on board a navy patrol boat. Like the crew in *Heart of Darkness*, which consists of an

unknown narrator, the Captain or Director of Companies, a lawyer, an accountant, and a seaman named Marlow, the crew of *Apocalypse Now* also consists of five men: Willard joins a seventeen-year-old boy named Clean, Chef from New Orleans, a famous surfer known as Lance, and Phillips, the chief of the boat. Willard's isolation is evident from his body choreography on the boat; he often sits with his back to the others while studying Kurtz's dossier. Unlike them he does not frequently engage in conversation and closes himself off physically, as can be inferred from his body choreography, and metaphysically, by keeping to himself and not engaging in dialogue very often. The characters and the comparison between the characters of *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* have already been discussed under the heading "Comparison of Lance, Kilgore, Chef and Chief Phillips".

During his journey, Willard is confronted with many absurd and/or grotesque situations that stir up his life and world view and ultimately change who he is – his identity. Cahir (2004:185) points to this journey into the psyche and the self, for she states that the journey upstream is "a movement to the deepest interior, symbolic of the psychological journey made by Marlow/Willard". In *Apocalypse Now*, Willard initially emerges as fragmented and corrupt in professional terms, for he is an assassin. Paradoxically, Kurtz is the man who appears to be solid and dedicated, for he has done his best to become the absolute officer and soldier. Willard's professional emptiness is juxtaposed with Marlow's good work-ethic and pride in his craftsmanship in the scene where Willard comes face to face with Kurtz. When Kurtz asks Willard: "Are you an assassin?", Willard replies, "I'm a soldier", but Kurtz quickly corrects him: "You're neither. You're an errand boy sent by grocery clerks to collect the bill" (Greiff, 1992:189-190). Willard and the American soldiers are governed by the American bureaucracy: what the bureaucracy say, goes. They are expendable "slaves" or "clerks" that have to do what they are told, even if they do not agree with it. If they refuse, they will be charged and thrown into prison. Kurtz's insanity has become too costly for the Army; he has to be killed because he murders outside their rules. They fear Kurtz because he threatens their Nietzschean will to power: Kurtz threatens to level the quanta of power of higher ranked officials and they cannot allow this. The "bill" Kurtz will have to pay must be paid

with his body – he must die. Willard has no power himself, he is merely “an errand boy” sent by higher authorities to do their dirty work for them.

Bakhtin's idea of the grotesque body where degradation is inevitably linked to regeneration can be found in the episode where Willard gets assigned his mission. As discussed in Chapter Two, the grotesque body, to Bakhtin, is “a body in which becoming rather than completion is evident, a body whose openness to the world and the future is emphatically symbolised by the consuming maws, pregnant stomachs, evident phalluses and gargantuan evacuations that make it up” (Dentiith, 1995:68). That is why the body which eats, digests, copulates, and defecates is a positive sign of life, of movement and dynamism. Willard, much like Marlow, gets ushered into the Company's inner offices by two attendants. In Willard's case, he is ushered in by the U.S. Army. Cahir (2004:184) sketches the grotesque and horrific situation Willard finds in the confines of the Army officers' office: “fleshy roast beef, rare, is aggressively stabbed and cut; prawns (still with their heads) form a grotesque swarm on a platter; and the tape recorder which plays Kurtz's peculiar musings was made by “Sony,” a Japanese company”. Although America was at war with the Vietnamese and not the Japanese, the Japanese are representative of the whole subaltern Orient. Not only are the visual images vulgarly carnivorous, but it is also very ironic that the tape recorder is made by the “enemy” that is representative of the East. The grotesque images of the “consuming maws” that manage to eat with so much pleasure at such a horrific point in history, becomes symbolic of Willard's journey that has just begun. Bakhtin celebrated the body in which becoming rather than completion is evident. Willard's journey is also a journey in the becoming, open to multiple discourses, and it also foreshadows the evils and the butchery that Willard will come to face.

The objective of Willard's first stop is to meet the Air Cavalry who will escort him to the Nung River. Similar to Marlow's first stop at the government seat at the mouth of the river, Willard here meets the horrors of imperialism. Cahir (2004:184) points out the absurdity of the United States' formidable war machinery, when juxtaposed with straw huts and the civilians, women and children, that make up the scene. “Natives,

apparently unarmed, are facelessly butchered” and the scene is “a madman’s burlesque”. The air strike on and occupation of the Viet Cong village serves no military purpose; the only reason Kilgore attacks and occupies the village is because it is the only cove that has waves that break in two ways at once and is therefore great for surfing (Greiff, 1992:194). A lot of bird’s eye view camera angles are used in this scene to represent the hierarchy in power relations between the army and the villagers; the Americans are in a superior position to the defenceless natives. The bird’s eye view camera angles also evoke the great distance between the American selves and the native “others”.

Captain Kilgore, played by Robert Duvall, who apparently likes to “kill” and welcomes the “gore” of war, epitomises the absurdity of war. Kilgore can be likened to the accountant in *Heart of Darkness* with regard to his appearance, because he moves “unscathed and unsmudged through the explosive horror” with his neatly creased shirt, his cavalry hat and yellow ascot (Cahir, 2004:185).

In another scene, Kilgore aims to hold a beach party amidst the chaos and the tumultuousness of the war. They grill steaks and drink beer and he even forces Lance to surf. After the air cavalry unit, commanded by Kilgore, has won a battle against their Vietnamese enemies, Lance and Kilgore meet: A wounded Vietnamese soldier lies dying, begging his seemingly indifferent American and South Vietnamese captors for water. Kilgore, apparently enraged about their indifference, says that any enemy brave enough to fight him is worthy enough to drink from his canteen. But before he can help the dying Vietnamese soldier, he learns that Lance, a well-known surfer, is present. He quickly forgets about the dying soldier and casts his canteen aside, resolute to make Lance catch the perfect wave. It is totally absurd that he manages to have frivolous fun during a serious time of war as he moves fearlessly through the crowds, totally unscathed physically and emotionally, by the bombs and the bullets that kill so many people around him.

When the PBR stops to refuel, Willard also “comes upon a bizarre attempt at a USO show, staged in the midst of a war-torn jungle” (Cahir, 2004:185). That evening a spectacular show is staged with Calendar girls to reward the soldiers for their hard work. Three girls, scantily dressed, are dancing around seductively with guns in their hands. The manner in which the girls succeed in making instruments of death and destruction seem alluring and sensual, is quite bizarre.

Worthy (1996:161) states that through these absurd situations, Coppola, like Conrad,

plainly disdains the contradictions in a society declared to be democratic. Coppola’s ironic stance toward American escapism in *Apocalypse Now*’s water-skiing and surfing scene, and the *Playboy Bunnies* scene, is dryly humorous about, and critical of, the masculine love of technological power (phallic missiles are a prominent part of the set).

The insanity and chaos of war is further emphasised in Captain Willard’s stop at the last Army outpost along the river. Nightmarish and hellish visions of “living bodies, swirling in a Dantesque pool of water and crying out to be saved” (Cahir, 2004:185) fill the screen. A trance-like atmosphere is created through a strobe effect of the gunfire that lights the darkened night, together with eerie music and the sound of bombs exploding amidst human cries. Willard tries to find the Commanding Officer, but learns that there is no Commanding Officer: “chaos has no order” amidst the purgatory of war.

Not only is there a dialogue between the two protagonists’ identity crises which spring from different socio-historic contexts and imagined communities, but also is there an intertextual dialogue with other texts that enrich the reading of the ur-texts.

4.7. Intertextual conversations between texts

In both the film and the novel, the perimeter of Kurtz’s compound is decorated with the ornamentation of human heads and the reader/viewer is cued: “a threshold beyond the pale is about to be crossed” (Cahir, 2004:186). The heads impaled on the stakes in

Heart of Darkness are images of discrowning, Guimond and Maynard (2001:335) argue. Bakhtin describes the concept of crowning and discrowning as a reference to historical folk traditions of crowning a mock king or lord of misrule for carnival festivities, but Guimond and Maynard (2001:334) believe it can also be related metaphorically to the political question of authority. Renaissance traitors or rebels who dared to oppose the authority of a king or emperor were beheaded or “discrowned” to expose the distorted, vulnerable body of their corpses. The human heads around Kurtz’s compound are a display of his authorial, centripetal force and monoglossic power.

After crossing the threshold, Willard comes face to face with Kurtz, who is initially, and symbolically, drenched in darkness. According to Cahir (2004:186), *Heart of Darkness* hints at rites performed by Kurtz, but these rituals remain unspoken and vague. The rituals have deified Kurtz for the natives, yet they are so shocking that Marlow decides not to report them. In his article, “The Unspeakable Rites in *Heart of Darkness*”, Stephen Reid (as quoted by Cahir, 2004:186) contends that the rituals involve human sacrifice and subsequent consumption of a portion of the sacrificial victim, much like African tyrant Idi Dada Amin did. Reid “cites the passages in Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* which discuss these rituals as performed by the natives in the Congo”.

In a close-up shot of the books that Kurtz is reading, the following books can be distinguished: *The Golden Bough*, the *Bible* and Jessie L. Weston’s *From Ritual to Romance*. The characteristic that all these books share is that they are centered around the mythic pattern of death and rebirth. Kurtz recites a part of T.S. Eliot’s poem “The Hollow Men” to Willard. Cahir (2004:186) states that Eliot’s 1922 poem “The Waste Land” draws in great part from the *Bible*, *The Golden Bough* and *From Ritual to Romance*, and “shows us the horror of an infertile, barren land, void of the rejuvenating power of a hero/god”. “The Hollow Men” is furthermore intertextual with *Heart of Darkness*, in that Eliot uses a line from the novella “Mistah Kurtz – he dead” (Conrad, 1973:100) as epigram to his poem.

Sharrett (2001:73) claims that Coppola's use of Eliot and Conrad is not incidental, especially the assassination of the patriarchal Kurtz at the end. He feels that *Apocalypse Now* has more in common with Eliot and Conrad than with the literature of the Vietnam era:

Just as Eliot mourned the decline of the West, Coppola laments America at the end of its road, and the bloated figure of Brando's Kurtz seems the perfect symbol of American waste, excess and arrogance in the final quartet of the 20th century. The references to television, pornography, consumer goods, rock music, and surfing fill out Coppola's picture of a modern wasteland that will not be redeemed by collective slaughters intended to a new social consensus amid spiritual bankruptcy (Sharrett, 2001:73).

Doherty (2001:31) is also of the opinion that Eliot picks up on the theme of devolution after the carnage of the "Great War" by scrawling "Mistah Kurtz – he dead/ A penny for the Old Guy", as the epigram for "The Hollow Men". He views it as "another of his elegies for the wasteland of Judeo-Christian, Greco-Roman civilization in a modern world all too in touch with its inner savage".

4.7.1. The Hollow Man

In the novel, the reader learns that Kurtz, despite his German name, is a cultural hybrid: "His mother was half-English, his father was half-French. All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz..." (Conrad, 1973:71). Greiff (1992:194) is of the opinion that Conrad uses Marlow and Kurtz in the novella to reflect Western culture as a whole; through the use of Kurtz, Conrad wishes to expose all Europe's capacity for savagery disguised as enlightenment. Greiff furthermore contends that all of Europe also contributed to the making of Conrad, the Pole turned Englishman, in a certain sense. Through the characters of Marlow and Kurtz, Conrad wishes to portray the multitude of dimensions a Western man can consist of – the capability for compassion and the high standard of ethics, as well as the capability of evil and the discarding of a code of ethics to live by.

In the novella Kurtz is regularly characterised by his eloquence, yet the reader never gets to experience this directly, since his actual reported speech is heavily dialogised by other characters (Murray, 1987:125). The reader has to rely on what other characters, the Russian, the manager or the accountant for example, have to say about him. And the positive things they say about him is dialogised by Marlow's negative impressions of him. Marlow remarks of Kurtz that it "echoed loudly within him because he was hollow at the core..." (Conrad, 1973:83). Murray (1987:126) contends that the "echoing hollowness here is a good image of the ultimate emptiness of monoglossia, language which excludes all others". Kurtz has lost all self-restraint; his "soul" has gone "mad" (Conrad, 1973:95) because there is no dialogue between the Will to Power and the Will to Peace, or selfishness and compassion. Selfishness and the Will to Power have a one-sided monologue in his soul.

Guimond and Maynard (2001:332) contend that Conrad uses the device which Ian Watt and Cedric Watts call "delayed decoding" in an especially ironic way to dialogise Kurtz's moral character. They quote Marlow's words at the end of part one, which states that he was "curious to see whether this man, who had come out equipped with moral ideas of some sort, would climb to the top after all..." (Conrad, 1973:44). Yet the moral character of these ideas are specified only 26 pages later; Kurtz's immoral acts contradict his aspirant moral ideals for he "had taken a high seat amongst the devils of the land" (Conrad, 1973:70) and Marlow describes his "unsound method" as "no method at all" (Conrad, 1973:89). Marlow initially describes Kurtz's seventeen-page report written to the Suppression of Savage Customs for its future guidance as "vibrating with eloquence" (Conrad, 1973:71), but when his report ends with the words "Exterminate all the brutes!" (Conrad, 1973:72) it dialogises Kurtz's (im)moral fibre and subverts the authority of his imperial voice.

Western man's capacity for savagery disguised as enlightenment is clear from Kurtz's credentials. Colonel Walter E. Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now*, is considered to be "one of the most outstanding officer's this country's produced" (Coppola, 2001), for "he graduated from West Point at the top of his class, held an M.A. from Harvard, and had been

rewarded 'about a thousand [military] medals'" (Cahir, 2004:182). Civilisation, "progress" and humanitarianism do not necessarily have to do with education and knowledge, for Kurtz is a learned man that could easily distinguish between right and wrong, yet chooses to embrace the evil inherent in him. Not even the cannibals in *Heart of Darkness*, though starving, break their code of ethics on board the *Nellie*. Yet Kurtz, in both the novella and the film, without any justified reason, makes a conscious decision to pillage and murder.

It is more than just a case of good versus evil, though. When Kurtz recounts an occurrence in the Special Forces during which the enemy hacked off children's arms that have been inoculated for polio, he realises that these men are not monsters, but loving husbands and fathers. The epiphany hits him like a diamond bullet that these men had the strength to do what it takes to ensure that they achieve their goals. These men utilised their primordial instinct to kill, not out of judgment or anger or revenge, but out of a necessity and Darwinian will to (over)power. The killing was not sadistic or impulsive, but a calculated, cool, calm and collected offering of children in order to win. These men have taught Kurtz to glorify the Will to Power and that any offering is a justified price to pay for victory.

This is what distinguishes Kurtz as a "hollow" man. Kurtz is so much of an enigma that no-one can pin-point him, for Marlow admits that "to this day I am unable to say what was Kurtz's profession, whether he ever had any – which was the greatest of his talents. I had taken him for a painter who wrote for the papers, or else for a journalist who could paint – but even the cousin (who took snuff during the interview) could not tell me what he had been – exactly" (Conrad, 1973:103). Kurtz is so opaque and multi-dimensional externally that he vaporises into a phantom of nothingness internally.

Kilgore is almost as much of a hollow man as Kurtz is, but there is a fundamental difference between them: Kilgore enjoys his killing *within* the boundaries of "civilisation" and the rules of the army and therefore he is, in my opinion, *immoral*, whilst Kurtz enjoys

his killing *outside* the boundaries of “civilisation” and the rules of the army and therefore, I believe him to be amoral.

Kilgore especially reminds one of Kurtz in the scene where he and other soldiers are having a night “beach party” with beers and T-bone steaks around a beach fire. The soldiers sit around him, filled with admiration, while he plays his guitar. He mirrors a cult-leader figure, much like Kurtz resembles a cult-leader figure in the scene where he reads articles to Willard from *Time* magazine and children drone all around him. Kilgore has so much power over his soldiers that he even gets some of them to surf amid a hailstorm of bombs and bullets. Willard remarks of Kilgore: “Well, he wasn’t a bad officer, I guess. He loved his boys and he felt safe with them. He was one of those guys that had that weird light around him. He knew he wasn’t going to get as much as a scratch here” (Coppola, 2001).

Like Kurtz, Kilgore does not want to return home. He enjoys the adrenaline rush of the war and remarks with lament that “some day this war’s gonna end” (Coppola, 2001). Kurtz has left his wife and son behind; he has started a new life in Cambodia and has no plans to return home.

4.7.2. Myth

T.S. Eliot dialogises Conrad in “The Waste Land”, for where Conrad relates the modern Thames to historical times and to empire and conquest, Eliot transposes it into myth (Murray, 1987:131). The title of Eliot’s “The Waste Land” refers to a myth in Weston’s *From Ritual to Romance*, where an injury to the king’s genitals, the Fisher King to be exact, has rendered him infertile. The king’s infertility also affects the kingdom itself, for the kingdom has dried up and has turned into a wasteland. A hero is needed to restore the kingdom’s regenerative power, and he therefore has to complete several tasks/trials. This myth is the basis for various other quest stories from many cultures, one of which is

the Christian quest for the Holy Grail. Many regard Eliot's poem to be a reflection of his disillusionment with the moral decay of post-World War I Europe (eNotes, 2005).

It is, therefore, fitting that the myth which informed Eliot's famous poem is also alluded to intertextually in *Apocalypse Now*. War brings about death and destruction and sterility to the minds, hearts and lands of people. Willard becomes the "hero" that must kill Kurtz in order to restore order and goodness to the land and its people.

Both Marlow and Willard can be regarded as "prophets" who journey into the dark recesses of the human soul. True to the mythic tradition, Marlow and Willard are accompanied by a guide or seer who never completes the journey himself: In *Heart of Darkness* Marlow is guided by a mad Russian and in *Apocalypse Now* Willard is led by a fundamentalist American photojournalist, played by Dennis Hopper (Cahir, 2004:186).

Initially, in *Heart of Darkness*, Kurtz might be compared to Jesus in the Bible. He is a very charismatic man who has made a big impression on a lot of people who admire him almost religiously. The accountant calls him a "very remarkable person" (Conrad, 1973:27), Kurtz's mad Russian follower is described as his "last disciple" (Conrad, 1973:84) who believes Kurtz "enlarged" his "mind" (Conrad, 1973:91), and his Intended states that "he drew men towards him by what was best in them" (Conrad, 1973:108). Throughout the novella, however, it becomes apparent that Kurtz possesses the type of dark magnetism a cult leader would have, rather than the good intentioned magnetism a figure like Jesus had. He is a Charles Manson or David Koresh who systematically lures and draws people closer into his power, blinding them to what he truly is. This links up with the newspaper clipping of Charles Manson's killings in a letter, moments before Clean is killed in an attack from the riverside; the insanity of war is emphasised. No wonder that in the end, he is nothing more than a "hollow" man, reduced to an "atrocious phantom" or "apparition" (Conrad, 1973:85), who has much the same effect on his followers. They are stuffed with the straw of his lies and have become so blinded by his ideas and charisma that they are stripped of an identity of their own. Kurtz's followers move like zombies about the paradise he has created for them and for himself,

entranced by his words and intoxicated by his command. Most are smeared with war-paint and walk around with spears, ready to defend Kurtz should there be any threat from the outside world.

In *Apocalypse Now*, Kurtz also mirrors a Jesus-figure in the scene where he reads articles to Willard from *Time* magazine, after Willard has been imprisoned in an underground "dungeon". The scene begins with children looking through zinc holes down at Willard who is imprisoned in a deep, dark hole. Tens of children swarm around Kurtz, echoing the scripture of Matthew 19:14 in the Bible where Jesus chastises the people for trying to keep the children away from him and tells them not to forbid the little children to come unto Him. The neurotic American photojournalist also tells Willard that "we are all his children" (Coppola, 2001).

It is also interesting to note that Richard Wagner, whose "Flight of the Valkyries" is requested by Kilgore during the air strike and famous helicopter attack scene, was very interested in the Christian version of the Grail legend. Wagner said that "the grail, according to my own interpretation, is the goblet used at the Last Supper, in which Joseph of Arimathea caught the Saviour's blood on the Cross" (Everett, 2005).

One wonders why Kurtz does not kill Willard instantly when he arrives at his compound. He knows that Willard has been sent to assassinate him, but instead of killing him, he just imprisons him. It might be that Kurtz's ego gets the better of him and that he believes he is so powerful that he can sway Willard to become one of his followers, like he did with many of the assassins that preceded Willard. I think, however, Kurtz knew that things could no longer go on like they did. Willard also discloses that Kurtz "knew I wasn't going anywhere. He knew more about what I was going to do than I did" (Coppola, 2001). Though Kurtz knew things could not go on the way they did, he was already beyond the point of no return, and therefore he would not leave his compound and go home, but wanted to die by the hands of a soldier. Willard remarks that Kurtz wanted him to take the pain away. He does not specify what that pain is, however.

4.7.3. The Doors

The use of The Doors' song to announce the end of the world as one knows it at the beginning of the film is very significant. A film's soundtrack often serves a very symbolic purpose to complement the themes explored in the film. The Doors is an American rock group that featured in the seventies, and even though they weren't mainstream, they soon became part of the American popular culture. Greiff (1992:188) states that

Coppola's musical frame creates an appropriate bridge between the bizarre tale about to unfold and the wider context of modern cultural experience. With rock music as frame, and particularly with The Doors, Coppola has found an image to conflate nightmare with normalcy – the worst extremes of Vietnam with the givens of American life. Wild, destructive, and self-destructive as it can become, rock music is also inseparable from our daily lives as Americans – as common and accessible to all of us as the portable radio beside the desk at which I write.

During his forming years, Jim Morrison, lead singer of The Doors, was an avid reader. He was interested in Nietzsche, Plutarch, Ginsberg, Michael McClure, James T. Farrell's *Studs Lonigan*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Balzac, and the French Symbolists (most important of these poets being Arthur Rimbaud, about whom Morrison would write the song "Wild Child"). By the time he reached the age of fifteen, Jim was writing poetry, was painting, and was identified as having an I.Q. of 149. He later on formed the rock group The Doors and continued to write poems. Throughout his career, Jim Morrison continued to experiment with drugs and alcohol – which would also lead to his death (Music Effect, 2001).

According to Danny Sugerman (1995), The Doors was "somewhat of an anomaly in the rock pantheon, for their music could not be categorised". They didn't fully belong to the folk-rock scene of bands like the Byrds, yet also didn't fit in with the categorisation of performers like Elvis, Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix. Their goal, in Sugerman's opinion, was to "wed rock music unlike any ever heard before with poetry and that hybrid with theater and drama". Jim believed that the writer or artist's power lies in his ability to receive as well as invent, and that it was the artist's duty to do everything to increase his

powers of perception. Nineteenth-century symbolist poet, Arthur Rimbaud, had advocated a systematic “rational derangement of the senses”. Jim is known for the quote: “There are things known, and there are things unknown, and in between are the doors”. To Jim, and many symbolist poets, the doors of perception could easily be opened through the ingestion of drugs. Jim took drugs to expand his consciousness, to gain entry into worlds otherwise locked and sealed off and

like the romantic poets, he revelled in the altering of his senses with anything available – wine, hash, whiskey. If absinthe had been around during his lifetime, Morrison might very well have been an absinthe drinker. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James wrote what Jim already knew: ‘Sobriety diminishes, discriminates, and says no; drunkenness expands, unites, and says yes’ (Sugerman, 1995).

Jim was much influenced by Aldous Huxley’s article entitled “The Doors of Perception” in which he advocated the intake of LSD to open up doors to revelation.

Taking into account the above-mentioned, it is ironic that one of the “hollow” men in *Apocalypse Now*, the surfer Lance, takes LSD. The LSD he ingests does not help him to reach a higher level of consciousness, perception or reception, however, but is merely nightmarish. His behaviour continues to grow more insane throughout the journey and this alludes to the effect that war has on the psyche of its victims. Lance’s moral deterioration has already been discussed under 4.5.1.

Neither Marlow nor Willard ingests mind-altering drugs at the beginning of their respective journeys, yet they have a natural capability for clear-sightedness that lies latent beneath the surface. The wilderness has a type of dreamy, narcotic and surreal effect on Marlow. After he has met the mad Russian who leads him into the realm of Kurtz, Marlow seems to become intoxicated by the primordial chanting and music of the natives: “The monotonous beating of a big drum filled the air with muffled shocks and a lingering vibration. A steady droning sound of many men chanting each to himself some weird incantation came out from the black, flat wall of the woods as the humming of bees comes out of a hive, and had a strange narcotic effect upon my half-awake

senses" (Conrad, 1973:91-92). Marlow seems to reach a hypnotic state where he is unable to distinguish between dream and reality. It is at the culmination of his physical passing of Kurtz's threshold and Kurtz's metaphysical passing of the threshold between life and death, that they come to some insight about the human soul. This revelation will be discussed under the heading "*Heart of Darkness and Apocalypse Now in conversation with the apocalyptic*".

An extract of the song sung by The Doors at the beginning of *Apocalypse Now* is given by Grant (2003:215):

Can you picture what will be, So limitless and free
Desperately in need...of some...stranger's hand
In a...desperate land
Lost in a Roman...wilderness of pain

These lyrics might refer to the legacy of colonisation and imperialism left by the Roman Empire and to the bloodshed that accompanied it. According to Porter (1997:93), the "degeneracy of French society seemed to have been foreshadowed by the decline and fall of the ancient Roman and Byzantine Empires". It might also link up intertextually with Marlow's tale, in which imperialism and colonisation are introduced as central themes that accompany the narratological, physical and inward journey of the novella: "I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago – the other day..." (Conrad, 1973:8). According to Sugerman (2005), these lines are "an epitaph for the moment, a photograph of the collective unconscious", symbols that are "timeless and the words contained stored-up images and energies thousands of years old, now resurrected". Within the context of the film, it becomes symbolic of the wilderness of pain that war inflicts on its victims, leaving the physical and emotional landscape of the inhabitants sterile, barren and fruitless, much like Eliot's "The Waste Land".

4.8. *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* in dialogue with apocalyptic, symbolist and postcolonial characteristics

In the first and third chapter of this dissertation, I contended that both *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* are hybrid texts in that they possess salient characteristics of four or more of the following movements or genres: modernism, realism, symbolism, impressionism, postcolonialism and/or the apocalyptic. In this chapter I wish to analyse both texts according to some of their apocalyptic, symbolist and postcolonial characteristics, because I find these movements/genres most importantly linked to the themes of identity, liminality, and borders and boundaries that inform the texts. A discussion is to follow on how these salient characteristics engage in a polyphonic dialogue with issues of identity, liminality, boundaries, war, colonisation and imperialism and the ways in which they dialogise these discourses, as apocalyptic, symbolist and postcolonial voices struggling for dominance in the texts.

4.8.1. *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* in dialogue with the apocalyptic

In Chapter Three of this dissertation, I quoted Northrop Frye's definition of the Greek word for revelation, *apocalypsis*, as "the metaphorical sense of uncovering or taking a lid off" for *aletheia*, meaning truth, "begins with a negative particle which suggest that truth was originally thought of as also a kind of unveiling, a removal of the curtains of forgetfulness in the mind". I think that the concept of mysticism is applicable here as will be made clear, after the concept of mysticism has been discussed.

Olivier (1992:311) defines Mysticism as a concept that originates from the Greek word *muein* (to close the eyes) and *mustérion* (mystery). The concept has many divergent meanings, but ultimately it can be described as the recognition of and the meeting and unification with the godly. Within Christian mysticism, there is a seemingly irreconcilable gulf that originated between God and humankind with the Fall. The nature of the mystic reconciliation is universal. The mystic tries to be an active participant in the process and tries to rid himself/herself of his/her humanity. Despite the mystic's effort, he/she stays a

passive partner, waiting for the moment of absolute bliss. The moment comes unexpectedly and fills the mystic with happiness and destroys all concepts of time and space. A paradoxical relationship is found between timelessness/eternity and the fleeting moment. Within mysticism there is an attempt to reconcile paradoxes.

In *Heart of Darkness* there is also an unveiling of truth, or fleeting moments of unveiling truths, which is discovered by both Kurtz and Marlow. Marlow's realisation after he has seen the ornamentation of human heads around Kurtz's compound foreshadows this unveiling of truth:

They only showed that Mr Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts, that there was something wanting in him – some small matter which, when the pressing need arose, could not be found under his magnificent eloquence. Whether he knew of his deficiency himself I can't say. *I think the knowledge came to him at last – only at the very last* (Conrad, 1973:83, my italics).

Apocalypse presents itself as a medium of transcendence and lays claim to a form of knowledge not accessible to ordinary ways of knowing. When Marlow falls asleep outside Kurtz's cabin, he is roused by the chanting of the natives and looks into Kurtz's cabin, only to discover that he isn't there. He is terrified to find the cabin empty, for he has no idea where Kurtz might be or what he might be up to. The epiphanies are thrust upon Marlow and he cannot seek them for himself, for he admits that "what made this emotion so overpowering was...the moral shock" he received, "as if something altogether monstrous, intolerable to thought and odious to the soul, had been thrust upon" him "unexpectedly" (Conrad, 1973:92).

Marlow soon finds his trail in the grass and describes Kurtz as having "antelope horns", as "some sorcerer, some witch-man" (Conrad, 1973:94). He confronts Kurtz and asks him whether he knows what he is doing. When Kurtz replies that he knows perfectly well what he is doing, Marlow once more gets a mystic "flash of inspiration" (Conrad, 1973:94), for he knows he is faced with the "devil" and this is his chance to try and let him see the error of his ways. He tells Kurtz that his soul will be utterly lost, but Kurtz

does not want to be redeemed. Marlow admits that “if anybody had ever struggled with a soul, I am the man” (Conrad, 1973:95). Not only does Marlow struggle to save the soul of Kurtz or even to understand Kurtz’s soul, but he also struggles to come to terms with the fact that there is a dormant Kurtz lurking in the soul of every human being. Marlow realises that Kurtz’s soul is mad and that “being alone in the wilderness, it had looked within itself, and, by heavens! I tell you, it had gone mad” (Conrad, 1973:95).

As Kurtz lies in his cabin a few days later, dying, Marlow experiences a revelation: “It was as though a veil had been rent. I saw on that ivory face the expression of somber pride, of ruthless power, of craven terror – of an intense and hopeless despair” (Conrad, 1973:99). When Kurtz dies, he cries out the infamous words, “The horror! The horror!” (Conrad, 1973:100). In that moment of Kurtz’s passing, Marlow admits that he “had peeped over the edge” (Conrad, 1973:101) himself and that it had the “appalling face of a glimpsed truth”, and he realises that there are no excuses for what Kurtz had done. Kurtz was not mad psychologically; his soul was mad. He gave in to the evil lurking inside of us all and lost all self-restraint, embracing the monster of power inside of him, committing evil deeds not so much because he wanted to, but merely because he could.

Guimond and Maynard (2001:335) point out that Conrad often gives his readers ferociously ironic epitaphs by nameless, marginal characters whose language or ideology is the opposite of that of the proclamatory characters. Kurtz’s powerful epitaph on himself – “The horror! The horror!” (Conrad, 1973:100) – is dialogised and undermined by the announcement of his death by the unnamed manager’s servant – “Mistah Kurtz – he dead” (Conrad, 1973:100).

Kurtz, as a liminal man, has crossed many thresholds during his lifetime. He has physically crossed the threshold of the continent of Africa, he has metaphysically crossed the threshold of all self-restraint and compassion, and now finally, he steps “over the threshold of the invisible” (Conrad, 1973:101) – he dies. But unlike other liminal men or women, he has reached the point of no return and his soul is lost forever. There is no liminal return or re-incorporation from the abyss he himself has made.

Therefore, when he cries out: “The horror! The horror!” (Conrad, 1973:100) the reader does not know whether he cries out because he finally realises his evil deeds and they are the horror he refers to, or whether he crosses the threshold of death, chooses not to repent and the horror he refers to is the judgment he has to face in the next world. Whatever the case may be, Kurtz has an epiphany or revelation in the fleeting moment of his death, and although Marlow cannot experience that exact revelation himself, his observation of Kurtz rouses him to his own epiphany about the evil inherent in humankind.

In *Apocalypse Now*, Willard also comes across human heads used as ornamentation. When he approaches Kurtz’s compound, he is greeted by dead bodies that lie scattered across the jungle floor. Some naked bodies even hang from the trees and human heads are visible in the background. Willard, and the viewer, soon realise that he is entering a liminal space where new rules count; rules, or rather a lack thereof, that go beyond humanitarian civilisation. A type of lawlessness, anarchism, nihilism reigns in Kurtz’s amoral mini-universe. Willard threatens Kurtz’s dystopic utopia, symbolised by the bird’s eye view camera angles of Willard, sitting on the roof of the PBR and looking down at the natives standing in the boats, armed with spears. The positioning of Willard as “higher” than Kurtz’s Cambodian tribe members through bird’s eye view camera angles symbolises the power Willard possesses; should he succeed in his plans to assassinate Kurtz, Kurtz will be dethroned and their “utopia” will be endangered. The natives crowd Willard, and a circular camera-shot cues the viewer that a turning point has been reached. Willard’s voiceover states that it smells like “slow death in there, malaria and nightmares – this was the end of the river all right” (Coppola, 2001).

After Willard has been taken prisoner, he comes to the same realisation that Marlow comes to – “the man is clear in his mind, but his soul is mad” (Coppola, 2001). Kurtz confronts Willard, making him aware of his own sins:

I’ve seen the horror. The horrors that you’ve seen. But you have no right to call me a murderer. You have the right to kill me, you have the right to do that, but you have no right to judge me (Coppola, 2001).

Kurtz's statement is justified, for they all have blood on their hands and as soldiers they are all guilty of killing. One is left to ask: Is murder ever justified? The thin line dividing cold-blooded murderers and necessity-bound killers becomes apparent, however, when Kurtz gives a blood chilling account of what happened when he was in the special forces. He remembers that they went into a camp to inoculate the children for polio and after they had left the camp, an old man came running after them, crying. When they went back they discovered that the enemy had come and hacked off all the inoculated arms. At that moment Kurtz comes to his own revelation about the war and about the soldiers who had done that:

There they were in a pile. A pile of little arms and I remember I cried, I wept like some grandmother. I wanted to tear my teeth out. I didn't know what I wanted to do, and I want to remember it, I never want to forget. I never want to forget. And then I realized – like I was shot with a diamond. A diamond bullet right through my forehead. And I thought – my God – the genius of that. The genius, the will to do that... You have to have men who are moral and at the same time who are able to utilize their primordial instincts to kill, without feeling, without passion, without judgment – without judgment. Because it's judgment that defeats us (Coppola, 2001).

Kurtz comes to the distorted realisation that one has to have the willpower to do what one has to do to get the job done, even if the price is to go beyond the normal rules of civilisation. The Special Forces's act is the quintessence of the Will to Power and inhuman ruthlessness. Kurtz has rebelled against, upturned and decanonised the authority of the American bureaucracy and military authority. He believes that he now does what they do under the guise of war, but the difference is that he has lost all self-restraint. He has created his own paradise ideal where new rules, or rather no rules at all, count, where he and he alone is at the head of power and does not have to answer to anyone.

And that is what war requires – to be able to kill others in order to defend oneself, one's family and loved-ones, and one's country. But is it really that easy to distinguish

between what is right and wrong, justified and unjustified, murder or self-defense? *Apocalypse Now* answers and judges no, for war has a long-lasting effect on war veterans, their loved-ones and the collective unconscious of the whole country. The blood seeps into the hearts and minds of the people and into the earth, staining the earth with guilt and remorse. *Apocalypse Now* actually asks the question: Is war ever necessary or justified? But this question is of course too simplistic, because war has many complex political, social and economical factors that contribute to it.

In the film Kurtz comes to his end in a different way than he does in the novella. In the novella he dies of an illness and Marlow does nothing to aid his death, yet in *Apocalypse Now* Kurtz is killed by Willard who succeeds in his assassination mission. With *The Doors* playing in the background, explicit and grotesque scenes alternate between Willard hacking Kurtz to death and a sacrificial cow being hacked to death by natives. Before his passing, true to the novel, Kurtz lies on the ground and cries out: "The horror! The horror!", suggesting that he has also come to a significant realisation. This realisation might just be that there is judgment in all killing and that his previous "epiphany" about the inoculated children's arms was false.

The temptations of power is exemplified when the Cambodian tribe kneel in front of Willard. If Willard so chooses, he can succeed Kurtz as ruler of the tribe. He can become a god that is adored, served and worshipped. Willard, however, has the self-restraint not to give in to the temptations of the Will to Power. It also has to be acknowledged that these people are free after Kurtz has been killed. Instead of embracing their freedom, they fear it and want Willard to become their new leader. They choose and embrace their position of submission because they cannot stand the thought of being leaderless, and this could easily lead to the downfall of most men corrupted by power.

4.8.2. *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* in dialogue with symbolism

These epiphanies that Marlow and Willard experience also link up with the fundamental idea on which symbolism is built – Marlow and Willard conceive “of a further reality beyond the reality of the senses, which could be approached only in special states of consciousness, such as poetic inspiration” (Kershner, 1997:48). These special states of consciousness are not necessarily begotten through the aid of drugs, but through mystic epiphanies.

Symbolist characteristics in *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* are abundant: the symbolic meaning of the physical journey up the river Congo and the metaphysical journey into the recesses of the human mind and soul; the initiate, following the mythic tradition, who is given a guide or seer who never completes the journey himself in the form of the deranged Russian; the interplay of light and darkness that is symbolic of the struggle between good and evil, to name but a few examples. Both the novella and the film can be seen as examples of Transcendent Symbolism, for both Marlow and Willard, and even Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now*, have a longing for a paradise ideal and the restoration of a lost fatherland.

Under the heading “Identity, Marlow and *Heart of Darkness*” I have already discussed Marlow’s statement of the fact that he cannot bear the “flavour of mortality in lies” and that it makes him “miserable and sick, like biting something rotten will do” (Conrad, 1973:38). I have also explained that this reflects his longing for the paradise ideal, before Adam and Eve revoked immortality through a lie and ate the fruit from the tree God forbade them to. Marlow longs to return to a time when everything was simple and innocent and where evil and darkness had no place in the human race.

Decadence is also to be found in *Heart of Darkness*. Whilst talking to Kurtz’s devoted Russian follower, Marlow is fascinated by the sensual exoticism of Kurtz’s native lover:

She must have had the value of several elephant tusks upon her. She was savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her deliberate progress. And in the hush that had fallen suddenly upon the whole sorrowful land, the immense wilderness, the colossal body of the fecund and mysterious life seemed to look at her, pensive, as though it had been looking at the image of its own tenebrous and passionate soul (Conrad, 1973:87).

Describing the “barbarous ornaments” of this “wild and gorgeous apparition of a woman”, Marlow cannot decide whether he is totally enticed or repulsed by her. *Heart of Darkness* furthermore shows a macabre imagination with darkness and death – “A haze rested on the low shores...the air was dark...a mournful gloom, brooding motionless over the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth (Conrad, 1973:5); “...they had faces like grotesque masks” (Conrad, 1973:20); “...I had stepped into the gloomy circle of some Inferno” (Conrad, 1973:24); “...I could see the still tree-tops of the grove of death” (Conrad, 1973:28); “dark human shapes could be made out in the distance” (Conrad, 1973:87).

Through Marlow’s descriptions, it seems that beauty is to be found in the “negative” aspects of the “other”. Echoing Derrida’s theory on binary categories, black presupposes white, darkness light, and death life. Because these binary categories make up two poles of a whole, one is not necessarily worse than the other, but just regarded as superior or inferior to the other, dependent on the cultural framework of the viewer. Kurtz’s death means new life to those people formerly under his control and subservient to his tyranny. It also spells new life and fertility to the land he has pillaged and the elephants he has killed for ivory. That Marlow, and the other imperialists, do not understand the natives, their world views and ways of life, does not mean that they are inferior to the imperialists’ world views and ways of life, even though the colonists regard them to be inferior. Ultimately, the colonialists fear that which they do not understand and the fear propels them to try frantically to keep control over the natives.

The symbolist characteristic most apparent in *Apocalypse Now* is that of its dream-like feel and atmosphere. This surreal experience is especially evident in the sequence

where Willard “stumbles into a dreamlike French-colonial plantation, where a formal dinner is served, the politics of Indochina are debated and he spends an opium-laced night in the bed of a beautiful widow”, played by Aurore Clement (Ansen, 2001). This sequence is dreamlike to my mind, because it is in stark contrast to the fast-paced and action-filled scenes that make up the rest of the film. The cultivation of the French, dressed in suits and ties for dinner and drinking wine or cognac from crystal glasses, inside the ornate colonial home is in stark contrast with the barbaric atrocities of war that rage outside. This sequence slows the film down to such an extent that it almost stands “still” for a few minutes; it is a world all its own, a space that is safe and guarded against the intrusions of war.

The plantation seems to be a liminal space which prepares Willard for what is to come – to execute the task given to him by the American army officers. The plantation provides Willard with some much needed rest and recreation before he carries out his command and a muse that gives him insight into his hybrid self. It is also a liminal space where Willard and the French widow escape from the outside world and create their own private world within the confines of her bed. This whole sequence is very decadent. The sequence starts off with a group of French children seeming to recite a Baudelaire poem, placing the sequence within the context of symbolist poets. After dining with the family and being told by one of the Frenchmen, Robert, that Americans are fighting for the biggest nothing in history, the French widow asks him to forgive Robert. She says that they have all lost much there; Robert has lost his wife and sons and she has lost her husband.

After some time, Willard and the French widow are in bed, and she is preparing an opium pipe for Willard, like she used to do for her husband. She tells Willard that her husband used the morphine for the wounds he felt in his heart and she used to tell him: “There are two of you, don’t you see? One that kills, and one that loves’. And he said to me: ‘I don’t know whether I am an animal or god!’ ‘But you are both” (Coppola, 2001). Willard takes over the role of her dead husband and makes love to her whilst high on opium. The opium numbs their pain and makes Willard forget that he, too, is

struggling with the same identity crisis her husband struggled with. Willard cannot reconcile the animal/soldier and the god/husband inside of him. True to decadence, the opium helps them to “escape from the physical, rational world into a realm of unrestrained imagination” (Porter, 1997:95). Her red robe, the smoke from the opium pipe and the curtains she draws around the bed which her naked body hazily shines through, are truly decadent images. This decadent sequence is a critique of French colonial land owners that have oppressed the people of Viet Nam, and the Americans that have now taken over from them as a colonial power.

Even though this sequence does nothing to advance the plot, as Ansen (2001) states, this “ghostly diversion broadens the movie’s perspective, reinforces its theme of the duality of man and adds new colors to its emotional palette”. Up to this scene, Willard has remained somewhat one-dimensional, a fragmented, cold and superficial assassin. But in this scene, Willard gains some depth, becoming a lover rather than a cold-blooded killer. He even verges on becoming a god like Kurtz – one can go as far as to say that he becomes a god that is idolised by the French widow.

Even though “these scenes enlarge the view from intimate to panoramic; they show how the war touched and tainted so many lives”, Corliss (2001:83) cannot help but observe that *Apocalypse Now*, like nearly all films about the Vietnam War, ignores the Vietnamese who were its real and immediate victims.

4.8.3. *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* in dialogue with the colonial and postcolonial

The marginalisation of the natives’ point of view is problematic in both *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*. In the novella, everything is narrated from the viewpoint of either Marlow or the omniscient narrator that retells his tale. The closest Conrad comes to narrating the story from the viewpoint of one of the black natives, is when a native, assigned with a rifle and a uniform by the Europeans, hoists his weapon to his shoulder

when he observes Marlow: "This was simple prudence, white men being so much alike at a distance that he could not tell who I might be" (Conrad, 1973:23). This is an example of ironic inversion, for it is common knowledge that the supercilious white man/woman often says that he/she cannot tell black people apart from one another. Here, mockingly, the white man becomes one of the faceless uniform masses, stripped of his individuality. In all other instances, the black natives are never given a voice, merely observed through Marlow's eyes and often dehumanised, likened to animals, or totally objectified.

Murray (1987:128-129) believes, as do I, that the monoglossic representation of the events from the white man's point of view is a specific type of colonialism: "Knowledge of the 'natives' could only be from outside, objective, rather than dialogical, and some recent severe self-examinations undertaken by anthropologists have tended to stress the inextricability of the forms of possible knowledge of other groups from the political situation in which they are studied." Marlow objectifies the natives and undermines their language when he describes the sight and sound of them as "a black and incomprehensible frenzy" (Conrad, 1973:51). The fact that Marlow does not understand them, does not mean that they aren't communities with a perfectly understandable language (Murray, 1987:128).

Even though they are not given a voice, much like Friday in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*, I believe that this deafening silence still cries out to the sensible reader and creates awareness of the fact that they are not given a voice. Because *Heart of Darkness* was published in 1899, the novella cannot really be labeled postcolonial. Yet the awareness of the "subaltern that cannot speak" anticipated and paved the way for postcolonial works, because there are hints of criticism in Marlow's observations. Murray (1987:120) states that discourse lives on the boundary between its own context and another alien context. Even though the colonial and the postcolonial are two different contexts or discourses, they cannot be understood apart from one another. Therefore the boundary between these two discourses is a limen where the one supplements and transforms the other. It is now necessary to illustrate the dialogue between them.

Heart of Darkness begins on board the yawl *Nellie*. An unknown narrator together with four other men, the Captain or Director of Companies, a lawyer, an accountant, and a seaman named Marlow, make up the crew. The narrator recounts a tale told by Marlow. *Heart of Darkness* is the product of a retelling of a retelling and as Cahir (2004:181) remarks, "his presence is so subtle that either we never really notice him or we soon forget that Conrad has positioned this disembodied voice between Marlow and us". The reader has to be aware of this distance in the communication process and must approach the reading with healthy scepticism. Seeing that the tale is a retelling of a retelling originally told by Marlow (I call Marlow's telling a *retelling* because he is a seaman with his own life and world view, preconceived ideas, biases, etc. and therefore *retells* the story from what he *perceived* and not what absolutely *happened*) he is not to be trusted absolutely.

Murray (1987:123) stresses that the reader notes the double set of quotation-marks that is often used, and in some passages cited even three and four. They are a constant reminder of the dialogisation at work in the texts. Murray (1987:124) states that "in Edward Said's view, Conrad's use of utterance (reported *speech*) as the basic narrative mode is a way of dissolving the author into a multiplicity of voices and allowing a clear approach to a reality which is, nevertheless, fundamentally unrepresentable in language".

The tale is a retelling by an unknown narrator, also with his own life and world view, preconceived ideas, biases, etc. Therefore the unknown narrator's tale has to be read with even more scepticism. The unknown narrator is a filter that may choose to include snippets of Marlow's tale selectively, or distort Marlow's tale through overemphasis or de-emphasis, etc. The more one moves away from the centre of a narrative, the more vague, opaque or distorted the narrative becomes. On the other side of the paradoxical coin, the unknown narrator liberates the text from a centripetal, unified and static telling of Marlow's tale and acts as centrifugal force, opening up the tale to more than one language and belief system.

From the exposition of the novella, the sea is introduced as the physical link that enabled men to conquer new lands and it becomes a symbol of colonisation: “The tidal current runs to and fro in its unceasing service, crowded with memories of men and ships it had borne to the rest of home or to the battles of the sea” (Conrad, 1973:7). References to Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Franklin serve as intertextual references – “the great knights-errant of the sea” (Conrad, 1973:7), conjuring up the historical past and positioning the novella within the ebb and flow of history.

According to Van der Merwe and Viljoen (1998:147-148), ideology is a framework of coherent ideas that radically influences the structure and thoughts of society. Racist ideology – the belief that some people are better than others on account of their skin colour – is an example. The concept of ideology often has negative connotations, for it is often used to sustain an unfair organisation of society. It is an instrument of oppression, because it masks and hides the truth through false representations. It is often typical of an ideology that preaches a simplified or even distorted image of reality or society, and is used to mobilise people in order to reach a specific goal. Criticism of ideology tries to unmask the ideology hidden within a text. In other words, hidden life and world views built into a text can be brought to light.

In an attempt to unmask the embedded ideologies in a text, one actually investigates how the text engages in conversation with all the different voices that could be heard when the text was published. And in my opinion, even long after the text was published, especially when the text is once again highlighted through intertextual references, such as T.S. Eliot’s use of a line from *Heart of Darkness* as epigram to his poem “Hollow Men” several years later in 1954, or Francis Ford Coppola’s use of the book as basis for his film *Apocalypse Now* in 1979. Stephen Greenblatt (1992) calls these echoes of other voices the resonance of the text and important questions that are asked are: With what other voices do the voices engage with in conversation? What voices does it contradict? What other voices can be heard therein? What voices cannot be heard, because they are silenced or totally ignored?

Marlow muses over the ideologies of colonisation and imperialism at the beginning of his tale. His musing is a foreshadowing of one of the central themes to accompany his journey up the Congo:

They were no colonists; their administration was merely a squeeze, and nothing more, I suspect. They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force – nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others. They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind – as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea – something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to... (Conrad, 1973:10).

Seeing that colonisation is merely a euphemism for the overpowering of others by means of “brute force”, there is nothing noble in the act. Marlow’s tone seems to me subtly sarcastic here, since colonisation (according to colonialists) shouldn’t be regarded as unethical “since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others”. The Nietzschean Will to Power, which is a natural expression of strength, would greatly serve the ideology of colonialists. Nietzsche believed that men are differentiated into ranks and it is the quanta of power which determines and distinguishes ranks; ideals of equality among men are therefore nonsensical. Equality where there are different quanta of power would result in the levelling downward of everyone to the mediocrity of the herd (Stumpf, 1993:428). My belief in Will to Peace dialogises Nietzsche’s contention, but this is beside the point. What is disturbing is how a philosophy such as Nietzsche’s can easily be distorted and used to justify atrocious acts of oppression and violent overpowering. The Will to Power is heteroglossic, in that it is a “language” of power which can take on a multiplicity of overlapping forms such as war, colonisation, imperialism, racism, ethnocentrism etc.

Even though Marlow does not sound very critical of colonisation and imperialism, since it “mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves”, I believe that Marlow deliberately oversimplifies and de-emphasises these acts. The opposite effect is actually achieved in that the injustices of these acts shout out louder to the reader than ever before; the silence of the colonised is deafening. It is furthermore infuriating how ideas and ideologies are (mis)used by some to justify unethical acts against humanity; a philosophy of “the end justifies the means”. An example of this is the South African Afrikaner of the apartheid era that believed that he/she has a godly calling and that their existence is justified on account of Christian, be it Calvinist or Protestant, principles. Strangely enough, ethnocentrism and oppression seem to contradict the whole foundation on which Christianity is based – to love thy neighbour like one loves oneself and to do unto others that which one welcomes to be done onto oneself. The act of colonisation hence does not seem very Christian to me.

Turning to the film, Ansen (2001) contends that the new material in *Apocalypse Now Redux* proves how far Coppola has travelled from realism, and just how metaphorical and surreal his take on Vietnam was. He asks an important question which I also pose: Where are the Vietnamese in this Vietnam War film? Worthy (1996:155) argues that even though the film confronts the inconsistency of American policy to a degree, it does not give a voice to the Vietnamese:

Compared to the Viet Nam war films of, for example, Jean-Luc Godard (*Letter to Jane*, 1972) and Emile de Antonio (*In the Year of the Pig*, 1969) whose views on the war are expressed by relatively radical stylistic techniques – antinarrative structure, silence, a blank screen – and especially by the inclusion of the North Vietnamese point of view, both Coppola’s and Bahr and Hickenlooper’s films produce history that is purposive (rather than, say, cyclical) and which centers the masculine hero within that world view. The white middle-class male is axis of the representation; the unity of the white male and the American nuclear family, with, as its goal, the acquisition of money, is the determining value. Another important point of reference for both films, which locates the American identity crisis at the center of the war, is the emphasis on ‘madness’ as a result of ‘Vietnam’ (Worthy, 1996:155).

In no other scene in *Apocalypse Now* is the madness of Vietnam captured as poignantly as the sampan-scene where the young seventeen-year-old Clean kills innocent civilians. In this scene, Chief stops the PBR when it comes across a sampan on the river. Against Willard's better judgment, Chief Phillips, wanting to do his duty, insists that the sampan should be stopped for a routine check and orders Chef to search the sampan. When a young girl makes a sudden movement and runs across the deck, a trigger-happy Clean misinterprets it as a threat, and opens fire, killing all three people on board. They eventually discover that the reason the girl was running across the deck was because she wanted to protect her puppy she had hidden away on the sampan. Clean's name is symbolic of his youthful innocence, and his role, according to Greiff (1992:193), is to prove that war victimises all people involved – Clean is victimised when he is killed, but also when he himself kills, for he is too young and inexperienced for war, and therefore “initiates a needless and ugly massacre of civilians on board a sampan, yet he does so out of pure wide-eyed terror, to the point that it would be very difficult to hold him responsible for the event” (Greiff, 1992:193).

But at what specific point should one then take responsibility for the side-effects of war? As James Wilson (as quoted by Worthy, 1996:157) argues, the “dementia” interpretation of Vietnam promoted in some literature, is nothing more than an evasion that even further obscures an event that is already obscured in the minds of most Americans and people across the globe. Wilson concedes that war does not make any sense, but also argues that it is a cop-out to let it go at that, and that it is not acceptable to mystify the war and by doing so perpetuate the idea that it is part of the human condition. Once again, this statement of Wilson is too simplistic to sum up such a complex issue as Vietnam. But it is true that war does not seem to make any sense. War creates a myriad of different possibilities to commit all sorts of atrocities and move beyond the pale of civilisation, reflected in Kurtz's amoral utopia which is the apotheosis of power: the men swooning over the playboy bunnies, Willard organising sexual favours from the playboy bunnies in exchange for fuel, and most poignantly, the sampan scene.

From the helicopter attack scene Coppola's position is clear. In this famous scene, Kilgore and the Hueys set out to launch an attack at "Charlie's point". Kilgore asks a young soldier: "How you feeling Jimmy?", to which the soldier replies, "Like a mean motherfucker, sir!" Psyched up by Richard Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries", the helicopter launches its attack, and then "cuts suddenly to a virtually silent Vietnamese village shot at ground level and centering upon the peaceful elementary school courtyard that is about to become the target of those 'mean motherfuckers'" (Worthy, 1996:161). Coppola criticises the joy the soldiers take in the killing of innocent civilians and reveals how absurd the imbalance of power is between the powerful Americans and the unarmed Vietnamese. Lothe (2000:187) is of the opinion that Coppola uses a range of filmic devices in this scene to display "the attack as an exercise of pure power, thus calling attention to its inherent absurdity and immorality".

In one of her footnotes, Worthy (1996:166) also points out that the only active enemy whose face is seen in close-up is that of a Vietnamese woman who, out of revenge, throws a grenade into a helicopter full of wounded American men. Thus, the rest of the Vietnamese people remain a faceless, unified mass, dehumanised and stripped of any individuality. Their status is even less than that of a flat character, because they are just phantoms filling out the backdrop of the scenes in which Americans are played off against one another. Murray (1987:132) also argues that the problem of dialogics in *Apocalypse Now* is that the only dialogisation of American official language is by other Americans: "The Vietnamese remain silent, unknown, and history dissolves into mystery and metaphysics."

4.9. Conclusion

From the polyphonic conversations between *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*, it is plain to see the film does not distort the novella indiscriminately. The central themes and narratives of the novella remain intact at the end of the film, in some ways, even more so.

Whereas Marlow seems to remain the meditative Buddha throughout the novella (Conrad, 1973:6; 10; 111), Willard seems to transform meditation into action. At the end of the novella, Marlow chooses to break his own code of ethics and perpetuates the lie of Kurtz when he talks to Kurtz's Intended, whilst Willard undergoes positive character development and/or change. *Apocalypse Now* can be regarded as a type of bildungsroman, for Coppola suggests that Willard developed inwardly because of his journey and his encounter with Kurtz. After Willard has killed Kurtz and ventures out, the Cambodian tribe kneel in front of him; they regard him as Kurtz's successor. He, however, rejects the option to replace Kurtz and perpetuate the savage mutiny. He also decides not to call in a prearranged air strike on them and thereby chooses not to "exterminate all the brutes" (Greiff, 1992:190). Chef prearranges the air strike before Kurtz beheads him. When Willard returns to the boat after killing Kurtz, an American radio operator tries to get information about the state of affairs at the Cambodian compound. Willard never answers him. The burning jungle at the end of the film suggests that the prearranged air strike Chef called in did occur, but it is important to note that it was not Willard that called in the troops after he killed Kurtz, for he did not want their blood on his hands also.

Kurtz's death, in both the novella and the film, not only spells the end of an era, but also new beginnings and has the potential for spiritual growth. Spiritual growth for the individual and fertility of the land could only be attained through the act of crossing boundaries: Marlow, in *Heart of Darkness*, journeys into the heart of the Congolese jungle to fetch Kurtz, but Kurtz dies of an illness before he can take him back. In *Apocalypse Now* Willard has to cross into the Cambodian jungle to assassinate Kurtz. Although the people in Cambodia are still not free from the clutches of war, they are at least now free to make their own, sober choices, liberated from Kurtz's supernatural spell. In both the novel and the film, it is up to Kurtz's followers to decide whether they are going to perpetuate Kurtz's madness, or whether they are going to restore order to the land by ceasing senseless killings and reclaim their power as free individuals with choices. No one can do it for them. They have to do it for themselves.

The statement of Ashcroft (2001:162) rings true: boundaries are indeed “critical in the colonial taming of the wild and the control of space”, for people fear that which they do not understand and Westerners have a totally different definition of “progress”. Westerners, therefore, took what they wanted by force and through subjugation and slavery, and tried to justify their greed through the moral rationalisation of their “civilising” mission. In his book about King Leopold II, Hochschild (as quoted by Nolan, 1999) quotes King Leopold saying that their mission is: “To open to civilisation the only part of our globe which it has not yet penetrated, to pierce the darkness which hangs over entire peoples, is, I dare say, a crusade worthy of this century of progress...” Both Marlow and Willard are liminal men who have to acknowledge the hypocritical justification of the injustices perpetrated by their contemporaries.

Marlow and Willard go on an individuating journey where they have to cross physical boundaries and simultaneously cross emotional and psychological boundaries. They are forced to reconfigure the fixed systems of beliefs of the imagined communities they are part of, and break through the cultural boundaries that stand between the “self” and the “other”; they come to the realisation that understanding for other cultures’ viewpoints does not necessarily threaten their own viewpoints or their memberships as part of their imagined communities. Throughout the journey, both develop as human beings and come to new insights about themselves: the negative aspects of the “other” which are ascribed to the enemy, are in actuality those parts of the “self” that they do not want to acknowledge and are therefore projected unto the native.

The negative of the “other” is not external or situated in the native, but is actually internal and is situated in the “enlightened” and “civilised” Europeans. One polar opposite always presupposes the other polar opposite, and therefore the negative inherent in oneself always presupposes the positive and vice versa. That is why ironic inversion, decadence and the macabre play such important roles in the novella and the film. The degradation of the Bakhtinian grotesque body embodied in Kurtz’s death, may equal regeneration; Kurtz’s death may equal new life for his station and his people and there is

the potential for spiritual growth free from Kurtz's power. But before fertility can be restored, change is necessary.

As individuals with a finer sensibility, Marlow and Willard realise that what their imagined communities do are wrong. Because they are forced to reassess their world views and their beliefs on what is right or wrong, they feel alienated from the imagined communities they are supposed to belong to. Yet, at the same time, they cannot fully identify with the native "other", because years of indoctrination has programmed them to think and feel in a certain way. This dichotomy leads to an identity crisis and a feeling of belonging neither fully to their imagined communities, nor belonging entirely to the cultural "other" – they find themselves in a no-man's-land.

Murray (1987:118) states that a key figure for Bakhtin, Rabelais, "inherits a world-view in which material reality is seen as inferior to the transcendent world of the spirit". From the texts it is evident that realism in the form of the postcolonial dialogises the transcendent world of the spirit, which is central to symbolism and the apocalyptic. Although key characters long for an inexpressible and unreachable "other world", their histories and situations keep them bound to the here and now.

It is now time to discuss the transposition of the novella to film. Greiff (1992:189) believes, as do I, that the film retains much of Conrad's artistic and philosophic achievement in *Heart of Darkness*, but with surprising transformations:

Possibly the most pervasive moral issue in the original text involves Conrad's (and Marlow's) belief in a proportion between man's endeavour and the quality of his being. In the world of Conradian and Marlovian ethics, to work well at one meaningful task – perhaps ideally as craftsman or an artist works – is to create self along with visible accomplishment. To work badly, erratically, or at conflicting endeavours, on the other hand, is to erode human substance toward hollowness – the extreme condition of moral vulnerability in *Heart of Darkness*.

In much the same way that apocalyptic discourse is interpretative in that it recycles earlier revelatory literature and appropriates and transforms its images and the

traditional ways of reading them (Chapter Three), *Apocalypse Now* recycles, appropriates and transforms *Heart of Darkness*. *Apocalypse Now* transformed *Heart of Darkness* for a different target audience: the American viewing public. Coppola took a similar narrative and appropriated it for an American audience by situating it within the time and space of the Vietnam War and telling it from the viewpoint of the Americans. This liberates the text, whilst at the same time problematising it due to the fact that it ignores the Vietnamese viewpoint throughout.

It is clear that Marlow does not condemn imperialism and colonisation outright in *Heart of Darkness*, but there is enough evidence to suggest that he is critical of the practice and even finds it quite absurd. Marlow does admit, however, that he is still unable to cross the divide between the “self” and the “other”. Even though *Apocalypse Now* voices outright social commentary on the absurdities of war in general and America’s guilt with regard to the Vietnam War, the fact remains that it captures the trauma of the American soldiers in Southeast Asia, without capturing the trauma of the Vietnamese soldiers and civilians.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak believes that Western intellectuals cannot speak for oppressed subalterns (the term given to the colonised non-elite) for, as Selden and Widdowson (1993:194) explain, “the oppressed and silenced cannot, by definition, speak or achieve self-legitimation without ceasing to be that named subject under neo-colonialism”. Spivak, in other words, believes that the white elite coloniser cannot free the colonised black non-elite, because it is not their place and that writers in the West “must be vigilant to see that they are not complicit with the further production of the subaltern and that they learn to critique colonial and post-colonial discourse without offering alternative figures of the colonized” (as quoted by Childs and Williams, 1997:163). Because language and history are infiltrated and dominated by the white elite coloniser, the postcolonial subaltern does not have the capability to speak for himself/herself and the colonised elite cannot speak on their behalf. The attempts to speak, even by postcolonial intellectuals that were oppressed themselves, are false

because the select few who are “allowed” to speak are accessories to colonialism in that the coloniser also speaks from a privileged position of power.

Women are especially absent in the film or portrayed as pathetic, subservient or as sexual objects. They either become faceless masses or defenseless and harmless victims in the background of war scenes; playboy bunnies dancing to the men’s delight or exchanging sexual favours for fuel; or subservient women that look after Willard at Kurtz’s compound or sit in waiting to serve Kurtz without ever speaking. Here and there they feature, though. The person that drops a grenade into one of the American helicopters after their Viet Cong village has been blown to pieces is a woman. Through this act she does not regress into the normal passive role of subservience and war victim, but retaliates and takes action. The only woman character that really features or gets to speak is the woman at the French rubber plantation. Although she does not seem to play such an active participating role as that of the men, she does create possibilities for Willard – she nurtures him when he needs it and facilitates him to carry on. It is therefore a much more important role than most men play in the film.

In *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*, the subaltern never really gets to whisper, even if just from the vantage point of its white colonialist writers. And that is what remains problematic of both the novella and the film.

**5. CHAPTER 5 – POLYPHONIC CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN NA *DIE*
*GELIEFDE LAND AND PROMISED LAND***

5.1. Introduction

Karel Schoeman (1939–) published *Na die Geliefde Land* in 1972. A South African film adaptation was made of the novel, which was released in 2002 and directed by Jason Xenopoulos. Although the film differs from the novel in many significant ways, it seems to be truer to the original text than *Apocalypse Now* is to *Heart of Darkness*. As is the case with *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*, discussed in depth in Chapter 4, the common denominator between *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* is the characters' experience of an identity crisis when confronted with paradoxical life and world views in a liminal space, in particular the characters of George, Carla and Paultjie.

An analysis of the dialogue between the novel and the film is to follow in which the historical events that informed the texts will be discussed; a Bakhtinian analysis of the dialogue between the novel and the film on different hierarchical levels will be made; the identity crises of key characters in the texts will be discussed; and the dialogue that each respective text has with apocalyptic, symbolist and postcolonial characteristics will be analysed.

5.2. Historical background of the novella and the film

In the novel it is clear that the reins of government have been assumed by another party and that the white Afrikaner community that previously headed the authority, in an ironic twist of fate, has now become the subservient one. It is not clear, however, who has now taken over the power. Those in power remain abstract background figures throughout the novel. The time and place also remain abstract and the reader is not orientated as to when and where the narrative is set. The reader knows that the novel takes place in South Africa on a farm, but the region is not specified.

The film is not quite so vague. Although the actual year remains wanting, the film is clearly set in a year after 1994 for it is a post-apartheid, postcolonial adaptation. The film explores the vertical power relations between the new establishment and its

citizens, as well as the mutual power relations between the citizens. The film is thus partly based on possible real experiences, thoughts and feelings of some of its South African citizens after the ANC, the previously oppressed South Africans liberated from the injustices of the apartheid system through democratisation, came to power.

5.3. Polyphonic conversations between *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*

If translated directly, the title of the Afrikaans novel can be translated either as “*Towards the Promised Land*” or “*After the Promised Land*”, seeing that the Afrikaans word “na” means both “towards” and “after”, depending on the context. Adding to the ambiguity of the novel, the interpretation of the title is also dubious: it can either refer to an apocalyptic belief of the community in the restoration of power and affluence as they approach the promised land through suffering, or it can refer to the time *after* the community has been stripped of their affluence and power where return is impossible. The title of the film, although stripped of the word “towards”/“after”, is also ambiguous; the characters long for the restoration of their utopia of affluence and power, yet find themselves in a dystopia where the tables have been turned and their former roles reversed. But is their situation a true dystopia, or is their viewpoint so tainted as to lead them to the belief that they are now living in a dystopia?

This question will be answered at the end of this chapter. First it is necessary to engage in conversation with the already existing dialogue between the narratives and characters of both texts.

5.4. Narrative conversations between *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*

There are definite narrative differences between the two texts that prevent a one-sided monologue of the novel as authorial artwork. These differences are constantly in dialogue and relativise the autonomy of the other as artwork.

The opening scenes of the novel and the film differ slightly. The novel begins at night with a farmer called Hattingh, asking a trespasser to identify himself. The trespasser, George Neethling, is met and blinded by the light of a lantern held by Hattingh. In the film, however, George is met with the barrel of a gun. The film is set much more explicitly within the realm of violence and mistrust.

A big difference between the novel and the film is the love triangle between Gerhard, Carla and George, which is not to be found in the novel. At the gathering in honour of George on Gerhard's farm, Kommandodrift, Aunt Loekie insinuates that Carla is to marry Gerhard when she is annoyed at Carla for interrupting her conversation with George:

'Sy dink sy's al baas hier,' mompel sy, 'maar sy sal haar heiland leer ken op Kommandodrift. Dit lyk dalk so 'n wonderlike ding om Gerhard se vrou te wees, en hy's 'n mooi man, ja, maar sy sal nog bitter trane oor hom huil; o, ek weet.' Sy is moeg, haar gesig rooi en opgeswel, en self het sy ook trane in haar oë. 'En om Kotie se skoondogter te wees – nee wat, om so 'n prys te betaal net om Gerhard in die bed te kry...' (Schoeman, 1972:137).

'She thinks she's already the mistress here,' she muttered, 'but she'll get more than she bargains for at Kommando Drift. Perhaps it seems a wonderful prospect to be Gerhard's wife and of course he's a goodlooking man, but she'll yet shed bitter tears over him; I know what I'm talking about.' She was tired, her face red and puffy, and there were tears in her eyes. 'And to be Kotie's daughter-in-law – no, that's too much of a price to pay just to get Gerhard into one's bed...' (Schoeman, 1978:184).

Whether this is the truth is never confirmed in the novel, and seems to be only idle chatter amongst bored and gossip-hungry elders.

In the film Carla is almost "promised" to Gerhard and her parents are the enforcers of this arranged marriage. In the film the gathering is not only to honour George's presence, but it is also the "engagement party" of Gerhard and Carla. Even though there are subtle hints of chemistry between Carla and George in the novel, it never flows over into a love affair as vividly as it does in the film. In the film there is an explicit love

scene between Carla and George, which does not appear to serve any purpose, but rather seems to feed into the Hollywood blockbuster recipe of love, romance and lust.

Another great difference between the novel and the film is the plot. In the novel Gerhard and Hatting's two sons, Hendrik and Johannes, are arrested during the gathering on Kommandodrift. George later learns that they were masterminding a conspiracy against the government and gathering weapons to overthrow the powers that be. It is never revealed what happened to them, and Carla and Paultjie stay behind with their parents when George leaves for Switzerland. In the film there is a much more intricate plot. Carla is attracted to George because he is the spitting image of his uncle, Pieter Neethling, whom she had an affair with some time ago. Pieter, who does not even exist as a character in the novel, had been killed by his own people, because he wanted to sell part of the water supply of Rietvlei to the government to help his community. Gerhard, Hattingh, and Hattingh's two sons are all in on the conspiracy to destabilise the government. They plan to blow up the Land Bank offices of the government. At the gathering on Kommandodrift, the police want to arrest them, but when they fail to comply, a shoot-out ensues between them and the police. A massacre occurs: innocent people are killed, like Aunt Kotie, Aunt Miemie and Frans Raubenheimer, and the only survivors seem to be Hattingh's wife, George, Carla and Paul. When Mrs. Hattingh learns that her husband has been killed, she turns a gun on Paul who confesses that it was indeed he who told the police of their conspiracy. She accuses him of being Satan and kills her own son. It is a dramatic scene of bloodshed and slaughter.

Besides the conversations between the narrative differences of the texts, key characters in the texts also engage in dialogue with issues of identity in different ways, which I believe, is representative of several Afrikaners.

5.5. Identity

5.5.1. Afrikaner identity

In a postmodern era where there are no fixed frameworks of identity, several young members of the new South African Afrikaner generation want to break free from the meaning that colonialism and capitalism superimposed on to structures, identities and boundaries, especially with regard to political, economic and social consequences. The Afrikaner was responsible for one of the most notorious products of social engineering, namely apartheid (Erasmus, 2002:91). The novel is overtly symbolist in nature and therefore does not mention the community's political preference. Although the film does not explicitly mention either Afrikaner Nationalism or right wing preferences, the viewer is cued to certain political ideologies of some of the community members, which will be discussed under the heading "Symbolist characteristics in *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*". It is also very important to note that the community in the film is an isolated one, and that they are not representative of most white Afrikaners. This isolated community cannot adapt to the new political order, and Xenopoulos demonises them as barbarous, closed-minded Afrikaners. I believe that *Promised Land* is set after apartheid had been abolished in South Africa.

In 1948 the National Party (NP) came to power under the leadership of D.F. Malan (1874-1959). Its policy was built on the segregationist legacy laid by South African political leaders such as Rhodes, Milner, Kruger, Shepstone, Hertzog and Smuts (Beinart, 2001:143). As a result, apartheid became a dominant feature of life over the next forty years. The South African government, which was an Afrikaner nationalist one, "was by no means the only authoritarian regime in the world, but it rejected an all-embracing nationalism and enshrined racial distinctions – anathema in the post-holocaust and postcolonial world – at the heart of its legislative programme and political projects" (Beinart, 2001:144).

The Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement or AWB) was founded in the early 1970s when seven young Boers began searching for an alternative to the Westminster system. The Westminster system allows for different political parties and, according to the AWB, divides the nation and nullifies the Boer-ideal of “unity is strength”. They were worried about the fact that after the assassination of H.F. Verwoerd (1901-1966), who expanded the policy of racial segregation, he was succeeded by National Party politicians, who in their opinion, deviated more and more from the traditional policy of separation between races. Concessionary politics quickly led to a split in the National Party. After much research and planning, these seven men gathered in a garage in Heidelberg and formed the AWB, under leadership of Eugène Terre’Blanche.

Given the injustices of apartheid under the Afrikaner national party and the existence of right-wing groups such as the AWB, it is not surprising that many white Afrikaners experience an identity crisis in the new milieu where the ghosts of the past still haunt the present. The fact that culture, ethnicity and race were the central constructs on which apartheid was based, led to whites being the centre of all daily activities, whilst anyone that was not white was reduced to the marginalised “other”.

Erasmus (2002:97) lists seven characteristics that plague the Afrikaner identity. Firstly, the Afrikaners’ affiliation with the Calvinistic/Protestant religion is stressed in that the Afrikaner is of the opinion that he/she has a godly vocation and that his/her existence is justified by Christian principles. The second characteristic is that fixed, separate social and cultural structures and boundaries are recognised. Thirdly, Afrikaner identity is linked to biological origin and appearance; the Afrikaner is very much aware of his/her white skin. The rejection of racial mixing on cultural or biological grounds is the fourth characteristic, which means that interracial relationships and children of interracial couples are frowned upon. Racial mixing was “atrocious”, because it led to the “degeneration” of the white race (Joubert, 1974, as quoted by Giliomee, 1975:42). Fifthly, the symbolic interest and meaning of “land” is associated with Afrikaner identity. The sixth characteristic comprises patriarchal authority, big families, strong family ties

and an unique language. The seventh and last characteristic that Erasmus lists, is that the Afrikaner is conservative and rejects liberalism, is honest, careful, thrifty and loyal. In a review of the literature on Afrikaner nationalism, O'Meara (1983:4) states that according to this mythology,

Afrikanerdom was shaped by its 300-year struggle to implant itself in the hostile South African soil, its roots constantly under attack from both the primitive inhabitants of the region and the relentless enmity of British imperialism. It was the resolute resistance to all attacks on Afrikaner identity, the assertion of a compelling and exclusive sense of self-identity (*ei e*)(*own*), and the history of suffering occasioned by these struggles, which forged the Afrikaner volk (nation) ... Behind these ceaseless struggles, the human suffering, the fierce determination of the volk to resist, lurks 'the Hand which guides the fate of nations and men'. Like the prophets of Israel, the ideologists have elevated Afrikanerdom to the special instrument in Africa of their Calvinist God. Divine Will explains Afrikaner history. Divine Will forged Afrikanerdom into a discrete organic unity and converted it into its special instrument.

Cattell (2001:12) contends that history is the constituting phase that forms the search for Afrikaner identity in the twentieth and early twenty-first century. The relation between national/individual identity (subjective space) and home (geopolitical space) rests on the pillars that function in both spaces, viz. the history of the nation (and/or group and individual) and the religious beliefs of nation, group and individual.

Murray (1987:130) states that the normal relation of languages in unequal and oppressive societies is that of struggle for dominance rather than for peacefully co-existing dialogue. The nationalist government pre-1994 maintained its dominance over the "other" through monoglossic power.

The imagined community created by the white Afrikaner leaders of apartheid flowed over into a type of fundamentalism. As Meyer (2001:20) rightly points out, fundamentalists try to impose their world views, ethics, lifestyles and forms of social organisation on everybody else, and consequently marginalise other orientations. Not only are other cultures, ethnicities and races marginalised because of other world views, ethics and lifestyles, or skin colours, but members of one's own imagined community, of

which Carla and Paultjie/Paul are examples, are also marginalised when differing in opinion or belief or not condoning the segregation and marginalisation of the “other”. Their imagined communities want centripetal control over their life and world views; they expect a monoglossia of life and world views between all Afrikaners that preserve the unity of their imagined community.

The white Afrikaner that does not condone this behaviour after the democratisation of South Africa which has liberated the marginalised, now finds himself/herself torn between a feeling of collective guilt over his/her forefathers' mistakes, yet seeks to acknowledge his/her heritage for it is something from which there is no escape. Thus, there is a longing to create a new identity that acknowledges the past, but simultaneously, is free from the constrictions imposed on it.

In his autobiography, Karel Schoeman (2002:390) speaks of the mixed feelings that caused him to write *Na die Geliefde Land*. In the 1960s Beyers Naudé, the well-known white clergyman who fought for the abolishment of apartheid, invited Schoeman to join the Christian Institute, a non-churchly ecumenical body created in 1965. Schoeman's immediate reaction was to join the haven for marginal figures like himself, but ultimately declined the invitation with appreciation, though, because the Institute was predominantly English speaking. He states that it was during this time in his life that he got clarity on his mixed loyalties: he realised that even though he rejected the political viewpoint of the majority of Afrikaners, especially the racial policy, it still is the Afrikaner with whom he identifies in his country, and he was not willing to criticise or judge them from the outside in the company of the English speaking group. Instead of joining the Christian Institute he wrote *Na die Geliefde Land*, he says, and the novel is therefore, to my mind, a subtle novel of protest by an Afrikaner against the Afrikaner's pre-1994 racial policy.

Van der Merwe (2002:206) states that the toppling of apartheid was one of the most radical changes in the history of South Africa. It left Afrikaners with mixed feelings: for some it brought about deep uncertainty and bitterness; for others relief and happiness;

and for most it was a reaction between these two poles. On the one hand, channels opened up for Afrikaners to fellow South-Africans that were segregated before. On the other hand, there are exclusive feelings that are concomitant with the role of Afrikaners in the creation of apartheid – be it nostalgia for the privileged position during apartheid, or anger and shame about the sins of the past, or denial of a personal allotment in the guilt of the past.

5.5.2. The dialogue between identity and outsidership in *Na die Geliefde Land*

From the onset of the novel and of the film, identity becomes pivotal. The first sentence of the novel is a question: “‘Wie is jy?’ roep die man (Schoeman, 1972:5)/ ‘Who are you?’ the man called out” (Schoeman, 1978:1). The question is not restricted to etiquettes such as one’s name, one’s family line, one’s colour, but throughout the novel develops into questions about the inner self: Where does your heart lie? To which imagined community do you feel you belong? What place do you call home?

George identifies himself as Anna Neethling’s son, who has come back from Switzerland in the novel, and from London in the film, to find Rietvlei and to decide what to do with the farm he has inherited seeing that his mother has passed away. George left South Africa with his parents when he was about five years old, because a new government threatened their safety and wealth. Even though George is welcomed into the Hattinghs’ house, he remains an outsider.

Before Hattingh invites George into his house, he asks George whether he was born overseas because “‘Jy praat soos ‘n buitelander’” (Schoeman, 1972:6)/ “You speak Afrikaans like a foreigner” (Schoeman, 1978:2). Once inside, George remarks that Hattingh’s sons stand shoulder to shoulder as if trying to resist his intrusion (Schoeman, 1972:7; Schoeman, 1978:4). Mr and Mrs Hattingh ask George to stay for dinner and George is overwhelmed with feelings of aversion and antagonism towards these backward people:

Hy sien 'n kas teen die muur, 'n rak, prente van volksleiers en politici wat hy uit geskiedenisboeke herken, en word skielik oorweldig deur onbeskryflike moegheid ná die lang reis en afkeer van hierdie swygende mense in hulle vuil klere, die kos, die sleg verligte kamer, en die vreemdheid en onverwagte armoedigheid van alle dinge (Schoeman, 1972:7).

He saw a cupboard against the wall, a shelf, pictures of national leaders and politicians whom he recognized from history-books; he was suddenly overwhelmed by exhaustion after his long journey and by an aversion from these silent people in their worn clothes, the food, the ill-lit room and the strangeness and unexpectedly poverty-stricken appearance of everything (Schoeman, 1978:5).

Even after the Hattinghs have convinced George to stay over, he still has the feeling that he does not belong there and feels out of place:

Die aand is inderdaad koel, en hierdie onverwarmde, ongebruikte kamer voel klam. Hy moes vanoggend reeds Rietvlei toe gery het, dink hy ongeduldig terwyl hy hom begin uittrek, en hierdie plek verlaat het. In 'n hotel sou hy gemakliker wees as in hierdie huis, en met hotelpersoneel nie minder vreemd as met hierdie mense nie. Maar waarheen sou hy ook gaan? Hy skakel die lig af en klim in die bed (Schoeman, 1972:34).

The night was indeed cold, and this unheated, unused room felt damp. He should have driven to Rietvlei that morning, he thought impatiently as he began to undress, and left this place. He would have been more comfortable in an hotel than in this house, and no more of a stranger there than with these people. But where should he have gone? He switched off the lights and got into bed (Schoeman, 1987:42).

George is a European with sophisticated and cultivated tastes and he is confronted with the meagerness of a lower working class and even against his will, judges these backward people and their humble home. Even though he shares a heritage with them and even though he was born of the same place, he cannot help but realise that he is in “hierdie onbekende en afsydige land, by mense wat dieselfde taal praat as hy, maar anders niks met hom gemeen het nie” (Schoeman, 1972:17)/ “this strange and remote land among people who spoke the same language as he did but with whom he had nothing else in common” (Schoeman, 1978:19). The hostility of some of Hattingh's

family members (especially Hattingh's sons) are even projected onto the landscape and the land is described as "detached". George has travelled from neutral ground (his homeland, Switzerland) to a hostile liminal space within the confines of South Africa. It is a liminal space because this other "world" infringes on George's world, and forces him to re-examine his identity and views; there is potential for transition within him before he is re-incorporated into his European homeland.

George soon realises that things are not what they seem and that the Hattinghs are keeping secrets from him. For example, when he speaks to Hattingh about his plans to travel through the country, Hattingh remarks:

'Waarvoor sou mens teenswoordig nog rondreis?' vra Hattingh. 'Niks is meer soos dit was nie, en wat jou familie betref, nee wat, dis beter om nie vrae te vra nie, jy maak net moeilikheid vir jouself en vir ander mense. Bly liewer hier by ons' (Schoeman, 1972:13).

'What would anyone want to travel around for now?' said Hattingh. 'Nothing is like it was, and as for your family – it's better not to ask too many questions: you'll make difficulties for yourself and for others. You'd better stay with us' (Schoeman, 1978:13).

George is warned against clear and present dangers, yet these dangers remain abstract and distant for he is not told what these dangers are.

He tries to make sense of the situation when he talks to Paultjie in his secret hiding place in the shed, and asks him if it is indeed possible to live such an isolated life. Paultjie replies that his parents believe it is possible and tells George that he wouldn't be able to understand. Indeed, George finds this secrecy and paranoia in conflict with his own life and world view that heralds truth and freedom, and admits that Paultjie is a stranger with secrets and secrecies, which makes him feel uncomfortable (Schoeman, 1972:22; Schoeman, 1978:26).

George finds it increasingly difficult to comprehend his mother's longing for her fatherland after she had left South Africa. He remembers the time after his father had

passed away and how he saw his mother as if anew: "...’n middeljarige vrou wat in ‘n ander land grootgeword het en as balling in die vreemde lewe, iemand wie se assosiasies en herinnerings hy nie deel nie en met wie hy nouliks nog iets gemeen het" (Schoeman, 1972:30)/ "...a middle-aged woman who had grown up in another country and lived here as an exile, someone whose associations and recollections he could not share, someone with whom he had scarcely anything in common" (Schoeman, 1978:37). His mother was born in South Africa and longed to return to her fatherland; she did not feel at home in Europe. George now finds himself in almost the same predicament; although he was born in South Africa and his parents were South African, he was reared in Europe. He therefore feels at home in Europe and estranged from South Africa. He has come back to find the sense of belonging his mother felt towards her fatherland, yet feels himself unable to identify with the community and the land.

Yet the community of white Afrikaners he comes across in his journey, want, need and expect him to feel part of their imagined community. To them, George is a link to their past – a time when they were blessed with power and affluence – and that is why they do not want George to leave, even though he tries to leave on numerous occasions. In the film, however, one gets the idea that they do not want George to leave because they are afraid that he might know something of their plans to destabilise the government and expose their secrets to the authorities. Gerhard even goes as far as to forcefully remove his passport from him, and one of the Hattingh brothers fiddles with his rented car so that it will not start.

George realises that he is bound to this community by his birth and his heritage, yet he is unable to identify with them or feel at home. This creates an identity crisis within George, where he seeks to transcend the conflict he feels between the community where he was born (South Africa) and the imagined community where he was raised (Europe).

Carla, Mr and Mrs Hattingh's daughter, is irritated by his ignorance and his inability to understand their way of life. On their visit to Aunt Miemie's farm, Moedersgift, George asks Carla whether Aunt Miemie lives alone on the farm, and Carla's answer is:

"Die plaas sou tog nie só gelyk het as sy alleen gebly het nie," antwoord sy, *'n bietjie ongeduldig oor sy onnoselheid*, en wys na die versorgde tuin en geskoffelde werf. "Bettie woon hier by haar, en Fanie Raubenheimer, en die kinders."

"Watter kinders?"

"Die kinders van die skool." *Haar toon impliseer dat dit vanselfsprekende dinge is wat hy behoort te weet, maar dan ontferm sy haar oor sy onkunde* (Schoeman, 1972:44, my italics).

'The farm wouldn't look like this if she were here alone,' she said *a little impatient with his stupidity*, indicating the cultivated garden and the weeded yard. 'Bettie lives here with her, and Fanie Raubenheimer, and the children.' 'What children?'

'The school-kids!' *Her tone implied that these were obvious things that he ought to know, but then she seemed to take pity on his ignorance* (Schoeman, 1978:56, my italics).

At George's request, Carla takes him to see Rietvlei and George is shocked to find that unnamed, unspecified soldiers had blown the homestead to pieces and that only ruins remain. When he tries to uncover what the soldiers' motive was for blowing up the house, she tells him to go back home because he does not belong there.

The little isolated community resents George for mainly three reasons. Firstly, there are those like Hattingh and Gerhard who believe that it was and is one's duty to stay behind and face the struggle when things get tough. Hattingh tells George that there are two kinds of people in this country: those that stayed because they could not get away, and those that stayed even if they could (Schoeman, 1972:11-12; Schoeman, 1978:10-11). Gerhard is much more hostile towards George when he talks about this subject and believes those who escaped overseas to be cowards and traitors. He accuses foreigners like George of being passive voyeurs that do nothing, but "praat, julle sit ure lank, dae lank – járe lank, nou al – en praat; maar dis óns wat agtergebly het wat die werk moet doen" (Schoeman, 1972:70/ "talk, you've spent hours, days, years already,

talking, but it's we who remain behind who must do the work" (Schoeman, 1978:92). These accusations spark the question: Is it cowardly to run away from the problems facing one in one's own country, or is it foolish to stay and face the music when a better life awaits one overseas? This question is still open to debate.

Secondly, there are those that are envious of and intrigued by George's lifestyle overseas. Fanie Raubenheimer believes that his love for poetry and drama connects him to George's appreciation of literature and art (Schoeman, 1972:58; Schoeman, 1978:75). Paultjie even asks George to take him along to Europe, because he wants to escape the monotony of farm life and the threatening danger of the establishment's minions (Schoeman, 1972:144; Schoeman, 1978:194).

Thirdly, people resent George's inability to identify with *them*, and their own inability to identify with *him*. Meyer (2001:15) states that "identity is an open process of negotiation between the self-image that the individual conjures up of himself and the image that his partners in social interaction form of him in changing contexts". An identity crisis might be experienced when the self-image of a person and other people's view of the identity of that person do not converge. The contrast within George and the contrast between him and the community are evident: He is *from* South Africa, but not *of* South Africa, he speaks Afrikaans, but with a foreign accent (Schoeman, 1972:6; Schoeman, 1978:2), his manicured nails are in contrast with the hard hands of Hattingh's son (Schoeman, 1972:76; Schoeman, 1978:101), George's cultivated friends and tastes are in contrast with the Hattinghs' ordinary way of life (Schoeman, 1972:91; Schoeman, 1978:121), and even his clothes are foreign to their life and world view (Schoeman, 1972:93; Schoeman, 1978:124). As a result he remains a stranger in his land of birth and is not entrusted with the secrets of what is actually happening in the country (Schoeman, 1972:52; Schoeman, 1978:66).

According to Willemse (1985:38), outsidership gets its allegorical charge in the intellectual, the critical and estranged intellectual who, on introspect, experiences an insufferable contradiction. George is simultaneously a refined, intellectual European

and a South African Afrikaner. It seems that George, much like a Naturalist character, cannot escape his heritage and his environment. Naturalist authors believe that a person's existence is governed by heritage and environment, over which he/she has no control or choice. A human being is viewed as a product of his/her abstract and concrete environment, and is irrevocably bound to his/her present and past. There is no hope for salvation. That is why the motif of fate is emphasised. It seems that George's environmental formation in Europe as a child, overrides his genetic link to South Africa and the little farming community. George's longing to feel that he belongs to the earth and the community he came from in his first five years of life is never met, and he is left with a notion of disillusionment. At the end of the novel he returns to Switzerland, the only place he can still call "home" (Schoeman, 1972:152; Schoeman, 1978:205).

The reconciliation of divided feelings – wanting to belong, but not belonging – is not lost, though, for this possibility lies in the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hattingh, Carla. Her character and identity-reconfiguration will be discussed under the heading "The identities of Carla and Paultjie/Paul in dialogue with their imagined communities in *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*" in this chapter.

5.5.3. The dialogue between identity and outsidership in *Promised Land*

In the film George is an outsider right from the beginning. The way in which the camera is used gives a polyphonic voice to his outsidership. The film starts with a close-up shot of the barrel of a rifle, which gives way to a blurred shot of the "imposter's" face which cannot be seen clearly. The camera gradually comes into focus and reveals George's face. From his body choreography – he holds up his hand to keep Hattingh's lantern from shining into his face – one can see that he feels threatened, but comes in peace. A bird's eye view camera angle of Hattingh, standing on the porch and looking down at George, represents the power relations: George has now entered others' territory where he is lower in power.

After he has arrived at Hattingh's farm and is invited to dinner, George is served chicken soup and is encouraged to eat a chicken claw. The positioning of George and the Hattinghs around the dinner table, before Carla joins them, also reflects the power relations: Mr and Mrs Hattingh sit at the heads of the table in a neutral position, and the two Hattingh brothers sit across the table from George and Paul. They form an antagonistic rugged unit against the effeminate unit of George and Paul. George clearly does not want to eat the chicken claw, for he has already hidden the other chicken claw he found in his bowl in a serviette. He does not want to disrespect his hosts' hospitality and decides to eat the chicken claw. The class difference between him and his hosts is stressed when he speaks in French, "*Bon Appetit*" (Xenopoulos, 2002) before eating the claw. There is a great difference between the life and world view of George and those of his hosts.

The Hattinghs regard the chicken claws as a kind of delicacy that one is fortunate enough to eat in these trying times, and as a token of their hospitality sacrifice the claws for George's enjoyment. They don't even consider the possibility that George might be disgusted by the chicken claws because he is not used to this way of life. On the other hand, George is pressured into eating the chicken claw for fear of offending the Hattinghs, but is simultaneously offended by their offering. This scene highlights the difference in cultures and point of view, and the big gulf between the sensitive, cultivated, rich European and the hardened, poor South Africans.

On another occasion Johannes, Hendrik and Gerhard encourage George to slaughter a farm chicken. This is the first shot in the film of Gerhard Snyman, the leader of the rebellion, and the scene opens with a shot of Gerhard sharpening the blade of an axe. A sequence follows in which the film quickly jumps from shot to shot, evoking George's feeling of dislocation. As George lays down the axe to save Paul from torment at the hands of his brother, Johannes, the other brother, Hendrik, beheads the chicken. A close-up shot of the chicken that is still squirming and moving about with its bloody neck is grotesque. It might be symbolic of George having to serve as scapegoat for the sins

of the past when his parents and other South Africans left the country, and this once again emphasises his inability to adjust to the unforgiving life of farming.

George has come to a liminal space (the Hattinghs' farm) where time seems to have stopped. He has kept up with the times, yet they remain stuck in the past and seem to have stagnated with regard to their identity as well as the outside world. In one scene Paul sits in George's car and listens to kwaito music that George has bought at the airport. The meaning of kwaito is "aggressive township music", and for the uninitiated, Kwaku (2002) defines it as "a fusion of slowed-down house-music grooves mixed with hip-hop and township jive sensibilities". George takes out the CD and gives it to Paul, yet ironically, the gift is useless because the Hattinghs seem to be stuck in a time-warp and do not have a CD player. Paul is flabbergasted by the CD, having no knowledge of such technological advances and asks George: "What do I do with this?" (Xenopoulos, 2002). The gift seems to be as useless as George's visit.

Even though George wants to find some point of contact with "his" people, he does not want to identify with this backward community and therefore he remains a passive character. He is also kept in the dark about the secret plot to destabilise the government, and therefore he is not allowed to really cross the divide. He remains a voyeur and observer, a marginal figure on the outskirts of this community's existence. This is symbolised in his passive and distancing act of taking photographs of the landscape around him and of Carla when she actively chops wood, which is juxtaposed with his inability to identify with the land and its people, and his disinterest to participate in their labour on the farm.

In a scene where George sits in front of the hearth-fire together with Hattingh, he inquires about Rietvlei, refusing to accept that no one has lived there for years. He believes that there must be a caretaker living on the farm, seeing that he sent money on a regular basis. Hattingh informs him that he is mistaken and that the police arrested Pieter Neethling a long time ago. He tells him: "You've been away a lifetime, don't try

and understand it in a day" (Xenopoulos, 2002). Yet, how is George to understand what is going on when no one is willing to tell him the truth?

George soon realises that this white Afrikaans community's identity is made up of paranoia and lies. George represents what Meyer (2001:16) calls an individual with an "open mind" – he is able to form a social and personal identity that withstands tension between ambiguities and ambivalences, and remains receptive to changing situations, and as a result "need not experience divergences in the social environment as a threat and a source of crippling fear". In the film there is a sense of closure on his identity conflict when he is encouraged to make a speech at the gathering on Kommandodrift. George starts off by saying that he could thank the community for their hospitality, but that he will not. He exclaims that he has discovered one thing there – "it is a discovery that has helped me to define who I am, it's a small word, but it governs your existence. That word is lies" (Xenopoulos, 2002). The secret plot to blow up the Land Bank and to murder community members that are regarded as traitors, is neither noble nor necessary. The community chooses to suffer for an ideology that is built on paranoia and the so-called "justness" of their cause, and often reverts to violence.

Meyer (2001:xiii) points out that there is no particular culture with particular characteristics which make it more prone to intolerance and violence than others. Yet, where culture resides, "there is identity and fragmentation, and this fragmentation may lend itself to intolerance and violence". This violence can take on many forms; apartheid and terrorism are but two examples. The notion that everything that is strange to one's own culture and life and world view is hostile and threatening breeds fear, which in turn breeds intolerance and violence, and it is built on ignorance.

George is disgusted with the community's ignorance, and exposes the lies that make up the community's collective Afrikaner identity in a fit of rage. Whilst making his speech, he grabs a hand-grenade from the trunk in which the weapons are stashed, and accuses the community of acting as helpless victims when they have the power to build

a new life based on transformation: “This is what you Boers grow in your promised land!” (Xenopoulos, 2002) – violence and destruction.

A copy of the painting of “The Last Supper” by Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) is mounted above the mantelpiece on which he places the grenade. This is symbolic of the community’s view of him as a Judas or traitor who is incapable of staying true to their “cause”, as someone who might betray them as Judas betrayed Jesus. They did not tell George about their plans to destabilise the government, because they felt he could not be trusted. But in the end it was not George who told the police of their plans, but one of their own who “sold” them out – Paul. George concludes by stating that if that is what being an Afrikaner means (reverting to violence, covering up secrets and lies, living governed by paranoia and xenophobia), he is not one. The secrecy and lies are symbolised by the dark lighting that pervades the film. Because there is no electricity on the farm, they have to use lanterns at night. As a result the nights are dark and ominous. George wants to break free from the mould of do’s and don’ts that accompany being part of this imagined Afrikaner community which stipulate that one has to regard the “other” as the enemy that threatens one’s own existence and belief system; one has to side with them no matter what, and if one does not, then one is excluded just like the “other”.

As in the novel, George returns to his homeland (in this case London), but in the novel he does not express what he feels to the community, like he does in the film. The verbal expression of one’s thoughts and feelings are important steppingstones on a journey to self-realisation and self-actualisation, but sadly, it seems that he returns home without any transition. The act of confronting the community with his own life and world view at least opens up a dialogue between him and the community, but it seems that this dialogue is a conversation where they talk *past* each other instead of *with* each other. Unfortunately, no cultural or ideological exchange takes place.

Characters that remain passive throughout the novel and do not really engage with other characters are typical of Schoeman’s work. George is such a character. In the film far-

off camera shots are often used of George, other characters or the landscape, to emphasise this distance between George and the rest of the characters or the land respectively. Although he is a passive character, his arrival does, however, seem to be the catalyst for the changes that await the community.

5.5.4. The identities of Carla and Paultjie/Paul in dialogue with their imagined communities in *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*

Na die Geliefde Land is not a pure farm narrative, but does take place in farm space. Coetzee (2000) throws some light on the relation between land and ideology, as well as on land and identity. The farm novel deals with issues such as hereditary tenure, the succession of generations, nature, labour, and departure from the farm. This type of novel also forms a part of a bigger framework of discourse about land and land ownership. The discourse about land consists of expressions about ownership, heritage, hereditary rights, etc. For a long time, the Boer has lived in a symbiotic relationship with the land, and has attempted to become one with it, creating the perception that land and identity are synonymous. In this regard, the farm space has become more than mere space, it has become a place that carries many different meanings.

One has to distinguish between space and place. In her article entitled “Plek, landskap en die postkolonialisme in twee Afrikaanse romans”, Louise Viljoen (1998:76) makes a distinction between space and place. According to Paul Carter (as quoted by Viljoen, 1998:76) the act of naming a place symbolically transforms a space into place – a space with a certain history – thus “place is space to which meaning has been ascribed”. Whilst space is a neutral term, place is a culturally laden term charged with “a complex interaction of language, history and environment” in postcolonial society. The colonisation and appropriation of South African soil by European settlers has tainted the land, and has culminated in bloodshed such as the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). As a result, Afrikaners feel that they now “own” the land, and have paid for it with their blood.

According to Coetzee (2000:14), the farm narrative and issues like land and land ownership have a ripple effect on a much larger discourse of political power and of texts as part of the ways in which hegemony is brought about. Coetzee (2000:1-6) gives many reasons why land ownership and the farm have become such an important part of Afrikaner identity. According to Van Coller (1995:23-26), a prominent characteristic of the farm novel is a patriarchal, hierarchical society, dominated by the values of the father where his traditions and norms have to be maintained. This often leads to conflict between the older and younger generation. The Boer's identity is to be perpetuated by and through his offspring, which explains why heredity plays such a central role in the farm narrative. The photos of national leaders, politicians and forefathers in both the novel and the film stress the importance of heritage. Often heredity is stressed to such an extent that woman characters are reduced to their role as procreators, expected to bear heirs for the fathers.

Here, Carla and Paultjie break the mold. Their natures differ to such an extent from the natures of their imagined communities, that they dialogise one another. From *Na die Geliefde Land* it is plain to see that Paultjie has a very childlike, innocent quality about him. Like George, Paultjie is an outsider when compared to his traditionalist and manly brothers, Hendrik and Johannes. Early on in the novel, George finds Paultjie hiding in his "secret" hiding place up in the barn's loft (Schoeman, 1972:19-20; Schoeman, 1978:21-22). Paultjie hides because he does not want to do farm labour such as working on the land, chopping wood or selecting potatoes (Schoeman, 1972:21; Schoeman, 1978:24). George remarks that "die seun is tog te oud vir sulke speletjies met onbekende wegkruipplekke en verborge skatte" (Schoeman, 1972:22)/ "the boy was after all too old for games like this with secret hiding-places and buried treasure" (Schoeman, 1978:26). Paultjie is a sensitive, effeminate character who is often teased and provoked by his manly brothers, as can be inferred from the conversation between Paultjie and Johannes when Paultjie tries to light the fire:

'As jy nie eers 'n vuur kan aanlê, kan jy ook nie 'n man se werk doen nie.'
'Wat noem jy miskien 'n man se werk?' vra Paultjie.

'Dinge waaroor seuns soos jy nog maar net hoor praat wanneer hulle saans te laat opbly.' Blykbaar geniet hy dit om hom te probeer kwaad maak (Schoeman, 1972:28).

'If you can't even make a fire you can't do a man's work either.'

'What do you call a man's work?' said Paul.

'Things that boys like you have only heard talk about when you've stayed up too late.' He seemed to enjoy trying to anger Paul (Schoeman, 1978:33).

Paultjie wants to escape the monotony of farm labour and farm life. Close-up shots of wind pumps are used to symbolise the monotonous cyclical existence of farm life. Wind pumps are also symbolic of their dependency on water for either good crops or nourishment for their cattle. The tension between duty and vocation is stressed when Paul asks George to tell him about another world overseas that is possible to escape to, tell him about anything but:

'...die plaas en die skape en die mielies, van vroeg opstaan en hard werk en arm wees; alles behalwe veg en swaarkry en veronreg wees, en tronke en kampe. Ek wil nie hoor van take of roepings nie, of van die voorgeslag of heldemoed of plig of die wil van God. Ek is moeg vir dit alles' (Schoeman, 1972:65).

'...the farm and the sheep and the mealies, anything except about getting up early and working hard and being poor; anything except fighting and suffering and being unjustly treated and jails and prisons and camps. I don't want to hear about tasks and vocations, about ancestors or heroism or duty or the will of God. I'm sick of all that' (Schoeman, 1978:85).

It is expected of Paultjie to live, work and die on the farm and to continue the Hattingh legacy, but Paultjie wants an identity that is free of the Afrikaner mold. He simultaneously loves and detests his own people, because they are holding him back from reaching his true potential. He says that he hates them for the same reason he loves them: "Omdat hulle my vashou soos 'n blok aan my been, sodat ek nie kan wegkom nie, hulle trek my met hulle saam in die afgrond"/ "Because they hang on to me so that I can't escape: they're dragging me down with them" (Schoeman, 1972:118; Schoeman, 1978:158). Thus, George is not the only character torn between the identity

of the self-image and the identity that is projected on to one by one's imagined community. Paultjie desperately wants to become what he was destined to be and pleads with George to take him back overseas with him, yet George refuses (Schoeman, 1972:144; Schoeman, 1978:195).

Note that I do not mean "imagined community" to signify exactly the same as Benedict Anderson and Ashcroft intend it. I will illustrate what I mean with George as example: The isolated Afrikaner community is George's "imagined community" because they imagine that he is part of their community due to his Afrikaner ancestry, even though he radically differs from them with regard to point of view, lifestyle, etc. As George's "imagined community" they are, however, a closed-off community that expect of and put pressure on George to conform to their point of view, lifestyle, etc. But the differences are a greater divide than the similarities, and they are the determining factor for George. Even though he shares a white skin, as well as national, geographical and genetic origins with them, he would rather, I believe, fall in with people that share his point of view and lifestyle, even though they might differ in skin colour, and in national, geographical or genetic origins. He is simultaneously *part of* and *not part of* the isolated Afrikaner community, but him *not* being part of them weighs the heaviest.

Promised Land is not so subtle about the contrast between Paul and his brothers. Extra scenes have been inserted to stress the divide between them. The first scene to stress the torment he has to suffer at the hands of his brothers, is the chicken claw scene where everyone is gathered around the dinner table. In an effort to draw George's attention away from Carla, Paul deliberately knocks over a glass, because George peers at Carla through his fingers while Mr. Hattingh says grace. Johannes threatens Paul that if one drop is to touch him, Paul is as good as dead. This scene does not only serve to reflect Johannes's dark character, but the act of Paul also serves to reflect his need and want for George's attention and the beginning of an infatuation with him. It has been suggested that Paul is actually a homosexual and that there are many homoerotic signs in the film (Muller, 2002:10). This would not really alter Paul's character, but I beg to differ.

In the novel Paultjie appears effeminate, but it is Fanie Raubenheimer who actually comes across as homosexual in his encounters with George at the Kommandodrift-gathering: “Sy een hand is op George se skouer en in sy opgewondenheid raak sy lippe vir ‘n oomblik aan George se voorhoof” (Schoeman, 1972:129)/ “He had a hand on George’s shoulder and in his excitement his lips fleetingly touched George’s forehead” (Schoeman, 1978:174). In *Promised Land* Johannes insinuates that Paul is homosexual one morning at breakfast when Paul asks his mother if he could go to Moedersgift with them. Johannes taunts Paul, saying that he wants to go and read verses with Fanie and that if he asks nicely, their mother might allow him to use some of her expensive perfume. Even though Paul appears effeminate in *Promised Land*, I believe that his infatuation with George can be ascribed to his envy of and longing to live George's life. George represents the “one that got away” and therefore concretises his hopes and dreams of escaping the rural area.

In both the novel and the film, George gives one of his expensive shirts to Paultjie/Paul to wear to the Kommandodrift-gathering. In this scene Paul investigates George’s lavish toiletries. George is clearly a *metroman*, and offers to lend Paul one of his shirts. At first, Paul does not want to wear the shirt for fear of being ridiculed by his brothers. George persuades him not to heed his brothers’ ridicule, and be his own self.

I believe that Paul’s death in the film can be linked to The Holy Grail legend and that he can be compared to the Fisher King. The chicken claw that George hides in his pocket in the first dinner scene, is symbolic of the secrets and the waste that the community is trying to hide. After dinner Paul comes to his aid, telling him that “If you leave it in your pocket it will start to stink” (Xenopoulos, 2002). He takes the chicken claw from George and eats it challengingly. George is the catalyst that sets change in motion, and in the end Paul becomes the scapegoat or trespass offering that takes all of the community's sins on himself. The viewer learns that he was the one who told Gerhard and the Hattings about Pieter’s decision to sell part of the water supply of Rietvlei to the

government, because he was jealous of Pieter and Carla's relationship. This means that he was indirectly responsible for Pieter's death.

When the police clamp down on the Afrikaner community at the Kommandodrift-gathering and kill Paul's father, he admits to his mother that he was in fact the one that told the police of their plans to rebel. When he is killed by his mother, he becomes the anti-hero who has to die for economic and spiritual renewal in the community: Paul becomes the scapegoat, the human offering that has to take the sins of the whole community on himself, much like Jesus took the wrongdoings of humankind on himself as repentance for their sins. Something as drastic as the Kommandodrift slaughter is needed to force Carla to bring about change. At the end of the film, George asks Carla what she will do. She replies: "I've got the children". Carla is the one who stays behind to bring about renewal. She can attempt to raise the orphaned children and instill new belief systems within them that are free of prejudice, xenophobia and paranoia. And they can then, hopefully, be integrated into the greater whole of society, instead of living an isolated and fearful life inflexible to change.

Carla is the antithesis of her mother, who throughout the novel and the film, is always serving the rest of the family. Mrs Hattingh represents the old generation that previously lived in better times and cannot adjust to the new way of life, while Carla represents the new generation that was brought up in these changing conditions. There is definite conflict between the old and the new generation, as seen from the conversation between Carla and her mother, when Mrs Hattingh apologises to George for their humble way of life at the lunch table:

'Dis baie eenvoudig,' sê mevrou Hattingh; 'ons eet maar eenvoudig om hierdie tyd van die dag.'

'Dis goed genoeg,' sê die meisie ongeduldig. 'Dis nie nodig om vir alles om verskoning te maak nie.'

'Jy weet nie van beter nie,' antwoord mevrou Hattingh driftig, 'jy't so grootgeword en nooit iets beters geken nie. Ek is nie gewoond daaraan om my gaste brood en koffie te gee vir middagete nie.'

'Dis tyd dat jy gewoond raak daaraan. Ons lewe al lank genoeg so' (Schoeman, 1972:19).

'It's a simple meal,' said Mrs Hattingh to George. 'At this time of the day we eat very simply.'

'It's good enough.' The girl was impatient. 'It's not necessary to apologise for everything.'

'You don't know any better,' said Mrs Hattingh angrily. 'You grew up when things were as they are now and you've never known anything better. I'm not used to giving guests bread and coffee for lunch.'

'It's time you got used to it: we've lived like this long enough' (Schoeman, 1978:20).

Carla clearly does not make any excuses for living a humble life. She does not want to apologise for who she is, because a person's worth is not based on material possessions, but on his/her character. She is strong-willed, flexible and accepts their current situation.

Carla is juxtaposed with her mother who is only known as her husband's wife, Mrs Hattingh, until page 104 of the novel. Only then does the reader learn that her name is Mart. In contrast, Carla is a woman in her own right from the exposition of the text. At their first meeting around the dinner table, George first mistakes Carla, who is dressed in the same work clothes as her brothers, for a boy. It is only when she steps into the light that he can see she is a girl. She is described as having "kortgeknipte hare" (Schoeman, 1972:36)/ "close-cropped hair" (Schoeman, 1978:44), she challenges authority and looks and feels uneasy in a dress (Schoeman, 1972:95; Schoeman, 1978:127).

She confronts George for judging her as part of her imagined community from a "superior" point of view, rather than judging her as a person in her own right. She does not want to be ridiculed or dehumanised by George's gaze because he regards her as intellectually inferior to his cultivated lifestyle. She wants him to see her for who and what she really is, a person of flesh and feelings just like him:

'Maar jy kyk tog op ons neer, nie waar nie, armoedige boere wat hier in 'n uithoek sit met hul skape en hul mielies en probeer om aan die lewe te bly.

Ons is nie mense nie, soos jy en jou vriende, jy kan met ons nie oor hulle praat nie. Ons het minder as mense geword' (Schoeman, 1972:87).

'But you do look down on us, don't you, poverty-stricken farmers living here at the back of beyond with their sheep and their mealies, trying to survive. And we're not people, not like you and your friends, and you can't talk to us about them. We've become less than people' (Schoeman, 1978:116).

Carla has been disillusioned by the reality of their situation, and stoically decides to accept her fate. Dreams have no place in her reality and she regards them as a weakness (Schoeman, 1972:88; Schoeman, 1972:117). But the dreams Carla refers to are dreams outside of her homeland, for she does cling to a dream for South Africa – a dream of better times to come – and therefore refuses to go to Europe when George invites her (Schoeman, 1972:151; Schoeman, 1978:204). She refuses to give up on her fatherland; she is willing to be the change that she wants to see in the world. Willemse (1985:44) contends that Carla rejects Afrikaner nationalism and –power, yet she feels that she is still an Afrikaner: "Plig, liefde, gewoonte – ek weet nie. Dis hoe ek grootgeword het, dis my mense hierdie" (Schoeman, 1972:148)/ "Duty, love, habit – I don't know. It's how I grew up, these people are my people" (Schoeman, 1978:200).

As in the novel, Carla has an androgynous appearance in *Promised Land*. She becomes the body in which the equilibrium of masculine and feminine elements, which are needed to restore the order in the district, can balance and dissolve each other:

In *Na die Geliefde Land* she rebels against her mother's authority, she works on the farm with her father and brothers, and chooses to wear men's work clothes. She does not, however, have just masculine attributes. At the end of the novel she tells George that Rietvlei was used as a hiding place for people who tried to overthrow the government and weapons were also stashed there, for that reason Rietvlei was blown up. Before it was blown up, she was taken to Rietvlei one evening by Johannes, where she had to care for a wounded rebel and stay with him all night on her own. Even though it was very dangerous, she had the masculine strength to go through with it. But she also had the feminine propensity to nurture, nurse and allegedly encourage.

In *Promised Land* Carla performs duties traditionally expected of a woman, like clearing the table after the first dinner scene and hanging washing out to dry. But she also performs duties traditionally expected of a man, like chopping wood. She seems to take Paul under her wing and pegs a knife into the kitchen table the morning of their Moedersgift excursion to Aunt Miemie, to stop Johannes from picking a fight with him. She also comes up for Paul when she tells George that he was the one that told on Pieter's secret plans to sell Rietvlei, saying he was a child that didn't know what he was doing. She is strong, yet not without compassion, and these two traits, masculine strength and feminine compassion, are needed at the end of the film to restore order to the land, and heal the orphaned children.

For far too long violence and domination that are associated with masculine attributes have reigned, causing death and destruction. In Carla's masculine strength, the feminine nurturing elements that are needed to restore Mother Earth of the South African soil, reach fulfillment and host the possibility for change, renewal and growth.

Ironically, it is not the sensitive, cultivated and sophisticated European, George, that possesses the prophetic vision, but one of the members of the imagined community, namely Carla. She is the one that has the foresight, together with Pieter, to realise that in order to survive, they have to adapt to the political transformations in South Africa. In the novel she is the one that realises that identity, although linked to physical labels such as race, culture, ethnicity, etc., does not absolutely determine who you are, for "dis wat jy self is wat saak maak" (Schoeman, 1972:52/ "what matters is what you yourself are" (Schoeman, 1978:67).

The scene in which Carla takes George to Rietvlei, deviates somewhat from the scene in the novel. When George realises that merely ruins remain of Rietvlei, he is infuriated. Carla cannot comprehend why George is so shaken up about this, seeing that George has not lived on South African soil for years:

'It matters. This is my home'.
'Not anymore. You're a stranger now.'
'I was born here like the rest of you'.
'You're not one of us'.
'And in England I wasn't one of them'.
'Why should you be one of anything? In the end we're all alone'
(Xenopoulos, 2002).

George is not the only marginal human being that is neither wholly part of, or free from the cultures he finds himself torn between. Carla also experiences this conflict, for she loves and defends her people, but at the same time she has no delusions of grandeur about their ignorance and wrongdoing. She regards herself as a representative of a new generation that is paradoxical to the old generation, yet she acknowledges her roots. She seeks to find an identity that is free from racial, cultural, or political restrictions. Although she has a cynical and existentialist point of view that "in the end we're all alone", she refuses to give in to an absolute and fatalistic world view, because she chooses to stay and rebuild her life in South Africa when she could easily have escaped to Europe with George.

I second Renders (2002:69) who states that Carla is willing to adapt to and live under a new political order. Renders contends that through Carla, Schoeman tries to convey that the Afrikaner has the potential to assimilate and participate in building a new nation. *Na die Geliefde Land* forms a strong voice against the ongoing calls to Afrikaner unity and the exclusive white descendant consciousness of political, churchly and cultural "Voortrekkers" at the beginning of the seventies.

Renders (2002:74-75) goes on to contend that *Na die Geliefde Land* confronts the Afrikaner with the question: Who are you? To stubbornly cling to the old Afrikaner identity and narrow-minded nationalistic ideology is self-destructive. One can either choose to stay loyal to this self-destructive nationalistic ideology and traditional Afrikaner values, or choose to withdraw from this fixed identity and actively resist this loyalty.

In both the novel and the film, Carla is filled with determination and faith and takes responsibility for her existence. Whether she finds the peace she is looking for after she

decides to stay in South Africa and pick up the pieces, remains undisclosed. But the seed of possibility has been planted with George as catalyst, Paul as scapegoat and her transcendence of the binary opposites within. They are the trinity that opens up new possibilities – hope remains.

5.6. *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* in dialogue with apocalyptic, symbolist and postcolonial characteristics

A discussion is to follow on how discourses such as violence, racism, xenophobia, the Will to Power, oppression, etc. engage in a polyphonic dialogue with apocalyptic, symbolist and postcolonial voices that struggle for dominance in the texts and consequently dialogise one another.

5.6.1. *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* in dialogue with the apocalyptic

From the survey of literature in Chapter Three, it has been deduced that apocalypse always has to do with the eschatology or end of times as humankind knows it and is envisioned by prophets. Meeks (2000:463) also contends that apocalyptic discourse is dualistic temporally, spatially and socially: “it divides this world from the world to come, earth from heaven, and us from them – dwellers in heaven from dwellers on earth, children of light from children of darkness”.

The small group of Afrikaners in *Na die Geliefde Land* believe that they have a godly vocation and that their existence is justified on religious grounds – what these religious grounds are exactly, is not specified. True to its symbolist nature, the novel remains, however, vague about their religious affiliation. They have been stripped of their power and their affluence and believe that their suffering is a sign of new and better times to come, and that it is a necessary porthole to renewal. They take in a superior position and believe in the “fact” that they lay claim to all knowledge. As the righteous chosen ones they have to endure suffering because the godless affluent masses will be judged according to Gerhard:

'Ons is 'n klein groepie wat hier oorgebly het, beroof van alles wat ons besit het, belaer en bedreig deur baie vyande, en al wat ons die moed gee om vol te hou, is ons onwrikbare geloof in die reg van ons saak. Soms kry ons egter een of ander bemoediging, een of ander teken dat ons stryd nie hopeloos is nie, en in hierdie lig wil ek George se besoek verwelkom' (Schoeman, 1972:114).

'We are a small group who have remained behind here, robbed of all we possessed, surrounded and threatened by many enemies, and the only thing which gives us the courage to hold out is our inextinguishable faith in the justice of our cause. Sometimes, however, we get some slight encouragement, some sign or other that our struggle is not hopeless and to me George's visit is such a sign' (Schoeman, 1978:152)

There is a definite break between the past and the present, as the novel suggests: "Dis 'n familieplaas, 'n erfenis van my oupa-grootjie, maar in daardie dae had hulle nog die geld en die volk om dit te onderhou" (Schoeman, 1972:11)/ "It's family land, an inheritance from my great-grandfather, but in his day they still had the money and labour to maintain it" (Schoeman, 1978:9). The older generation live in a constant nostalgic longing for the past, they cling to old titles and references (Schoeman, 1972:12; Schoeman, 1978:11), remember a time when they had an abundance of black servants (Schoeman, 1972:14; Schoeman, 1978:15); recall family genealogies (Schoeman, 1972:41; 51) and reminisce over old times when they had more than enough lavish things to eat (Schoeman, 1972:108; Schoeman, 1978:145). Dualistically, the present is filled with uncertainty, oppression, poverty and the threat of violent subjugation.

The old generation accuse the younger generation of forgetting the importance of the past (Schoeman, 1972:105; Schoeman, 1972:141), but what they do not realise is that they have become imprisoned by it. Fanie Raubenheimer becomes their "siener, die sanger, die profeet" (Schoeman, 1972:123)/ "seer, the bard, the prophet" (Schoeman, 1978:165) who writes poems about their strife and the better life that awaits them:

*'O God van ons vaders, U heilige hand
wat ons altyd gerig en gelei het,
sal ons ook eendag terugvoer, U volk van weleer,*

na die erfenis wat U berei het...’ (Schoeman, 1972:121).

*‘God of our fathers, once more we affirm
Our faith in Thee, where with bowed heads we pray,
Certain that Thou will raise us from the dust
And lead us forward to a brighter day...’* (Schoeman, 1978:162).

There is quite a number of Christian and biblical references in the novel, tying the Afrikaner community to the Israelites that Moses led from Egypt to Canaan, the promised land of milk and honey. They do not, however, stop to even consider the possibility that they might have indeed been led into exile and slavery, because they did not heed the learning and principles on which their “exclusive” religion is based.

As representative of the new and enlightened generation, Carla does not want to sit around and nostalgically meditate and pine over the past. She wants to actively change their situation and live in the present as she clearly explains to George during their visit to Rietvlei:

‘Ek weet nie hoe dit was nie en ek wil ook nie weet nie. Ek is moeg vir al julle drome en herinnerings, ek wil nie in die verlede leef nie, ek wil nie kom treur oor ‘n toegegroeide ou blomtuin nie. Daar is werk om te doen, die lewe moet aangaan’ (Schoeman, 1972:50).

‘I don’t know how it was and I don’t want to know either. I am tired of all the dreams and memories; I don’t want to live in the past, I don’t want to come and grieve over an old overgrown garden. There’s work to do, life must go on’ (Schoeman, 1978:64).

Promised Land is the fulfillment of the prophecy that some might feel Karel Schoeman made with his novel. Like I said earlier, it would be unjust to call *Na die Geliefde Land* an absolute prophecy, for the novel remains vague about the political power that has succeeded, and the old power that has ceased to be. Schoeman (2002:400) admits that he wrote the novel without really understanding what he was writing and also states that it was not his conscious goal to warn or preach, or even to shock or upset, even though he realised while writing the novel, that it could easily serve to be a warning, a sermon,

shocking and upsetting (Schoeman, 2002:434). It seems that Schoeman regards writing as an organic, necessary process that is not entirely in the hands of the author, but is sometimes driven by a higher, “supernatural” force guiding his hands when he recounts one particular time he was “forced” to write something almost against his will. He equates writing with child bearing: writing is not something one just does. It is essentially an unpleasant process, natural, messy and painful, something one initiates and executes with the knowledge that one has done one’s part, but without any feeling of fulfillment, relief or liberation (Schoeman, 2002:433).

Promised Land, on the other hand, situates the film within a definite and prominent post-apartheid, postcolonial South Africa, therefore the film concretises the “prophecy”, because it already has knowledge of what happened after 1994. One could, however, argue that Schoeman realised that the ruling power pre-1994 would not be able to escape drastic changes, especially if one takes into account his diary entry during his stay in Ireland (Schoeman, as quoted by Willemse, 1985:35). Indeed, references to crime that has got out of hand – shooting and murder and rape (Schoeman, 1972:106; Schoeman, 1978:142) – are reminiscent of the current high crime rate in South Africa, and isolated farms that are dangerous at night (Schoeman, 1972:75; Schoeman, 1978:99) fit in quite well with the high number of farm attacks that occurred after 1994. Whether these farm attacks are racially motivated is not to be debated here, but they merely serve to prove that the novel lends itself to the concrete, filmic interpretation executed by Xenopoulos.

It is only at the end of the film that the relief the faithful Afrikaner community longs for, comes. On two different occasions Mrs Hattingh stands in the kitchen whilst preparing a meal and looks at the rain-gauge. She predicts that it is going to rain that day, yet the rain never comes and the drought persists. This is ironic and foreshadows the suffering from which they are not delivered until only in the end. At the end of the film George and Carla stand in the rain – the drought has finally been broken. The rain symbolises forgiveness for the community’s sins, for which Paul was the human offering. Carla and

the orphaned children can hopefully prosper now and fertility can hopefully be restored to the land.

The novel has subtle nuances of the rebellion of Gerhard, Johannes and Hendrik because Schoeman's novel is more symbolist in nature, whilst the film is drenched in violence and bloodshed. Is the use of explicit violence and bloodshed justified when it differs so radically from the novel? I believe it is, because the film is more apocalyptic in nature than symbolist, and Xenopoulos had a prophetic purpose in mind when directing the film. Apocalyptic literature and/or films are often synonymous with "megadisaster" and violence is often the means by which the old world is destroyed in order to pave the way for the new world that is to come. I believe that Xenopoulos simultaneously criticises those that perceive the world from a skewed ideology and therefore refuses to adapt to changing conditions, and warns of the death and destruction that unlawful retaliation could lead to.

A lot of apocalyptic characteristics are displayed in the words of Gerhard Snyman at the Kommandodrift-gathering, leading up to the bloodbath at the end. Before analysing his words, it is prudent to quote Carli Coetzee (1995:48) on her view of Afrikaner identity as it ties into the notion of the 'chosen people':

Around the 'Great Trek' has developed a body of literature in which the emigrants are credited with viewing themselves as a 'chosen people', travelling out of what they regarded as Egypt to the 'promised land'. In these readings of the Trek group solidarity is stressed, since the emigrants are said to have entered collectively into a 'covenant' with God. Identity, in this account, is God-given and therefore unchanging, and all members of the community are described as having equal access to this group identity, and through it to the land.

The Afrikaner community of *Promised Land* believes that anyone who is different from them, be it through skin colour, nationality, or religious, cultural or political views, threatens the solidarity of their group. Gerhard epitomises this xenophobia and superior attitude in the prayer he utters before dinner at the gathering: "Lord, listen to a just cause. Hear my plea. Listen to my prayer, my lips that do not deceive. Bless my deeds

and judge me righteously. Amen.” (Xenopoulos, 2002). He is so self-righteous and supercilious as to believe that he is superior to his “enemies”, yet it seems that he had no problem of oppressing them and dehumanising them pre-1994. When the white Afrikaner was in power, he/she projected his/her own inhumanity on to the “other”, labeling them as enemies and justifying their cause. When George confronts them about it, Gerhard exclaims: “You bloody traitor. We must fight to keep our land. It’s God’s land. There’s a holy command laid upon us which must be obeyed. We are made in God’s image”. In other words, he believes that anyone who does not belong to their group, is not made in God’s image and therefore not deserving of the land. The absurdity of this statement, especially in a postmodern era, speaks for itself.

In the end, George never finds the revelation or peace of mind about his lost fatherland that he was looking for, and he leaves South Africa and feeling that his visit was fruitless: “...*waarom het hy hierheen gekom, geld en tyd verkwis ter wille van ‘n sinlose reis en ‘n nuttelose besoek?*” (Schoeman, 1972:136)/ “...why had he come here, wasting time and money for the sake of a senseless journey and a visit that served no purpose?” (Schoeman, 1978:183).

5.6.2. *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* in dialogue with symbolism

In both the novel and the film George has a recurrent dream. There is an important difference between the dream in the novel and the dream in the film, however. In *Na Die Geliefde Land* George’s dream is centered on a beach around the North Sea. In the dream the landscape is colourless; the beach is deserted and he hears the voices of women he cannot see (Schoeman, 1972:35; Schoeman, 1978:43). On the other hand, in *Promised Land*, George has two different dreams that are both centered in South Africa and burst with bright colour. The one dream in the film that correlates with the dream in the novel, is centered in South Africa, as can be inferred from the song that speaks of “Ou Tafelberg”/ “Old Table Mountain” (Xenopoulos, 2002). The other filmic dream is situated on Rietvlei and involves a big gathering of family and friends, as things

were in the old days – prosperous and affluent. The bright colours in George's dreams are in stark contrast with the dark and grainy shots of the rest of the film.

Boekkooi (2003:28) remarks that Xenopoulos used a lot of filters to create a gritty grey chiaroscuro lighting that serves an expressionist purpose. The dark and grainy atmosphere of the film is symbolic of the reality of the characters which are filled with secrets, violence, closed-mindedness and strife, whilst the bright colours of the dreams are symbolic of an utopian ideal. George's ideal is centered within Europe (Schoeman, 1972:141; Schoeman, 1978:190), whilst his mother's ideal is centered within Southern Africa.

There are several references throughout the novel to his mother's longing for the restoration of her lost fatherland, as is characteristic of Transcendental Symbolism. She feels herself an exile in a strange European country (Schoeman, 1972:30; Schoeman, 1978:37), the longing for her fatherland remains even amid the lavish enjoyment of financial prosperity (Schoeman, 1972:62; Schoeman, 1978:80), and she feels homesick even up to her death (Schoeman, 1972:69; Schoeman, 1978:91). In the film George scatters his mother's ashes on Rietvlei; she might not have been united with her fatherland during her lifetime, but she will become one with South African soil in her death – she has returned home. The restoration of the lost fatherland not only evades Anna Neethling, but also evades her son. Try as he might, he is unable to identify with the Afrikaner community, and returns to Europe where he feels his future lies.

Although Xenopoulos makes use of much symbolism in *Promised Land*, the novel displays a greater propensity towards the symbolist movement. Schoeman uses suggestion and indirection rather than explicit statement and the novel remains ambiguous and opaque throughout. A good example of this is to be found in the following passage taken from the novel, which describes the interior of Gerhard and his mother's house on Kommandodrift:

Langs 'n gang word die geselskap binnegelei in 'n groot dubbelvertrek waarvan die twee dele deur 'n boog verbind word. Die een helfte is deur

paraffienlampe verlig, en in die middel staan daar 'n lang, gedekte tafel met stoele aan weerskante; die ander kamer strek donker weg. Daar is geen ander meubels as die tafel en die stoele nie, en teen die mure is die vertroude portrette van politici en helde simmetries langs mekaar gerangskik. Al wat kleur gee aan die kaal wit vertrek is die vlag aan een end daarvan, in wat blykbaar die ereplek is; verder is dit helder en skoon en klam, so leeg en netjies asof niemand dit ooit gebruik nie en niemand ook veronderstel is om dit te doen nie, 'n ruimte afgesonder vir die viering van een of ander hoë en onuitspreeklike geheimenis (Schoeman, 1972:100).

The company was led along a passage into a large double-room, the two parts of which were connected by an arch. One half was lit by paraffin-lamps and in the middle was a great table, laid for a meal, with chairs on either side, and the other room stretched away in darkness. There was no furniture other than the table and chairs. On the walls hung the usual portraits of politicians and heroes, arranged symmetrically next to one another. The only splash of colour in the bare white room was a flag at one end of it in what was obviously the place of honour; otherwise it was bright, and somewhat musty, as clean and empty as if no-one ever used it, indeed, as if it was not supposed to be used: an area set aside for the celebration of some lofty and inexpressible mystery (Schoeman, 1978:133).

The narrator never specifies who the figures in the portraits are. If the narrator had given names, the reader would have known what their political affiliation would be and would be able to place the novel within a certain political and ideological framework. The flag that is the only item that gives colour to the stark room is also unknown. George is aware that the celebration is in honour of some political ideal, but what that ideal is exactly, evades him. The reader is left to fill in the figures in the portraits and the flag for himself/herself. The novel seems to be a matrix or a template on which the film is based and elaborated upon from the viewpoint of a certain ideology.

In *Promised Land*, for example, portraits of H.F. Verwoerd and D.F. Malan are mounted on the wall, which places the film within the realm of Afrikaner nationalism. Verwoerd propagated the belief that the white man brought civilisation to this country and that everything the Bantu inherits together with the white man, was brought about by the zealotry and efforts of the white man (Pelzer, 1966, as quoted by Van Der Merwe, 1975:43). Malan also drew a definite colour boundary, for he believed that difference in

skin colour alludes to the “fact” that whites and non-whites are not equal or similar, but that they are “different in kind” (Du Preez, 1972, as quoted by Van Der Merwe, 1975:43).

The film goes even one step further; whereas the novel suggests that the Afrikaner community’s political affiliation *might* be Afrikaner nationalism, the film not only strengthens this assumption, but also ties the community to a right-wing fundamentalist political group called the AWB. Although it is never stated that the group *are* the AWB, it is evident that they are much *like* the AWB. The AWB flag is on the back of the head of a stuffed animal and is also symbolically blown to pieces by the police at the end of the film, together with the table decked with traditional food. Their plans to destabilise the government are executed in secrecy, just like the activities of the underground AWB movement. On their way to Moedersgift and Rietvlei, there is a clear head-shot of the new black land owners, whilst no mention is made of race in the novel.

It is important to mention that the AWB signs in the film merely suggest that the isolated Afrikaner community have right-wing beliefs. Nowhere in the film is it clearly stated that they are actually members of the AWB movement; their ideological beliefs are inferred from the clues given, such as the AWB signs. The film is very vague about the political preferences of Carla, Paul and Mrs Hattingh, and therefore it seems that they do not endorse the right-wing ideologies of the AWB movement. But there are several indications through what they say and do, that Gerhard, Mr Hattingh and his two sons, Hendrik and Johannes, support right-wing political ideologies.

Both the novel and the film readily make use of symbolism. One example of symbolism is the roses that are used in both the literary and filmic text. When Carla takes George to explore his mother’s old farm, Rietvlei, he is shocked to find that the farm has been annihilated and that mere traces remain of their former lives. Old memories flow over George as he remembers his childhood and the affluence of the farm: the old dam where they swam as children, the impressive green garden with bright flowers, peaches in the orchards, the dense shade of fig trees, the coolness of the verandah (Schoeman, 1972:48-49; Schoeman, 1978:62). Even though mere ruins remain, Carla reminds

George that at least, “Daar is nog rose” (Schoeman, 1972:49)/ “there are still roses” (Schoeman, 1978:63). Although the roses are not symbols of another world *beyond* reality like that of traditional French symbolism, the roses become a symbol of *another* reality in *this* world that could easily come to pass, if only the community members would adapt to the new political situation. To me, the roses are clichéd symbols of survival, resilience and hope – even though the community is plagued by destruction and suffering, there is still hope for better times. The scene in *Promised Land* also includes this part during the exploration of Rietvlei by Carla and George. In the film, the ruins of an old fountain is symbolic of a lavish past era, which is in stark contrast with the rubble that now remains. In a shot of Carla and George framed by bright red roses, the roses become a decadent symbol of beauty and hope amid the death and destruction of the farm, and this hope finds its fulfillment in Carla when she decides to stay in South Africa to make a difference here.

Two other symbols in the film are: The scene where George and Carla converse whilst she hangs up the washing. They are separated by what appears to be a hazy curtain. The hazy curtain becomes a symbol of George’s search to make sense of everything he has found and is reinforced by his statement that he wants “the truth” (Xenopoulos, 2002). The photo of George’s uncle, Pieter, which Paul throws to the ground and breaks, is symbolic of George’s shattered identity he has to mend. He is not entirely his own person for he looks like Pieter and has a certain identity that the community has projected on to him, which conflicts with his own self-image.

5.6.3. *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* in dialogue with the colonial and postcolonial

I argue that the novel anticipates a postcolonial order. Even though Schoeman denies that he consciously intended to write a novel that criticised the present Afrikaner nationalist apartheid-driven regime, the novel can easily be interpreted in this manner. Subsequently, a discussion will follow on how *Promised Land*, that was released after

the 1990s and the democratisation of marginalised South Africans, engages in conversation with the postcolonial.

In the preface to their book about Schoeman's oeuvre, editors Willie Burger and Helize van Vuuren (2002:8-9) admit that Schoeman's name does not carry the same connotations of political engagement like those of André P. Brink, Breyten Breytenbach, J.M. Coetzee or Nadine Gordimer, for example. But what cannot be denied, is that there is definitely a social engagement in his work that focuses on the problematic relationship between European culture and Africa, between the Afrikaner and the African space, and on cultural identity.

Na die Geliefde Land is about the entanglement of the white Afrikaans person, descendant of colonists, and the representation of Africa as a stranger, a country that instigates longing, a country of exile (Jooste, 2002:45). Even though Schoeman never spoke out directly against apartheid, his work undeniably goes against traditional Afrikaner values and the ideology of Afrikaner nationalism (Renders, 2002:65).

Unlike *Na die Geliefde Land's* vague and abstract insinuations, *Promised Land* is very explicit about the tension caused by racial relationships that make up part of the narrative. From very early on, the past order of apartheid is invited into the dialogue between the colonial and the postcolonial. In one scene, George is awakened by the eerie sound of a window that is roused by the wind to open and shut. The sound of the window is symbolic of the hostile environment George finds himself in. As George looks at the window, the reflection of the back of a stuffed animal toy becomes clear: it is an AWB sign. This instantaneously places the community within a certain ideological and political framework. It is ironic that a sign of such terror, violence and intolerance is placed on the back of a seemingly innocent child's plaything. This tension between guilt and innocence alludes to the defenseless position in which the Afrikaners believe that they now find themselves.

The hybridisation that colonisation has brought about is represented by the kwaito music Paul listens to in George's car. Kwaito is a hybrid of American hip-hop and South African township music. The dismantling of apartheid has opened South Africa to the influences of globalisation more than ever before, which is merely a continuation of the interpenetration of cultures brought about by colonisation. In an effort to provoke his brothers, Paul turns up the volume of the kwaito music and is warned by his brother, Johannes, to turn off that "Kaffir music" (Xenopoulos, 2002).

Hattingh is much more verbal about his beliefs in the film than in the novel, and in the film he is part of the conspiracy which attempts to destabilise the government. The polemic and controversial issue of land possession and land reform is brought into play in the scene where Hattingh tells George that the Land Bank wants to steal their farm and give it to the blacks. When Hattingh commands George to hit the cattle and to herd them into the kraal, George replies that a cow is regarded as sacred in some cultures. Hattingh, in a very supercilious and patronising tone, disregards this notion, calling the cow nothing more than a T-bone steak. This is quite in contrast with the usual respect Boers display towards their cattle, for cattle ensure them and their families a living. When George tells him that he'd be perfectly happy as a vegetarian, Hattingh retorts by saying that if he wants to eat a man's food he must be willing to do a man's job: "Happiness is for Jews and Kaffirs. You're an Afrikaner, you can't ever change that" (Xenopoulos, 2002). The scene is set next to a rusty, old car and ruins of old buildings, which represent the decay of Rietvlei and the imminent "threat" of the degradation of the Afrikaner nation.

It is clear that Hattingh believes that cultures that could even conceive of a cow as sacred are foolish, and instead of respecting their beliefs, he reduces their world views to mere nonsense. He also believes that happiness is at present only destined for the previously marginalised, and that he is now on the receiving end of discrimination because of his heritage and his skin colour.

The fundamentalist community's fear of the unknown, which breeds violence and intolerance, is obvious in the scene where the Hattingh family, Gerhard and George sit down to eat dinner several days later. Whilst conversing about the time that Johannes shot "daardie bleddie skepsel"/"that bloody creature" (Xenopoulos, 2002, my translation), George inquires what the word "*skepsel*" means. Gerhard defines a "creature" as a man without a soul:

'Kaffirs, Jews, Communists, anyone who's not pure.'
'You mean everyone that's not an Afrikaner.'
'You learn quickly' (Xenopolous, 2002).

The community does not only base their xenophobia on skin colour, but also on any label that is different from theirs, be it race, ethnicity, religion, world view, political preferences, etc. Gerhard even goes as far as to threaten George not to sell Rietvlei, for if he sold it to "Kaffirs" or "Jews" there could be dire consequences, seeing that they are, to his mind, "Satan and his followers".

Although there seems to be oppression in *Na die Geliefde Land*, it is possible that the community in *Promised Land* could still have a good life under the rule of the new government. In the film the new farm owners and new establishment are given a face in a close-up shot of three black people whilst George, Mrs. Hattingh, Paul and Carla travel to visit Aunt Miemie at Moedersgift. There is no mention in the film that it is after 1994, but the kwaito CD George listens to, suggests that the film is set in a post-1994, globalised and technologically advanced South Africa. If it is post-1994 in South Africa, it can be inferred that the new reign is the ANC government and that a democratic political system, therefore, renders its citizens free and equal. The white policeman that makes up part of the police force at the end of the film, also suggests that black people are not the only ones to be instated in roles of power.

Yet, the xenophobic white Afrikaans farming community of that region chooses to suffer and die for a skew ideology, refuses financial aid from the government to endure the drought, and refuses to adapt to the new political situation. True to Darwin's theory on

natural selection, those that are unable to adapt to changing environmental conditions do not survive and are doomed to become extinct. Fortunately, Carla has the power to continue the bloodline, but hopefully one that is free from ethnocentrism, xenophobia and closed-mindedness. She also rebels against the patriarchal order in that she breaks the mould of what is traditionally expected of a woman, and even though it is “expected” of her to marry Gerhard, it appears she is resolute not to.

5.7. Bakhtinian voices in *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land*

Spies (1973:43) contends that *Na die Geliefde Land* becomes an outcry for dialogue between the characters. Recollection is a definite motif in the novel and is tied to the exile’s recollection of a country that has some or other hold on its former citizens. The older generation desperately wants to engage in conversation about recollections of earlier times, yet it always seems to degenerate into a one-sided monologue. In her article, Spies (1973:42-43) gives several examples of this phenomenon: conversation misses its goal of word and reply and tends to become a monologue as the narrator remarks: “Hattingh sit en luister na wat George vertel, maar gedurende sy vrou se lang monoloog begin hy rusteloos word...” (Schoeman, 1972:13)/ “Hatting sat and listened to what George had to say, but he began to get restless during his wife’s monologue” (Schoeman, 1978:12); “...en hulle aarsel totdat tant Miemie self haar monoloog onderbreek...” (Schoeman, 1972:41/ “...and they stood there waiting until Aunt Miemie broke off her monologue...” (Schoeman, 1978:52).

Spies (1973:43) continues to give examples of the pleas for dialogue: During their visit to Rietvlei, George gladly remarks that it is the first time Carla has spoken to him on that particular day, and even though she was rude to him, “...ongeskiktheid is beter as stilswye” (Schoeman, 1972:50)/ “rudeness is better than silence” (Schoeman, 1978:66). Carla also expresses a need for dialogue. She has waited so long for someone to talk to that conversation appears impossible, for her words seem to have frozen, leaving nothing to say (Schoeman, 1972:86; Schoeman, 1978:114). Even though George can do nothing to alleviate her situation, Carla is thankful that he at least listened to her,

because there is nobody on the farm she can talk to (Schoeman, 1972:90; Schoeman, 1978:120).

In the film, Carla also has no one to talk to of her own kin. In George she finds an outsider, a marginalised compatriot, in whom she can confide; this might be the motivation behind their long and explicit love scene which seems to border on being superfluous; it might be an externalisation of the conversation between George as European outsider and her as a member of the isolated South African community – their verbal and emotional communications that are embodied in their physical union.

Gerhard, Johannes, Hendrik and Hattingh are centripetal forces that assume definite power roles over George. As he tries to make sense of everything around him, he chooses not to speak his own mind. Even though he wants to return home, he is persuaded to stay and when he does not want to attend the Kommandodrift gathering, he is forced into acquiescence when Gerhard forcefully takes his passport from him. Almost everyone in the district expects him to stay on at Rietvlei out of respect for his ancestors, his “oneness” with his people and his love for the land. It is only in the end at the Kommandodrift feast that George chooses to take his power back and speak his mind. In the process he also unveils their plans to destabilise the government. This sets the polyphonic conversation in motion between the dividing lines of right and wrong of different life and world views, but before the dialogue can override the one-sided monologues of the people and their beliefs, the police clamps down on them and Gerhard, Hattingh and his three sons are killed before salvation can take place.

Even though the isolated, closed-off community is finally penetrated by a representative of an enlightened outside world and confronted with other points of view, George remains a passive, unengaged character and they stand steadfast by their convictions. It seems that a hybridisation of ideologies never takes place, that boundaries are drawn with no limen to ensure an exchange of ideologies, and that they ultimately talk *past* each other.

I agree with Elize Botha (1965:171) that every literary artwork creates its own world and that this “world”, made up of words, provides its own key(s) to interpretation. The way in which a literary work gives access to every single reader, might be, and I believe definitely is, different each time, for every individual has his/her own store of learning, experiences, collective and/or individual memories, beliefs, culture, and other frameworks of reference which influence his/her point of view.

Van der Merwe and Viljoen (1998:50) also discuss heteronomy as one of the distinguishing features of literature. A literary work is viewed as an independent world of its own with its own inherent value, and is therefore autonomous for there is something that has to be interpreted. It is, however, simultaneously independent of readers that read and engage in dialogue with it, and is therefore heterogeneous. This means that a text has boundaries, whilst being open to multiple interpretations. One cannot impose just any meaning onto the text, but at the same time, one is not just a passive receiver of the text.

The novel, as an unique, unrepeatable artwork thus realises itself differently in the mind of each new reader. It is therefore not surprising that the transposition of the novel to film will also differ with each new director. If every reading of a novel is interpreted differently by every new reader, how much more so would the interpretation of a film differ, seeing that film is a totally different medium than the novel. The mere transposition of the novel to film already opens up the novel, that is not wholly, but partly fixed, due to its concrete nature as a work made up of the same words each time a copy is produced. The novel as a centripetal, autonomous artwork is therefore opened up even more to centrifugal possibilities, interpretations and meanings. Yet paradoxically, the symbolist novel that is vague and open to so many interpretations, is also closed-up again by the filmic adaptation, which clearly moulds the film in a post-apartheid, postcolonial framework.

Umberto Eco is famous for his theory on open and closed texts. Certain texts are closed precisely because they are open to any sort of reading, as Hawthorn (2000:245) helps me to understand from this quote:

Those texts that obsessively aim at arousing a precise response on the part of more or less precise empirical readers...are in fact open to any possible 'aberrant' decoding. A text so immoderately 'open' to every possible interpretation will be called a *closed* one (Eco, 1981:8).

Na die Geliefde Land can be regarded as a closed text, precisely because it is open to any aberrant reading, and *Promised Land* can therefore be regarded as an open text, precisely because it has chosen one specific interpretation to apply to the filmic adaptation.

Two other Bakhtinian concepts that readily occur in the novel and the film are the *carnavalesque* and *irony*. The people George meets are sketched as ugly, absurd or senile. Bettie Conradie, the teacher who lives with aunt Miemie on Moedersgift, is unflatteringly described as a stout girl without makeup and her hairstyle is a mass of tight little curls (Schoeman, 1972:42; Schoeman, 1978:53). It is suggested that the women are old-fashioned and their clothes are out-of-date (Spies, 1973:44). At first sight aunt Maria is viewed as "grotesque" (Schoeman, 1972:120; Schoeman, 1978:160), but then her fine, soft hands and her pure features disarm George and it is impossible for him to condemn her as ludicrous. Only Carla is described with some compassion by the narrator and the focaliser. When Carla appears in an out-of-date white dress for the Kommandodrift-occasion, George realises that

Sy weet dat sy belaglik lyk en haar oë beken dit vir 'n oomblik, maar dan lig sy haar kop op en daag hom uit om haar uit te lag of medelye met haar te voel (Schoeman, 1972:95).

She knew that she looked foolish and her expression briefly acknowledged it, but then she lifted her head, challenging him to be amused or to pity her (Schoeman, 1978:127).

The pinnacle of caricature and absurdity is aunt Miemie. She is a feisty woman without any social graces or etiquette. She makes her guests feel unwelcome when she scolds them for giving her a fright because they drove up in a car she did not recognise, (Schoeman, 1972:40; Schoeman, 1978:51), yet ironically she resents them and makes them feel guilty when they want to depart after having stayed for a long visit (Schoeman, 1972:60; Schoeman, 1978:78). Surprisingly, Mrs Hattingh does not take offence at her untactful behaviour, and just remarks how much energy she still has for a woman her age.

At the Kommandodrift-gathering Aunt Miemie's table manners are described in carnivalesque style:

Tant Miemie sit nog oor haar bord gekrom met sous wat langs haar ken af loop, en mevrou Hattingh kom haar te hulp met 'n servet (Schoeman, 1972:105).

Aunt Miemie was still bent over her plate, gravy running down her chin, and Mrs Hattingh came to help her with a table-napkin (Schoeman, 1978:141).

Tant Miemie het haar bord skoongeskraap met mes en vurk en die laaste sousressies met 'n stuk brood opgevee (Schoeman, 1972:107).

Aunt Miemie had scraped her plate clean with knife and fork and mopped up the last drops of gravy with a piece of bread (Schoeman, 1978:144).

It is ironic that this uncultivated, unsophisticated, ridiculous woman is so patiently endured and even honoured, as Spies (1973:45) points out, as a "mother of the nation". At the gathering, when George beholds the procession as the men help aunt Miemie to the house, he mockingly thinks to himself that all that is left for them to do is to unfold a canopy over her, and the solemnity of her entrance will be complete (Schoeman, 1972:99; Schoeman, 1978:132). In the film, as in the novel, she is so senile that she often loses the thread of their conversations or gets her facts about family genealogies wrong (Xenopoulos, 2002; Schoeman, 1972:43; Schoeman, 1978:54).

With regard to irony, the film concretises the ironic inversion of power roles. According to Renders (2002:76), the roles have been reversed, the whites are no longer the masters. To the Afrikaner it means that history repeats itself: he/she is stripped of his/her freedom, not by the English this time, but by the blacks. But isn't this exactly what the whites did unto the blacks?

Previously, the Afrikaners enjoyed status, power, financial prosperity and a life of comfort. The older generation often talk about the old times when things had been better. The Afrikaners are bitter about their new position, yet it is ironic that in the past the black majority was in the same position that they now find *themselves* in. This means that, in their view, it was all right to treat the "other" in a certain way, but now that the playing field has been levelled and they are on the receiving end, it is unacceptable.

It is furthermore ironic that Mrs. Henning and Gerhard tell George that his arrival is a sign that all things will be well again; in hindsight, after the bloody and violent end of the little isolated Afrikaner community, George is in fact the catalyst that speeds up the disastrous end.

Promised Land, because of the visual aspect of the medium, brings across the Bakhtinian notions of grotesque bodies and the carnivalesque poignantly and disturbingly. I have made countless references to the slaughtering of a chicken; the consumption of chicken claws; Aunt Miemie's disgusting table manners; the mawing jaws at the Kommandodrift-feast; the naked entwined bodies of George and Carla; the red, sweaty and drunken faces of the men at the feast; Johannes groping one of the Lourens's daughters while dancing. The Afrikaner community is portrayed as backward "white trash" who has degenerated from a middle class to a low class existence. All the worst characteristics of the Afrikaners are presented in such a way that they are demonised as xenophobic and paranoid discriminators who actually have no reason to regard themselves as superior: the patriarchal father (Mr Hattingh), the subservient mother (Mrs Hattingh), the racist, homophobic brothers (Hendrik and Johannes), the

tyrant political leader (Gerhard), and the redundant national leader (senile aunt Miemie). It is only Carla and Paul that break the mold of the usual Afrikaner stereotype.

In *Promised Land*, it is especially at the Kommandodrift feast that the men and women are portrayed as ridiculous. Xenopoulos ironically inverts Bakhtin's celebration of the grotesque body, and emphasises the grotesque body in such a way that its positive aspects are lost to the viewer. The old-fashioned dresses, the clumsy application of too much makeup or bright rouge on cheekbones, the unrefined table manners, all contribute to the representation of the isolated group of Afrikaner women as ludicrous. Aunt Miemie even slurps up her food in a messy fashion and burps at the table.

Xenopoulos captures the grotesqueness of these ridiculous caricatures in overwhelming *dogme*-type shots – simulated shots taken with a hand-held camera – of Johannes feverishly fondling a young girl whilst dancing, drunken men with jovial and sweaty red faces, the loud, disorienting sounds of an accordion. The hyperbolic emphasis on bodily functions causes the viewer to become so aware and uncomfortable about his/her own gross bodily functions which include eating, digestion, urination and defecation, that he/she does not want to associate with these demonised, ridiculous Afrikaners in any way. This purposefully widens the gap between the viewer and the characters even more. Xenopoulos deliberately represents the Afrikaners as flawed or limited in various ways, and therefore discredits and dialogises the superior position they believe they have over “Kaffirs, Jews, Communists, anyone who’s not pure” (Xenopoulos, 2002).

The juxtaposing of characters in both the novel and the film also serves to emphasise the hierarchies and roles of power or status that accompany them. There is especially one passage in the novel where George is juxtaposed with Johannes:

‘Jy moet ‘n slag inspring en hand bysit met die werk hier op die plaas. Jy sal genoeg vind om jou besig te hou van voor dagbreek tot laat in die aand.’

‘Ek dink nie dat ek sal probeer nie.’

‘Wat is dan verkeerd met plaaswerk?’

‘Ek sê nie dat daar iets mee verkeerd is nie. Maar as ek moes probeer om julle te help, sou ek meer in die pad wees as iets anders.’

'Ja, seker,' sê Johannes. 'Jy's 'n lessenaarmens. Kyk maar na jou hande.' George kyk na sy hande voor hom op die tafel. Op die dag ná sy terugkoms het hy 'n afspraak met die kapper en sal die manikuur sy hande versorg – nog net twee dae in hierdie vreemde land waarvan hy feitlik niks gesien het nie, net een dag hier op die plaas met sy groot kombuis en die stilte buite en Johannes in vuil kakiewerklere (Schoeman, 1972:76).

'You must lend a hand with the work here on the farm. You'll find enough to keep you busy from before dawn and until late evening.'

'I don't think I'll try.'

'What's wrong with farm-work?'

'I don't mean there's anything wrong with it. But if I had to try to help you people, I'd be more of a hindrance than anything else.'

'Yes, that's true. You're a desk-man. Just look at your hands.'

George looked. On the day after his return he had an appointment with the hairdresser and the manicurist would attend to his nails – only two more days in this foreign country of which he actually had seen very little and one more day on this farm with its huge kitchen, the silence outside, and Johannes in dirty khaki working-clothes (Schoeman, 1978:101).

In his analysis of this passage, Willemse (1985:37) comments on the juxtaposing of one way of life with another and the feeling of estrangement, the difference and outsidership that is brought across to the reader. George's occupation as office worker is juxtaposed with the hard labour of the Hattinghs' farm work; his groomed appearance and refined lilac shirts (Schoeman, 1972:37; Schoeman, 1978:124) are the opposites of Johannes's uncared-for, hardened appearance and his unflattering kaki clothes. In the quoted passage, the tension between George as intellectual and Johannes as labourer, is clearly felt. Willemse (1985:38) warns the reader to resist the temptation to reduce Johannes to a mere one-dimensional labourer. Johannes is a patriot and representative of a history of connectedness with South African soil, and must be viewed as such. George not only stands opposite Johannes as intellectual to patriot, but also as a reflector on and sceptic of the incredulous Afrikaner struggle to keep other cultures at bay.

The voice of George, as representative of an European world view, and the voice of Johannes, as representative of the Afrikaner world view, constantly dialogise and relativise one another. Their speech diversity reflects social diversity, as Murray

(1987:121) states in his discussion of Bakhtinian theory, and disintegrates the authority of stable verbal-ideological systems. The Afrikaner would like to bring the verbal-ideological belief system of the European in line with its own, and vice versa.

Even though the dialogue differs, the tension between George and Johannes is also transposed to film in *Promised Land*. In this scene, George and Johannes sit across from one another, at opposite ends of the kitchen table. The length of the table symbolises the fact that they are poles apart and that there is no notion of brotherhood between them. The fact that each sits at a different end of the table, is also symbolic of the power struggle between them. Johannes provokes George, who has just entered the kitchen, and remarks: "It seems to me *you people* sleep late, hey?" When George retaliates with: "It seems to me *you people* have a strange sense of time", Johannes replies, "A moment can last forever in this part of the world" (Xenopoulos, 2002). The lines are clearly drawn between "us" and "them" – a divide that neither wishes to bridge. Johannes regards George's habit of sleeping late as a sign of laziness and idleness which, in his opinion, is representative of all Europeans. In return, George perceives their way of life as monotonous and feels that they have a choice to rise at dawn and work until dusk. Of course, no one is in the right, it is merely a question of cultural differences, of priority, duty and point of view. Yet, Xenopoulos portrays the community members in such a hyperbolically barbaric and backward way that he demonises them, and the viewer tends to back George's point of view out of fear of not wanting to identify with them in any way.

Johannes cannot comprehend the Europeans' fast-paced lifestyle, and George cannot stand the Afrikaner's monotonous farm lifestyle, and neither tries to understand the other. They talk past each other, instead of towards one another, and therefore their dialogue degenerates into one-sided monologues. This is a great example of what Murray (1987:127) calls "the general impossibility of dialogue because of a lack of common language".

I believe the film to be a good example of Afrikaner-bashing, but not of all Afrikaners everywhere. It is a very extreme portrayal of a minority Afrikaners who cannot accept the new political regime and cannot adapt to the changes. The film has a more closed point of view and supports George's beliefs in order to warn them of the dangers that lurk in their inflexibility, whilst the novel is so vague that the reader does not know whether the Afrikaners or the new political leaders are in the right.

5.8. Conclusion

Willemsse (1985:35) describes *Na die Geliefde Land* as a world just before, during or after a violent assumption of the reins of government; a process of individual and group adjustment, as well as spiritual and physical survival; a period during which fundamental choices have to be made by the individual and the collective. The reader is, however, never oriented towards the time or place when and where this assumption of the reigns of government take place, and the political orientation of the new government is not elaborated on. In the course of the novel the reader learns names of farms such as Rietvlei, Moedersgift and Kommandodrift, but never learn what district they form part of and never find out what the Hattingh's farm is called. The vagueness of the novel makes it very universal and very accessible to people of all cultures, races, and nationalities. True to the symbolist text, the narrator of the novel remains vague about specifics, yet what is clear is that the characters experience a definite longing for a lost fatherland.

Even though the novel is not postmodern, it seems to be a symbolist template of sorts, with many open parts and possibilities and therefore it ties into the culture of the modern age. According to Meyer (2001:6), "the culture of the modern age provides a framework for different ways of life and world views without itself constituting a particular way of life". The novel never concretises the oppressive power that the establishment belongs to, and never gives a face to the apparent totalitarian regime that reigns.

In contrast, the film does exactly this: it fills in the “template” of the novel from the viewpoint of a specific ideology and places the film within the space-time of a post 1994, post-apartheid, postcolonial South Africa. One can go as far as to argue that the film *overfills* the template and makes it too explicit. But what one has to keep in mind is that the film was made from a specific ideological viewpoint that wanted to demonise those selected few Afrikaners who still cling to right-wing beliefs, even after the democratisation of South Africa.

What is ironic is that the act of adapting the novel to film has the potential of opening up the autonomous artwork due to the characteristic difference in medium, yet the film actually seems to close off multiple interpretations because it is filmed from a definite ideological viewpoint. Consequently, the novel is more open to multiple, universal interpretations than the film. Is this necessarily detrimental, though? I do not believe so. Because the film is made for a specific target audience it is relevant to those viewers and has the power to help them to come to terms with hybrid feelings of belonging. The filmic adaptation brings many different discourses into play, such as the colonial and apartheid past, the postcolonial present, hybrid Afro-European ancestry, etc., while the symbolist novel is much more open and universal, but does not engage in quite so many discourses in a polyphonic conversation as the film.

Another important difference between the novel and the film is that there is definite oppression of the small community by the totalitarian government in the novel, whilst in the film, in my opinion, the oppression is not real but part of the paranoid minds of the Afrikaner community. It seems that their world view is so tainted that they truly believe they are living in a dystopia. Not all whites are oppressed (as can be inferred from the white policeman at the Kommandodrift gathering) and it seems that the Afrikaners have the freedom to prosper, but choose to suffer, because they believe in the justness of their “cause”: They regard themselves as the chosen ones that must endure evil and must refrain from contact with the enemy, the enemy who threatens their existence and their beliefs. It is this xenophobia that is responsible for their inability to adapt to the new political and social order and this represents their inability to hybridise. Strength

and Darwinian survival lies in the hybrid, the new generation white Afrikaners that are not rendered passive because they have paradoxical feelings of guilt for the apartheid past as well as pride in being an Afrikaner. The new generation Afrikaners need to participate actively in building a new South Africa, for stagnation and inflexibility would lead to the "death" of the Afrikaner.

It is quite ironic that the Afrikaner community in the film has such a superior, supercilious notion of itself, for they are made out to be a ridiculous backward community that lives in the past and displays nothing of the principles of common humanity, love towards their neighbour and the compassion on which Christianity is based. Xenopoulos hyperbolically portrays them as such backward, closed-minded, grotesque human beings that one finds it very difficult to identify with. As white Afrikaner South African, although I can only speak for myself, I do not want to associate with them in any way. I believe Xenopoulos goes as far as to demonise them in order to give one an idea of how many foreigners, rightly or wrongly, view Afrikaners.

I therefore believe that Xenopoulos chose such an adaptation of the open and subtle novel, because he wanted to criticise and warn those that choose not to adapt to the new democratised South Africa. He wants to warn people who still cling to closed frameworks of mind such as AWB-ideals that xenophobia often ends in terrorism and that the only way for one to survive is to adapt and to reconsider one's ideologies, beliefs and life and world views. Issues such as land reform and emigration are also addressed. The message I got from the film is that a new patriotism is needed in South Africa that is characterised by a multicultural awareness and a celebration of unity that underlies multicultural diversity.

Whether Schoeman wrote this novel as a prophetic warning is debatable. Although Schoeman cannot be labelled a resistance writer like authors such as Nadine Gordimer, Bessie Head or A.P. Brink, the evidence is there to suggest that he wanted to warn the white hegemony about the atrocity of apartheid and how oppression can turn on one. From the hindsight of the democratisation of South Africa post 1994, it is easy to

superimpose the current situation on to the novel and to label the novel as apocalyptic and prophetic. Although Schoeman could not have foreseen exactly what would happen, I believe he knew the nationalist apartheid system would not be able to oppress the black majority for long. But Schoeman's novel is purposefully vague and universal about the apocalyptic situation and the abuse of power, and must therefore be respected as such: an open novel with a multitude of possible interpretations, which can be applied to almost any situation anywhere in the world at any given time.

Although some critics, such as Boekkooi (2003:28), feel that Xenopoulos has done an injustice to the film through an ideological adaptation that differs so much from the open-ended novel, I believe that the mere act of adaptation sparks a polyphonic conversation that simultaneously acknowledges and liberates the original text from a fixed reading. It mutually dialogises the viewpoints, beliefs and opinions of the author and the director, literary scholars and film critics. Hybrid salient characteristics engage in conversation with multiple discourses such as war, colonisation, imperialism, xenophobia, the postcolonial etc., thereby dialogising the salient characteristics of different movements, as well as dialogising the voices between the colonial and the postcolonial. The film has relevance to a certain target audience at a certain point in time and therefore aids an understanding of the self and the self's situation. The continuous narrative replication and interpretation of the past emphasises Hutcheon's (1987:12) reminder that it is important to comprehend that history is not unreal, but that it consists of fallible, provisional, relative sets of interpretations of a history that we have no immediate or absolute access to.

Even though the filmic adaptation liberates the novel through another interpretation, and simultaneously closes it off through this specific interpretation, it cannot be denied that neither the novel nor the film makes the subaltern speak. Even though the film is very politically correct, it is true that everything is experienced from the viewpoint of the whites; even the perception of the community is seen through George's eyes. Depending on one's point of view, this might be somewhat worrying.

Renders (2002:76), however, feels that the absence of blacks is relative in Schoeman's oeuvre, because Schoeman's focus is on white Afrikaners that have stagnated in their ideological absurdity and have lost all moral justification. He gives the subaltern a restricted place in his work, because as a white South African Afrikaner himself, he throws some light on the whites' presence in Africa. Renders (2002:76) thus feels that it is not a denial of blacks' presence, because it is not a world without black people. They get the place that they were attributed to in the white world. A realisation of their unacceptable marginalisation sprouts from the very way they are portrayed.

The saving grace of both novel and film, however, I believe, is the following Bakhtinian concepts that make up part of it: irony and ironic inversion, decadence, polyphony and heteroglossia, the regeneration and growth that lies in the grotesque body and the salvation that lies in change.

6. CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

This dissertation set out to argue that a Bakhtinian framework could be used to analyse the polyphonic conversations between the four stylistically hybrid texts under discussion, namely Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, Karel Schoeman's *Na die Geliefde Land* and Jason Xenopoulos' *Promised Land*. In this sixth, and final chapter, I shall give a summary of my conclusions and remind the reader of my answers to the research questions posed in Chapter One.

In summary, I shall set out to answer whether the films are relevant adaptations of the literary texts and motivate why; determine what new insights a Bakhtinian analysis of the transposition of the stylistically hybrid filmic texts into stylistically hybrid literary texts according to Bakhtinian concepts such as intertextuality, polyphony, heteroglossia, centrifugal and centripetal voices, ironic inversion and the carnivalesque could yield; and determine how the different depictions of the identity crises experienced by key characters in the four texts could be of use to a postcolonial, post-apartheid South African people.

6.2. Conclusions

The filmic adaptations of the respective novella and novel instigate a polyphonic conversation between the literary and filmic texts. Are they just adaptations? How do the novella/novel and the films differ and why? What other voices now form part of the dialogue that make up the literary work? These questions will be answered in due course.

There is a rivalry between literature and the cinema and literature is the "favoured" medium by scholars for a variety of reasons (Stam and Raengo, 2005:4-8). Stam and Raengo (2004:12) make an interesting postcolonial analogy of cinema as the "other" – "the designation of film words as 'literary' other, to be resisted, mastered, and colonized continues in other decades and discourses over other film words". It seems that literary

scholars have an unwarranted faith in the pure nature of literature and its superior position to cinema, for both literature and film are hybrid mediums in that words and visuals are intrinsic to both. It is indeed the visual propensity of literature that lends itself to filmic adaptations.

Stam and Raengo (2005:17-18) have helped me to understand that even though a director might stay faithful to the storyline and setting of a literary work, a “faithful” filmic rendition of the work is impossible anyway, seeing that literature and the cinema are two totally different mediums. I agree with Stam and Raengo (2005:18) who claim that “there can be no real equivalence between source novel and adaptation”, for even though a film can recapitulate the outlines of the basic story, “the actual resulting texts in their densely signifying materiality will be in many ways incommensurable”. Stam and Raengo (2004:1) also quote Barthes who concludes that the substances of the two structures of graphic and iconic or word and image are irreducible, since there is never a real incorporation between them.

I believe that the filmic texts do not indiscriminately distort the original literary texts, but rather pay homage to their importance, while at the same time, “relieving” them of their modernist, canonical status. The filmic texts are the concretisation of some of the interpretative possibilities and open up a dialogue between the original texts, themselves and other possible readings that have not yet been fulfilled. The transposition of the films, therefore, decanonise the sanctity of the written literary texts and this should be celebrated in our postmodern era.

I find neither filmic adaptations to be what Stam and Raengo (2005:43) call aesthetic mainstreaming – screenwriting that targets the mass audience, avoids complex issues and is made with the intent to entertain and produce box-office profits, rather than make the viewer think, reflect and question. Stam and Raengo (2005:43) state that

since adaptations engage the discursive energies of their time, they become a barometer of the ideological trends circulating during the moment of production. Each re-creation of a novel for the cinema unmask facets not

only of the novel and its period and culture of origin, but also of the time and culture of the adaptation.

Bakhtin believes that genre is "a crystallisation of the concepts particular to a given time and to a given social stratum in a specific society" (Clark and Holquist, 1984). If a society has a marked preference for some forms over others, then visual media seem to dominate in the society of the 21st century. Bakhtin indeed praises the polyphonic characters of certain media because they employ multiple styles and express multiple world views.

The transposition of the novels to film opens up even greater dialogue between the different media's discourses, languages and histories, between the characters and the actors, and between the author and director. In film especially, the voices of the actors and directors are sometimes granted as much, or even more authority than the voice of the author who created the character, for the director leads the actor to interpret and portray the character in a certain way. The hypertextuality of the film liberates the literary work from its canonical and elitist status, and recycles many of the original themes in a visual, and therefore I believe, much more accessible way to the masses.

I believe films are more powerful than the original ur-texts in rousing a general mass audience of the 21st century to action, for two reasons. Firstly, films are more directly implicated in bodily response than novels are, as argued in Chapter Two. I believe film to be a greater form of popular culture in this day and age, and that the films under discussion might reach audiences it would not have reached if they were only in written form. Even if people watch the films and do not like them, a seed might have been planted from which some afterthought could germinate.

Secondly, I also agree with the renowned film semiotician, Christian Metz, who claims that film images have generally been proclaimed a more universal language, because visual perception varies less throughout the world than languages do (Metz, 1974:64).

I have to acknowledge, of course, that not all filmic adaptations are good adaptations that enrich the original text. Some filmic adaptations are only driven by profit and often result in depthless and superficial blockbusters, and perpetuate the Hollywood ideology of capitalism. Sometimes directors make a film to serve a specific ideology that clashes with the author's original intent. They might have a "strong" reading of a text, as McCormick and Waller (1987) put it, which is a self-conscious, clearly articulated reading that works against the grain of the text. Readers might be aware that a text wants to be read in a certain way, but choose to denounce such a reading because of a certain historical perspective or cultural awareness. A good example of this is Chinua Achebe's (mis)reading of *Heart of Darkness* as a racist text. This is thus a clashing of repertoires and an imposition of a certain literary reading or critique.

Eco argues that "you cannot use the [open] text as you want, but only as the text wants you to use it. An open text, however 'open' it be, cannot afford whatever interpretation" (Eco, 1981:19). I do believe, however, that *Apocalypse Now* and *Promised Land* are not depthless or superficial and that *Heart of Darkness* and *Na die Geliefde Land* can afford the filmic interpretations because they are of great relevance to their target audience, and they should rather be judged by other criteria than the norm. Instead of judging and meriting a film on its fidelity to the literary text, it is rather prudent to ask questions such as: What events from the novel have been deleted, added, or changed in the transition to film, and why? What does the director want to say with these alterations? What is to be learned or gained by the transformations and transmutations? What intertextual and hypertextual echoes engage in the dialogue set in motion by the filmic adaptation?

I shall answer these questions by using *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* as examples. Xenopoulos transposes the timeless, unspecified setting of Schoeman's novel to a specific time and place – South Africa, post-1994 – because he has a certain ideological purpose, he wants to warn those that refuse to adapt to the changing conditions that they will not flourish and that negative feelings breed hatred that could easily lead to violence. He engages in dialogue with Schoeman about the Will to Power, but instead of leaving the details of the narrative vague, he fills the template with topical

issues facing South Africans, such as the aftermath of democratisation, land reform, emigration, lingering racism etc. The film therefore offers its audience an array of characters different people can identify with, issues to contemplate, and decisions to make.

In Chapter Two I stated that many literary scholars and film critics argue that *Apocalypse Now* and *Promised Land* are not justified adaptations of *Heart of Darkness* and *Na die Geliefde Land* in that they distort the storyline and setting to such an extent that the original storyline and setting are unrecognisable, or distort the authors' original intentions with the work.

What, then, are some of these differences that could support critics' claim about the infidelity of *Apocalypse Now* and *Promised Land* to their *ur*-texts?

Heart of Darkness was written by Conrad who grew up in Poland and later based himself in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, while *Apocalypse Now* was made by American director, Coppola, late into the twentieth century. Coppola discarded the Congolese jungles of Africa, to tell a story that was relevant to him and fellow-Americans, and replaced it with the Vietnam War. Both are placed in a colonial setting and a tropical climate and follow the protagonists' penetration deeper and deeper into an unknown jungle, confronted with a culture they do not understand.

The time and place in which *Na die Geliefde Land* is set is never specified. In *Promised Land*, however, the film is clearly set in a post-apartheid, postcolonial South Africa.

Two big differences distinguish the protagonists of *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* on the one hand, from the protagonists of *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* on the other.

Firstly, Marlow and Willard are much more part of their imagined communities and also take part in the "offences" that alter their life and world view forever: Marlow is a

European who joins other Europeans in the Congo, and even though he does not technically imprison the natives, he turns a blind eye to their oppression and therefore perpetuates the injustices of his contemporaries. Although the Vietnam War has made Willard sick mentally, physically and emotionally, he has to kill for his country; he perpetuates what sickens him. Yet one can argue that Willard ultimately executes a moral task when he kills Kurtz, for he stops Kurtz from perpetuating his own violent horrors on people.

In comparison, there is a greater divide to be found between George, in both the novel and the film, and the imagined community he is now only linked to by genetic heritage. He cannot and will not identify with the community and does not take part in their injustices, because he is kept in the dark about their plans to overthrow the government on the one hand, and chooses to distance himself from their skewed life and world view on the other.

The second great difference between the protagonists is the way in which the Golden Bough myth engages in dialogue with the texts. Marlow and Willard morally dialogise one another in that neither of them are represented as one-dimensionally ethical or unethical. In *Heart of Darkness* Marlow develops a negative view of the world; he starts off as an idealistic dreamer who believes in the justness of the European cause, but is disillusioned by the injustices that accompany colonisation and imperialism. Kurtz is the physical manifestation of these evils and only when he dies naturally of his illness is there a chance for spiritual renewal and growth. Willard kills Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now* and is therefore the instigator for the restoration of the fertility of the land. Unlike Marlow, who starts out with a high sense of what is moral and ethical, Willard, who does not have these principles, changes for the better in the story. He refuses to succeed Kurtz as savage king or to call in an air strike to kill the natives of Kurtz's Cambodian tribe. Thus, in both the novella and the film, Kurtz becomes the scapegoat or Fisher King who carries all of Europe's sins, and is "sacrificed" to make way for a new order.

Similar to *Heart of Darkness*, in *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* it is not the protagonists who are responsible for spiritual and economic rebirth; rather, they are the instigators. While Paultjie does not die in *Na die Geliefde Land*, he (Paul) becomes the sacrificial lamb or Fisher King that pays for the whole community's sins when he is killed in *Promised Land*. In both the novel and the film, Carla is the figure that remains to implement the change, unlike Marlow and Willard that leave Kurtz's compound.

Both *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* are retrospective narrations, which draw on historical events that have already happened. They draw on the past to criticise the choices that have been made and the inhumanity that greed or intolerance breeds, in an attempt to prevent history to be repeated.

In contrast, *Na die Geliefde Land* is a prophetic telling of events that could happen, and *Promised Land* is simultaneously a retrospective narration built on historical events, yet is also driven by a prophetic vision of what could happen under these new historical conditions. They warn the reader/viewer against what might happen in the future when one abuses one's power, oppresses others or refuses to adapt to changing political and social conditions.

Whether or not it was Schoeman's intention with the novel, *Na die Geliefde Land* seems to be a prophetic warning to the nationalist government pre-1994 against what could happen if those that they have oppressed should rise up against and were to overthrow them. Fortunately for white South Africans, Nelson Mandela and the president at the time, F.W. de Klerk, negotiated a peaceful take-over by the ANC in 1994 for which they both won a Nobel Peace Prize. Had Mandela chosen to do unto the whites what they did unto Blacks, Coloureds and Indians for over forty years, white South Africans could easily have turned out like the oppressed in Schoeman's novel. But he made an ethical choice not to perpetuate the violence and oppression that was enforced on them. And fortunately South Africa, although not without its transformational problems, has until now enjoyed twelve years of democracy and peace.

Despite the above-mentioned differences, the texts engage in dialogue on many other hierarchical levels, though. Lothe (2000:181) points out some of the parallels between *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*: both narratives revolve round an up-river journey, one into the Congo and the other into Cambodia and the complex, tense and ambiguous relationship between two male characters. Both Marlow and Willard travel towards Kurtz, who inspires both admiration and fear; Marlow has been sent to save Kurtz, while Willard has been sent to assassinate him. The one narrative is set in the Vietnam War, and the other is repeatedly described as war-like. Lothe (2000:185) describes *Apocalypse Now* as a critique of American warfare and of American imperialism.

Coppola was informed by the politics and destruction of war, rather than colonisation and imperialism – the factors that informed Conrad's life and world view. What war and colonisation/imperialism share, though, is that they create anti-utopian environments for both soldiers and/or colonists, and in particular civilians and/or natives. The America soldiers in Vietnam, for example, did not get to choose whether they wanted to fight in the war, and on many levels had the same experiences as many imperialists and colonists, like the Belgians, and the Romans before them. Most of them were there against their will. They were in strange, ominous landscapes they could not comprehend, confronted by a culture that was not their own, and had to assess how they fit into the whole situation and the country. The postmodern notion of the double, divided or fluid self that is torn between different kinds of worlds is therefore very strong.

Both *Na die Geliefde Land* and *Promised Land* have to do with an isolated, imagined community that had closed-minded ideologies about other communities which caused them to oppress them. Those they oppressed retaliated, however, and they now seem to find themselves in the position of the oppressed.

All four texts are indeed stylistically hybrid texts, which are made up of several salient characteristics of four or more of the following movements, periods or genres: modernism, realism, symbolism, impressionism, postcolonialism and the apocalyptic.

They are possibly open to even more interpretations, but I have found these to be the most prominent within the texts and have restricted myself to predominantly symbolist, postcolonial and apocalyptic interpretations. In all four texts symbolist, postcolonial and apocalyptic characteristics polyphonically dialogise one another so that the texts cannot be reduced to one framework of interpretation.

The stylistically hybrid nature of the novels is their Darwinian strength and the saving grace for their survival, and lies in the fact that they lend themselves to so many different interpretations that are valid for a certain target audience at a particular point in time. The literary texts open up possibilities for multiple readings, and therefore make the texts much richer in literary, cultural and social value, as well as becoming universal and timeless. Because the literary texts deal with universal, topical issues such as the effects of the Will to Power on individuals in the form of war, colonisation or imperialism, films have been made of them, even eighty years (*Apocalypse Now*) and thirty years (*Promised Land*) after they were respectively published.

Although none of these texts are postmodern stylistically, what they share with postmodernism is that they defy categorisation and link up intertextually or hypertextually with other texts. Their stylistic hybridity furthermore prevents a monologic reading of them. All the texts have symbolist, postcolonial and apocalyptic voices that engage in the polyphonic conversation between different discourses and movements; the texts are much less rigid in their potential for interpretation than if they were for example *only* symbolist or *only* postcolonial or *only* apocalyptic stylistically.

“Every text, and every adaptation, ‘points’ in many directions, back, forward, and sideways” (Stam and Raengo, 2005:27). In other words, a text paves the way for a multitude of future interpretations. It pays homage to the past and it engages in a complex web of dialogues with contemporary texts. According to Stam and Raengo (2005:31), hypertextuality infers canonical status in the adaptation of novels to film, for as Jacques Derrida believes, the “copies” create the prestige of the original. Filmic adaptations are furthermore caught up in a cycle of “intertextual reference and

transformation, of texts generating other texts in an endless process of recycling, transformation, and transmutation, with no clear point of origin” (Stam and Raengo, 2005:31).

The four texts are all linked intertextually in that they have protagonists that all enter a liminal space where they undergo the three phases of the rites of passage as a result of cultural hybridity: separation, transition and re-incorporation. The texts also engage in dialogue with discourses such as marginality, the Will to Power and resultant identity crises.

Separation from other community members is rife in the texts under discussion: Paul and Carla have a secret hiding-place, Carla says that there is no-one to talk to on the farm. She likes to do work on her own and sees it as a waste of time to visit Aunt Miemie. Marlow and George have separated from their homeland, Europe, and Willard finds himself secluded in a hotel room in Saigon, after which he is sent on a mission into the Vietnamese Jungle. In the end he is left all alone because his crew has been killed off. These forms of separation or liminality give the characters perspective on their situation, and give them space and time to redefine who they are through physical separation and mental introspection.

Cultural hybridity which leads to torn feelings of belonging, resultant identity crises and isolation experienced by the protagonists, have been discussed in depth in Chapters Four and Five. Take George’s cultural hybridity in *Promised Land* for example – he is an Afrikaner born in South Africa, but raised as an European citizen in London. After his mother’s death he returns to South Africa, hoping to find some link with the Afrikaners he and his family have left behind. He cannot deny his ancestry, yet he does not want to identify with the backward, closed-minded minority of Afrikaners he meets. He remains a passive outsider and does not engage with them like he would have hoped.

As argued in Chapter One, personal identity refers to a sense of sameness or continuity of the self regardless of environmental changes and individual growth. An identity crisis

is experienced by an individual when environmental changes threaten the continuity of personal identity and, as a result, the individual is driven to new identity formation(s): the restructuring of all previous identifications in the light of the anticipated future (Corsini and Auerbach, 1996:443-444).

Labels such as gender, race, nationality, etc. have a paradoxical purpose in identity formation. Whilst labels have the power to give a sense of security and affirmation of the self, I believe they also have the power to restrict people from being absolutely themselves, for these labels influence the gaze with which other people perceive them, and ultimately distort and change who they are. What I mean by this is that every object has an absolute essence that makes it what it really is, as Bergson contended, yet the viewpoint from which that object is perceived changes for each person and therefore inherently distorts the object, following Einstein's theory on relativity.

Take as example the stereotype that all men are misogynists or chauvinists. When applied to a free-thinking and liberal man that sees a woman as his equal, this gaze (even if it is not true) changes the composition of that person. Yet, most people regard labels as safe boundaries that ensure the continuity of one's personal identity, and even though there might be environmental changes or individual growth, these labels at least give them something "absolute" to hold on to in an ever-changing world.

Key characters in the texts experience identity crises because there is tension between what they are and what their imagined communities expect them to be. This tension threatens the absoluteness of the "labels" imposed on them by their imagined communities.

The liminal and the marginal are also in dialogue with the identity crises experienced all four texts: Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* leaves Europe for the African jungles of the Congo, where he comes across the atrocities of colonisation and imperialism, discards his idealistic and romantic notions about their civilising mission, and returns to Europe forever changed. In *Apocalypse Now* Willard has already left America for Vietnam, and

has been given the task to assassinate the colonel-turned-madman Kurtz. The horrors of the Vietnam War have driven Willard to insanity before and threaten to succeed again, but in the end he chooses to return to America, integrity gained. In *Na die Geliefde Land* George travels from Switzerland to South Africa, while George in *Promised Land* journeys from London to South Africa. In both the novel and the film, George feels himself unable to identify with the isolated Afrikaner community and their racist, xenophobic outlook and returns home altered by his experiences.

Ultimately, the change that occurs in key characters assists them to transgress the conflicting selves or binaries within them. Marlow comes to the conclusion that evil is not just inherent in the “other”, but in all humankind, especially in the Europeans that have seriously misguided intentions with regard to colonisation and imperialism. Willard sheds his skin as war puppet without a moral core and chooses not to perpetuate Kurtz’s insanity; he does not call in an air strike to “exterminate the brutes”. Carla is torn between her loyalty towards her family and her country on the one hand, and her refusal to perpetuate their skewed life and world view on the other. She could have chosen to leave for Europe with George, but chooses to stay in her country and make a difference.

In the end Carla and Willard transgress their marginality, as Park and Germani defined it, discussed in Chapter Two. Because they are unable to conform to expected social roles with respect to gender, age, civil life, etc., there is the possibility that they could be rendered static due to torn feelings of belonging. This could ultimately lead to a state of not participating. Instead, there are key characters that change internally and pave the way for change externally. Paradoxically, Carla has to stay behind to carry out the change, whilst Willard has to withdraw so that the change can take place.

Their imagined communities expect them to think, believe and act in a way that is expected of them. They could easily have been rendered stagnant because of this tension between who and what they are, and who and what they are expected to be. When something ceases to grow, it leads to stagnation and ultimately, “death” – “death” of a nation. But they refuse to stagnate. The boundary between these dichotomies and

the boundary between their imagined communities and other cultures are marked positively. Exchange between cultures and the inclusion of other cultures are now possible. The identities that have been superimposed onto Marlow, Willard and Carla are destabilised, and they affirm identities that neither exclude or include. They can be reincorporated into their imagined communities with new insight, vitality and a Darwinian strength to survive, thereby preserving their imagined communities, yet hopefully, an imagined community that is altered and enlightened.

In all four texts economic forces and the desire for control drive the Will to Power and victims are overpowered into submission through violence. In *Heart of Darkness* the ivory-rush in the Congo leads imperial and colonist forces to overpower natives with weapons, take over their land, force them to do cheap or free manual labour and claim the riches of the natives' land for themselves. *Apocalypse Now* joins the conversation about colonialism and the Will to Power in the form of the Vietnam War, an American colonist war in which America supposedly fought to protect the freedom of the anti-Communist South Vietnamese government. Ironically, it seems that America only took over from the French, against which the Vietnamese waged an anti-colonial war between 1945 and 1954.

Na die Geliefde Land brings the Will to Power to the table through an ironic inversion of power. The people who were previously in power are stripped of their power and have to submit to the people who, previously subaltern, are now the rulers. The text never specifies who the opposing forces are or where exactly the novel takes place, but one can infer from the text that the revolution must have taken place through physical force, and the reader learns that the powerless group also plans to take back control through physical force. *Promised Land* is set in a post-apartheid, postcolonial South Africa and therefore unavoidably engages in dialogue with the imperialist and colonist history of the country. The film demonises an isolated minority of Afrikaners that still cannot come to terms with losing their power to those they have previously oppressed. They plan to destabilise the power of the government through terrorism.

With the exception of Schoeman because of the vague, symbolist nature of his text, one can confidently conclude that Conrad, Coppola and Xenopoulos draw on and engage in dialogue with their own personal and socio-economic histories. I do believe, however, that *Na die Geliefde Land* was influenced by the political environment in which Schoeman found himself, whether or not the result was conscious or deliberate. In all four texts and history itself there is a cyclical repetition of the Will to Power. It seems that an economic incentive underlies the acquisition of land and that people will use anything it takes – even power wrapped in violence – to reach their goal.

The issue of morality and ethics is central to all four texts. In both the literary and filmic texts there are representatives of “hollow” human beings in conversation with representatives of human beings with substance. Some of the representatives of “hollow” human beings in all four texts are Kurtz, the lawyer and clerk in *Heart of Darkness*, Willard (at the beginning of the film), Kilgore, Lance, Gerhard, Johannes and Hendrik. Some of the representatives of human beings of substance in all four texts are Marlow, Willard (at the end of the film), Chief, Chef, Carla and Paultjie/Paul.

These representatives engage in conversation on three levels. To illustrate what I mean I shall use only one example, because there are too many examples to specify here. The first level is mutually between representatives within one text: the dialogue between Kurtz and Marlow in *Heart of Darkness*. Marlow is a very moral man with a great work-ethic and romantic ideals about Europe’s “civilising” mission. Kurtz, on the other hand, is corrupted by greed and loses all self-restraint in the Congolese jungle, and with it, it seems, his sanity.

The second level is hypertextually between the filmic texts and the literary texts they are based on: Kurtz and Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* engage in conversation with Kurtz and Willard in *Apocalypse Now*. Kurtz is corrupt in both texts. Marlow is a very ethical man who starts off with high ideals about imperialism at the outset of his journey, but is disillusioned by the horrors he finds. While Willard starts out as a corrupt assassin, he

chooses not to give in to the corruption of power in the end when he refuses to take over from Kurtz; the change is positive.

The third level is intertextually between the respective literary and filmic texts. There is dialogue between Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness* and Gerhard in *Na die Geliefde Land*, and dialogue between Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now* and Gerhard in *Promised Land*. Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* is in conversation with George in *Na die Geliefde Land*, and Willard in *Apocalypse Now* is in conversation with Carla in *Promised Land*. Kurtz and Gerhard are both “hollow” men who are willing to use violence to bend people to their will. Marlow, like George, is a man with high ideals, but remains a passive outsider distanced from the atrocities that take place. Willard kills Kurtz who is the Fisher King that takes all colonists’s sins on himself, thereby restoring order to the land. Carla stays to implement the change in her community after her Fisher-king brother is killed as scapegoat for the community’s sins. The difference between Kurtz and Paul is that Kurtz is guilty and deserves to be “sacrificed”, while Paul naïvely betrays his community members because he thinks it is the right thing to do and in the end, is sacrificed for their sins.

It has been established that the texts can indeed be placed and analysed within a Bakhtinian framework. A Bakhtinian framework has been used as instrumentation to analyse the texts, because it resonates most with what I perceive in them. It provides tools like heteroglossia, centripetal and centrifugal forces, irony, intertextuality and carnival to analyse the polyphonic conversations between the texts on different hierarchical levels.

The novels and films respectively open up dialogue between different discourses, languages and histories. *Heart of Darkness* voices the history of the ivory-rush in the Congo, which is in dialogue with the Will to Power, colonisation and imperialism, while *Apocalypse Now* adds the history of the Vietnam War to the already existing conversation. *Na die Geliefde Land* remains vague about who the parties are, but it is clear that there is tension between previous oppressors who have been ironically inverted as the oppressed by those they used to dominate. *Promised Land* adds South

Africa's history to the conversation, and shows how Europe's Will to Power through colonisation and imperialism negatively impacted on both the colonisers and the colonised and led to apartheid, xenophobia and ethnocentrism.

The hypocrisies, double standards and paradoxes that govern the life and world views of the imagined communities in the texts are exposed and emphasised through the literary device of ironic inversion. The centripetal voices and forces of the imperialist Europeans or the racist Afrikaners are dethroned by the centrifugal forces (alternate ideologies and/or life and world views) inherent within the texts themselves. The centripetal force of literature is also destabilised by the centrifugal voices film adds to it. Some might judge and lament the filmic adaptations to be carnivalesque, but as a postmodernist, I celebrate the decanonisation of the literary works.

Porter (1997:93) explains that "from a historical standpoint, the metaphor of 'decadence' implies that art and society must age, decline, and die like a human body". Although decadent characteristics abound in the texts, they are not purely decadent and therefore have the Darwinian strength to survive the onslaught of time; the literary texts have not "died", but have been resurrected by their filmic adaptations.

Decadent and macabre images of the grotesque body abound in all four texts: the "grove of death" episode in *Heart of Darkness*; the cow that is slaughtered in *Apocalypse Now*; Aunt Miemie's vulgar table manners in *Na die Geliefde Land*; and the feast on Kommandodrift that leads to a bloody shootout in *Promised Land* are but a few instances of these examples discussed in Chapters Four and Five. Bakhtin advocates that the grotesque body should not be viewed solely in a negative or satirical manner, and insists that it also encapsulates positive, regenerative, centrifugal forces.

Bakhtin celebrates a body in which becoming rather than completion is evident, and identity, as said earlier, is always in a state of becoming. It is an ever continuous process which is developmental. If it is true that identity is a constant deferral ultimately reached, if ever, through death, does it mean that it is useless to become more of

oneself when alive? Definitely not, for even death equals new life and a continuation of the soul, I believe, beyond this world. But when that process is suppressed or ignored, it brings about stagnation, and spiritual growth is no longer possible.

It seems that literary texts have an “identity” of their own that is always in a state of becoming and which changes and evolves with every reader. A filmic adaptation thus subverts the traditional metanarrative and opens it up to even more interpretations. It prevents it from regressing into one stale meaning and progressively opens debate between literary scholars and film critics, readers and viewers, authors and directors.

Like the grotesque body, the carnivalesque also encapsulates positive, regenerative forces. I believe that all four texts are carnivalesque in the sense that they invert the normal social hierarchies. Furthermore, film inverts the normal social hierarchies bound to the novel. Just as carnival upturns everything official, authoritarian and one-sidedly serious, so too the films upturn the official, authoritarian and what could be one-sided books, very fittingly in a postmodern era. They are still relevant to this day, because they deal with old, universal and topical issues like humanitarianism, racism, violence, etc. from refreshing new angles. The following quote of Eco (1981:49) strengthens my argument:

A work of art, therefore, is a complete and closed form in its uniqueness as a balanced organic whole, while at the same time constituting an *open* product on account of its susceptibility to countless different interpretations which do not impinge on its unadulterable specificity. Hence every reception of a work of art is both an *interpretation* and a *performance* of it, because in every reception the work takes on a fresh perspective for itself.

Just as Rabelais called into question the fact that the term carnival had acquired a derogatory and burlesque meaning in society, so too, hybridity was only met with disdain. At present, the positive potential of hybridity is recognised, cultivated and increasingly celebrated. Due to the emergence of hybridity – mixed-race children, men becoming more in touch with their feminine side, women now doing everything only men were allowed to do in the past, etc. – the surety of fixed labels are destabilised. I believe

that hybridity should be celebrated, not feared, for it liberates people from restrictive shackles and elitist purism, and levels the playground between people, art mediums, discourse and disciplines.

The filmic adaptation of literature strengthens the operation of centrifugal forces, in that centripetal and autonomous discourses, languages or histories, are generally criticised and undermined through irony, parody, reinterpretations, etc. In *Heart of Darkness*, for example, Marlow comes to the ironic realisation that the evil he sought in the “barbaric” natives is seated within the “civilized” Europeans. The ideological forces of classical and canonical texts like *Heart of Darkness* and *Na die Geliefde Land* are subverted and appropriated by the filmic reinterpretations *Apocalypse Now* and *Promised Land*.

The films are not frivolous parodies of the literary text in that they ridicule them, but are rather enriching, serious reinterpretations that supplement the already existing ur-texts. The directors pay homage to the authors and the genre through its adaptation and therefore, simultaneously, relativise them. They are not true examples of satire for they do not ridicule or make a mockery of the texts, yet they ridicule biases, closed-minded world views, etc. They should therefore be regarded as regenerations of the literary texts.

I believe that if it were to be argued that literary works should not be transposed to film, it actually dishonours literary works, by placing them on a pedestal that is untouchable to heteroglossia and locks them away in glass cases to be forgotten, rendering them stagnant to the endless possibilities of interpretation – an authoritarian, sterile, monoglossia that will not survive. Dialogics thus insists on multiple “voices” making up part of a text or an artwork and rages against one superior, autonomous “voice” or artwork. It also keeps a text in dialogue with present-day culture and topical issues.

Although there might be arguments for what has been lost in the transition of these literary texts to film, I second Stam and Raengo (2005:3) and celebrate what has been

gained by these filmic adaptations. What has then indeed been gained by these filmic adaptations?

Following Bakhtin's belief that every age reaccentuates in its own way the works of the past, adaptation is also a work of reaccentuation of the past through new grids and discourses of (re)interpretation. That is exactly what these filmic adaptations are. What is significant is that several years have elapsed between the publication of the novels and the production of the films respectively, and that many of the alterations have to do with ideological, political and social discourses. *Apocalypse Now* was released eighty years after *Heart of Darkness* was published, whilst *Na die Geliefde Land* appeared thirty years before *Promised Land* was released. Stam and Raengo (2005:42) feel that a lapse of time between publication and production allows the adapter more freedom to update and interpret the novel: "At times the adapter innovates by actualizing the adaptation, making it more 'in synch' with contemporary discourses." This is exactly what happens with the filmic adaptation of the literary texts under discussion in this dissertation.

Because of the relevance of the films with regard to the political, social and historic milieu of the viewer, the films play a very important role in bringing certain issues to the table and confronting the viewer to hopefully make him/her deal with these issues and form a definite opinion about them. I am not an American, and therefore I cannot speak for Americans and how they received *Apocalypse Now*, but what it did do is to address a very universal subject and debate about war: Was the Vietnam War justified? Was the Vietnam War worth it? Is war ever justified or worth it? Admittedly, these are very simplistic questions to a very complex issue. Nevertheless, they are questions worth asking.

The violence and effects of war are captured so poignantly, especially in the scene where the seventeen-year-old Clean is shot dead whilst a voice recording he was listening to, in which his mother pleads with him to return to them safely, continues to play. Although the film raises more questions than answers, which I believe is an

artwork's role in getting a polyphonic debate going, the answers to the above-mentioned questions seem to be no, no and no. The film intertextually resonates with Wilfred Owen's poem "Anthem for Doomed Youth" in which he emphasises how senseless war is.

How are these polyphonic texts, then, of use to a post-apartheid, postcolonial South African people? The marginal South African feels him/her neither wholly part of his/her own imagined community nor wholly part of the other's imagined community. There is the potential for a new identity to be born and the freedom to follow one's nature which should not be restricted by labels or boxes like nation, race, class, or sect, but is rather based on humanity, acceptance and tolerance. In a postmodern South Africa where there is an "incredulity towards metanarratives" (Barry, 1995:86) as Lyotard defined postmodernism, humanity, acceptance and tolerance could help to prevent wars, colonisation, imperialism, power-seeking, terrorism and violence.

The emancipation of oppressed South Africans has left some young white South Africans with mixed feelings: they celebrate the liberation of all South Africans, yet are plagued by the sins of their mothers and fathers. They take pride in their Afrikaans language, yet recognise that Afrikaans is tainted as the language in which their nationalist forefathers oppressed other races during the apartheid years.

Art often reflects topical issues and all four texts under discussion, were and still are, very topical indeed. *Promised Land*, especially, addresses many of the issues that face a transformational postcolonial, post-apartheid South Africa, such as identity crises over cultural hybridity and mixed feelings of belonging, land ownership (Pieter was regarded a traitor when he wanted to sell Rietvlei to the government), land reform (the tension between Mrs Hattingh and the new black owners of a nearby farm when she travels with George to Moedersgift), righting the wrongs of the past and emigration (Carla has the option to leave for Europe with George, but chooses not to).

The film does not preach about what is right and what is wrong and it does not claim to have all the answers, but what it does do, is to portray characters that many South Africans that are still in the country or who have chosen to leave, can identify with. Because it makes people think, it urges people to unstick themselves from their apathetic ways and take action, and it sparks a polyphonic debate over topical issues. Take the topical issue of emigration, for example. Just because George feels that it is the right thing for him to return home, it does not necessarily mean that the right thing for Carla to do is to leave her country. And just because Carla has a need to stay in her country, it does not mean that George necessarily has to feel a need to live on at Rietvlei and rebuild it.

Many young white Afrikaners feel pressure from the older generation in their imagined communities to think like they do, and see the world through their closed-minded vision, which is still shackled in prejudice, racism, and xenophobia. Just because one shares the same nationality or race or language, does not mean, however, that one has the same life and world view:

Actually, class, nation, and race were discovered, just as the nebulae were. Just as it was discovered that the earth is part of a certain system and this system part of the Milky Way, so it was discovered that a person is this by birth and that by his livelihood, and it is for him to choose, or to be undecided, whether to follow his nation, his class, his sect – or his nature [Paul Valéry, *History and Politics*, as quoted by Giliomee, (1975:17)].

Carla follows her own nature in *Promised Land*; she realises that she can embrace her Afrikaner ancestry, but has the right to differ with the life and world view of her imagined community. The difference between Carla and her imagined community is the fact that they are willing to *die* for an *abstract ideology*, whilst she is willing to *live* for her *living and breathing community members*. She survives because she is adaptable to new and changing political, historic and social conditions; instead of running away from her problems, she faces up to the challenges in South Africa. Carla, George and Paul are characters that many young white South Africans can identify with. This might assist them in coming to terms with their own culturally hybrid identities.

One cannot deny that many people still uphold rigid boundaries between race, gender, disciplines, discourses or reinforce stereotypes, biases and generalisations. But what is inspiring about films like *Promised Land* is public awareness about the transgression of these boundaries. Instead of ending up in an *either, or*, situation, if embraced, one's hybrid Afro-European heritage can be a Darwinian strength that South Africans need to overcome the new problems facing them. Many South Africans might feel that they are alone in their experiences of being torn between different cultures, but *Promised Land* makes them aware that there are others that feel the same way.

Alphonse Bertillon once said: "One can only see what one observes, and one observes only what is already in the mind" (The Quotes and Sayings Database, 2006). Following Bertillon's quote, the film voices experiences and feelings that many South Africans suppress or do not know how to express, thereby planting seeds for new realisations and self-actualisation. It forces the viewer to ask himself/herself: Who am I? What are my values and beliefs? How do I engage in dialogue with the "other"? How do I engage in dialogue with people of my own race who have different values and beliefs? Must I choose between my divided loyalties, or can I embrace both? When people understand themselves, their histories and their situations better, they are empowered to make better choices in future.

Now that the findings of this dissertation has been summarised, it is important to discuss what possible research could flow from or extend the research done in this dissertation.

6.3. Recommendations

During my research on *Promised Land*, I found no articles that have been written about it on the databases EbscoHost, ABES or RSAT, while *Heart of Darkness*, *Apocalypse Now* and *Na die Geliefde Land* all yielded results. I believe my research to be a stepping stone to more research on either a comparative analysis between the novel and the film from a specific angle, or a semiotic or contextual analysis of the film alone,

according to perceptual and conceptual characteristics such as film credits, stylistic trends (e.g. realist, expressionist, etc.), the director and his oeuvre, camera shots, focus and angles (e.g. close-ups, deep, and bird's eye view respectively), lighting, colour, filters (e.g. blue, ultra-violet, etc.), the soundtrack, choreography, editing, etc.

I furthermore believe that a Bakhtinian framework is a useful instrument to analyse texts and might yield fruitful re-readings of texts that deal with identity and the resultant polyphonic conversations it engages. I believe literature and film rivals should surrender to the celebration of a reciprocal and beneficial dialogue between the novel and the cinema.

The adaptation of novels to film has never been more alive, which vouches for the fact that novel and film can supplement and enrich the reading of one another. No less than three films that were very prominent at the Golden Globe Awards and the Academy Awards are based on books or short stories: The highly controversial film *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), directed by Ang Lee, is based on Pulitzer Prize winning Annie Proulx's short story by the same name which was first published in *The New Yorker* in 1997. *Brokeback mountain* was a 2006 Golden Globe and Academy Award nominee for best picture and Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana won the Academy Award for best adapted screenplay (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2006). *Memoirs of a Geisha* (2005) that won three Academy Awards for best art direction, cinematography and costume design, is also based on the novel by the same name, written by author Arthur Golden and published in 1997 (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2006). *Tsotsi* (2005), the South African film that was also nominated for best foreign film at the Golden Globes, won this category at the 2006 Academy Awards. The film, directed by Gavin Hood, is based on Athol Fugard's only novel by the same name, published in 1980 (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2006).

I believe the dialogue between Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* and Gavin Hood's *Tsotsi* warrants investigation: What identity crisis is experienced by the protagonist? How does the novel and film engage in dialogue with violence and the Will to Power? Why did Gavin

Hood decide to set the novel in modern times? Why did he decide to make the baby that is “stolen” black instead of white, and what effect does this have on the viewer? What correspondence was there between the highly critical Fugard and the ambitious Hood after the novel was transposed to film? What political motivation underlies *Tsotsi* losing out to the Palestinian *Paradise Now* as best foreign film at the 2006 Golden Globes, but winning at the Oscars?

These are but a few ideas on further research that could be done. Identity appears to be a common denominator between many recent filmic adaptations of literature and, therefore, suggests that it is an almost inexhaustible topical issue at present. Not only is there much research to be done on identity in old and new texts, but also does it serve as barometer for the epistemological and ontological confusion experienced by many imagined communities worldwide.

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7.2. Filmography

Apocalypse Now (1979)

Director, Francis Ford Coppola; script, John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola; narration, Michael Herr; photography, Vittorio Storaro; music, Carmine and Francis Coppola. With Marlon Brando (Col. Walter E. Kurtz), Martin Sheen (Capt. Benjamin Willard), Robert Duvall (Lt.-Col. Kilgore), Frederic Forest (Chef), Albert Hall (Chief), Dennis Hopper (Photo Journalist), G.D. Spradlin (General). Production, Francis Ford Coppola (Omni-Zoetrope). Video, Zoetrope Studios; Paramount Video.

Apocalypse Now Redux (2001)

Director, Francis Ford Coppola; script, John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola; narration, Michael Herr; photography, Vittorio Storaro; music, Carmine and Francis Coppola. With Marlon Brando (Col. Walter E. Kurtz), Martin Sheen (Capt. Benjamin Willard), Robert Duvall (Lt.-Col. Kilgore), Frederic Forest (Chef), Albert Hall (Chief), Dennis Hopper (Photo Journalist), G.D. Spradlin (General). Production, Francis Ford Coppola, Gray Fredericksen and Fred Roos (Miramax).

Promised Land (2002)

Director, Jason Xenopoulos; script, Karel Schoeman and Jason Xenopoulos; narration, Jason Xenopoulos; photography, Giulio Biccari; music, Rene Veldsman. With Nick Boraine (George Neethling), Lida Botha (Kotie), Daniel Browde (Paul), Tobie Cronje (Fanie Raubenheimer), Dan Robbertse (Hendrik), Ian Roberts (Gerhard Snyman), Wilma Stockenström (Mart), Grant Swanby (Johannes), Yvonne van den Bergh (Carla), Louis van Niekerk (Hattingh). Production, Vlokkie Kuhne, Moonyeenn Lee and David Wicht (Khulisa Productions).