



Exploring white Afrikaner identity through filmic fantasy tropes

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DECLARATION

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M. van Eeden

ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this MDram dissertation, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval on the 9th of February 2023. The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to explore how fantasy tropes and Afrikaans mythological narratives can be used to create a framework for a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity. The investigation is undertaken to explore how fantasy may be used to question what, I argue, is a liminal state of white Afrikaner identity. This liminal identity is likely a consequence of the uprooting of historical identity markers in the course of South Africa's shift to democracy in 1994. Many young white Afrikaners are attempting to reimagine a white Afrikaner identity distanced from historical Afrikaner nationalist identity markers (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 640). However, such attempts at reimagining identity and, hence, engaging with South Africa's post-apartheid context are arguably not often reflected in Afrikaans film. The study explores how the fantasy genre may be used to address the perceived lack of engagement of Afrikaans-language films with the post-apartheid socio-political context of South Africa. Moreover, this study addresses what, in my view, is a lack of fantasy films in the Afrikaans film industry.

Film functions as a “cultural text” (Steyn 2016: 4) that has become a way of depicting the social world, a means through which people construct meaning about the social world and which, arguably, might influence how they engage with the social world. This is also the case for Afrikaans film, a medium through which many white Afrikaners continue to imagine their comm(unity) on the basis of the nostalgic representation of pre-1994 markers of white Afrikaner identity which manifest as film tropes. By means of these tropes, white Afrikaners maintain their imagining of their cultural identity as an imagined community. In this sense, Afrikaans film can be seen as a mode of myth-making.

Fantasy draws from myth to construct imaginative fictional worlds that are ontologically ruptured from phenomenal reality. This rupture, which functions as the supernatural ‘nova’, evokes estrangement through which audiences are critically distanced from their own realities. It is through this distancing that new perspectives can be formed and, hypothetically, that the identity that is represented in the myths can be reimaged within the fantasy world. I identify tropes of the fantasy genre on the basis of Vogler's (2007) writer's journey plot structure, Indick's (2012) fantasy character-archetypes, as well as salient tropes pertaining to fantasy themes, settings and visual iconography. Through these tropes, I investigate how fantasy worlds are constructed, and I discuss how the tropes function to create a critical distance from

phenomenal reality. I then investigate how this critical distance might allow for the reimagining of identity within the boundaries of the fictional filmic world.

Thereafter, I investigate white Afrikaner identity through the lens of cultural narrative identity. This lens is employed to consider Turner's (1969) theory of liminality, Anderson's (2006) imagined communities, and Bhabha's (1990; 1994) theories of nation as narration, the third space of enunciation and cultural hybridity. These theories are applicable to my study as they are concerned with culture and its hybridity, the role narration plays in the imagining of collective identities, and the impact of rupturing those identities from the myths through which they are imagined. Using the lens of cultural narrative identity, cultural identity is understood as imagined through the myths that construct it, thereby positioning cultural identity as a process of myth-making.

I then explore Afrikaner mythological narratives as indicators of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, and I identify fantasy tropes in them. To do so, I use thematic analysis as a methodological approach to identify fantasy tropes in these Afrikaner mythologies (FTAMs). This analysis is undertaken on a sample of Afrikaner mythologies which include originary myths and folklore, fables, fairy tales and legends. The identified FTAMs are applied alongside my adaptation of Vogler's (2007) writer's journey – from which I construct a new plot-structure framework aimed at subverting white Afrikaner identity. Together, these are used to construct the framework which, in turn, guides the creative implementation of the FTAMs in the process of writing a fantasy screenplay.

The study demonstrates that by using fantasy tropes, understanding Afrikaans mythological narratives as expressions of white Afrikaner identity through the lens of cultural narrative identity, and identifying how fantasy tropes manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives, I am able to construct a framework that can be used as a guide to write a fantasy screenplay aimed at questioning white Afrikaner identity. The framework might enable this questioning by rupturing Afrikaner cultural narrative identity from phenomenal reality by means of the use of fantasy tropes, thereby allowing for the reimagination of white Afrikaner identity within the bounds of the fictional world.

Keywords: Fantasy genre, Fantasy film, Tropes, Afrikaner identity, Cultural narrative identity, Myth, Liminality.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and introduction

As an aspiring screenwriter, I have been swept away by the mythical and imaginative worlds of the filmic fantasy genre. This genre yields the power to conjure up a critical distance between the reality of the viewer and the fictional reality of the fantasy world on screen (Glynos, 2011: 74). Through this critical distance, identity can be questioned, tested and renegotiated and, in turn, may inspire the realisation of possible change in the phenomenal¹ world (Weinstock, 2022: 49).

This study aims to create a framework for writing a fantasy screenplay that reflects on and questions post-apartheid white Afrikaner identity through the use of fantasy genre tropes. To accomplish this, it investigates the fantasy genre, white Afrikaner identity and its identity crisis, and the how tropes of filmic fantasy may manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives.

Films, as cultural texts,² are multi-layered audio-visual expressions of culture. Ekotto and Harrow³ (2015: 7-8) note that film requires an acknowledgment of an embedded cultural subjectivity. From the representations of various values, identities, ideologies, ethnicities, and religious orientations to the food that is included in the *mise-en-scène*, films act as visual texts depicting various elements of culture (Baron, Carson & Bernard, 2014: 5).

¹ Phenomenal reality refers to reality as it is subjectively perceived by one's perceptions (Velmans, 2017: 1201), senses and experiences (Audi, 2015: 967). I define phenomenal reality in Chapter 2, 2.4.1 *Phenomenal reality, fictional reality and estrangement*.

² This speaks to the principles of constructivism² (discussed in 1.3. *Philosophical worldview informing the research*), which acknowledges the subjective experiences of culture as well as the heterogeneity of and in a culture.

³ Ekotto and Harrow (2015: 7-8) frame this argument with reference to African film but do not state whether this delineation includes Afrikaans film. I acknowledge the debates regarding the classification of Afrikaans film as African film. Tomaselli (2021: 11) argues that white Afrikaners are often seen as an "exception to Africa" as their films are "historically indelibly tainted" through their association with "racism and settlerism". However, Tomaselli's (2021: 12) submits that "no matter the white Afrikaners' position in history, they are located in southern Africa and are part of the continent's geography". Considering the geographical location of Afrikaners and their participation in the continent's politics and economy, it can be argued that Ekotto and Harrow's (2015) classification of African film as "cultural production" can be applied to Afrikaans films too.

Steyn⁴ (2016a: i, 4, 5) positions Afrikaans film as a cultural commodity that functions as a “cultural text”. This cultural text has become a central part of how people perceive and construct meaning from their experiences and influences how they engage with the social world (Steyn, 2016a: 4). As films carry culture-specific significance, they also carry the potential to reinforce or subvert socio-cultural constructs and to address socio-cultural issues.

Broodryk (2015: 81) critiques Afrikaans cinema⁵ as lacking engagement with the realities of its social world – democratic South Africa. He refers to Afrikaans cinema as a “cinema of political impotence” (Broodryk, 2015: 81). This impotence speaks to Afrikaans cinema’s inability to address the socio-political realities of contemporary South Africa while reflecting a yearning for the past (Broodryk, 2015: 81). Many Afrikaans films⁶ display a lack of critical engagement with history and identity (Broodryk, 2015: 81). This is despite Afrikaans cinema’s potential to function as a platform that evokes the dialogue necessary to negotiate identity, and the complexities of South Africa’s tumultuous political history in the post-1994 context. In spite of this potential, many post-1994 Afrikaans films rely on a sense of “cultural traditionalism”⁷ (Broodryk, 2015: 81) that often resonates with hegemonic white nationalist ideals through often nostalgic representations of what I identify as markers of pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity.

In this study, I argue that continued filmic portrayals of pre-1994 configurations of white Afrikaner identity are arguably the result of South Africa’s transition from a white nationalist to a democratic political structure, a process which uprooted identity markers that were historically associated with white Afrikaners’ identity. With the advent of democracy, this identity and its supposed stability shifted or was uprooted, spurring an identity crisis. This identity crisis positions white Afrikanerhood as being in a state of liminality (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 639). The term Afrikaners, in this context of my research, refers to those people who subscribe to a white

⁴ In this dissertation, I draw on Adriaan S. Steyn’s (2016) MA Dissertation, “A New Laager for a “New” South Africa: Afrikaans Film and the Imagined Boundaries of Afrikanerdom” due to its relevance to this study concerning how Afrikaner identity is imagined through cultural commodities such as Afrikaans film.

⁵ Broodryk’s (2015) critique is specifically centres on a series of Afrikaans films produced between 1994 and 2014, although I find his arguments remain applicable and relevant to many Afrikaans films produced after 2014.

⁶ I acknowledge that there are exceptions and that films such as *Kanarie* (Olwagen, 2018), *Poppie Nongena* (Olwagen, 2019) and *Barakat* (Jephta, 2020) do engage with socio-political complexities.

⁷ Cultural traditionalism, in this context, refers to a longing for and adherence to historical or traditional cultural values by framing the past as a time of supposed stability which trumps a culture’s present state (Broodryk, 2015: 81).

Afrikaans-speaking socio-cultural identity in South Africa and whose cultural background has historically been shaped by Christian Calvinism, nationalism and patriarchal structures (Steenkamp, 2016: 316; Tamarkin, 2020: 1; Vestergaard, 2001: 20). I discuss this cultural background in Chapter 4.

This study focuses especially on young⁸ white Afrikaners who, according to Álvarez-Mosquera (2017: 639) experiencing a liminal identity⁹ (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 639). Although liminality is associated with feelings of uncertainty (Hawkins & Edwards, 2013: 3), it also has great transformative potential (Meyer & Land, 2005: 373). For this reason, I argue that the critical potential of the filmic fantasy genre may be used to aid in the reimagining of these young white Afrikaners' identity as more compatible with the contemporary democratic context of South Africa.

I argue that the fantasy genre and its tropes may act as a strategy through which young white Afrikaners can imagine different perspectives and approaches to reconfiguring their identity and their place in democratic South Africa. However, despite the fantasy genre's relevance to the South African context (which has a long history of conflicting and contested identities), I find that it is underutilised by the Afrikaans film industry. Steyn (2016a: 1-3) refers to a "boom" in the Afrikaans film industry's production of a variety of Afrikaans films since 2007. Yet, this development is not mirrored in the Afrikaans industry's output of the fantasy genre.

In light of this, this study aims to use fantasy genre tropes¹⁰ to create a framework that acts as a guide for writing a fantasy screenplay that reflects on and questions post-apartheid white Afrikaner identity. To construct this framework, I investigate textual sources relating to the fantasy genre and its filmic tropes, white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, and Afrikaans mythologies. I analyse the fantasy tropes that manifest in white Afrikaner mythological narratives (such as myths,

⁸ Álvarez-Mosquera's (2017: 648) refers to those of 18–25 years of age, based on the parameters of his study. In this study, I use broaden this category and use "young" to refer to *born frees* – those born in democratic South Africa. I elaborate on this age category in Chapter 4.

⁹ Liminality refers to a transitory and transformative state that is located "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1969: 95) a future and a past state (Turner, 2011: 94). It is a state of "transition, being between states, a sense of suspension and temporary in nature" (Pagan, 2019: 76). Liminal spaces may exist between different states of identity (Pagan, 2019: 77). I engage with liminality in Chapter 4, 4.2.2 *Liminality and nostalgia*.

¹⁰ I am aware of debates on genre and the fluidity of genre and, therefore, use filmic tropes to navigate genre boundaries. I discuss this in my review of the scholarship in Chapter 2, 2.4.2 *The Fantasy genre*, and discuss this matter in depth in this dissertation.

legends, folktales and fairy tales) and how they manifest. I refer to tropes that emerge from this analysis as ‘fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythologies’ (henceforth FTAMs). I use these FTAMs to develop my framework. In doing so, I investigate the role that myths play in both the fantasy genre and in the formation of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. What follows is an overview of the investigation of the role of myths in this regard.

First, fantasy draws from mythological narratives to construct its fictional world (Atteberry, 2014: 2). By incorporating elements of mythological narratives into fantasy films, it allows for critical engagement with, and the reimagination of, these mythological narratives and the ideologies that are perpetuated through them (Nasriddinov, 2020: 354), which are passed through to the contemporary consciousness of the fantasy film audience (Nasriddinov, 2020: 354). The audience is critically distanced from the presented myth through the estrangement¹¹ evoked by the fictionality of the fantasy world. As myths function as “life models” (Campbell & Moyers, 1988: 16) that describe cultural behaviours and modes of meaning-making (Berger, 2016: 93-95), critical interrogation of myth through the fantasy genre also leads to critical engagement with cultural identity, in this case, white Afrikaner identity.

This leads me to the second role of mythological narratives – the construction of cultural identity. I frame my discussion of white Afrikaner cultural identity through the lens of ‘cultural narrative identity’.¹² I use this term to denote the role that cultural narratives, such as myths, play in imagining the identity of a culture and its supposed boundaries. I specifically make reference to the ‘imagined’ unity of a cultural identity, as I investigate culture through the lens of Benedict Anderson’s (2006) notion of imagined communities. Homi K Bhabha (1990: 1) frames nations as imagined communities that are imagined through the originary narratives that construct the identity of the nation. Originary narratives include the myths that describe the origins of a nation. Bhabha (1990: 297) thus posits that ‘nation’ exists as narration. Scholars such as Wasserman (2000) and Hall (2015) have similarly framed culture as a product and process of narration. Drawing together the concepts of imagined communities, narration, and cultural identity, I construct the concept of cultural narrative identity. The argument involving cultural narrative

¹¹ Estrangement refers to the separation that occurs between the audience and their phenomenal world (Atteberry, 1992: 16) through their engagement with fantastic fictional worlds.

¹² I use the term ‘cultural narrative identity’ to refer to those culture-specific narratives that construct a culture’s identity by prescribing its values, ideals and modes of behaviour. I discuss this concept in Chapter 4, 4.2 *A theoretical framework for cultural narrative identity*.

identity is that cultures are imagined communities whose cultural identity is imagined through the narratives they construct, which functions as a process of cultural myth-making.

With regard to the myths that construct white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, I distinguish between internal and external myths.¹³ Internal myths refer to those myths that intentionally construct cultural identity and its pedagogy¹⁴ from within the cultural group, while external myths occur as creative narrative expressions of cultural identity, such as folk tales, fairy tales and legends. My use of the word ‘external’ is deliberate and acknowledges the appropriated¹⁵ nature of many of these myths¹⁶. As Afrikaans historically developed as a creole language – which in turn speaks to the cultural hybridity¹⁷ of Afrikanerhood – many of the myths, legends, folktales and fairy tales that form part¹⁸ of white Afrikaner narrative identity have been appropriated from the various language groupings and cultures that have influenced the development of the language. Despite their appropriation, these external mythological narratives contribute to white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. I discuss cultural narrative identity in greater detail in Chapter 4.

White Afrikaner cultural narrative identity is constructed through internal myths and is reified through the telling and creative expression of external myths that perpetuate those ideological narratives that construct cultural identity. I argue that it is thus imperative to include both internal

¹³ I investigate internal and external Afrikaans mythological narratives in Chapter 5, *5.3 Internal and external white Afrikaner myths*.

¹⁴ I use pedagogy to refer to those ideologies that are ‘taught’ through its perpetuation in cultural narratives.

¹⁵ I elaborate on this appropriation in Chapter 5, *5.2 A tale of appropriation: white Afrikaner mythological narratives*.

¹⁶ Writing from the perspective of whiteness studies, Steyn (2004: 163) defines a creole language as a “mother tongue” formed as a result of “contact of a European language with local language(s)”. A postcolonial approach disregards the ‘European’ element and describes such a development as the process of “cultural creativity through ‘entanglements’” (Erasmus, 2001, as cited in Steyn, 2004: 163). The historical development of the Afrikaans language is further discussed in Chapter 4, *4.3 Pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity*.

¹⁷ I discuss the hybridity of white Afrikaner culture in Chapter 4.

¹⁸ Due to the creole nature of the Afrikaans language and the hybridity of Afrikaner identity, this study include myths that are not indigenous to white Afrikaans culture but that have been assimilated into it and hence are commonly associated with current expressions of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. I discuss how I construct my sample of the Afrikaner mythological narratives, which I utilise in a thematic analysis.

and external myths in the analysis of Afrikaans mythological narrative tropes in order to represent Afrikaans cultural narrative identity as broadly as possible within the scope of this study.

As Afrikaner cultural narrative identity is constructed from (internal and external) myths, its role in the construction of white Afrikaner cultural identity thus involves a process of cultural myth-making. Concerning such processes, Barthes (1991: 128) describes the process of 'naturalisation'. By means of naturalisation, myths become so woven into the fabric of society that they are viewed as constituting the natural order of things when they are but social and ideological constructions. For example, Bhabha's (1994: 2, 34, 35) notion of cultural hybridity states that cultures are inherently hybrid and that the identities comprising a culture simultaneously belong to multiple cultures. The cultural hybridity of white Afrikanerhood is pertinent in relation to, for example, Afrikaner ancestry and the Afrikaans language, both of which have historically been shaped by various cultural influences.¹⁹ Yet, as a component of Afrikaner nationalism, Afrikaner identity was imagined as belonging to a homogenous white Calvinist, Afrikaans-speaking community. These ideologies were bolstered by the myths that became naturalised in white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

An example of an internal myth that became central to white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, and which historically bolstered white Afrikaner cultural homogeneity, is the civil-religion²⁰ myth. Civil religion is a constructed originary myth that exists as a compilation of selective historical events that serves as a mythological history of white Afrikaners. Civil religion, according to Moodie (1975: 2), imagines the history of white Afrikaners from their cultural oppression at the hands of colonial forces at the Cape and also includes the Great Trek, and the various conflicts encountered along the way. The myth serves to establish the ideological narratives that later formed the tenets of Afrikaner nationalism. These narratives include Godly predestination,²¹ a right to the ownership of land, Calvinist beliefs, patriarchal systems of power, and white

¹⁹ This includes those influences present in the colonial Cape that have bearing on the origin of Afrikaans as a creole language (Willemse 2016: 3).

²⁰ I elaborate on my decision to foreground civil religion from among various interpretations of the originary myth of white Afrikanerhood (see, among others, De Klerk, 1975; Frederickson, 1981; Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007) in 1.5.2.1 *Establishing a sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives* and in Chapter 4, 4.2.5 *Cultural mythmaking*.

²¹ Godly predestination refers to the myth that the Voortrekkers were predestined to move into the interior of South Africa, that God gave South Africa to the Voortrekkers (Schutte, 2017: 216), and that they, as a chosen people, thus had a right to own the land.

superiority. It is to these narratives that many white Afrikaners still cling in the post-1994 context as a historically fundamental part of their cultural narrative identity.

Having contextualised how both Afrikaner cultural narrative identity and fantasy utilises myths, I postulate how the fantasy genre may be used to critically engage with white Afrikaner identity. By drawing from the myths that form part of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity to construct a fictional fantasy world, a critical distance may be created between Afrikaners and the myths through which they imagine their identity. This distance enables the questioning, within the creative liminal space of the fantastical fictional world, of those ideologies inherent in myths.

I position fantasy's fictional world as liminal by viewing it as an example of Bhabha's (1994: 53) third space of enunciation.²² The third space exists as a discursive liminal space located at the interstices of the cultures that constitute a hybrid cultural identity, one where cultural identities may be negotiated (Bhabha, 1994: 53). I argue that the liminal nature of the fantasy world emerges from the position of the audience which, through enchantment²³ by the fantasy world, is located in multiple spaces. These spaces include the fantasy world, their own phenomenal reality, and their socio-cultural position from which they embark on making meaning from filmic representations. The transformative potential of liminality allows them to experiment with different identity configurations within the safe space of the imaginative fantasy world. This may lead to new perspectives and to critical questioning of the ideologies presented in their cultural myths. Figure 1, below, summarise how the above-mentioned theoretical concepts associated with the fantasy genre and with white Afrikaner identity are brought together through fantasy and the use of myth in Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

²² The third space of enunciation emerges due to the hybridity of cultural identities in terms of which an identity belongs to multiple cultural spaces simultaneously. I discuss Bhabha's third space of enunciation in Chapter 4, 4.2.4 *Culture, hybridity, and cultural narrative identity*.

²³ Enchantment refers to an experience cultivated by fantasy narratives whereby the presented fantasy is experienced as tangible and real by an audience for the duration of the narrative (Goossens, Clémence & Dyka, 2020: 204; Tolkien 2008: 52, 59).

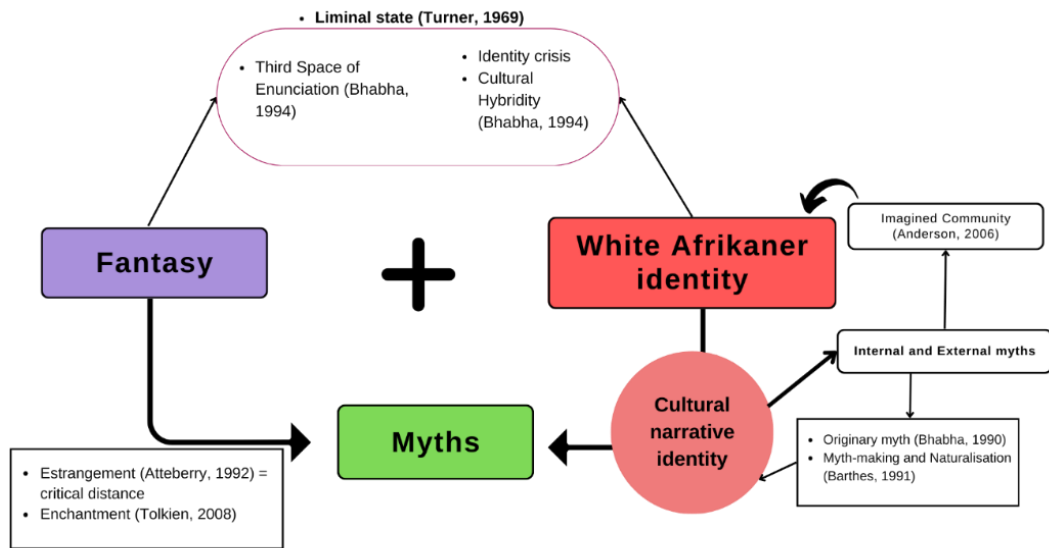


Figure 1: How myths speak to fantasy and white Afrikaner identity. (Illustration by the author.)

I utilise the concepts²⁴ summarised in Figure 1 to construct the theoretical basis of my framework for a fantasy screenplay that questions white Afrikaner identity. This framework is based on what I perceive to be the cultural narrative identity of post-apartheid white Afrikanerhood, as informed by my research. The framework aims to address the lack of fantasy films in the Afrikaans-language film industry, which I contextualise in the following section. I summarise the structure of Chapter 1 in Figure 2, below.

²⁴ The theories represented in this graph reflect those discussed thus far in this chapter. However, they are not representative of all the theories employed in this dissertation. The remainder I discuss in the chapters that follow.

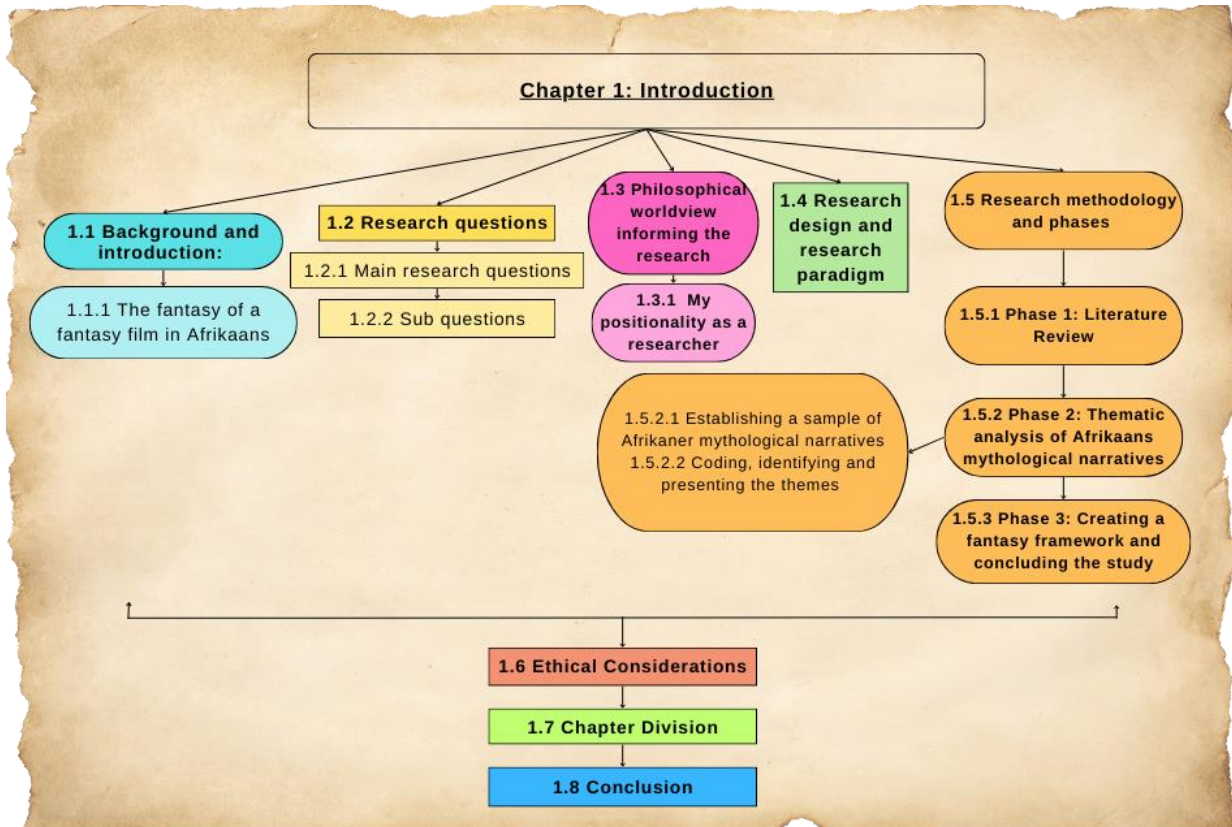


Figure 2: Structure of Chapter 1. (Illustration by the author.)

1.1.1 The fantasy of a fantasy film in Afrikaans²⁵

Afrikaans film has often been studied in relation to its socio-political and representational problematics (see, for example, Andrews, 2022a&b; Bothma, 2017; Broodryk, 2016; Steyn, 2016a; Van Coller & Van Jaarsveld, 2018); as a (neo)nationalist endeavour²⁶ (Bothma, 2017; Van

²⁵ I deliberately refer to 'fantasy films in Afrikaans' and not to 'Afrikaans fantasy films' as such a delineation implies the imagining of Afrikaners as an enclaved identity with a specific and exclusive fantasy genre. Although I acknowledge the culture-specific nature of genre (discussed in Chapter 2), the troublesome history of Afrikaner identity, which has excluded many heterogenous expressions of Afrikanerhood, make such a delineation problematic. I wish to avoid any implication of cultural homogeneity which would undermine the cultural hybridity I wish to emphasise in this dissertation.

²⁶ White Afrikaner 'neo-nationalism' refers to contemporary expressions of Afrikaner nationalism presented as a "non-Nationalist civil-society network of organisations and initiatives", as seen in cultural expressions such as some Afrikaans films (Alsheh & Elliker, 2015: 429, cited in Bothma, 2017: 115). Such neo-nationalism includes the extreme right-wing white-supremacist Afrikaner organisations.

Coller & Van Jaarsveld, 2018; Steyn, 2016a); and as “ethnic film”²⁷ in post-apartheid South Africa (Paleker, 2019: 1979). Yet, I have found very few Afrikaans-language fantasy films. A Google search reveals only a handful of self-professed fantasy films,²⁸ including three feature length films: *Die Windpomp* (Fourie, 2014), *Meerkat Maantuig* (Schutte, 2017), and an “ecological horror-fantasy”, *Gaia* (Bouwer, 2021; Gaia Film, 2021). I argue that, while these films may utilise some conventions or tropes of the fantasy genre, they do not adhere to this study’s key criterion for the filmic fantasy genre: the creation of an “ontological rupture” (Fowkes, 2010: 2) between everyday phenomenal reality and impossibility or unreality that is embraced in the imagined fantasy fictional world.

I argue that while all three of the above-mentioned films contain elements of fantasy in their fictional story-worlds, in each case, the fantasy is subverted. This occurs as either only a single element that is ruptured from phenomenal reality is depicted – and logical explanations for flights of fantasy are then offered – or by the use of fantastical elements with an intention other than one of creating wonder, which is the overall intention of fantasy (Stephan, 2016: 15). (I briefly discuss these instances below.) Overall, I argue that the fantasy present in these films do not form the fabric from which their fictional worlds are created. Rather, it constitutes an ‘otherworldly’ element which the characters need to overcome in order to return their world to one that mirrors phenomenal reality.

In *Die Windpomp* (The Windmill), the protagonist, Hendri, comes across a single magical windmill standing in a dam that functions as a fountain of youth. This windmill constitutes the root of all the magic encountered in the film. Furthermore, it is the only fantastical element in a fictional world that otherwise mirrors phenomenal reality. Hendri recognises and reacts to the windmill as an otherworldly object that defies the natural laws of his reality. This runs against the grain of

²⁷ Paleker (2019:1978) defines ‘ethnic cinema’ as those films produced “outside of the dominant industry, especially from other regions, linguistic and cultural groups”. The pre-1994 South African political landscape with its white Afrikaner political dominance used the term ‘ethnic cinema’ to refer to films that conveyed representations of black ethnic groups (Paleker, 2019: 1979). The shift in political power in 1994 shifted “elements of Afrikaans cinema to the margins of a national cinema which could be argued to constitute the new ‘ethnic cinema’ of South Africa” (Paleker, 2019: 1979).

²⁸ The short film, *Die Maan Val Bewusteloos* (Scheepers, 2017), also emerged within the categorisation of ‘fantasy’ in the course of my search for Afrikaans-language fantasy film. However, I exclude this film from my study due to the inherent experimental nature of short films, which falls outside of the scope of this study.

Todorov's (1973: 42) genre definition of the "marvellous"²⁹ in which I root this study's approach to the fantasy genre. Contrary to Hendri's reaction to the windmill, in the genre of the marvellous, characters need not react to supernatural elements as they are accepted in the marvellous fictional reality (Todorov, 1973: 42, 47). Furthermore, as per my argument regarding the elements of fantasy functioning as an otherworldly elements, Hendri destroys the windmill at the end of the film. This causes the fictional world to return to its natural order – a world without supernatural elements.

In *Meerkat Maantuig*, a young girl, Gideonette, encounters seemingly fantastical phenomena, including a curse that manifests in the form of a beast and the launch of a home-made rocket ship to the moon. However, the fantastical nature of these elements is eroded by narrative explanations that frame these elements as manifestations of Gideonette's state of mind rather than as aspects of a physical world that includes magic. This disqualifies the fictional world's from being categorised as fantastical as Todorov (1973: 45) states that fantasy involve projections of the mind or dream states. Rather, as Tolkien (2008: 59) notes, the fantasy must be real and tangible for the duration of the narrative. At the end of the film, Gideonette overcomes the beast she fears and he disappears, which returns her world to one that closely mirrors phenomenal reality.

Finally, *Gaia* is a horror-fantasy ("Gaia Film", [sa]) that utilises elements of fantasy to construct a supernatural threat in a world that otherwise mirrors phenomenal reality. This threat is a conscious supernatural fungal network that threatens to take over the world. Although fantasy and horror are both speculative fiction³⁰ genres and thus share tropes, it is the intention and purpose of the use of these tropes that differentiates them. Whereas fantasy narratives are set on creating "wonder" (Stephan, 2016: 15), *Gaia*'s use of the fantastical centres on creating a monstrous entity for the purpose of frightening and threatening, as occurs in the horror genre. Moreover, as with my critique of *Die Windpomp* and *Meerkat Maantuig*, the characters set out (but fail) to overcome the fungal network in order to return their world to its 'natural order'.

²⁹ I discuss the relationship between fantasy and Todorov's (1973) category of the "marvellous" in Chapter 2, 2.4.2 *The fantasy genre*.

³⁰ Speculative fiction refers to a meta-genre that encompasses those genres, such as fantasy, horror, magical realism and science fiction, that deviate from the rules and logic of phenomenal reality (Oziewicz, 2017: 1). See Chapter 2, 2.4 *Speculative fiction*.

Based on these examples, I argue that there is a lack of fantasy films in Afrikaans that embrace the fantastical as the ‘natural order’ of the fictional world, an order that is ontologically ruptured from phenomenal reality, as per Fowkes’ (2010: 2) conceptualisation. A possible reason for the lack of fantasy films in the Afrikaans film industry may be found in Broodryk’s (2014: 85; 88) statement that there are “systemic constraints” that impact on the production of Afrikaans films, for example “neoliberal capitalist practice”, financial policies, and content markers that are required by national funders. Globalism presents further challenges. Steyn (2016a: 103) summarises the challenges faced by the Afrikaans film industry: “small budgets, a limited potential Afrikaans-speaking audience, and an increasingly competitive commercial circuit”. To clarify, I acknowledge, but am not concerned with, the systemic inhibitors and budget constraints Afrikaans films face as probable reasons for the lack of narratives that play out in vast fictional worlds. Rather, I am concerned with demonstrating the relevance and use of the fantasy genre to question and explore conceptions of white Afrikaner identity by drawing on fantasy elements from white Afrikaner myths and folklore, legends and fairy tales – whether or not these have been assimilated from outside.

In addition to the lack of fantasy films in the Afrikaans language, academic sources on the fantasy genre, as these relate to Afrikaans film, also appear to be sparse. This indicates a gap in both the Afrikaans film industry’s products and in academic scholarship. In order to address this gap, in the following section, I unpack my approach to this critical exploration of fantasy and white Afrikaner identity by translating the above contextualisation of my research problem into research questions. Thereafter, I explicate my methodological approach to answering these research questions.

1.2. Research questions

1.2.1 Main research question

How can I use fantasy tropes and Afrikaans mythological narratives to create a framework for a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity?

1.2.2 Sub questions

1.2.2.1 What is the fantasy genre?

(This sub-question is addressed in Chapter 2.)

1.2.2.2 What are the salient tropes of the filmic fantasy genre?

(This sub-question is addressed in Chapter 3.)

1.2.2.3 What is cultural narrative identity?

(This sub-question is investigated in Chapter 4.)

1.2.2.4 What are the markers of white Afrikaner identity?

(This sub-question is investigated in Chapter 4.)

1.2.2.5 What salient fantasy tropes can I extract from Afrikaner mythological narratives?

(This sub question is addressed in Chapter 5.)

1.2.2.6 How can I use the results of these investigations to create a framework for writing a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity?

(This sub question is investigated in Chapters 6 and 7.)

1.3 The philosophical worldview informing the research

To answer the research questions, a specific philosophical perspective is used to guide the execution of the research process in relation to my positioning within the research. Creswell (2014: 6) states that the philosophical views of the researcher inevitably influence both the study's approach to knowledge and its construction of knowledge. This study is conducted from a constructivist perspective.

Constructivism can loosely be defined as an approach to knowledge in which reality and knowledge are seen as constructed through varied modes of human action and interaction (Tracy, 2020: 51). Constructivists locate the genesis of social structures, such as identity, norms, and culture in human actions and interactions (Cornut 2018: 1; 139). Constructivism hence assumes that social phenomena such as identity and culture are human constructs. Tracy (2020: 51) elaborates on the role of culture in constructivism, stating that it provides important "cultural texts" that can be read and interpreted by the researcher. In the context of my study, myths, films, and the creation of an original fantasy screenplay serve as "cultural texts" from which meaning can be read and created. According to constructivism, the 'read' meaning is determined by the subjective reality of the individual as human experiences and the meanings created from them are subjective (Creswell, 2014: 8). Due to this subjectivity, constructivism suggests that no one superior reality exists; rather, there are numerous personally experienced subjective realities (Lee, 2011: 5).

In light of this, I recognise that my subjective approach to this study and the information presented here cannot be the only standard against which to measure the validity and credibility of the research. For this reason, I implement triangulation in my approach to the research. Triangulation is the integration of various methods and sources to create an in-depth understanding of a concept (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, Dicenso, Blythe & Neville, 2014: 545) by approaching it from various perspectives (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018: 43). Triangulation involves the collection of data from multiple sources and a comparison of them to find common patterns or themes (Leedy & Omrod, 2016: 86, 88). That is, triangulation is a method for verifying information through the integration and synthesis of data relating to a topic, concept or theory that has been gathered from various sources (Carter *et al.*, 2014: 545). In this study, I draw from theory gathered by reviewing the literature, from the filmic fantastical tropes present in fantasy literature and films, the fantasy tropes contained in Afrikaans mythological narratives, and my own experiences as an

insider to white Afrikaner culture. By integrating information from these sources, I aim to balance and measure my own subjectivity with the existing theories, concepts, and subjectivities of other scholars and sources to obtain a degree of critical distance, informed argumentation and critical reflection. I clarify my subjectivities and the potential bias that I must navigate in this dissertation in the positionality statement that follows.

1.3.1 My positionality as a researcher

My cultural background conveys on me an insider position from which to explore the identified gap in the Afrikaans film industry. According to Holmes (2020: 3), the positionality of a researcher refers to those elements including the “social-historical-political” influences that may impact on the relationship between the researcher and the body of knowledge investigated. These elements should, therefore, be disclosed to locate the researcher’s personal and professional selves in relation to the research process (Holmes, 2020: 3). Positioning myself within this research involves both recognising subjectivities and biases as they may appear in my research and allows for critical and self-reflexive distance.

I was raised in a middle-class white Afrikaner community. Here, I experienced the remaining privilege of the apartheid government’s discriminative support of white Afrikaners, most poignantly in the financial and educational spheres of my life. Lindner (2018: 44) defines white privilege as the benefits experienced by those who conform to the societal construct of whiteness. Through the positionality of white as the societal ‘norm’ (both historically and currently, as reinforced through Western thinking), “whites are permitted to exist outside of racial identity, even though non-whites are constantly assigned racial labels” (Lindner, 2018: 44). In my own context, my education and upbringing has been focused on the development of my own individuality and approaches to thought without having to negotiate a racial identity in the process. I recognise this as a result of white privilege.

My upbringing in a white Afrikaner community further positions me as an insider to a specific expression of white Afrikaner culture which has inherently formed and shaped me. Moore (2012: 11) defines insider status in qualitative research as a researcher’s organic position in the social group being studied before the commencement of the study itself. This position of ‘belonging’ is

indicative of a “shared or aligned identity” where the “total insider” shares multiple identities with the social group such as “race, ethnicity and class” (Chavez-Reyes, 2008: 475). As my study involves an investigation of white Afrikaner identity, my insider status provides me with experiential knowledge and access to lived cultural knowledge of white Afrikaner cultural identity/identities. However, as an insider, I acknowledge that I may face challenges in confronting questions about potential bias in my research. At the same time, I also experience dis-identification related to my gender role and political views that have shifted me to the margins of some white Afrikaans social groups. This experience, along with my identification as a Christian, causes me to experience a sense of cultural ‘liminality’ as I am simultaneously included and marginalised in Afrikaans social groups.

Another element of my positionality that influences my approach to the research is my education. I was privileged to have attended both a practically orientated tertiary film school (AFDA) as well as to have received a theory-based honours degree from the University of Pretoria. I believe this has given me an awareness of theory and its place in practice as this pertains to film, especially screenwriting. It is from this intersection of theory and praxis that I wish to approach this research study.

Having located myself in white Afrikaner culture, I wish to here recognise that white Afrikaner culture is heterogeneous in its many expressions of ‘Afrikanerhood’. My experience of white Afrikaner culture is rooted in my specific context as a white, Afrikaans-speaking middle-class Christian Afrikaner. At the same time, I still benefit from the privileges I have discussed. These impact on my subjective approach to reading the films as certain biases and assumptions based on this privileged position might surface. To counter this, I aim to create critical distance by means of triangulation, as discussed above, and by acknowledging my subjective stance in relation to the research.

1.4 Research design and research paradigm

This study follows a non-empirical design. Non-empirical methods are not necessarily concerned with the collection of new quantifiable primary data through reproducible research processes but rather engage in modes of investigation that centre on reflection or revision in areas of social life (Dan, 2017: 1). In line with the non-empirical nature of the study, my paradigmatic approach to the research process is qualitative.

Qualitative research concerns itself with constructing new theories, frameworks, or hypotheses, rather than testing or assessing pre-existing theories (Mohajan, 2018: 38). This study aims to create a framework to apply to the creation of an original fantasy screenplay aimed at questioning white Afrikaner identity. This framework is formulated through the analysis of textual data, as qualitative research often relies on such data to “make discoveries on social phenomena through an inductive approach to the qualitative inquiry” – as is undertaken in this study (Williams, 2007: 65). I draw from existing theories on the filmic fantasy genre and its tropes and apply these in my framework, accompanied by a concept for an original fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity. This purpose is in line with the function of qualitative research, which “produces themes and suggest[s], ‘[t]hink about this and what it might mean in your own context and situation’” (Patton, 2015: 151). Furthermore, my use of myths and folklore in the fantasy screenplay framework reflects qualitative research’s view of the world as “complex, dynamic, interdependent, textured, nuanced, unpredictable, and understood through stories” (Patton, 2015: 151). Although I question white Afrikaner identity, I keep in mind that qualitative research is “sensitive” to the “people and places under study” (Creswell, 2013: 44, as cited by Creswell & Poth, 2018: 35), including their stories.

1.5 Research methodology and phases

Research methodology refers to the “architectural design” by means of which a researcher constructs an appropriate approach to finding a problem and solving it, which is determined by the kind of research undertaken and the characteristics of the research problem (Buckley & Chiang, 1976; Crotty, 1998, as cited in Jamshed, 2014: 1). The research method encapsulates the means and tools used to collect data and how results or findings are to be ascertained,

whether applied to a qualitative or quantitative study (Igwenagu, 2016: 8). I utilise a qualitative methodological approach in this study (a literature review aided by examples from films) which I discuss below in relation to the three phases of the research.

The three phases of my research entail the following: Phase 1, a review of scholarship. This phase aims to answer the sub-questions – What is the fantasy genre? What are the salient tropes of the filmic fantasy genre? What is cultural narrative identity? What are the markers of white Afrikaner identity? Phase 2 involves a thematic analysis of a sample of internal and external Afrikaans mythological narratives³¹ in order to establish the fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythologies (FTAMs). This phase aims to answer the sub-question, What salient fantasy tropes can I extract from Afrikaner mythological narratives? Phase 3 involves the construction of a framework for a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity by integrating the identified FTAMs. This phase answers the sub-question, How can I use the work outlined above to create a framework for writing a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity? In what follows, I discuss the details of each phase, as illustrated below in Figure 3.

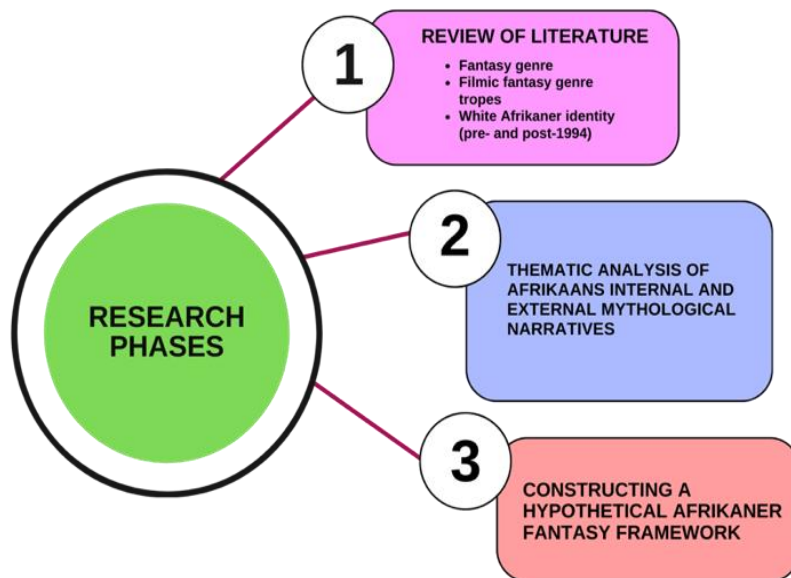


Figure 3: Research phases. (Illustration by the author).

³¹ I use the term 'mythological narratives' as an overarching term to denote myths, legends, folk tales and fairy tales.

1.5.1 Phase 1: Literature Review

Phase 1 of the research process includes a literature review. Literature reviews are necessary to conceptualise the field of study by providing a backdrop to the theories and concepts used in the research, an understanding of how scholars and practitioners have engaged with these concepts, how they have evolved, and how these theories may be synthesised to provide interdisciplinary links (Snyder, 2019: 333). Snyder (2019: 333) states that a literature review may serve as a research methodology in and of itself as it directly addresses the research question through the synthesis of existing theories or discourses, the identification of gaps in existing research, and the formulation of new theoretical and conceptual frameworks. By means of the literature review, I aim to demonstrate how the fantasy genre may act as an effective vehicle for questioning white Afrikaner identity. The review of scholarship organised into a set of key genre tropes from which a fantasy framework can be created.

To accomplish this, I collect, analyse and synthesise literature to define the filmic genre of fantasy, its conventions, and tropes, the defining pillars of apartheid and post-apartheid white Afrikaner identity which I investigate through theories pertaining to cultural narrative identity, liminality (Turner, 2011), imagined communities (Anderson, 2006), the nation as a process of narration (Bhabha, 1990), cultural hybridity (Bhabha, 1994), and cultural myth-making and naturalisation (Barthes, 1991). Furthermore, I investigate an internal nationalist myth referred to as 'civil religion' (Moodie, 1975), along with external Afrikaner mythological narratives.

I investigate filmic fantasy genre tropes by categorising them according to the elements of genre. I have researched elements of genre as defined by scholars, such as Cornea (2007: 5) – “structure, themes, narrative strategies, and visual iconography”; Pye (2012: 241-242) – structural features, plot, theme, setting, characters, and iconography; and Klein (2014: 4) – “images, characters, settings, plots, or themes”. Based on the commonalities I perceive between these series of genre elements and my own screenwriting experience, I identify the following common elements of genre narratives as my units of categorisation: plot structure, themes, setting, characters and visual iconography. My rationale for the use of these units rests on the screenwriting orientation of this research and its stated purpose – it to be used as a guideline for creating a fantasy genre screenplay. These elements form the headings I use to identify salient tropes of filmic fantasy in the course of the literature review.

1.5.2 Phase 2: Thematic analysis of Afrikaans mythological narratives

Phase 2 of the research involves a textual analysis of Afrikaans mythological narratives. Qualitative textual analysis is used by researchers to gather and analyse texts to determine how meaning is constructed in specific contexts and how this meaning is used by individuals to understand the world (Smith, 2017: 3). This is undertaken through the characterisation and interpretation of the content of a text (Tracy, 2020: 80) in order to understand how individuals or groups use the text to make sense of the structures of social institutions that define social life (Smith, 2017: 3). In other words, in my study, I implement textual analysis to analyse how white Afrikaner identity is expressed in a sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives that form part of its cultural narrative identity. This is undertaken to understand how the identity may be reimagined by framing its myths within a fantasy screenplay.

Textual analysis is often associated with more specialised research methods (Smith, 2017: 1). Qualitative thematic analysis is one such a method that is often used in combination with textual analysis (Tracy, 2020: 80) and is relevant to my study. Thematic analysis is concerned with the identification, analysis and interpretation of themes across a set of data (or texts) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is considered an effective method to sum up key themes within a set of data (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 2). Clarke and Braun (2017: 1) define qualitative thematic analysis as a flexible “tool or technique”. Due to its flexibility, it may be modified depending on the need of the study (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017: 2). Thematic analysis may be applied to any number of qualitative research studies and theoretical frameworks; it foregrounds the researcher as a key role-player in the coding and interpretation of data (Clarke & Braun, 2017: 1).

The central position of the researcher in the research process has led to debates regarding the reliability and trustworthiness of thematic analysis (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016: 36). It has likewise been argued that the subjectivity of the researcher should be foregrounded as a “resource for research” rather than as a limitation (Braun & Clarke, 2023: 2). As the creation of meaning is context-specific and subject to change (Braun & Clarke, 2023: 2), my positionality as a researcher may aid in the identification of culture-specific nuances and implied meanings in Afrikaner mythological texts. Concerning the reliability of thematic analysis, Vaismoradi and Snelgrove (2019: [sp]) argue that researchers should detail the “philosophical perspectives underpinning theme development” in order to disclose the “rigor, reasonability, validity and

comprehensiveness” of the identified themes. As such, I not only disclose the philosophical worldview informing my research, alongside my own positionality, but I also investigate white Afrikaner identity in depth (Chapter 4) to contextualise my understanding of the identity, which underpins how I approach my identification of themes in Chapter 5. In an attempt to ensure the transparency of my research process, which may influence the reliability of my findings, I disclose all the stages undertaken in my thematic analysis, which I describe in the following sections.

In this study, I apply elements of thematic analysis to answer the sub-question: What salient fantasy tropes can I extract from Afrikaner mythological narratives? To achieve this, I undertake a thematic analysis to investigate what salient fantasy tropes (which I identify in Chapter 3) emerge from a sample of internal and external Afrikaner mythological narratives and how these tropes are made manifest. This is undertaken to identify FTAMs (fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythology) to implement in the construction of my framework in Chapter 6. The steps of thematic analysis I implement comprise establishing and acquainting oneself with the data set, identifying initial codes, identifying themes for the coding structure, evaluating the identified themes, describing and naming the themes, and presenting and interpreting the results (Nowell *et al.*, 2017: 4-11). In the following section, I discuss how I implement these steps in the context of this study.

1.5.2.1 Establishing a sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives

I establish my data set by generating a sample of internal and external Afrikaans mythological narrative texts that are representative of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. I consider both internal and external myths as I argue (in chapters 4 and 5) that together these categories construct Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. Internal myths provide insight into the pedagogy of white Afrikaner identity, while the creative expression of external myths contains fantastical elements that creates touchpoints with the fantasy genre. I identify the specific mythological narratives that constitute this sample on the basis that they either reflect Afrikaner identity, as I establish it in Chapter 4, or include prominent fantastical elements. My choice of the narratives has been further influenced by my own familiarity and inherent knowledge of white Afrikaner narrative culture due to my positionality as an insider in this socio-cultural group. The sample thus

reflects my own subjective³² experience of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity and the mythological narratives that I deem to reflect white Afrikanerhood.

With regard to internal myths, despite the existence of other Afrikaner nationalist myths, I foreground Moodie's (1975) civil religion as a myth that constitutes the "typical" (Moodie, 1975: 1) originary narrative of white Afrikanerhood and best encapsulates white Afrikaner identity and its markers, as I investigate this in Chapter 4.³³ My rationale for including just one internal nationalist myth is also motivated by the time period that the civil-religion myth covers – it spans more than a century, circa 1806- 1914 (Moodie 1975: 2). This period includes numerous historical events significant to Afrikaner identity. Investigating more than one such myth would negatively impact on the granularity³⁴ of the analysis I undertake.

Concerning external myths, I identify the constituents of the sample based on six external myth categories I include in this study. These categories include disputed histories and people whose existence is disputed (Coetzee, 1960), ghost myths (Coetzee, 1960), magical creatures (Coetzee, 1960), and Boer heroes (Van der Merwe, 2009). I add the categories of animal fables and fairy tales, as I have recognised significance from my research into various Afrikaans mythological narratives.

I selected a sample of three myths for each of the six categories. I deemed these myths to be model examples of external Afrikaans myths based on my own experience of white Afrikaner identity. In total, this resulted in a sample of 19 mythological narratives, including civil religion as an internal myth. This number constitutes a sample sufficiently large to identify salient tropes while providing a feasible data set to analyse within the timeframe of my study. In utilising three narratives for each category, I have been able to ascribe salience to tropes that appear more than twice per category. I acknowledge that my specific sample of mythological narratives has indubitably influenced the manner in which my framework is constructed; a different sample may have delivered a different outcome.

³² I acknowledge that a different narrative sample would generate different data and tropes and that this sample is a reflection of my own subjective perception of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

³³ I elaborate on the significance of civil religion in Chapter 4, 4.2.5 *Cultural mythmaking*, and Chapter 5, 5.3.1. *The Afrikaans mythological narrative sample: Internal myths*.

³⁴ Granularity refers to the level of detail and complexity of the analysis.

As I unpack in Chapter 5,³⁵ my inclusion of external mythological narratives is not aimed at validating cultural appropriation, though the majority of these narratives did not originate from within Afrikaner cultural identity. Rather, I aim to acknowledge the many cultural influences that have shaped Afrikaner identity as a hybrid identity and whose mythological narratives form a central part of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

1.5.2.2 Coding, identifying and presenting the themes

After establishing my narrative sample, I move to the second step of my thematic analysis, which involves identifying the set of codes I use to guide my identification of themes within the narrative sample. Nowell *et al.* (2017: 5-6) define coding as a process of interaction with the data, in this case with the mythological narrative texts, during which the researcher is able to summarise the data set through focusing on the specific, identified characteristics. In the course of the process of analysis, the assignment of codes is not fixed but can change as the researcher's understanding of the data evolves (Nowell *et al.*, 2017:6).

In this study, I utilise as codes the salient tropes of fantasy identified by means of my units of analysis (plot structure, themes, characters, settings and visual iconography). These codes comprise the steps of Vogler's (2007) writer's journey framework (plot structure), the identified salient thematic tropes of fantasy (theme), Indick's (2012) character archetypes (character), and salient fantasy tropes pertaining to setting and visual iconography.

The third step of the analysis involves analysing the narrative sample according to these codes in order to identify that themes that emerge. Themes refer to the emerging patterns that can be identified within the coded categories of the data (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 57). In this study, I identify the themes that emerge in Afrikaner myths when the texts are coded according to the above-mentioned salient fantasy tropes. In other words, I investigate how salient fantasy tropes find expression within Afrikaner myths and what themes emerge from them. As per Vaismoradi and Snelgrove (2019: [sp]), I understand themes as the "subjective meaning and cultural-contextual message of the data". This underscores the understanding that the meaning of the

³⁵ See 5.2. *A tale of appropriation: white Afrikaner mythological narratives.*

themes I identify within my data set are tied to both my subjective interpretation of the themes and the themes' meanings within the context of white Afrikaner identity.

These identified themes may be clearly observable, such as when a theme is directly mentioned (manifest themes), or they may be induced by means of a deeper analysis of the text (latent themes) (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 57). Nowell *et al.* (2017: 8) argue that the significance of an identified theme in a text is not necessarily determined by the number of times a theme appears within a data set; rather, it finds its value in relation to its relevance to the research question.

Having identified the themes within the narrative sample, I undertake the fourth step of my analysis: reviewing the relevance and accuracy of the identified themes and whether they effectively reflect the code categories. I then proceed to steps five and six, which I perform together. This involves naming and describing the themes and presenting them within my interpretation of the analysis in Chapter 5. I structure this interpretation according to plot structure, themes, character, setting and iconography.

By identifying what salient fantasy themes can be identified in Afrikaner myths and how they are expressed, I am able to identify the FTAMs. These identified FTAMs are then used in the final phase of the research to inform the creation of a framework for a fantasy screenplay that has the aim of questioning white Afrikaner identity.

I summarise my method of analysis in Figure 4, below.

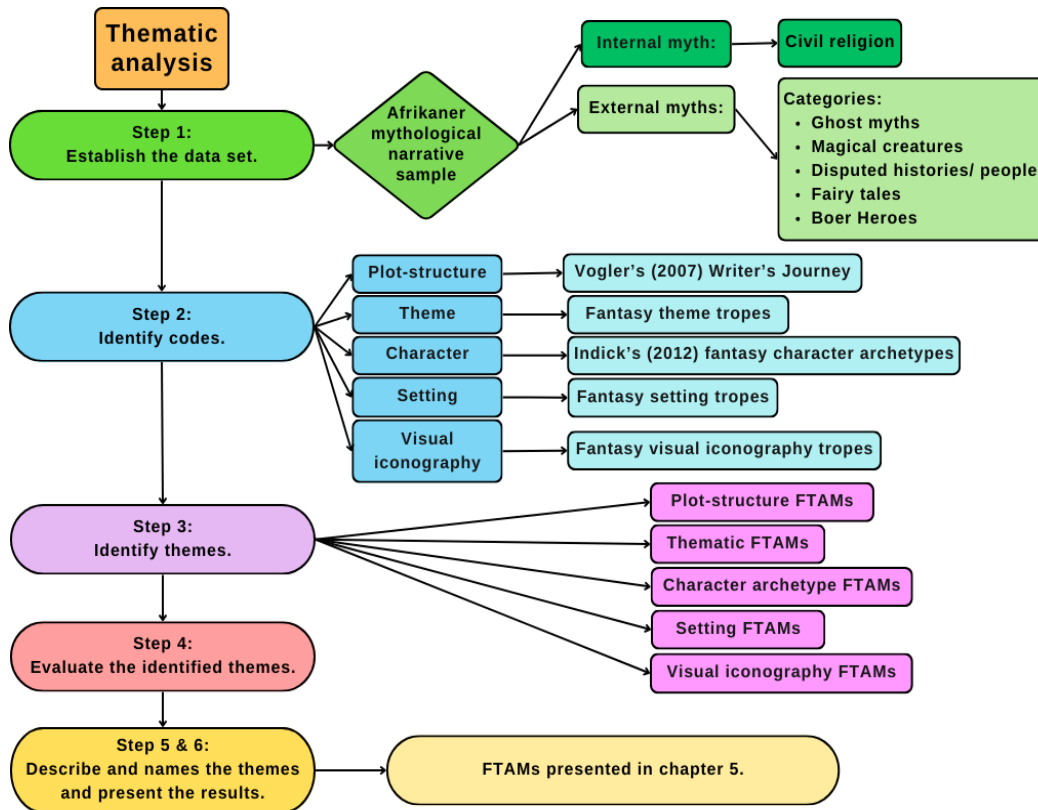


Figure 4: Phase 2, thematic analysis. (Illustration by the author).

1.5.3 Phase 3: Creating a fantasy framework and concluding the study

Phase 3 involves the creation of a framework for a fantasy screenplay aimed at questioning white Afrikaner identity. I construct this framework by investigating how the FTAMs identified in the thematic analysis of Phase 2 can be creatively implemented in a fantasy screenplay in such a way that it critically engages with white Afrikaner identity. This framework is structured according to the elements of genre (plot structure, theme, characters, setting and visual iconography). To illustrate the 'creative implementation' of FTAMs and to aid explanation of my framework, I create a fantasy screenplay concept, *Die Waterwewer*, that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity.

The research process, as undertaken through the phases discussed above, is illustrated in Figure 5, below. To illustrate how the research phases are used to guide my formulation of this dissertation, I provide a bird's eye-view of the study and its various components in Figure 6.

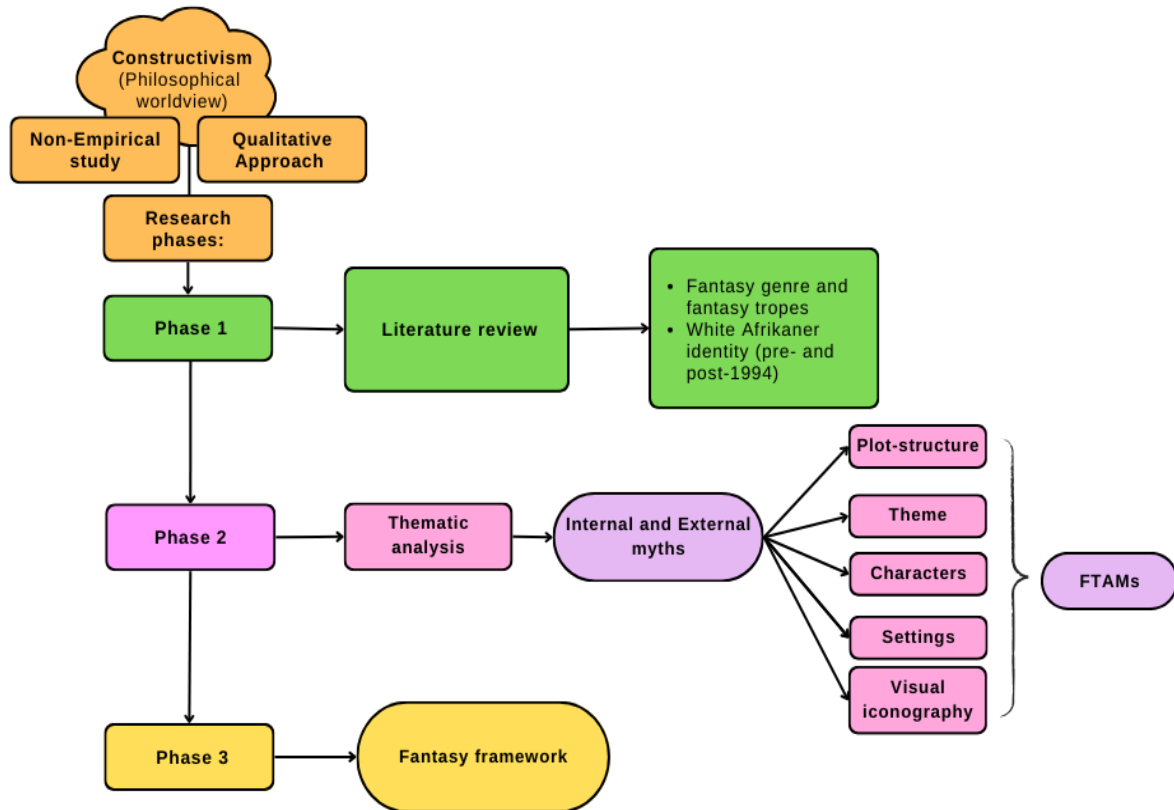


Figure 5: Approach to the research process. (Illustration by the author).

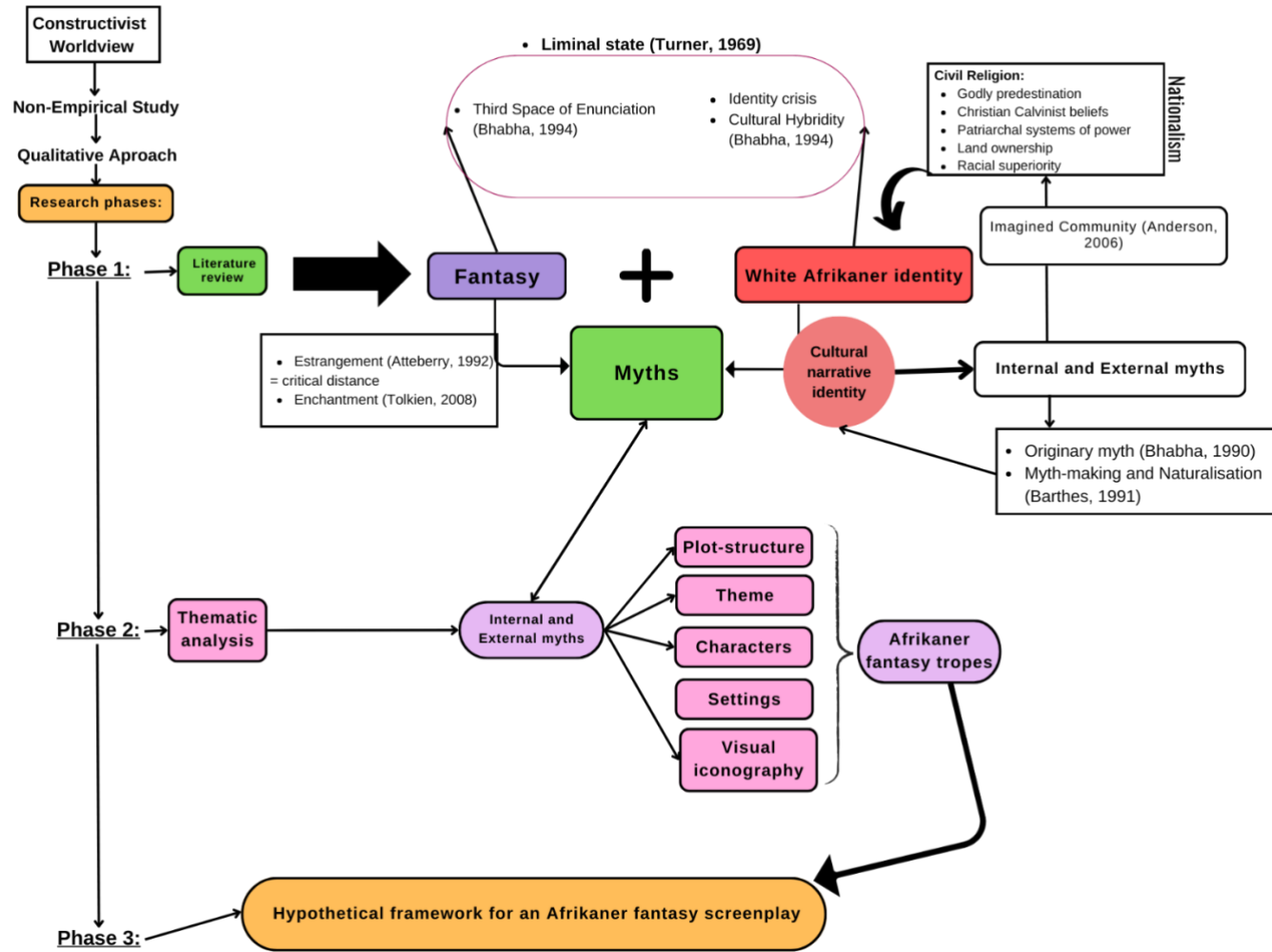


Figure 6: An overview of the workflow followed in the dissertation. (Illustration by the author).

1.6 Ethical Considerations

This research study does not involve any research participants and, therefore, the research has no ethical implications.

1.7 Chapter Division

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

I introduce the field of study and provide background to the research question and the research gap that the study aims to address. I define key terms and set out the research methodology, methods, and explain the phases of my research to indicate how the research develops and how the dissertation is structured.

CHAPTER 2: THREADING THE FABRIC OF FANTASY

Chapter 2 aims to address sub-question one: What is the fantasy genre? The chapter introduces Phase 1 of the research and entails a textual investigation by means of a review of the literature on the ontology of the fantasy genre. This includes an enquiry into genre, its problematics, how trope theory navigates the problematics of genre, how fantasy's tropes function within the speculative fiction genre, and a discussion of the relationship between fantasy and myth.

CHAPTER 3: FILMIC FANTASY TROPES

In Chapter 3, I address sub-question two: What are the tropes of the filmic fantasy genre? I explore the salient tropes of filmic fantasy and how they are made manifest in fantasy film by means of an investigation into fantasy scholarship. This I undertake to identify salient fantasy tropes. How these manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives is explored in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4: WHITE AFRIKANER IDENTITY

This chapter addresses sub-questions three and four: What is cultural narrative identity, and what are the markers of white Afrikaner identity? In Chapter 4, I investigate the concept of cultural narrative identity and the defining pillars of white Afrikaner identity in both the nationalist apartheid and democratic post-apartheid contexts. I conclude the chapter by examining how fantasy may be used as a creative strategy to critically engage in reimagining white Afrikaner identity within a liminal space. This I undertake to establish the theoretical basis for how the fantasy framework may operate to question white Afrikaner identity and to establish the markers of white Afrikaner identity which are to be questioned.

CHAPTER 5: AFRIKAANS MYTHOLOGICAL NARRATIVE TROPES

Chapter 5 introduces Phase 2 of the research and addresses sub-question five: What fantasy tropes can I extract from Afrikaner myths and folklore? To answer this question, I investigate what salient fantasy tropes can be found within a sample of internal and external Afrikaans mythological narratives and how these tropes are made manifest. I undertake this investigation by means of a thematic analysis and position the identified themes as FTAMs (fantasy themes in Afrikaner mythologies). The aim of this chapter is to identify how these FTAMs manifest; in other words, how fantasy tropes might reflect white Afrikaner identity. The identified FTAMs are used in the following chapter to create my framework.

CHAPTER 6: FORMULATING A FANTASY FRAMEWORK

This chapter addresses sub-question five: How can I use the information gathered in answering these sub-questions to create a framework for writing a fantasy screenplay aimed at critically engaging with white Afrikaner identity? I utilise the FTAMs identified within the sample of white Afrikaner mythological narratives (Chapter 4) to create a framework for a fantasy film screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity. This I undertake with the aid of an original fantasy screenplay concept to illustrate how the FTAMS may be practically and creatively implemented. I distill the key nodes of this process to create my practically applicable framework. I structure the framework according to the units of analysis used as codes in this study: plot structure, theme, character, setting and visual iconography.

CHAPTER 7: AT JOURNEY'S END – A CONCLUSION

This chapter offers an overview of the study and how the research question and the related sub-question are answered. I reflect critically on the framework created and the ways in which it engages with white Afrikaner identity through recognisable fantasy tropes. I conclude the dissertation by presenting the study's limitations and future research possibilities.

1.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I contextualised the Afrikaans film industry according to Broodryk's (2015: 81) critique of it as politically impotent. I identified what I perceive as a lack of fantasy films in Afrikaans in this industry. I presented an argument that the filmic fantasy genre may be politically potent in the current democratic context in which many white Afrikaners' identity is in a liminal state due to the uprooting of their identity markers by South Africa's political shift to democracy in 1994. Fantasy's political potency sprouts from its ability to critically engage with identity and its reimagining of identity within the safe parameters of the fictional fantasy world.

In this dissertation, I set out to create a framework for the writing of a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with, and questions white Afrikaner identity by drawing from the myths through which the identity is imagined. To construct this framework, I investigate myths as a key factor in the construction of fictional fantasy worlds and in the formation of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. I construct this framework in order to aid in the reimagining of a white Afrikaner identity compatible with South Africa's current socio-political context. To achieve this aim, in Chapter 1, I set out my research questions, methodology, and the trajectory this dissertation follows to answer the research questions. In Chapter 2, I critically explore the fantasy genre and its ontological tropes.

CHAPTER 2: THREADING THE FABRIC OF FANTASY

2.1 Introduction: Understanding the fantasy genre

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the fantasy genre by investigating it as a sub-genre of speculative fiction and exploring how its tropes might allow for the reinvention and reimagining of identity. In order to shape this contextualisation of the fantasy genre, I begin by investigating the broader concept of genre theory and criticism thereof, how trope theory provides a means to navigate genre criticism, and finally, how fantasy's tropes function within the overarching genre of speculative fiction.

This study understands speculative fiction as a meta-genre that is concerned with the imagining of alternative realities, based on the premise that the known scientific natural laws that determine cause and effect chains are replaced with alternative laws and conditions (Gill, 2013: 73). Other genres within speculative fiction include fantasy, horror, science fiction, and magical realism (Oziewicz, 2017: 1). I define the fantasy genre and its tropes according to this understanding of speculative fiction. The tropes I investigate in this chapter are concerned with the nature and ontology of the fantasy genre as a whole. I use 'ontology' to refer to fantasy's treatment of reality and its construction of new fantastical fictional realities. I provide a more detailed definition of ontology in Section 2.4.2 *The fantasy genre*. In Chapter 3, I investigate the practical filmic tropes associated with the fantasy genre, as they are found in fantasy films.

Finally, I unpack the fantasy genre's relationship to myths and other mythological narrative³⁶ genres, such as folk tales, fairy tales and legends (from which fantasy often draws). This relationship serves to illustrate how fantasy may critically engage with aspects of cultural identity of which these narratives form part. Figure 7, below, provides a visual layout of this chapter.

³⁶ 'Narrative', in the context of this study, refers to story. It is the process of meaning-making accompanied and guided by certain "structural characteristics" depending on the medium or mode through or in which the narrative is presented (Schiff, 2012: 34).

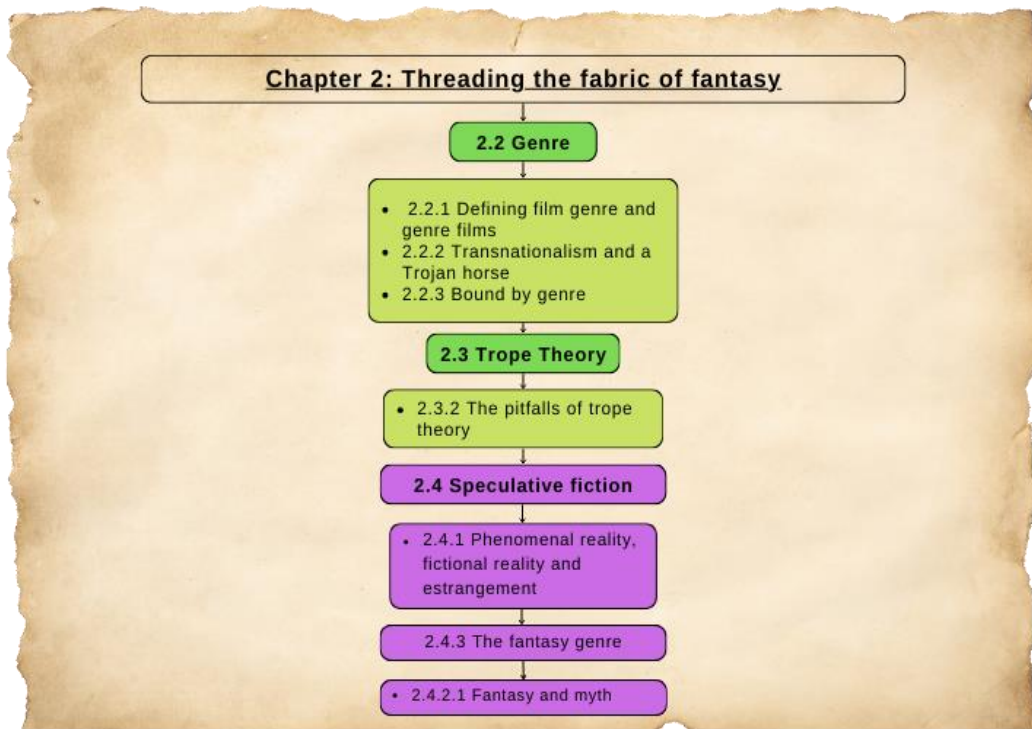


Figure 7: The structure of chapter 2. (Illustration by the author).

2.2 Genre

In what follows, I unpack the broader concept of genre before investigating the fantasy genre and its tropes. This section includes a working definition of the term genre, an investigation into the difference between film genre and genre films, and an investigation into the role of genre conventions. I further explore genre criticism with a focus on the role of transnationalism and the ideologies that are embedded in Hollywood genre conventions. I specifically include Hollywood's genre conventions due to Hollywood's historical and current influence on the Afrikaans film industry (Broodryk, 2015: 64). I end this section on the concept of genre by investigating the criticism against the restrictive nature of genre taxonomies.

2.2.1 Defining the film genre and genre films

Genre as a concept is considerably older than its use in cinema and dates back to Aristotelian times when it was applied to literary critical and creative theories and practices (Duff, 2014:

[sp]). With the invention of cinema, filmic genre theory evolved as cinema critics such as Siegfried Kracauer, Robert Warshow and André Bazin, among many others, attempted to define some taxonomic standard or system of categorisation (Grant, 2012: xviii; Grant & Kurtz, 2016: 2-3).

As cinema developed and filmic expressions became more diverse, so too did the generic categorisation of films. By the 1980s, film critics such as David Bordwell (1989: 147) had stated that generic categorisation may occur on the basis of any number of criteria, including “period or country, director or star or producer or writer or studio, by technical process, by cycle, by series, by style, by structure, by ideology, [or] by venue”. Despite these modes of categorisation, Chandler (1997: 1) argues that a film’s genre is not the result of an “objective procedure”, meaning that there is no set, agreed upon, structural guideline according to which genres are assigned. As a consequence, genre theory has always been accompanied by debates involving genre criticism³⁷. These debates have prompted scholars such as Stam (2000: 14) to interrogate the nature of genre. Are they merely abstract analytical notions, or are they concrete categories (Stam, 2000: 14)? Although I do not provide an answer to these fundamental questions of genre in this study, I do contextualise filmic genre here in such a way that its purpose and functions are clear.

Genre is a French word that means type or “class” (Berger, 2016: 100), and it is generally used to indicate the classification of recurring types of texts, regardless of the medium in which these texts are found (Berger, 2016: 100; Duff, 2014: [sp]; Selbo, 2015: xi). This recurring type or taxonomy is based on the similarities that exist between the texts, or on the norms to which they conform, and leads to a degree of “standardisation” (Duff, 2014: [sp]; Moïne, 2009: xvi). Although, as indicated above, these similarities can be based on any number of things, they are often defined by “structural, thematic and functional criteria” (Duff, 2014: [sp]) which include existing “narrative strategies and repeated visual iconography” (Cornea, 2007: 5). These criteria are expressed in sets of genre conventions that are familiar to both the creators and audiences³⁸ of the genre’s texts (Berger, 2016: 101; Deleyto, 2012: 220). Conventions are thus the “stylistic” (Duff, 2014: [sp]) building blocks that construct a genre (Selbo, 2015: x) and which function as a “consumer index” (Grant, 2003: 28) that shapes the audience’s

³⁷ I investigate such debates in the Sections 2.2.2 *Transnationalism and a Trojan horse: ideologies embedded in Hollywood genre conventions* and 2.2.3 *Bound by genre: the restrictive nature of genre taxonomies*.

³⁸ As genre functions in many mediums, the term ‘audience’ can be replaced by ‘reader’/‘listener’ etc. For the filmic focus of this study I use the term ‘audience’.

expectations regarding the type of “artistic representation of reality” (Duff, 2014: [sp]) they encounter in the genre (Cornea, 2007: 5).

I offer Jule Selbo’s definition of genre in her book, *Film Genre for the Screenwriter* (2015), as a working definition to guide this discussion on genre, based on the practical screenwriting orientation of her work, which aligns with the purpose of this study:

Film genre, for the screenwriter, refers to the type of film story and its essential elements such as locations, iconography, characters, themes, mental space and certain filmic and story attributes and intentions of the filmmaker – which have a historical heritage known to attract and emotionally affect a particular audience. Film genre implicates film narratives that hone original storylines, and original ... character motivations, themes, and genre revisionism (Selbo 2015: 8).

As such, film genre refers to the packaging of traditionally³⁹ recognisable genre tropes⁴⁰ within new narratives. Genre revision refers to the revision of the typical approach to a specific genre (Selbo, 2015: 6) by means of the introduction of non-conformist or alternative perspectives to traditional genres (Grant, 2003: 30). This serves to continuously renew genre forms to create new narratives.

Genre may also be packaged in narratives constructed from especially recognisable and familiar genre conventions associated with specific genres. With regard to film, the products of this practice are known as genre films (Grant, 2003: 28). What then is the difference between film genre and genre films? Grant (2012: 134) states that a film genre is “a tradition of common works”, while genre films are the “individual instances of that tradition”. Therefore, a genre film⁴¹ is the practical expression of a genre’s (or of genres’) conventions in a specific film.

I refer to the work of Thomas Sobchack (2012: 128) when investigating how these genre conventions function within a genre film. Sobchack (2012: 128) argues that the fictional nature of genre films constantly serves to remind the audience that identification and experimentation with characters, fears and fantasies carry no real-life consequences (Sobchack, 2012: 128). Moreover, genre films allow for narrative problems to be solved “directly, emotionally, [and] in

³⁹ ‘Traditionally’ here refers to those tropes commonly associated with a genre by both audiences and filmmakers as a result of genres’ repeated use of the tropes.

⁴⁰ I discuss tropes in 2.3 *Trope Theory: navigating fluid genre boundaries with tropes*.

⁴¹ I acknowledge that genre films are often viewed as derivative as they submit to the unoriginal formulaic nature of genre itself (Selbo, 2015: 1-2). They are criticised for not addressing “contemporary issues, philosophies, and aesthetics” due to their unrealistic and “blatantly dramatic nature” (Sobchack, 2012: 121).

action” (Sobchack, 2012: 127). This is due to the nature of genre films’ fictional reality wherein obstacles often manifest in physical bodies that may be fought and slain or wherein problems have definite solutions that can be realised by the protagonist through a degree of effort and action. Sobchack (2012: 127) further contends that because the nature of genre film characters is based on an established genre tradition, rather than the creation of complex and realistic characters, the audience is able to easily identify with the familiar character roles.

By identifying with these characters and so imagining their own selves within such character ‘shells’, audiences are able to distance themselves from their reality and critically engage with their identity⁴². As such, genre films are powerful tools through which identities⁴³ and their boundaries can be reimagined and tested within the confines of a fictional world (Sobchack, 2012: 127).

Furthermore, genre films’ repetition of conventions and tropes create “mythic meaning”⁴⁴ in that audiences are able to shape their morals, values and behaviours according to the conventions portrayed in popular films (Grant, 2012: 135). This occurs as film is a product of mass media that influences mass culture, which in turn exists as a mode of popular myth production in itself (Zheltukhina, Klushina, Ponomarenko, Vasilkova & Dzyubenko, 2017: 96). This identification is in line with the function of myths that concerns considerations of the nature of morality⁴⁵ (Saxby, 2004: 249) and offers culture-specific interpretations of the seen and unseen worlds (Mills, 2020: 203-204).

Regarding film genre as a culture-specific phenomenon (Dibeltulo & Barrett, 2018: 3), genre reflects culturally specific experiences of reality, determining what is portrayed as possible or impossible, normal or supernatural (Müller-Funk, 2003: 43) by means of the conventions it includes. However, due to cultural diversity and the unlikelihood of a worldwide consensus on genre conventions, different cultures ascribe different genre conventions to a specific genre.⁴⁶

⁴² I unpack this argument as it relates to the fantasy genre and white Afrikaner identity in Chapter 4, *4.5 Fantasy as a liminal strategy for questioning white Afrikaner identity*.

⁴³ I discuss the concept of identity, with a specific focus on white Afrikaner identity, in Chapter 4.

⁴⁴ I discuss myth in relation to the fantasy genre in Section 2.4.2.1, *Fantasy and myth*.

⁴⁵ Morality refers to a self-governed system of values, ideals (Schwartz, Luyckx & Vignoles, 2011: 18) and virtues that guide an individual’s reasoning and, ultimately, behaviour – it concerns the principles of right and wrong (Hardy & Carlo, 2011: 495). A supposedly ‘universal’ sense of morality, however, is problematic as it would rely on an objective, fundamental standard of truth, whereas constructivism involves “context dependent” (Hardy & Carlo, 2011: 500) truths constructed by individual subjective experiences.

⁴⁶ On the one hand, what is presented in and through the fantasy genre film should arguably be determined by the specific culture the film is created in and for. On the other, a film’s target audience becomes part and parcel of the conceptualisation and packaging of the film.

That is to say that conventions are culture-specific (Tudor, 2012: 7). As Tudor (2003: 7) states “[g]enre is what we collectively believe it to be”. Whoever constitutes the “we” in Tudor’s statement will thus determine the nature of the belief.

Nevertheless, the culturally specific nature of genre films’ conventions is often influenced by factors other than the “we”. Dominant cultural industries, such as Hollywood, are an example of such a factor. I use Hollywood as an example as the South African cinema industry, especially the Afrikaans film industry, has historically, (and arguably still), been influenced by Hollywood cinema and Hollywood genre conventions (Broodryk, 2015: 64). Popular Hollywood genre conventions, in this context, concern “setting, character type, [and] images of social and psychological conflict and its solutions” (Gitlin, 2017: 215)⁴⁷ along with the ‘typical’⁴⁸ Hollywood characters, plots, narrative structures, themes, and aesthetics, among other elements associated with a specific genre. Hollywood offers some popular conventions that are used across genres, such as the presentation of Joseph Campbell’s “structural [narrative] pattern” trope, *The Hero’s Journey*⁴⁹ (Sadri, 2020: 1, 4), the use of Hollywood character types and archetypes (Yoshinaga, 2019: 196), such as Campbell’s character archetypes (as found in the Hero’s Journey), and the use of prominent professional actors in key roles (Ram, 2022: 31) to portray these archetypal characters.

Dibeltulo and Barrett (2018: 5) argue that a possible reason for the prevailing presence of these popular Hollywood genre conventions in a variety of national and cultural cinemas⁵⁰ use of genres may relate to transnationalism. Transnationalism refers to the influence that various cinemas and their cinematic traditions, both national and cultural, have on one another in terms of film production and markets (Dibeltulo & Barrett, 2018: 5).

According to Decker, transnationalism’s influence on various national and cultural cinematic practices has led to transnational genre hybridity so that a filmic text produced within the context of a specific cultural cinema draws on established and developing genre conventions

⁴⁷ Although Gitlin’s (2017) notions relating to hegemonic ideologies on screen are mainly centred on television, these concepts can be applied to film as well, especially with the advent of streaming sites, such as Netflix, which blur the boundaries between films and television shows.

⁴⁸ I acknowledge that not all Hollywood films utilise the same genre conventions and that these conventions may vary in style and degree across various genres and films.

⁴⁹ I discuss *The Hero’s Journey* in Chapter 3, 3.2.1 *A brief overview of Campbell’s hero’s journey*.

⁵⁰ My use of ‘cinemas’ here refers to specific cultural or national film industries and their cinematic practices such as, for example, Afrikaans cinema or Hollywood cinema.

from both a film's own cultural genre traditions and the genre conventions of "foreign national cinemas" (Decker, 2021: 3).

2.2.2 Transnationalism and a Trojan horse: ideologies embedded in Hollywood genre conventions

It is from this standpoint of transnationalism that Yoshinaga (2019: 193) critiques the dominant genre conventions (which I discuss below) of the commercial Hollywood approach to genre that infiltrates other cultural cinemas. Yoshinaga (2019: 193) centres his critique on how transnational genre hybridity may diminish varied expressions of culture (Yoshinaga, 2019: 193) by creating a platform for the infiltration of Western⁵¹ hegemonic⁵² ideologies into various national cinemas. Western hegemonic ideologies include "racial homogeneity" and white dominance (Molina-Guzmán, 2016: 438) expressed, for example, through white-saviour archetypes (Sebastian, 2017: 20); heteronormative sexuality as an expression of masculinity (Kent, 2019: 111); othering⁵³ and the exoticism of bodies and identities that are not Western (Martynuska, 2016: 73); the representation of cultures through a binary lens of dominance and advancement versus elementariness and poverty, where the West occupies the former (Njambi & O'Brien, 2021: 86); the projection of, on the whole, American culture, or 'other' cultures through a predominantly Western lens (Ram, 2022: 27); and an approach to world-building that reflects a colonial outlook (Yohsinaga, 2019: 193). These ideologies are embedded in Hollywood-specific approaches to genre by means of narrative structures and genre conventions.

With regard to a colonial outlook, Hollywood genre conventions often restrict the representation of cultural elements salient in narrative world-building to suit the "launch of a single protagonist on a narratively efficient journey" – as is prescribed by the structure of popular Hollywood films (Yoshinaga, 2019: 193). Yoshinaga (2019: 193) refers to this phenomenon as "hegemonic narrative world-building", whereby the cultural information

⁵¹ My use of 'the West' in this study refers to countries located in the Occident who has historically been framed as centres of power. The West and Western thinking operates on an assumption of universality and is often associated with modernity and civilization (Gamble, 2009: 8). Moreover, the West is often problematised in relation to its exercise of power such as colonialism and the spread of Western hegemonic ideologies such as patriarchy and racial superiority (Gamble, 2009: 8).

⁵² Hegemony refers to ideologies that reinforce the position of dominant and established structures of power (Gitlin, 2017: 205-206).

⁵³ Othering refers the connotation of discriminative ideas of inferiority in relation to those deemed to belong to marginalised groups (Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012: 300).

presented in the narrative is limited to and filtered through the constraints provided by the Hollywood approach to narrative structure.

The critique of embedded hegemonic Western and colonial ideologies also finds footing in the conventions of the fantasy genre. Scholars such as Young (2014: 738-740) and Rumsby⁵⁴ (2017: 2) argue that the fantasy genre and its conventions often carry Western and racial ideologies that centre on the promotion of whiteness and that discriminate against representations of “the Other”. McLarty (2021: 176) critiques Peter Jackson’s *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, which has been deemed a model of filmic fantasy by many scholars (see Fowkes, 2010; Selling, 2003; Sullivan, 2004; Walters, 2001) according to its inclusion of Western hegemonic ideologies. McLarty (2021: 176) argues that the films depict racial hierarchies pertaining to whiteness and its associations with social class and privilege, as seen in the ethereally white elves who are juxtaposed to “monstrous non-white” fantastical beings (McLarty, 2012: 176).

This critique, both of the fantasy genre and of the broader concept of genre, prompted this study’s recognition that genre conventions can carry hegemonic ideas and that cultural representation needs to navigate these embedded ideologies in order to negotiate and understand the representation of cultures on screen and in screen culture. Beyond acting as a vehicle for ideologies, genre can be problematised in many other ways, which I will discuss in the following section.

2.2.3 Bound by genre: the restrictive nature of genre taxonomies

My inquiry into the problematisations of genre in this section focuses specifically on the limiting boundaries of genre taxonomies and the blurring of genre boundaries by means of genre hybridity.⁵⁵ The current discussions leads, in the next section (2.3 *Trope Theory*), into the use of filmic tropes as a means to navigate fluid genre boundaries.

Here, I return to the definition of genre as a category, one which has led to critiques of genre’s attempt to act as a rigid indicator of categorisation (Duff, 2014: [sp]). In the course of the

⁵⁴ I include Rumsby’s (2017) masters dissertation, “Otherworldly others: racial representation in fantasy literature” here due to its relevance to my study.

⁵⁵ Genre critic Steve Neale (2000: 166-167) refers to hybrid genre films as those that clearly make use of more than one set of recognisable genre conventions but are complicated by genre conventions’ attempts to be definitive.

twentieth century, scholars such as Schwartz (1971), Conley (1979), Croce (1992), Derrida (1980) and Neale (2000) grappled with the concept of genre and its limitations. In 1909, Benedetto Croce, an Italian philosopher and literary critic, argued for the complete abandonment of genre (Croce, 1992: 39-41; Duff, 2014: [sp]). This argument was generated on the basis of the criticism that genre's attempts to define texts through concrete definitions and regulations strip texts of innovation, inhibit original creativity, and hamper true art's tendency to push against and question boundaries and norms (Croce, 1992: 39-41; Duff, 2014: [sp]). Furthermore, the unique experience offered by a new text is diminished by generic expectations. Genre criticism holds that rather than celebrating the novelty of the text's distinct individuality and intricacy (Schwartz, 1971: 115), genre expectations invite critique based on generalised taxonomic standards (Cohen, 1986: 2010–211).

To navigate the limitations of genre taxonomies, genre critic Steve Neale (2000: 165) offered an alternative approach to genre which views genre less as a category and more as a process. This process becomes active due to each new genre film and auteur⁵⁶ filmmaker contributing to the existing corpus of a genre by either including new defining elements or deliberately excluding others, or both (Neale, 2000: 165).

Deleyto (2012: 220) elaborates on the changing relationship between genres and genre conventions by referring to the seminal work of Wittgenstein (1986: 33e) on the principle of the “family resemblances” of groups of related ideas. Wittgenstein (1986: 33e) argues that the features shared in a family are not necessarily shared by all family members, but that members who do not share them are not excluded from the family. As such, the features in themselves do not act as a criterion for the inclusion or exclusion of members or ideas from a specific grouping; rather it is the relationship between them that is significant.

This approach leads to the concept of ‘chaining’, which refers to the relationship between the links of a chain – some links are more closely related to other links in the chain. However, those links further down the line still form part of the chain, even though they are not directly linked, or related, to other links (Deleyto, 2012: 221). This chain metaphor may indicate that genre convention ‘links’ may appear in some genre films, be irrelevant in other films of the same genre, and link to other genre chains that may share these conventions. Genres and

⁵⁶ Auteurism refers to French film critics Alexandre Astruc and Francois Truffaut's view of film directors as authors (Sikov, 2020: 119). Those directors who author works with unique styles of personal expression involving a distinct worldview are considered *auteurs* (Sikov, 2020: 120).

their conventions are, therefore, not merely rules that are repeated in different narratives, but are constantly in the process of changing (King, 2021: 263), of being shaped and shifted. The constant dynamic reformation of genre boundaries leads to the overlapping of various genre conventions across different genres, and to the existence of hybrid genres, which problematises the formulation of concrete genre boundaries (Neale, 2000: 167) and indicates that genre boundaries are fluid and hybrid.

What then is the significance of utilising fantasy as a genre in the context of this study if the concept of genre can be proved to be moot by genre criticism? To answer this question, I offer French philosopher Jacques Derrida's (1980: 9) argument regarding the genre paradox. Although Derrida's (1980: 9) critique of assumed generic purity resonates with Schwartz's argument (above) to the effect that genre inhibits innovation, Derrida also argued for the necessity of genre taxonomies. Derrida (1980: 60) argues that deliberate and innovative disobedience in relation to genre (in order to broaden and challenge its boundaries) can occur only due to the actual existence of genre. In other words, one cannot break or re-invent the 'rules' without the 'rules' themselves being present. It is for this reason that I take into account the genre criticism discussed above and acknowledge the debates on the fluidity and hybridity of genre but argue for the necessity of the rules in order for them to be disrupted innovatively. As this study is concerned with the fantasy genre, some sort of framework that will provide parameters in which to operate is necessary, otherwise any text might classify as fantasy.

My position regarding genre is as follows: I admit to the existence of genre and utilise it as a tool to link the attributes and conventions used in this study to those commonly associated with the fantasy genre. I understand genre as a fluid and dynamic concept, constantly shifting its parameters. I am, therefore, concerned with what is currently commonly associated with and understood as 'fantasy'. What is seen as magic or fantastical today might be considered a mundane part of phenomenal reality tomorrow (Fowkes, 2010: 12).

This position strongly resembles Attebery's (1992: 12-13) approach to genre, which Leeder (2018: 97) refers to as the "core/periphery model". In this model, Attebery (1992: 12-13) places certain texts at the core of the genre, such as *The Lord of the Rings*, which is considered the "cultural touchstone" of fantasy. All other fantasy texts are 'measured' by how they resemble this text's use of the genre and by how near or far they are thus placed from the generic periphery of fantasy. The structure of this model remains intact until another fantasy work becomes more commonly associated with the genre, at which point the genre

taxonomy shifts (Leeder, 2018: 97). I draw on Atteberry's textual model of fantasy when I investigate the tropes of fantasy in Chapter 3.

In summary, I view genre as a concept whose 'themes' act as a gravitational force that attracts certain genre attributes, but which shifts over time. I conceptualise genre as the nucleus around which various attributes revolve like electrons, as illustrated in Figure 8, below. Genre attributes are not fixed but dynamic and may be shared between various genre nucleuses. As such, I view these attributes to be changeable, temporal and transitory conventions that rely on association with a genre nucleus to be maintained as genre attributes and, therefore, understand these attributes to function as genre tropes. I elaborate on this matter in the following section.

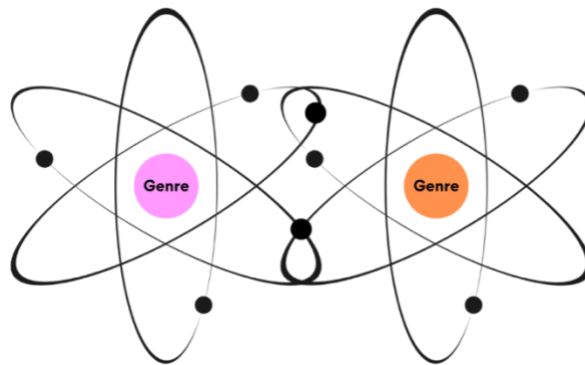


Figure 8: Genre as nucleus with genre attributes (tropes) as dynamic electrons. (Illustration by the author).

2.3 Trope theory: navigating fluid genre boundaries with tropes

The word 'trope' stems from the Greek *tropos* which means to "turn in direction" (Roth, 2020: 16). Some definitions of filmic tropes include the following: narrative conventions that may include "plot tricks, narrative structures, or character types" (Äijälä, 2020: 1); a "recurring narrative pattern or device that appears in cultural works" (García-Sánchez, Velez-Estevez, Merelo & Cobo, 2021: 2); and "cultural narrative conventions" that determine "expectations of stories" (Chou & Christie, 2021: 32). Tropes are thus very broadly delineated and may describe any aspect of a filmic text, including "the story and its discourse, characters and their interaction, location, time", and even the type of camera-work used in the film (Chou & Christie, 2021: 32). In the discipline of anthropology employs trope theory as a cultural-specific lens

which determines how and through what properties meaning is created within the context of a specific culture (Townsley, 2001: 102).

Owens-Murphy (2013: 240-241) introduced trope theory into the realm of genre as an alternative approach to the genre conundrum that is involved in viewing genre as “restrictive, reductive and ahistorical”. Trope theory is a theoretical approach to classifications that is borrowed from a metaphysics, a branch of analytical philosophy (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 241). The trope theory approach focuses on navigating complex hybrid-genre texts by creating a foundation for analysing such texts, such that they may belong to multiple genres simultaneously (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 241). Trope theory views texts as “complex bundles of properties”, with the properties being recurrent, concrete, “particular and isolatable” (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 252, 246). The basic principle of trope theory suggests that partial similarities between two objects point to “complete” similarities between the isolated properties they share (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 245). Applying this principle to genre, a text may be classified according to more than one genre, allowing for analysis of the many complex levels of each individual text (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 241).

The relationship between genre and tropes can be summarised as follows: broadly speaking, genre refers to a general type of narrative, whereas tropes are the narrative instruments used to create a particular effect. A trope may involve any narrative element, from overarching structures to minute details (García-Sánchez et al., 2021: 5). Tropes are the repeated, concrete, isolatable properties that may be found across different genre texts; their use in each genre holds unique significance (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 258). Trope theory thus enables us to understand works “in light of” rather than “in spite of the shared genre conventions and attributes” (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 257).

By this logic, genre boundaries are fluid and temporary as they are subject to change – they can be drawn and redrawn based on any number of genre attributes (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 257). In referring to the “isolated properties” that identify items or objects, trope theory allows that the properties defining the genre may be shared amongst various items or objects and do not exist as universals (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 245-246). In this manner, these shared properties act to categorise genres without the need for unyielding boundaries (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 246). When approaching genre through the lens of tropes, the inclusion of a film in one genre does not, therefore, exclude it from another genre (Walters, 2011: 2). This is because trope theory resituates the focus of genre from “difference” to “interconnectedness” between texts (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 259). In summary, I rephrase Leeder’s (2018: 93)

statement regarding genre conventions as it suits this study's view of tropes: “[tropes] are more typical of a genre than they are vital [to it]”.

In the course of my research, I discovered that the terms genre ‘trope’ and genre ‘conventions’ are often used without a clear delineation between the terms (such as in Adejunmobi, 2016; Äijälä, 2020; Pheasant-Kelly, 2013; and Selbo, 2015) . In order to argue that genre tropes provide a way to navigate the fluid terrain of genre boundaries constructed by genre conventions (as discussed above), I differentiate between the two terms in what follows.

This study understands genre conventions as the properties that act as criteria to be fulfilled for a text to qualify as a genre, while tropes, as another approach to genre, refer to those recurring properties that gravitate toward a specific genre but which may also belong to other genres to a greater or lesser extent (as illustrated in Figure 9, below) depending on the purpose of the trope and how they are used in the genre.

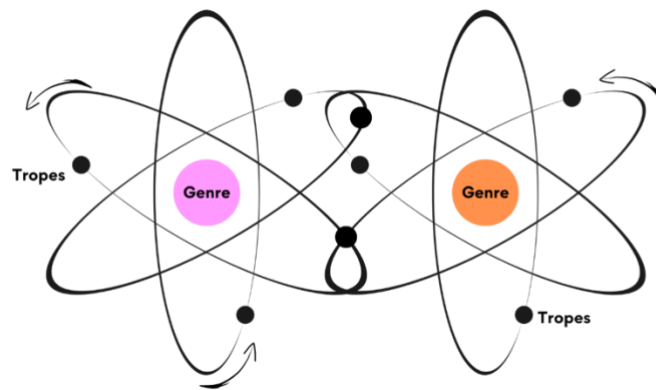


Figure 9: The genre atom with genre as nucleus and tropes as electrons. (Illustration by the author).

As film tropes are the recurring elements (García-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021: 2) that serve to advance plotlines (Roth, 2020: 16), and which shape audience “expectations of stories” (Chou & Christie, 2021: 32), filmic genre conventions may become film tropes through the act of repetition in films. I acknowledge that genre conventions are themselves based on repetition in order to become conventions in the first place, especially in the case of genre films. However, film tropes’ repetition transcends genre boundaries, as tropes are not confined or bound to a specific genre, but rather operate on the basis of genre hybridity. Certain tropes may be commonly associated with a genre, but they do not serve to construct the genre’s boundaries as genre conventions do. Therefore, whereas conventions cannot exist without

the principle of exclusion (if all genres were to include all conventions, then they would not function as genre conventions at all), tropes are not exclusive to a genre nor create determinate genre boundaries; rather, they exist across them (Chou & Christie, 2021: 40). Tropes therefore include and group together texts based on a single property, while conventions exclude texts from genre groupings based on the lack of properties.

Repetition, and consequently, audience recognition⁵⁷, further function as an attributes of filmic tropes. Audiences are familiarised with tropes through recurring exposure which, over time, constructs audience expectations of certain types of narratives and genres (Thompson, 2018: 12, 45). As a result of recognition, tropes are ascribed meaning based on their affiliations (Mellina & Svetlichnaya, 2011: 1) and function as generally “recognisable patterns” (Chou & Christie, 2021: 32). Due to the general familiarity and recognisability of tropes, it is possible to identify texts belonging to a certain genre based on the tropes they contain (García-Sánchez et al., 2021: 2). However, this recognition – and the consequent meaning constructed through the tropes – is culture-specific. As with genre, tropes are anchored in culture; hence, as cultures shift and change their creative expressions and parameters, so do tropes (Chou & Christie, 2021: 33, 40).

2.3.1 The pitfalls of trope theory

A filmic trope approach to genre is not without pitfalls. First and foremost, Chou and Christie (2021: 33) draw attention to a lack of scholarship on filmic tropes, such as that concerning a regulated collection of genre tropes. Many trope scholars (Äijälä, 2020: 1; Chou & Christie, 2021: 40; García-Ortega *et al.*, 2021: 1; Mellina & Svetlichnaya, 2011: 1; Smith *et al.*, 2017: 1799) make reference to the online filmic trope wiki, *TVTropes*, as a source of filmic tropes. This website serves as an inventory for filmic tropes and is created and curated by myriad online contributors, which means that the tropes are “regularly modified” and “obviously subjective” (Chou & Christie, 2021: 40). As there is no formal criterion against which tropes are measured, nor any monitoring or ‘policing system’, the tropes are “organic, dynamic and extensive” (García-Ortega *et al.*, 2020b, as cited in Chou & Christie, 2021: 33). Tropes drawn

⁵⁷ I acknowledge that not all tropes will be recognised by all audiences, nor all audience members. Rather I argue for trope familiarity on the basis that the recognition of a film as belonging to a certain genre, by an audience, implies the recognition of at least some tropes associated with the genre.

from this website and used in academic works can thus be created by anyone, leaving their reliability of their authenticity in question.

In addition, in the context of this study, the use of Owens-Murphy's (2013) application of trope theory to genre is problematic. Although trope theory effectively navigates fluid genre boundaries and genre hybridity by focusing on the relationship between isolatable properties of texts, it problematises my argument that there is a lack of fantasy films in Afrikaans. This problematisation occurs as I exclude certain films from the fantasy genre based on their lack of genre conventions and tropes. As mentioned in Chapter 1,⁵⁸ I argue that Afrikaans films such as *Meerkat Maantuig*, *Die Windpomp* and *Gaia* are not necessarily fantasy films in their own right, but merely utilise and incorporate a limited number of tropes of the fantasy genre. This argument, however, relies on an assumption that the density of tropes in a film associated with a particular genre somehow qualifies it to form part of a genre. This contradicts trope theory, which shifts the focus of genre ascription from the exclusion of texts based on differences to the inclusion of texts based on similarities (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 259). Furthermore, trope theory focuses on how the isolatable properties of a text may yield relationships with the properties of other texts or genres not previously considered or which do not bear any superficial resemblance to one another (Owens-Murphy, 2013: 258).

Here, I wish to reiterate that by recognising the blurred and shared boundaries of genres, this study does not deny the existence of genres. Rather, in line with Owens-Murphy (2013: 257), this study admits that genre boundaries are not rigid – rather, they change – and that trope theory offers a way to navigate these transformations. This presents a paradoxical, Derrida-like conundrum for trope theory. Although genres may be fluid, they still need defining principles, otherwise all texts would qualify as all genres. For trope theory to admit and foster new relationships between genres and texts, it needs to admit the presence of some sort of exclusivity.

To navigate this problem, I approach the fantasy genre as a “bundle” of fantasy genre tropes, which I define as the familiar, recognisable and “recurring narrative patterns” that are commonly found in or associated with the fantasy genre and that may function to “characterise” (García-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021: 2) a fantasy film text, while admitting that these tropes may be shared among various genres (Thompson, 2018: 45).

⁵⁸ See 1.1.1 *The fantasy of a fantasy film in Afrikaans*.

The lack of fantasy films in Afrikaans is, therefore, based on what I perceive to be a lack of the use of tropes commonly associated with the fantasy genre that would construct a fictional fantasy world that differs from phenomenal reality⁵⁹ and that are recognisable to an audience as overarching and primarily elements of fantasy. As tropes admit both genre hybridity and cultural specificity, they are an effective approach for this study to investigate the fantasy genre. Conceived in the manner, tropes enable me to create a framework for a fantasy genre screenplay aimed specifically at white Afrikaner cultural identity while navigating genre hybridity and the fluid boundaries of genre.

In light of the discussion above, henceforth, my use of the term ‘fantasy genre’ refers to a “bundle of tropes” (García-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021: 2) that are recognisable as characteristic of a fantasy narrative but are not exclusive to it. Other genres that share tropes and attributes with the fantasy genre include the speculative-fiction genres of horror and science-fiction (Fowkes, 2010: 2; Oziewicz, 2017: 4; Stephan, 2016: 4). I add magical realism to this discussion as its treatment of reality and the magical is in line with this study’s understanding of fantasy, which I elaborate on in Section 2.4.2 *The fantasy genre*.

2.4 Speculative fiction

This study frames fantasy as a genre of the speculative fiction meta-genre (Goossens *et al.*, 2020; Oziewicz, 2017; Selbo, 2015; Silva, 2020) based on its use of speculative fiction tropes. Over time, the term ‘speculative fiction’ has had many meanings. These have included it being used as synonymous with “science fiction” (Burger, 2020: 2), as a sub-genre of science fiction (Roux, 2020: 14), though concerned with “human rather than technological problems” (Oziewicz, 2017: 1), and as a stand-alone genre completely separate from science fiction and fantasy (Roux, 2020: 24).

This study utilises Oziewicz’s (2017: 1) approach to speculative fiction as a meta-genre that encompasses those genres that deviate from the rules and logic of phenomenal reality, such as “folk and fairy tales, fantasy, horror, magical realism, modern myth-making, science fiction,

⁵⁹ Phenomenal reality refers to reality as a “cognitive construction”, perceived through the senses and experience (Audi, 2015: 967). See Section 2.4.1 *Phenomenal reality, fictional reality and estrangement*.

slipstream, etc.” (Shimkus, 2012: 25; Silva, 2020: 21). Thus, my use of the term meta-genre when referring to speculative fiction.

Based on this understanding of speculative fiction as an inclusive meta-genre, I posit that an Afrikaans speculative-fiction meta-genre, involving the sub-genres of science fiction, magical realism and horror has developed in South Africa, although I maintain that expressions of the fantasy genre are lacking. Below, I provide a very brief and necessarily incomplete historical overview of the Afrikaans speculative-fiction genre in South Africa, before returning to my contextualisation of the broader concept of speculative fiction.

My purpose with this brief overview is both to illustrate the existence and development of an Afrikaans speculative-fiction meta-genre and to reify the lack of development of the fantasy genre in Afrikaans film. I focus specifically on Afrikaans speculative fiction rather than on speculative fiction in the broader context of South Africa. As such, I acknowledge but do not discuss the existence of historical, indigenous forms of speculative fiction on the African continent, such as traditional “myth, orality, and indigenous belief systems” (Kolm, 2010: [online]; Bryce, 2019: 3), that far predates the development of Afrikaans speculative fiction forms.

A formalised Afrikaans speculative fiction first found expression in the early twentieth century (Bryce, 2019: 3) in the form of literary works such as CJ Langenhoven’s *Loeloeraai*,⁶⁰ the first Afrikaans science fiction novel (Muller, 2022: 78). Speculative fiction then developed into other mediated forms of expression such as theatre productions, television shows and eventually, films. For example, in 1982, the first Afrikaans science fiction television puppet series, *Interster*, aired (Muller, 2022: 80), while the first traces of an Afrikaans horror film are found in the 1970s film, *Jannie Totsiens* (Rautenbach, 1970). This continued development has resulted in an array of Afrikaans speculative fiction films in the twenty-first century, such as *Wesens* (Muller, 2020), *Roepman* (Eilers, 2011), *Die Ontwaking* (Breedt, 2015), and *Siembaba* (Roodt, 2017). However, such development is not mirrored in the genre of fantasy. The NuMetro website (2014, 2017) promoted both *Die Windpomp* (Fourie, 2014) and *Meerkat Maantuig* (Schutte, 2017b) as fantasy films,⁶¹ while, most recently,⁶² the film *Gaia* is labelled a fantasy-

⁶⁰ The novel’s ethnoscape clearly points to a pre-1994 mindset as almost all of its characters are white, including the alien, *Loeloeraai* (Muller, 2022: 78).

⁶¹ In Chapter 1, I argue that the ascription of the term ‘fantasy’, as it is understood in this study, to these films are problematic.

⁶² *High Fantasy* (2017), directed by Jenna Bass, is another South African film that, though set in a realistic South African countryside, introduces elements of the fantastical through characters swapping

horror film on its own website (“Gaia Film”, [sa]). However, as I have argued, although such films may utilise tropes of fantasy, they predominantly conform to other, related speculative-fiction genres such as magical realism and horror.

Regarding the relationship between speculative-fiction genres, horror, and science fiction (and magical realism) are regarded as those most closely related to fantasy (Fowkes, 2010: 2; Oziewicz, 2017: 4; Stephan, 2016: 4). Due to the fluidity of genre boundaries, the relationship between these, including their differences, similarities and hybrid forms, have been much debated (see Fowkes, 2010; Mendlesohn, 2002; Roine, 2016; Selbo, 2015; Stephan, 2016). The element of speculation is captured in the question, “what would happen had the actual chain of causes or the matrix of reality-conditions been replaced with other conditions?” (Gill, 2013: 73). These “other conditions” determine the genre category into which the speculative-fiction narrative would fall. In other words, how and according to what conditions the future or alternative reality is imagined is determined by the tropes and conventions of the specific genre.

However, to delve into a discussion about where the boundaries of one of these speculative genres begin and the other ends would require an investigation into which attributes belong to which genres, which, all-in-all, would be counterintuitive in relation to this study’s tropological approach⁶³ to genre. Rather, my framing of fantasy as a speculative-fiction genre allows for a relationship between these genres on the basis of the tropes they share.

These shared speculative-fiction tropes include the use of plot and characters to stimulate a feeling of “wonder” (Burger, 2020: 2) by constructing an imaginary world that exceeds the boundaries of phenomenal reality (Goossens *et al.*, 2020: 203) rather than imitating actuality (Oziewicz, 2017: 2). As such, speculative fiction includes narratives involving wonder about the past, present and future as well as narratives that concern other realms that have simply been imagined (Burger, 2020: 2). The essential aspect of speculative fiction is that, by means of its tropes, it imagines fictional characters, settings, and plots in order to explore the potentialities of narratives set in alternate approaches to reality than phenomenal reality (Roine, 2016: i). These alternate approaches are created through the use of speculative-fiction tropes include the use of fantastical phenomena such as monstrous fantastical creatures

bodies. However, as the film’s dialogue is predominantly in English, I do not include it within my delineation of Afrikaans speculative fiction.

⁶³ I discuss trope theory in Section 2.3 *Trope theory: navigating fluid genre boundaries with tropes*.

(Fowkes, 2010: 3, 50); a consistent commitment to new laws of cause and effect, such as futuristic or alternative science or magic (Goossens et al., 2020: 204; Stephan, 2016: 16); and the construction of novel fictional worlds that deliberately (though to varying degrees) break from phenomenal reality in order to evoke estrangement (Oziewicz, 2017: 9).

2.4.1 Phenomenal reality, fictional reality and estrangement

Before investigating the concept of estrangement, it would be conducive to discuss how this study understands reality as speculative fiction is concerned with the creative treatment of reality. For Todorov (1973: 25), reality consists of the known phenomenal world, one without “devils, sylphides, or vampires” (1973:25). In this reality, supernatural events are not the norm. The ‘norm’ is ascribed to those events which can be rationalised by means of the agreed-upon natural laws of the familiar world (Todorov 1973: 25-27). This is what, in this study, is described as ‘phenomenal reality’.

The *Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy* (Wuellner, 2012: 90) defines “phenomenal” as that which is experienced and apprehended “consciously”. The phenomenal world is thus the product of cognitive processing influenced by one’s perceptions (Velmans, 2017: 1201), senses and experiences (Audi, 2015: 967). It would be an impossible feat to capture a definition of phenomenal reality that encompasses all the aspects of its meaning as phenomenal reality is influenced by a great many factors. For example, social reality is determined by the information shared through social human communication and interaction which may act to verify thoughts or beliefs and so establish a sense of a shared phenomenal reality (McLeod & Chaffee, 2017: 51).

On the other hand, Langacker (2019: 2) describes the personal subjective experience of reality as an individual’s own “reality conception”. This reality conception defines reality as that which has been realised by the individual as a result of the accumulation of all past experiences up to the present moment (Langacker, 2019: 2). The framing of reality through a lens that acknowledges personal subjective experiences is relevant to this study due to the latter’s adoption of a constructivist perspective. The constructivist view agrees with the reality conception’s framing of phenomenal reality as the accumulation of past and present occurrences, one shaped as much by those events that have not occurred as by those that have (Langacker, 2019: 2).

However, the term ‘phenomenal reality’, and its use of ‘reality’ in the singular, is complicated by the constructivist paradigm at work in this study, which is one that suggests that multiple realities exist as individuals’ subjective experiences result in the construction of their own realities (Lee, 2011: 5). Constructivism questions the notion of a collectively shared experience of reality and problematises the very delineation of something that may be considered ‘our reality’. Moreover, reality and its relationship with, for example, the “impossible” are complicated by culture-specific experiences of reality as every culture carries its own ideas and understandings of the nature of “impossibility” (Selling, 2003: 48).

To navigate these problematisations, this study shifts its focus from *who* experiences reality to *what* is experienced as constituting reality. As such, reality is understood as the constructed, familiar world that is shaped by various historical and present occurrences, social interactions (Langacker, 2019: 2), and personal, lived experiences. This study acknowledges that *who* undergoes these interactions and lived experiences influences how the specific conception of reality is shaped. Everyday phenomenal reality, then, refers to everyday experiences as these are experienced sensorily (van Buuren, 2018: 12; Glattfelder, 2019: 567) and physically by a person, including experiences shaped in the digital sphere.

Speculative fiction relies on this understanding of everyday phenomenal reality in order to deliberately and creatively break from this treatment of reality through the creation of novel fictional realities (Roine, 2016: 7). In fictional realities, new laws of nature and of cause and effect apply (Gill, 2013: 13). The newness of these fictional worlds creates a critical distance between the audience and their own phenomenal reality. This process of being drawn away from “the world we live in – or think we live in” is referred to as estrangement (Atteberry, 1992: 16). Estrangement is the “condition” that separates speculative-fiction genres from realistic fiction, realism or reality (Stephan, 2016: 6). It not only provides a critical distance between viewers and their phenomenal reality by placing them in a new fictional reality (Weinstock, 2022: 18), but allows for a new perspective from which to reflect on phenomenal reality, formulate new perspectives inspired by new laws that govern life (Thomas, 2013: 4), and question the status quo and hegemony inherent in systems of power present in phenomenal reality (Oziewicz, 2017: 9). I offer Oziewicz’s (2017: 19) statement to further highlight the significance and use of speculative fiction:

With all its borderless messiness, the field of speculative fiction can thus be considered the unlimited cloud space for our multicultural world’s non-mimetic traditions that help us share and reclaim forgotten or marginalised modes of engagement with reality (Oziewicz, 2017: 19).

Oziewicz's reference to "borderless messiness" refers to the fluid relationship between the different speculative fiction genres' boundaries. The term "non-mimetic" in the above statement refers to those conceptions of reality that do not imitate popular or dominant approaches to phenomenal reality (Oziewicz, 2017: 2). Speculative fiction's use of estrangement thus enables the meta-genre to disrupt conventional approaches to and understandings of reality by imagining new and alternative approaches to it. It further challenges the belief that everything can be explained within the boundaries of phenomenal reality and its observable phenomena (Oziewicz, 2017: 19) by highlighting the role of the supernatural.

Here, I momentarily digress to distinguish between the terms 'supernatural' and 'magical' within the context of speculative fiction. The Latin etymology of the word 'supernatural' combines the words "above (*super*)" and "nature (*natura*)" to mean that which transcends the realm of the natural (Lindeman & Svedholm, 2012: 1). This may include, but is not limited to, religious manifestations (Lindeman & Svedholm, 2012: 1), "different dimensions, extrasensory perception, different forms of non-human intelligence, [and] existence or powers" (Oziewicz, 2017: 13). Historically and currently, the term 'magic' indicates exceptional skills or attributes which defy the scientific understanding of the time (Lindeman & Svedholm, 2012: 1). In light of this, this study understands magic as an expression of the overarching concept of the 'supernatural'. Both the supernatural and the magical, and the manner in which they challenge conceptions of phenomenal reality, are central to my understanding of the fantasy genre, which I investigate in the next section.

2.4.2 The fantasy genre

I would like to reiterate that the fantasy tropes discussed in this chapter are concerned with the theoretical and ontological nature of the fantasy genre in and of itself. I discuss the filmic fantasy tropes that describe how fantasy practically finds expression in filmic form in Chapter 4.

There are many debates regarding the supposed validity of fantasy as a genre in and of itself. Walters (2011: 51) argues that there are instances of fantasy in almost all other genres and that categorising fantasy as a stand-alone genre means that it thus encompasses almost all other genres. Other theorists argue that fantasy is not a genre but a storytelling field at large

(Oziewicz, 2017: 13), that it has very few unique generic characteristics (Nasriddinov, 2020: 355), and that its complexity sprouts from the myriad perspectives and fields to which it is applied (Seregina, 2019: 5).

Among the definitions of fantasy are that it is a genre that “plays with time, space and the physical” by deliberately disobeying laws of nature (McKee, 1997: 85); the extravagant product of “unrestrained” imagination “conjectured out of fanciful thought” (Selbo, 2015: 40); and a genre that revolves around the impossible or highly improbable which exists outside the known possible realm (Stratyner & Keller, 2007: 1). Walters’ (2011: 19) entry point for defining filmic fantasy is its relationship with fiction. Fiction is understood as the creation of narrative worlds that contain elements particular to the fictional world, and, for film, where the audience is cognisant that what they see on screen has not occurred within this current reality (Walters 2011: 1,2,17). Fantasy exists as a further expansion of such a fictional world, beyond the borders of reality and “the realm of the explainable” (Walters, 2011: 17).

Seregina (2019: 32) argues that these different perspectives do not exist in isolation but, rather, when considered together, speaks of the “multisensory and subjective experience that is fantasy”. Despite the diversity of approaches, this study requires a containable, working point of reference for fantasy in order to investigate the attributes and practical filmic tropes of its form in later chapters and to inform the creation of an original fantasy screenplay. As such, I define fantasy as a genre rooted in the creation of imaginative fictional worlds, distinctly removed from the ontology of everyday phenomenal reality, but consistently compliant with the rules of the fictional worlds’ own ‘reality’ (Fowkes, 2010: 2; Khakimova, 2021: 220; Todorov, 1973: 42; Tolkien, 2008: 60; Walters, 2011: 18).

Fowkes (2010: 2) describes the “break” or distance between fantasy’s created ‘reality’ and the everyday phenomenal reality as an “ontological rupture”. Ontology refers to “a set of beliefs around the nature of reality” (Tracy, 2020: 73), including how it is understood and, from the constructivist’s perspective, how it is experienced (Heigham & Croker, 2009: 308). Tolkien (2008: 60) defines fantasy as a form of “unreality”, a deliberate deviation from what is ontologically understood as current, experienced, states of reality, one that aims at creating a new fantastical⁶⁴ fictional reality. Walters (2011: 22) holds that the term ‘reality’, as an antonym for fantasy, disregards the created ‘reality’ within the fictional world. Reality comprises the

⁶⁴ My use of the word “fantastical” here is intended as a general-use adjective – as that which relates to fantasy. It does not make reference to Tzevan Todorov’s narrative category of “the fantastical”, as described in his work, *The Fantastic* (1973).

consistent rules relating to nature, rationality, cause and effect, and the like, as established in a world – whether it be a fictional world or not (Walters, 2011: 22).

A fictional reality necessitates an “inner consistency of [that] reality” which Tolkien⁶⁵ (2008: 59) defines as the obedience to the laws of the fictional world’s own created fictitiousness to the extent that it creates a new realm of reality – the fictional reality. If the “inner consistency of reality” is obeyed consistently, it leads to “[s]econdary belief” (Holdier, 2018: 76; Walters, 2011: 18). Secondary belief is a state of mind by means of which the reader or audience member surpasses mere suspension of disbelief and freely commits to belief in the created secondary world (the fictional world), despite their knowledge that it is fictional (Tolkien, 2008: 52-53). It thus refers to the experience of enchantment through fantasy to the extent that, for the duration of the unfolding of the narrative, the fantasy is experienced as both real and tangible (Goossens *et al.* 2020: 204; Tolkien 2008: 52, 59).

In this vein, Fowkes’ (2010: 2) “ontology of ‘everyday phenomenal reality’” refers to an understanding of reality as it has been shaped by a person’s phenomenal experiences, and consequently, of its perceived boundaries and limitations, and what is considered ‘real’ as a result of these everyday experiences. As such, the notion of an “ontological rupture” (Fowkes, 2010: 2) from phenomenal reality refers to an “acute defamiliarization” (Conkan, 2015: 3) of the experienced reality encapsulated by everyday experiences. It is a break between what is ontologically understood as everyday reality, as experienced by the senses, and that which is considered to exist outside reality, as the “impossible”⁶⁶ (Fowkes, 2010: 2).

Fantasy thus exists beyond the borders of phenomenal reality and “the realm of the explainable” (Walters, 2011: 17) as its “logic and reality” are removed from everyday reality (Khakimova, 2021: 220). What differentiates fantasy from other genres and modes of escapist storytelling⁶⁷ is, therefore, the “type of world constructed” (Stephan, 2016: 5). Each fantasy

⁶⁵ Although Tolkien’s essay “On fairy stories” is written exclusively about the literary fairy-story genre, I include his work in this study as his works such as *Lord of the Rings* and *Beowulf* are today popularly classified as fantasy. His theories of fairy stories form the basis on which this study builds its investigation into fantasy. Furthermore, Tolkien’s work is included in a vast amount of film and genre theory scholarship.

⁶⁶ I recognise that, as with the notion of ‘reality’, what is considered to be ‘impossible’ is subjective and is determined by a person’s experience and cultural context.

⁶⁷ Escapist genres enable an audience to “escape to an invented world that is not their own” (Mazour, 2018: 2). Escapism involves foregrounding the distance between the fictional world and phenomenal reality and is often considered a derogatory term as the question arises as to how the need to distance oneself from reality can serve any purpose other than in children’s literature (Mazour, 2018: 4).

narrative's fictional reality includes its own "history, culture, geography, language and unique word-creation" (Khakimova, 2021: 200, 221). The fantasy genre thus requires neologisms⁶⁸ and new formations for the fictional languages, cultures, creatures, names, and the like. These serve to create an authentic new reality which has the ultimate goal of enchantment (Khakimova, 2021: 220, 221).

In the created fictional reality of the fantasy world, new laws of nature and of cause and effect apply (Khakimova, 2021: 220). In the fictional reality, supernatural acts as a catalyst for the narrative phenomena (Walters, 2011: 18), with 'magic' being a central catalyst (Stephan, 2016: 7). Fantasy's "ontological rupture" from phenomenal reality is thus "inherent to the premise of the fantasy movie" (Fowkes, 2010: 6). This indicates that the fantasy narrative does not merely contain imaginative elements that require the suspension of disbelief,⁶⁹ but that the narrative of a fantasy film as a whole is located in a fictional reality.

It is thus in the fantasy world that the action takes place, and in which the characters make decisions that influence the course of the narrative. This then excludes narratives in which the fantasy world exists merely as a dream in which the character has no control. In such instances – where the fantasy occurs as dreams, under the influence of drugs, as an illusion of the senses, or as a result of madness – the fantasy world either did not occur at all or carries such a rational explanation that it cannot be rendered as fantasy (Todorov, 1973: 45). Tolkien (2008: 59) states that fantasy is not dreaming, as the active role of the imagination and its control over image formulation is taken away in such instances; rather, fantasy exists as both tangible and believable for the duration of the narrative.

The rupture between the phenomenal and fictional world is thus "ontological" as the fantasy phenomena "really exist within the story-world, [t]his existence is as real as the [phenomenal]⁷⁰ reference world from which they break", and, hence, they cannot exist as "hallucinations or delusions" (Fowkes, 2010: 5). As this "ontological break" allows for unrestricted imaginative creativity (Khakimova, 2021: 220), the mind is freed from "the search for grounding and truth,

⁶⁸ Neologisms, in the context of fantasy, involve the creation of new names and titles for phenomena that are unique to, and exist in, the fictional fantasy world (Khakimova, 2021: 221).

⁶⁹ 'Suspension of disbelief' refers to the "willingness to suspend one's critical faculties" – to keep one's awareness of fictitiousness dormant so as to "sacrifice realism and logic for the sake of enjoyment" (Vignesh, 2019: 157).

⁷⁰ Brackets are my own.

by providing the possibility of exploring alternatives in the ‘safe’ environment of fiction” (Stephan, 2016: 8)

Stephan (2016: 7) refers to the rupture or ‘removal’ as the “nova”,⁷¹ the point of difference between the phenomenal and the supernatural fictional reality. This “nova” has as its “dominant tone” a “sense of wonder” (Stephan, 2016: 15). Ascribing the notion of suspension of disbelief to fantasy would mean that the nova is insignificant and that the fictional reality remains rooted in notions of phenomenal reality rather than in complete fictitiousness that admits its own impossibility (Cowan, 2019: 28). Fantasy, therefore, makes no claim to any degree of ‘possibility’ (Khakimova 2021: 220) in phenomenal reality, but rather uses this impossibility for the creation of the fictional world which “assumes that everything is possible in it” (Khakimova, 2021: 221).

The fantasy genre carries the potential to embrace culturally determined impossibilities by distancing itself from what is considered to be phenomenal reality within a specific culture. This expression of impossibilities does not simply require the suspension of disbelief but, rather, an altogether new belief – *enchantment* – the acceptance of the fictional reality presented as a whole and completely new reality governed by a new logic – *magic* (Khakimova, 2021: 220; Tolkien 2008: 52, 59) – which functions as the “nova” (Stephan, 2016: 7).

In his seminal work, *The Fantastic*, Tzevan Todorov (1973: 41) classifies supernatural narratives into three categories, “the fantastic, the uncanny and the marvelous”. As do Stephan (2016: 8) and Fowkes (2010: 41), I argue that this delineation of the fantasy genre is rooted in Todorov’s classification of the “marvelous”. The “marvelous” describes narratives wherein “new laws of nature must be entertained” and the “supernatural accepted” without necessitating any reaction from characters (Todorov, 1973: 41, 42, 47). In other words, the characters’ reactions must be in line with the rules of the created fictional reality in which they are located in order to create an inner consistency of reality within the fantasy genre film.

To summarise this discussion of the tropes of fantasy, I turn to Stephan’s (2016: 12) statement to the effect that what differentiates and defines the fantasy genre is “estrangement, the

⁷¹ The term “nova” or “novum” which Stephan (2016: 6-7) applies to the genre of fantasy, is a term originally used by Darko Suvin (1979), a “widely cited theorist of science fiction” (Stephan, 2016: 6) to define the science fiction genre.

supernatural nova, the evocation of the marvellous⁷² and [a] sense of wonder”. (I summarise the tropes associated with the nature or ontology⁷³ of the fantasy genre, as investigated in this section, in Figure 10 below.) Estrangement allows for a critical distance which is set into motion by the supernatural nature of the nova and maintained as the audience is captivated by a sense of wonder and by how the characters live their lives in a different fictional reality, as per Todorov’s (1973: 41) category of the marvellous. This critical distance allows audiences to generate new perspectives as fantasy worlds reflect recognisable aspects of their own reality but present them in new and imaginative contexts (Weinstock, 2022: 49). The fictional fantasy world thus functions as a safe environment wherein new perspectives and approaches may be tested. In like manner, fictional fantasy also functions as a space where existing perspectives and ideologies may be questioned and renegotiated – such as those ideologies embedded in the myths from which fantasy draws. I discuss the relationship between fantasy and myth in the next section.

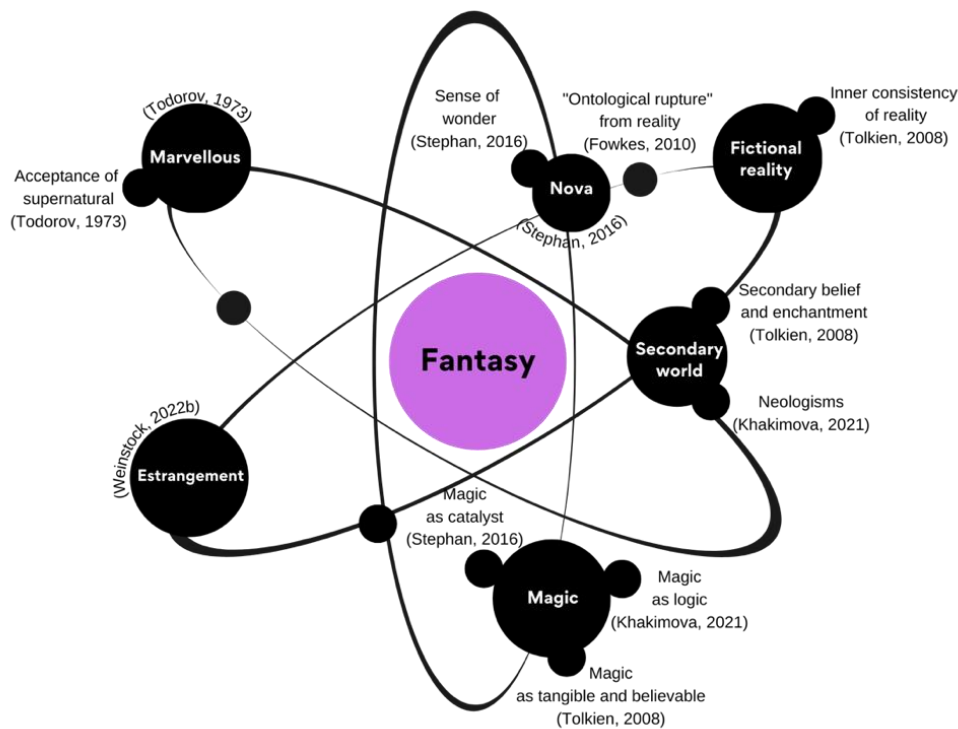


Figure 10: Summary of tropes associated with the ontology of the fantasy genre. (Illustration by the author).

⁷² Stephan’s (2016:12) use of “marvellous” refers to Todorov’s (1973: 41) narrative classifications of the “fantastic, the marvellous and the uncanny”. According to Stephan (2016: 8), the fantasy genre falls within the “marvellous” category through its “acceptance of the supernatural”.

⁷³ Ontology in relation to film refers to how film speaks to philosophical understandings of its representations and how these representations speak to and shape understandings of reality (Trifnova, 2011: 5).

2.4.2.1 Fantasy and myth

This study uses the term ‘myth⁷⁴’ to refer to narratives that function to establish and inform cultural customs, traditions, practices and beliefs (Berger, 2016: 93-95) and seek to provide an explanation for the driving forces behind inexplicable natural and cultural phenomena (Saxby, 2004: 249) via the interpretation of their origins (Mills, 2020: 202). Myths, as human constructs, are concerned with understanding the supernatural, the relationship between the supernatural and the natural, and the influence of this relationship on human society (Valipour 2016: 209). This includes an understanding of the existence of deities, the nature of morality, and life before birth and after death (Saxby, 2004: 249). As such, social institutions such as religion function as myths (Cowan, 2019: xiv) as it provides narrative explanations for both natural and supernatural phenomena).

In his seminal work, *The Power of Myths*, Joseph Campbell (1988: 16) states that myths function as “life models” and must thus be contextually appropriate to the milieu in which they are told. To this end, the contemporary world needs myths relevant to the contemporary timeframe (Campbell & Moyers, 1988: 16; Silva, 2020: 16). The filmic fantasy genre allows for the rethinking of mythical and traditional narrative genres in the filmic form – these tales are passed through to the “modern consciousness” of both the filmmaker and the audience (Eydemiller, 1993, as cited in Nasriddinov, 2020: 354). This leads to the negotiation and renegotiation of the validity of what is presented or represented through the myths in relation to the current configuration of the identity of a cultural group (Gymnich, Puschmann-Nalenz & Sedlmayr, 2018: 187).

A culture’s identity may be expressed through a variety of narrative genres, such as folk tales, folklore and legends. According to Saxby (2004: 249), all these narrative genres stem from myths and, as such, I henceforth refer to these genres, including myths, under the collective term, mythological narratives. As illustrated in Figure 11, below, fantasy narratives draw from mythological narrative genres (Atteberry, 2014: 2; A’zamkulovich & Iskandarovna, 2020: 1044; Fowkes, 2010: 1; Khakimova, 2021: 218; Powers, 2020: 3; Saxby, 2004: 249; Sullivan, 2004: 438), and these mythological narratives themselves contain elements of fantasy. In this relationship, fantasy thus exists as a mode of expression through which these narrative genres

⁷⁴ I discuss myths and cultural myth-making in Chapter 3 and Afrikaans myths in Chapter 5.

are able to convey meaning and as a filmic genre of expression that utilises these mythological narrative genres to construct meaning.

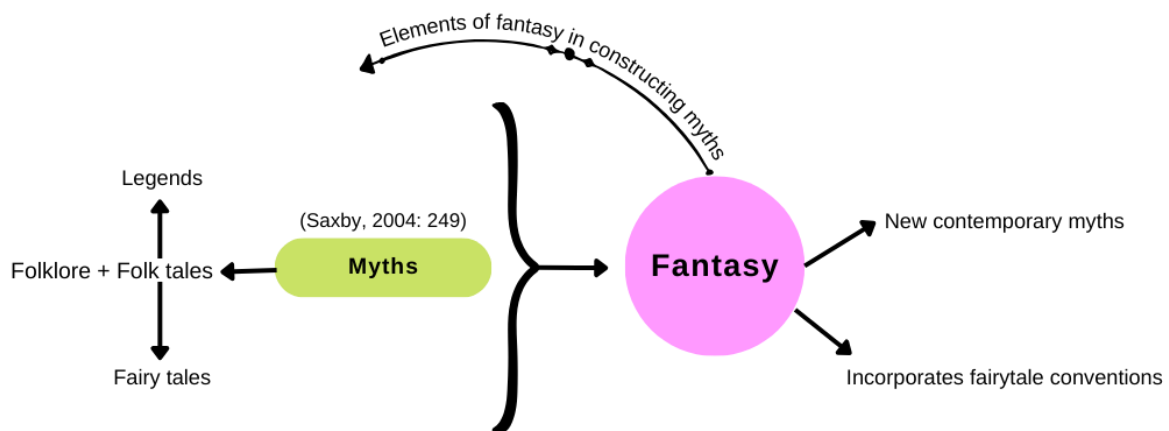


Figure 11: The relationship between fantasy and traditional narrative genres. (Illustration by the author).

To provide further clarity on Figure 11, here, I differentiate between ‘folklore’ and ‘folk tales’. Folklore refers to the collective wisdom of a culture and is often based on religious and mythological views (Choliboyevna, 2021: 188), superstition and magic (Clute & Grant, 1996: 359). It is often expressed in the form of “anecdotes, legends, sayings, proverbs and ‘old wives tales’”. On the other hand, folk tales are well-known and -understood narratives passed down via oral tradition (Clute & Grant, 1996: 359). Folk tales may draw from the wisdom of folklore, reflect a culture’s identity and form part of its heritage (Clute & Grant, 1996: 359). They may include stories of national heroes, fairy tales, legends and morality tales (Clute & Grant, 1996: 359).

The relationship between folk tales and myths has been discussed by Russian folklorist Vladimir Propp and French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. According to Lévi-Strauss (1984: 178), the folk tale and the myth have a “complementary relationship” which represents two different ways of reading the same narrative (Monin, Terekhova & Ledeneva, 2019: 171). Propp (1984: 79) argues that myths have been replaced by folk tales and as such, do not co-exist with them (Monin et al., 2019: 170). For Propp (1984: 79), myth represents reality as it believes itself to hold ‘true’ explanations of the phenomenal and supernatural world, whereas folk tales admit to their own fictitiousness and are transparent in their pretence to being real (Monin et al., 2019: 172; Propp, 1976: 88).

Taking both theorists into consideration, this study argues that fantasy film allows for the co-existence of myths and folk tales (Lévi-Strauss, 1984: 178) as the filmic fantasy text exists as a contemporary myth in and of itself (a matter discussed below) while also drawing from folk tales. However, despite its resemblance to mythology, fantasy admits to its own fictitiousness (Propp, 1976: 88) and frames the mythological 'realities' or truths presented within the impossible realm of the fantasy world as fantastical. As such, within the context of the fantasy narrative, the so-called playing field is levelled by rendering all included myths and other mythological narratives, such as folk tales, fictional within the context of the fantasy narrative.

This fantastical framing leads to a sense of estrangement and enables a critical distance through which the presented myths can be interrogated and renegotiated in order to evaluate their relevance in the contemporary phenomenal world. This relevance may pertain to those ideologies perpetuated through the myth such as, for example, societal power structures (Jansen van Vuuren, 2014: 4). In this manner, fantasy holds the potential to question inherent biases and hegemonic ideologies that have been perpetuated through mythological narratives by framing them within a new, disruptive, fantastical context.⁷⁵

Not only does fantasy critically engage with the mythical in its narrative content, but the filmic fantasy text in itself serves as a contemporary myth. While mythic thought has been in decline since the rise of science and scientific thought in the seventeenth century, Silva (2020: 16) locates a new-found fascination with mythical narratives in the audiences of speculative-fiction cinematic entertainment. The creation of new myths through the imaginative fictional story worlds of speculative fiction hence offers a platform for the creation of contextually appropriate myths. The content of these new myths is often drawn from historical myths and adapted to a contemporary sensibility (Silva, 2020: 21). The contemporary world⁷⁶ is often associated with technologically advanced systems and complexities that are not fully understood by many of its users (Silva, 2020: 31). The cinematic speculative fiction genre marries the mythical with these complexities in order to provide explanations for the intricate contemporary world (Silva, 2020: 31).

⁷⁵ In Chapter 6, I frame the ideologies perpetuated through white Afrikaner mythological narratives (which I identify in Chapters 4 and 5) within an original fantasy screenplay concept in order to critically engage with them.

⁷⁶ I acknowledge that the association of contemporariness with technology is born of a Western perspective and that cultures and societies may express modernity in various other forms.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter set out to contextualise the fantasy genre in order to present an understanding of how it constructs an imaginative fictional space that is ruptured from phenomenal reality, and where identity can be questioned. To achieve this, I investigated the broader concept of genre, its problematics, and how trope theory navigates the fluid boundaries of genre. I contextualised the speculative-fiction meta-genre and acknowledged that its genres, such as horror, science fiction and magical realism share tropes with fantasy. Finally, I framed fantasy as a speculative-fiction genre as it is concerned with the imagining of fictional realities beyond phenomenal reality and how these fictional realities enable it to function as a platform which allows for critical engagement with and the questioning of the ideologies embedded in myths, folk tales and fairy tales (mythological narratives), in order to measure their contemporary relevance.

In this chapter I have formulated my understanding of fantasy as a bundle of tropes. In the following chapter, I discuss how the tropes of cinematic speculative fiction, specifically pertaining to the fantasy genre, find expression in film.

CHAPTER 3: FILMIC FANTASY TROPES

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I contextualised my understanding of the concept of genre and how the use of tropes aids in navigating fluid genre boundaries. I defined the fantasy genre as a sub-genre of speculative fiction and investigated those tropes that are concerned with the nature and ontology of the fantasy genre as a whole. In this chapter, I investigate how these ontological tropes of fantasy may practically manifest within fantasy films. In other words, in Chapter 3, I focus my exploration on salient filmic fantasy tropes as they find expression and are made manifest in film. This is achieved by means of the analysis of scholarship on fantasy. In Chapter 6, I utilise the identified salient filmic fantasy tropes to inform my framework for a fantasy screenplay that interrogates white Afrikaner identity.

As there exists a multitude of fantasy tropes identified in fantasy scholarship, I draw on those tropes⁷⁷ most salient in the literature investigated in this study. As established in Chapter 1 (1.5.1 *Phase 1: Literature Review*), I structure my investigation into the filmic fantasy tropes based on the elements of genre such as plot structure, themes, setting, characters and iconography. For each of these elements, I identify the salient filmic fantasy tropes.⁷⁸ As regards plot structure and character, the tropes identified include tropic frameworks such as *The Writer's Journey* (Vogler, 2007), which relies on the plot structure of *The Hero's Journey* (Campbell, 2004), and Indick's (2012) fantasy character archetypes. For themes, setting and iconography, I do not identify set frameworks but rather investigate a variety of tropes.

Where possible, I illustrate how the tropes manifest in fantasy films by providing examples from popular Hollywood fantasy films. My choice of filmic examples is motivated by their framing in scholarship as exemplary models of the fantasy genre. Such films include *The Lord*

⁷⁷ I acknowledge that these tropes are drawn from Western approaches to fantasy but argue for its relevance in light of the existing transnational influence of Hollywood on Afrikaans cinema, as established in Chapter 2 – 2.2.2.1 *Transnationalism and a Trojan horse: ideologies embedded in Hollywood genre conventions*.

⁷⁸ I acknowledge that the tropes I identify in this chapter are in no way inclusive of all filmic fantasy tropes. Rather, these tropes emerged as prominent from my point of view and within the scholarship with which I was engaged.

of the *Rings*⁷⁹ film trilogy, *The Chronicles of Narnia*⁸⁰, as well the *Harry Potter* films⁸¹ and stand-alone feature films such as *Pan's Labyrinth* (Del Toro, 2006).

Figure 12 below provides an indication of the layout of the structure of this chapter. Thereafter, I begin my investigation of filmic fantasy tropes, starting with plot structure.

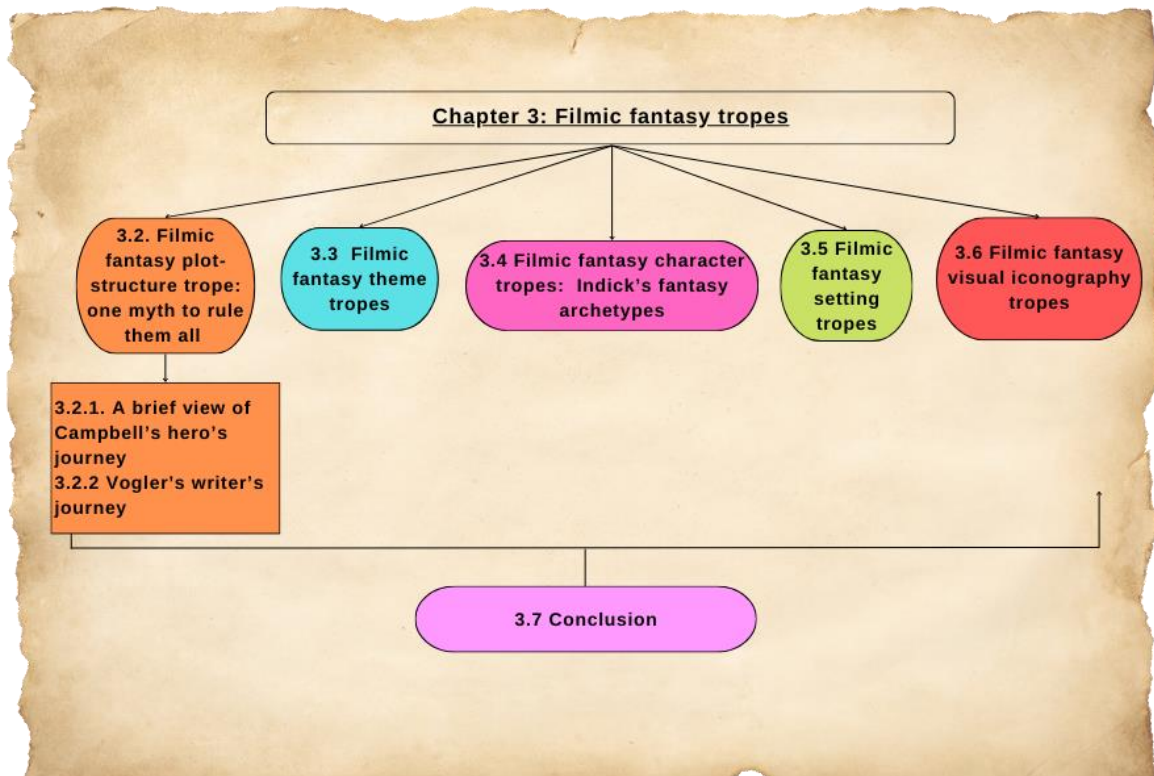


Figure 12: Layout of Chapter 3. (Illustration by the author).

⁷⁹ The *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy includes *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (Jackson, 2001); and *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (Jackson, 2002), *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (Jackson, 2003).

⁸⁰ The *Chronicles of Narnia* film series include *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Adamson, 2005); *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian* (Adamson, 2008) and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (Apted, 2010).

⁸¹ The *Harry Potter* film series include *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Columbus, 2001); *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (Columbus, 2002); *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Cuarón, 2004); *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (Newell, 2005); *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (Yates, 2007); *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (Yates, 2009); *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows (part 1)* (Yates, 2010) and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows (part 2)* (Yates, 2011).

3.2 Filmic fantasy plot structure trope: one myth to rule them all

In this section I investigate the trope of the hero's journey, as coined by American mythologist Joseph Campbell (2004 [1949]) in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949 [2004]), as a salient trope pertaining to plot-structure frameworks used in fantasy films. I identify the hero's journey⁸² as a trope based on scholars such as Indick (2012: 46) and Weinstock (2022: 24) who maintain that the hero's journey stands as a tropic structural compass for fantasy narratives. Although it is now a trite concept in contemporary scholarship, the hero's journey is a structural framework described as a 'monomyth', a common pattern in global mythology and literature that contains allegedly inherent and universal thoughts and ideas (Vogler, 2017: 10; Weinstock, 2022a: 26-27). In this section, I focus on Christopher Vogler's (2007) interpretation of the hero's journey, titled *The Writer's Journey*. (I henceforth refer to the 'writer's journey' as the plot structure described in *Vogler's The Writer's Journey* book.) South African screenwriter and academic Janet van Eeden (2023: 6), in her book, *Cut to the Chase: Scriptwriting for Beginners*, identifies the writer's journey structure as an adaptation of the structure of the hero's journey specifically for screenwriting. The writer's journey's screenwriting focus is aligned with the aim of my research – to create a framework for the creation of a fantasy screenplay.

In what follows, I first explicate my use of the term 'plot structure'. I then briefly contextualise Campbell's original hero's journey before turning to Vogler's writer's journey plot structure in Section 3.2.2. *Vogler's The Writer's Journey*.

My use of the term 'plot structure' rests on the interlinked relationship between plot and structure. Structure, according to American screenwriting theorist Robert McKee (1997: 33), is a narrative's sequence of events that is strategically constructed to evoke a certain emotional response by conveying the narrative from a specific perspective. In contradistinction, a genre film's plot consists of the plotting of a series of story points, or plot points, into a cause-and-effect sequence which, when viewed as an integrated whole, both forms the narrative and maps out its boundaries (Grindon, 2012: 51). Field (2005: 143) defines an individual plot point as any single event that drives the narrative forward in a new direction.

⁸² I refer to the plot structure trope as 'the hero's journey', to differentiate from the '*The Hero's Journey*', Joseph Campbell's book (1990) by the same name. Similarly, I refer to the writer's journey as plot structure trope while *The Writer's Journey* refers to Christopher Vogler's (2007) book.

Plot thus comprises the events selected by the writer and how they are designed to follow on from one another (McKee, 1997: 43).

However, what determines how plot points follow on one another is structure and, therefore, the plot also functions as a structure (Grindon, 2012: 51). Plot and structure are thus inherently linked (Van Eeden, 2023: 30), and the one cannot function without the other in the process of creating a narrative. Plot relies on structure to guide the sequential plotting of its plot points, while structure relies on plot to construct a narrative from its sequential framework. In fact, scholars such as Fox (2020: 133) and Van Eeden (2023: 12) utilise the writer's journey framework as a structure for plot. I investigate the writer's journey as a plot-structure framework as the placement of specific plot-points is determined by the framework's structure. First, though, I provide a brief theoretical background to the hero's journey from which Vogler (2007) draws the writer's journey screenplay plot structure.

3.2.1 A brief overview of Campbell's hero's journey

Campbell (2004 [1949]: 28) summarises the hero's journey as follows:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.

The hero, in this context, refers to the protagonist who must undertake a journey by answering the call to adventure in order to learn valuable lessons in order to become a higher version of themselves (Campbell, 2004 [1949]: xxiv). Kobacker (2016: 20) refers to the hero in this context as warrior and defender, as per the Greek definition of *hērōs*. The hero's journey functions as a three-act structure, containing three stages: "separation/departure—initiation—return" (Campbell, 2004 [1949]: 28). Each of these stages is further broken down into narrative beats.⁸³ It is the presence of these narrative beats, structured according to the above-mentioned three stages, that together constitute the framework of what Campbell refers to as the monomyth.

⁸³ I use the term 'beat' to refer to specific, singular plot points that carry structural significance within a screenplay.

The hero's journey's claim to function as a monomyth is based on Swiss analytical psychologist Carl Jung's principle of the "collective unconscious" (Weinstock, 2022: 26-27). Jung's theory of the collective unconscious assumes the existence of shared, unconscious universal experiences (Jung, 1969: par. 3). The assumption of universality is in direct contrast to the constructivist principle of subjective⁸⁴ experience and is questionable in the light of postmodern and decolonial thinking. Moreover, the claim to universality is problematic as it would be an impossible feat to take into account all cultures' narratives as these concern the expression of culture-specific worldviews or nuanced narratives, such as cultural narratives, which do not follow the three-act structure⁸⁵, as the hero's journey does. The nature of the three-act structure, the most common narrative structure, originated from the work of Greek philosopher Aristotle (1907: 31). It generally requires the narrative world and its conflict to be set up in the first act, confronted in the second act and then resolved in the third act (Yoshinaga, 2019: 196). Furthermore, the claim to a monomyth is also problematised by the fact that cultural narratives are constantly in the process of change due to changing societal contexts.

Weinstock (2022: 27) suggests that the claimed ubiquity of the hero's journey is a product of repeated use rather than a true, universal reflection of human psychology in all its diversity. It can consequently be argued that the monomyth itself exists as a naturalised⁸⁶ myth based on its common incorporation into dominant cultural narratives, which in turn functions as a means of reifying retelling. Furthermore, the supposed universality rather serves to reify and to uphold a white, western masculine trajectory (Weinstock, 2022: 27) which arguably hinders gender or cultural diversity (Vogler, 2007: xix-xxi). Vogler (2007: xxi) holds that the hero's journey may contain some "masculine bias" as the framework has been constructed by a male theoretician, Campbell.

This critique is mirrored in Van Eeden's (2017: 30, 31) doctoral thesis, "Beyond the biopic: An exploration into the nature of biography through the medium of film", in which she states that the hero's journey is inclined towards and favours a masculine hero. Van Eeden (2017: 14) makes this argument based on the nature of the plot stages of the hero's journey, which she describes as a "masculine rite-of-passage narrative". The masculinity of the plot stages is

⁸⁴ Although this study's philosophical perspective does not align with the concept of a collective unconscious, it does allow for a degree of a collective consciousness (the phenomenal world) but holds that this is experienced subjectively by individuals.

⁸⁵ Yoshinaga (2019: 196) considers the three-act structure to be a western narrative structure.

⁸⁶ Barthes' principle of 'naturalisation' is discussed in Chapter 4 , 4.2.5 *Cultural myth-making*.

highlighted when it is compared to the journey a woman would need to undertake to achieve heroic status without having to conform to traditional female gender roles such as mother or wife (Van Eeden, 2017: 31). In order to navigate this male bias inherent to the hero's journey, authors such as Maureen Murdock (2013) have formulated a feminist approach to the plot-structure, referred to as the heroine's journey, which has been variously adapted (see Frankel, 2010; Pinkola Estés, 1995; McCarthy, 2016; Schmidt, 2001). The heroine's journey tailors the narrative journey to the fulfilment of a female hero.

Despite this critique, and the availability of an alternative in the heroine's journey, I focus on the hero's journey framework as a foundational plot structure within the context of fantasy as I have identified it as a salient plot-structure trope in fantasy films. Moreover, the hero's journey is still popular and remains prevalent in the contemporary Hollywood fantasy genre despite scholarly critique against it, as it supposedly satisfies the genre expectations of its audiences (Weinstock, 2022: 27). This satisfaction results because the structure of the hero's journey is able to captivate its viewer by evoking a sense of wonder and guiding the plot points of a narrative towards a satisfying (if not expected) conclusion (Weinstock, 2022: 27). Key fantasy film text franchises such as *The Lord of the Rings*, *Narnia*, *Star Wars*, and *Harry Potter* have been analysed using this structure (see Palumbo, 2014; Porter, 2005; Radley, 2003; Vogler, 2017). Senior (2012: 190) refers to fantasy texts that follow this structure as 'quest fantasies' as the hero ventures through a series of landscapes and obstacles to finally face a powerful antagonistic force.

In order to create a framework for a fantasy screenplay along the lines of the tropical plot structure discussed here, I now proceed to investigate the writer's journey plot structure.

3.2.2 Vogler's writer's journey

Drawing from Campbell's hero's journey, screenwriting theorist Vogler (2007: xiii) wrote *The Writer's Journey* adaptation by relating Campbell's ideas to "contemporary storytelling". I understand Vogler's (2007: xiii) use of "contemporary storytelling" to include mediated narratives such as films as the writer's journey has been assimilated into screenwriting practice. Whereas Campbell's the hero's journey plot structure exists as an observation of human existence encapsulated in a journey structure reflected in myths (Campbell, 2004: xlvi;

Vogler, 2007: xxiv), *The Writer's Journey* is the “retelling” of the hero's' journey designed as a practical guide for the writing of screenplays (Vogler, 2007: xiv, xv, 7).

In *The Writer's Journey*, Vogler condenses the 17 stages of the hero's journey into 12 stages and views Campbell's (2004: 28) “separation/departure, initiation and return” as acts (Vogler, 2007: 9). Below, I summarise the writer's journey and indicate where it adds to or differs from the hero's journey.

Act 1: Separation

1. Ordinary World: The everyday, ordinary, unremarkable world of the hero as it exists before adventure calls. This world contrasts with the “Special World” to which the hero is called (Vogler, 2007: 10).
2. Call to Adventure: The ordinary world is disrupted by a problem to be solved or an adventure to be undertaken (Vogler, 2007: 10). The hero cannot return their ordinary world without rising to and overcoming the challenge.
3. Refusal of the Call: The hero is momentarily held back by fear from accepting the call to adventure (Vogler, 2007: 11).
4. Meeting with the Mentor: The mentor assists the hero to overcome their fear and to accept the call to adventure and guides the hero in the unknown (Vogler, 2007: 11,12). Campbell (2004: 63) refers to the mentor as the “Supernatural Aid”, yet both the mentor and the Supernatural Aid fulfil a similar function by calling the hero to the journey (Vogler, 2017: 3).
5. Crossing the First Threshold: The hero accepts the call to adventure and crosses the threshold to the “Special World” (Vogler, 2007: 12). This crossing symbolises the acceptance of the call to adventure and indicates the beginning of the journey into the unknown (Vogler, 2007: 12). Vogler (2017: 3) positions this unknown world as Campbell's (2004: 83) “belly of the whale” in which the hero undergoes a metaphorical rebirth and transformation.

Act 2 : Descent and Initiation

6. Test, Allies, Enemies: In the unknown, the hero faces challenges and trials that push the hero to learn the ways of the “Special World” (Vogler, 2007:13). This stage is known as the “Road of Trials” stage in the hero's journey (Vogler, 2007: 6).

7. Approach to the Inmost Cave: The hero ventures to the threshold of the most dangerous place where that which is the purpose of the quest is to be found. Before entering, the hero pauses momentarily to devise a plan known as the “approach” (Vogler, 2007: 14). Upon entering this place of danger, the hero crosses a second significant threshold into the heart of danger and the unknown (Vogler, 2007: 14). The approach to the inmost cave equates to the “meeting with the goddess” and “woman as the temptress” stages in the hero’s journey (Vogler, 2017: 3)
8. Ordeal: A life-threatening low point where the hero is pushed to the brink during a confrontation with their greatest fear (Vogler, 2007: 14–15). The confrontation with death represents a metaphorical rebirth and transformation (Vogler, 2007: 15). Vogler’s ordeal stage spans Campbell’s “Atonement with the Father” and “Apotheosis” stages (Vogler, 2017: 3).
9. Reward: The hero acquires the goal or object of the quest and celebrates as they are now worthy to be called a ‘hero’ (Vogler, 2007:16). This stage is known as the “Ultimate Boon” in the hero’s journey (Vogler, 2007: 6). After acquiring the reward, the hero may believe that they have completed the journey, which Campbell describes as the “refusal of the return”, but they are forced to embark on the return journey (Vogler, 2017: 3).

Act 3: Return

10. The Road Back: The hero is faced with the consequences of the forces they disrupted during the Ordeal and if the hero has not reconciled with these forces, they may be pursued by them (Vogler, 2007: 17). The road back marks the narrative’s shift to the third act as the hero crosses another threshold (Vogler, 2007: 189). In the hero’s journey, the beginning of third act is marked by several other stages including, “Refusal of the Return, The Magic Flight, Rescue from Within, Crossing the Threshold, and Return” (Vogler, 2007: 6).
11. Resurrection: The hero faces a second ordeal, a life-threatening and climactic situation in which they are tested to prove that they have mastered the lesson of the Ordeal before finally defeating the forces of death (Vogler, 2007: 17). The transformed hero is ready to return to their ordinary world with the new knowledge acquired from their experiences (Vogler, 2007: 17). This stage is known as the “Master of the Two Worlds” in the hero’s journey (Vogler, 2007: 6). Here, as with the outcome of the resurrection stage, the hero has conquered the supernatural world and is ready to return to the ordinary world with their new knowledge.

12. Return with the Elixir: The hero returns to their ordinary world with an elixir, object or with knowledge obtained in the “Special World” that may aid the ordinary world (Vogler, 2007: 18). This stage is known as the “Freedom to Live” stage in the hero’s journey (Vogler, 2007: 6) as, by gaining the elixir, or what Campbell refers to as the “boon”, the hero has the tools to live freely in the ordinary world (Vogler, 2017:4).

Figure 13 provides an illustration of the writer’s journey.

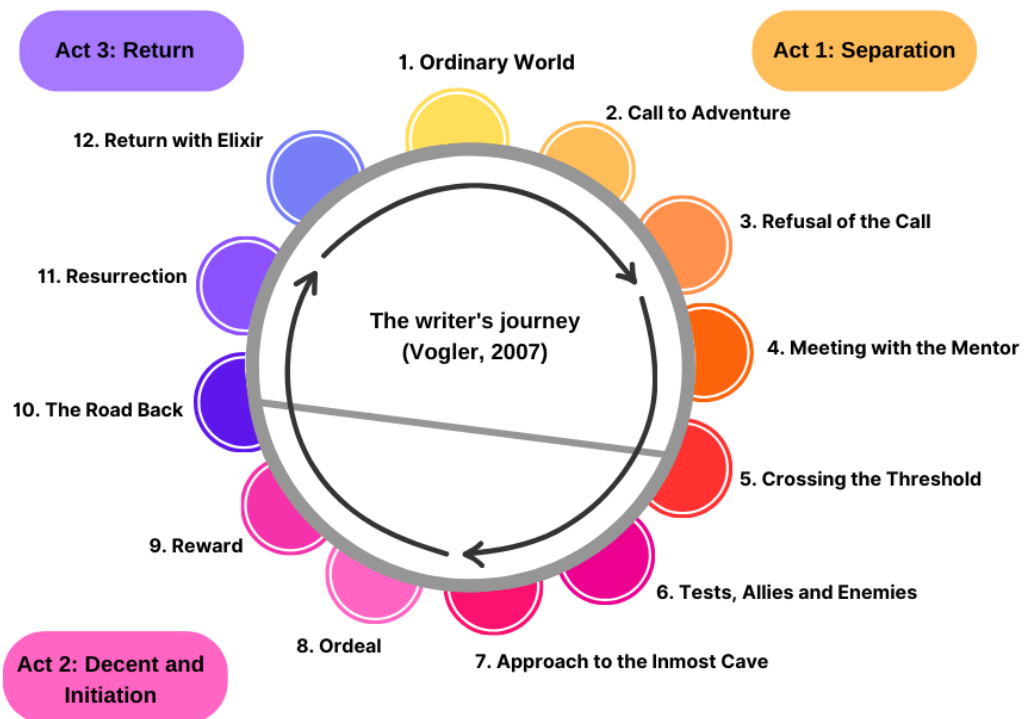


Figure 13: The writer’s journey (Vogler, 2007). (Illustration by the author.)

Due to the various parallels between Vogler’s writer’s journey and Campbell’s hero’s journey, I hold that the critique levelled against the former⁸⁷ can also be applied to the latter. As such,

⁸⁷ See 3.2.1 A brief overview of Campbell’s hero’s journey.

I elaborate on criticism against three-act structure frameworks such as the writer's journey here.

In the preface to *The Writer's Journey*, Vogler (2007: xvi-xxiii) himself makes mention of such criticisms. These include problematising the writer's journey as being formulaic and as inhibiting the creation of novel narratives (Vogler, 2007: xvii) and critiquing the standardised language used in the writer's journey, as this pertains to the naming of stages and methods, as inhibiting expressions of unique culture-specific elements and nuances (Vogler, 2007: xviii, xix). In other words, of standardising the Western ideas and methods embedded in the writer's journey, which inhibits the expression of culture-specific narrative elements and aligns them with a Western method.

It is concerning this critique of standardising Western approaches to narrative that Yoshinaga (2019: 195) critiques the three-act structure⁸⁸ as inherently colonial, especially pertaining to film texts that remoulds diverse cultural narratives to conform to the three-act structure. Instead of drawing on cultural nuances throughout the film structure, all cultural elements are set up in the first act to "culture-splain" the specific cultural setting to Western audiences. The three act structure restricts and inhibits narratives from cultures whose mythological narratives may follow a different structural trajectory than a sequential "crisis-climax-resolution arc" (Carbonell, 2021: 33). As such the three act structure 'colonises' cultural narratives by forcing it into a Western structural system wherein it may lose its native narrative form and the cultural nuances of its narrative identity.

Other criticisms include that the writer's journey is not inclusive of those cultures that do not embrace the concept of a hero, that it bolsters ideas of the male as a warrior in terms of how the hero is described and the stages the hero undergoes, and that male bias is present within the construction of the concepts of both the hero and the journey the hero undergoes (Vogler, 2007: xx-xxi).

However, despite these criticisms, I utilise *the writer's journey* plot-structure as the aim of this chapter is to identify salient filmic fantasy tropes – which I argue the writer's journey

⁸⁸ Yoshinaga (2019: 195) does not specifically critique the writer's journey, but as it utilises the three-act structure in its framework and serves as a popular framework implemented in Hollywood films (Vogler, 2007: xvi), I apply this critique to the writer's journey. Furthermore, I discuss this critique here, and not in 3.2.1 *A brief overview of Campbell's hero's journey*, as this study identifies the writer's journey as the tropological plot structure of filmic fantasy.

represents. It forms part of my ‘researcher’s journey’ in Chapter 6⁸⁹ to subvert this plot-structure, especially as it pertains to those areas of criticism of *the* writer’s journey that align with the markers of white Afrikaner identity that I wish to question by means of the creation of a new plot structure aimed at questioning white Afrikaner identity.

In the next section, I proceed with my investigation of filmic fantasy tropes in order to investigate the salient theme tropes addressed by means of fantasy films.

3.3 Filmic fantasy theme tropes

Theme refers to a narrative’s intended message, the moral perspective, lesson and underlying insight of the story (Schmidt, 2012: 7). What theme is delivered through a narrative is dependent on the screenwriter’s creativity and the socio-cultural, political and economic contexts in which they find themselves or which they wish to address. As such, regardless of the narrative’s fantastical packaging, fantasy themes correlate with the socio-cultural context of the phenomenal world (Moen 2013: xvi) and thus concern matters that are both recognisable and relatable to audiences (Walker, 2012: [sp]) so as to create touchpoints between the phenomenal world and the imagined world.

Before I discuss some of fantasy’s salient themes, it would be conducive to acknowledge that the approaches to and interpretations of the term ‘theme’ are multivalent. My understanding of theme rests on McKee’s (1997: 115) argument that a theme is not encapsulated in a single word but is an expression of how life undergoes change from one state of being at the beginning of the story to another at its conclusion, and of what causes this change to occur. McKee (1997: 15) refers to this thematic expression as the “controlling idea”. While each film’s controlling idea is unique and specific to the narrative, my discussion of theme centres on fantasy cinema’s themes in general. To this end, I briefly summarise those thematic binaries that may qualify as the states of being between which a narrative shifts in a controlling idea. ‘How’ this shift happens is determined by the plot and its unique characters and events.

Referring to thematic binaries, Fowkes’ (2010: 6) includes instances such as “work vs. play and leisure, rationality vs. imagination, adults vs. children, and nostalgia vs. progress”. Below,

⁸⁹ See 6.3 Questioning white Afrikaner identity through plot structure FTAMs.

I briefly summarise the fantasy themes I have found to be salient in scholarship on fantasy. I include those themes evident in some of the fantasy films that have been classified as models of the fantasy genre.

The first thematic binaries I identified pertain to good versus evil (Khakimova, 2021: 221; Pheasant-Kelly, 2013: 91; Ramaswamy, 2014: 44, 227) and life and death (Walters, 2011: 45, 78; Ramaswamy, 2014: 189). In the context of fantasy, good and evil often find expression in the form of a battle between clearly demarcated, unambiguous and binary opposite forces of the pure and justice-seeking good and the ultimate evil (Sun, 2022: 235). I conceive of these battles as physical war-like battles between forces of good and evil that are accompanied by death and loss (Pheasant-Kelly, 2013: 95), and are, therefore, also tied to the theme of life and death. Examples of such physical battles may be observed in prominent fantasy films: the Battle of Helm's Deep in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (Jackson, 2003), the Battle of Beruna in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Adamson, 2005), the Battle of Isla de Muerta in *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* (Verbinski, 2003), the Battle of Hogwarts in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (Yates, 2010), and the battle between the Falangists and the republican rebels, in addition to the physical altercation between the evil Captain Vidal and the compassionate Mercedes, in *Pan's Labyrinth* (Del Toro *et al.*, 2006).

As good and evil are polar opposites in fantasy, they cannot coexist without the one overcoming the other (Robinson, 2003: 32). In fantasy, evil forces may be either equivalent or greater in power than those of good (Fowkes, 2012: 12). Victory by the evil forces would mean the engulfing of the fantastical world in complete evil, and the death of all that is good. As such, the forces of good absolutely need to win in order to survive and will, therefore, sacrifice whatever it is necessary to sacrifice to secure victory. It is only through sacrifice that good is able to overcome evil and its ultimate power, as may be seen with the characters Aslan (*The Chronicles of Narnia*) and Gandalf (*The Lord of the Rings*), who act as benevolent mentor figures and who sacrifice their lives for the greater cause of good (Robinson, 2003: 32). Yet, as is the case with both Aslan and Gandalf, fantasy may transcend death as a final end and include "heavenly ascents", "resurrection" and the rebirth of characters (Ramaswamy, 2014: 189). In this manner, the theme extends beyond life and death on Earth to include immortality (Pheasant-Kelly, 2013: 112) and the before- and after-life.

In fantasy, the forces of good and evil are often portrayed by means of what Robinson (2003: 30) views as stereotypical representations of good and evil. Besides good manifesting as light

and life, Robinson (2003: 31) also discusses the manifestation of innocence through children or a childlike-quality, as seen in the small stature of the hobbits in *The Lord of the Rings*, the children of *Narnia*, Harry Potter and his friends, and the young girl Ofelia in *Pan's Labyrinth*. Evil, on the other hand, is embodied in darkness and death.

Evil may further be exhibited through temptation (Robinson, 2003: 32) as is observed with the Turkish delight in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the cursed Aztec gold in *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, and the all-powerful ring in *The Lord of the Rings*. The allure of ultimate power may also be conceived as temptation. This power is often corrupting and is misused by morally weak characters (Fowkes, 2010:12), a common theme in fantasy. It is due to the misuse of power that characters are often positioned as evil by those who are oppressed by this power. In addition to the ring of power in the *Lord of the Rings*, throughout the films of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* film franchise (Marshall, 2011; Ronning & Sandberg, 2017; Verbinski, 2003, 2006, 2007), various objects represent ultimate power and control over the sea. These objects include the heart of Davy Jones who is the captain of the Flying Dutchman ship, the fountain of youth and Poseidon's trident; battles between good and evil for control of such objects then occur.

The misuse of power, especially in the form of magic, entails consequences, as magic comes at a price (Burton, 2014: 39). Moreover, the mere use of magic for the sake of transformation, fulfilling one's wishes, or towards any other objective are also taxed in fantasy narratives. This may be observed in fairy-tale traditions, such as the tale of Rumpelstiltskin, who demands the queen's baby as the price for helping her. Similarly, in fantasy films such as *The Lord of the Rings*, Frodo is burdened with the weight of evil and temptation as he carries the magical ring to Mordor, while in *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell no Tales*, a human sacrifice is demanded in order to gain the power of the fountain of youth. In *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald*, it is said that Nagini's repeated transformations into a snake will eventually become permanent, a cost she must pay for her supernatural ability. As established in Chapter 2, the use of magic within the fantasy world is 'real' and tangible (Tolkien, 2008: 59) and, as such, so are its effects on and consequences for the characters. By means of the use of magic, or the suffering its consequences, the fantasy world's rupture from phenomenal reality is reified as magic defies the ontological nature of phenomenal reality. Magic as a filmic fantasy trope thus defamiliarises (Conkan, 2015: 3) the fantasy world in relation to the experience of everyday phenomenal reality.

The second trope of fantasy themes I investigate is the positioning of home as a haven (Fowkes, 2010: 11; Schmidt, 2013: 11; Ramaswamy, 2014: 148, 184) set against the binary of the dangerous outside world. The myth of home as the “best place in the world” is a popular theme in fantasy (Fowkes, 2010: 11). Ramaswamy (2014: 184) discusses the concept of a “sanctuary” in relation to the archetypal motifs of fantasy, though I include it in this discussion of theme as I hold that it qualifies as one half of a thematic binary when it is contrasted with its opposites, such as danger, adventure, far-away lands, or what Ramaswamy (2014: 184) calls “the road and the world outside”. In this light, I include themes pertaining to “longing and belonging” (Mendlesohn, 2012: 126) within this thematic category, as home is often the place in which the character finds extreme comfort or from which they need to break away to find a space of true belonging, in other words, a new home.

Home is often portrayed as an Eden-like place (Ramaswamy, 2014: 185) surrounded by natural landscapes, as seen on the planet of Pandora in *Avatar* (Cameron, 2009). The concept of home as a haven or sanctuary is most aptly illustrated by *The Lord of the Ring’s* Shire, where the hobbits live in peace and harmony. The focus in the Shire is on serenity, safety, social connections between neighbours and the reluctance of the hobbits to leave it. The framing of home as haven, especially in the context of *The Lord of the Rings*, is intrinsically tied to the positioning of nature as a space of harmony and belonging. The Shire is a lush green space where the hobbits live tranquil lives; however, it becomes threatened by Sauron’s industrialisation, which destroys nature. Although this dichotomy between nature and industry has strong thematic ties, I discuss it in the Section 3.5, *Filmic fantasy settings*, as nature and industry concern specific fantasy locations.

3.4 Filmic fantasy character tropes: Indick’s fantasy archetypes

I now turn to salient fantasy character archetypes⁹⁰. Carl Jung popularised the concept of personality archetypes as unconscious “representational collectives” of behavioural patterns in the human psyche (Jung, 1969: par. 55) based on his principle of the collective unconscious (Jung, 1969: par. 3). In other words, archetypes are the patterns that emerge from those shared behaviours and experiences referred to as the collective unconscious. I

⁹⁰ For the sake of constructing my framework, I use Indick’s (2012) fantasy character archetypes to identify specific character examples from Afrikaans mythological narrative in Chapter 5.

problematised⁹¹ the idea of the collective unconscious in my critique of Campbell's hero's journey, Jung's archetypes imply complex analytical psychological constructs in the subconscious. Archetypes are drawn from common themes recognised across supposed cross-cultural folklore and mythology. However, as I find the notion of universality problematic, I assume a non-Jungian approach to archetypal theory.

Here, I turn to literary scholars⁹² such as Northrop Frye (1957: 147, 166), as well as Burrows, Lapidés and Shawcross' (1973: 2) definition of archetypes as patterns or clusters that are both familiar and recognisable across a number of stories, but which are not necessarily rooted in the concept of the collective unconscious. Based on my critique of universality⁹³, I view archetypes not as universally experienced, but rather as tropical devices that provide insight into salient genre characters. My understanding is thus in line with that of Van Eeden (2023: 10), who defines character archetypes in the context of screenwriting as "common sets of stock characters".

Many scholars (Burrows et al., 1973; Campbell, 2004; Frye, 1951; Jung, 1969; Schmidt, 2012) have created lists of archetypal characters. It would be impossible to consider every possible character archetype, as there are a vast number of them. Therefore, I turn to American scholar of film psychology William Indick's (2012) book, *Ancient Symbolism in Fantasy Literature: A Psychological Study*.⁹⁴ Indick (2012: 2) draws from⁹⁵ mythologists, such as Campbell, and fantasy literature, including the works of Tolkien and CS Lewis, to construct a list of the most significant fantasy character archetypes. Although archetypes are rooted in psychoanalytic theory, I do not investigate archetypes through a psychoanalytical lens in this study, but rather as filmic character types that are associated with certain attributes.

⁹¹ See Section 3.2. *Filmic fantasy plot structure trope: one myth to rule them all.*

⁹² I view the work of Frye (1957) as a seminal source due to the fundamental contribution of his book, *Anatomy of Criticism*, to literary criticism, especially as it pertains to archetypes and genre. I further treat Burrows, Lapidés and Shawcross' *Myths and Motifs in Literature* (1973) as a seminal source due to its contribution to archetypal theory.

⁹³ See Section 3.2. *Filmic fantasy plot structure trope: one myth to rule them all.*

⁹⁴ I acknowledge that Indick (2012) takes a Western approach to fantasy and that his fantasy archetypes are consequently drawn from Western psychology and fairytales. As the Afrikaans film industry is greatly influenced by Western filmmaking, I incorporate Indick's theory in my research but aim to interrogate these Western approaches using my framework in Chapter 6.

⁹⁵ Even though I do not investigate archetypes through a psychoanalytical lens in this study, I acknowledge that Indick's (2011) list of character archetypes also rely on various analytical psychology scholars such as Jung and psychoanalytic scholars such as Sigmund Freud, Bruno Bettelheim, and others.

Many of Indick's archetypes are problematic in terms of their gendered associations and presentation of Western patriarchal views. It is these problematic associations and ideologies I wish to disrupt in Chapter 6⁹⁶ through the creation of my framework. However, for the aim of this chapter, which is to identify salient filmic fantasy tropes as they find expression in fantasy films, I investigate the character archetypes 'as is'. Indick's (2012) fantasy character archetypes include the hero, the princess, the witch and the goddess, the wizard and the dark lord, the man⁹⁷, the beast and the man-beast.

Indick's (2012: 40) hero archetype is a male character who represents the ideal male figure and his values, as determined by the culture which the hero represents. The hero undertakes a journey which stands as a metaphor for his initiation from boyhood into manhood; his masculinity is both proven and accepted by those around him who are deemed men. This male-centric view of the hero has historical roots in the patriarchal ideology embedded in the myths and fairy tales from which Indick's analysis stems. However, as this study is concerned with the filmic expression of fantasy and, here, how Indick's archetypes may manifest in fantasy films, I also consider Ramaswamy's understanding of the hero archetype as inclusive of male and female (heroine) characters. Female heroes are found in a variety of fantasy films, such as *Pan's Labyrinth* (Del Toro, 2006), *The Shape of Water* (Del Toro, 2017), *Alice in Wonderland* (Burton, 2010), and *Three Thousand Years of Longing* (Miller, 2022), amongst many others. Excluding women characters from the hero archetype is thus highly problematic, not only in terms of gender politics, but also in terms of not crediting the filmic fantasy texts created thus far. In other words, omitting female characters from the definition of 'hero', deprives powerful characters such as Ofelia in *Pan's Labyrinth* and Elisa Esposito in *The Shape of Water*, amongst others, of their agency as heroes of these fantasy films. As such, in line with Van Eeden's (2023: 11) use of the term 'hero', I use it to include both male and female characters.⁹⁸

Ramaswamy (2014: 46) argues that the fantasy genre is hero-centric. Within the fantasy-narrative plot structure, the hero's ultimate quest is to ensure that good prevails over evil, in whatever form this theme may manifest within the narrative (Ramaswamy, 2014: 47). It is important to note that a narrative's protagonist does not necessarily function as the hero

⁹⁶ In my framework in Chapter 6, I propose new strategies to further disrupt and challenge these hegemonic ideologies inherent in archetypal characters.

⁹⁷ I acknowledge the problematic patriarchal assumption underlying the categorisation of all human-kind as 'man'.

⁹⁸ I am yet to encounter a fantasy film in which a hero conforms to a gender other than male or female. An investigation into this subject may offer a potential avenue for research.

archetype. I turn to Lissauer (2014: 1523) to explicate this statement. Lissauer (2014: 1523) states that the delineation of 'hero' carries a dual meaning in the fantasy genre: the hero as protagonist and the hero archetype. The hero as protagonist refers to a text's central character who undertakes the hero's journey and who ventures forth from their ordinary world and to face those areas of the psyche where suppressed challenges lie (Campbell, 2004 [1949]: 16).

With regard to the hero archetype, Lissauer (2014: 1562) differentiates between a hero and a heroic character. The hero is guided by a strict moral code and does good for the sake of good, while the heroic character chooses to do good for the purpose of fighting off evil (Lissauer, 2014: 1562). This often justifies the heroic character's committing of acts which, when viewed in an isolated light may be judged evil but which serve the greater good. For example, Captain Jack Sparrow in *The Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* gives the villainous pirate Blackbeard poison in order to save Blackbeard's daughter. Despite Sparrow's actions, which are mainly motivated by selfish gain (he is in love with the daughter), his choices have the consequence of keeping the greater evil at bay – Blackbeard is a murderous man who would compromise the life of his daughter for his own gain.

The hero archetype refers to a character who is either a hero or is heroic in nature but who is not necessarily the narrative's protagonist (Lissauer, 2014: 1535). This archetypal character stands as a role model and as the embodiment of admirable values (Lissauer, 2014: 1535). Aragorn in *The Lord of the Rings* films is an example of a heroic figure who is not the main character, but one who both serves and saves the other characters and is ultimately crowned a benevolent king.

Regardless of whether the hero is the protagonist, the hero in fantasy is often associated with certain tropes. One of these is the positioning of the hero as an orphan in the ordinary world (Ramaswamy, 2014: ix), which provides them with an unbound yet searching spirit ripe for undertaking a journey and fulfilling a destiny. This destiny may take the form of their being a "chosen one", such as a lost king (or queen) or other monarch (Ramaswamy, 2014: 47). The hero may thus be a renegade who constantly challenges power and authority to maintain justice and fairness (Indick, 2012: 62).

In the hero's journey, the hero is called to adventure by the herald archetype, who hails from the fantasy world (Indick, 2012: 47). The fauns in *Pan's Labyrinth* and in *Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* are examples of heralds who appear to the heroes, usher them out of their ordinary world and introduce them into the fantastical world (Indick, 2012: 92, 107).

The hero is assisted by a supernatural aid in the form of a gift given (wisdom or a supernatural object) which will later aid the hero and also serves to remind them of both their past and destiny (Indick, 2012: 47, 49).

The hero is often faced with the possible departure or death of a guiding figure, which would mean that they are then left alone (Smith, 2004: 449). Another character that aids the hero in his journey is the loyal companion or sidekick who has admirable characteristics and who aids, but never outshines, the hero on their quest (Ramaswamy, 2014: 127, 142). The hero may also be accompanied or motivated by a love interest, often a princess archetype (Lissauer, 2014: 2041).

Indick (2012: 63) investigates the princess archetype with a focus on how this archetype functions in fairy tales. It should be noted that this archetype is not restricted to princesses but stands as a symbol for a character who undergoes a process of becoming and fulfils certain character roles within a narrative. Indick (2012: 73) states that, in contrast to the external journey the hero undergoes, the traditional princess archetype faces an internal journey which is prompted by her reluctance to embrace changes in her body as she transforms from girl to woman and mother (Indick, 2012: 63). These changes involve the societal expectation that she give up her childhood hopes, dreams and fantasies, against which she initially rebels (Indick, 2012: 73).

Although both Indick (2012: 63) and Ramaswamy (2014: 163) frame the princess as a female character, male characters may also conform to aspects of this archetype, such as the need to be saved by a female hero in *The Secret Garden* (Munden, 2020). Be that as it may, the archetype seems to be predominantly associated with women characters in fantasy texts.

Indick (2012: 65-79) investigates various fairy tales (such as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Cinderella*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Rapunzel*, and *Snow white*) in order to identify the archetypal traits of the princess characters. These include some degree of separation or loss, as of the princess' own mother, at the start of the narrative (Indick, 2012: 65), often as a result of some ailment (Smith, 2004: 449). This renders the princess vulnerable and without guidance and often causes her father to become numbed by his own loss and ignorant to his daughter's pain.

Without a mentor, the princess often faces a challenge or temptation which she is not yet mature enough to overcome and which places her in harm's way, such as with Little Red

Riding Hood who strays from the path, Pandora who opens the forbidden box, and Rapunzel's mother who craves and eats the lettuce from the witch's garden (Indick, 2012: 66, 69, 79). On the basis of these tales, once the princess is in danger, it is often 'only' the male prince or the hunter who can save her, which renders her a prize as a form of gratitude for her own deliverance. This positioning of the princess as helpless or as a mere love interest of the male hero is highly problematic as it strips the princess of any self-sufficiency and agency (Lissauer, 2014: 2054).

As with Indick's princess, the maiden archetype (Lissauer, 2014: 2081) is reliant on the hero for salvation and may be the loyal companion to the hero, as they are often helpless without the hero (Lissauer, 2014: 2081). If the companion were equal in talent, importance, calling or heroism, they would be the hero themselves (Lissauer, 2014: 2095). If not, they are reliant on the hero for survival. As much as the princess relies on the hero, she is also influenced by the mother archetype, whether positively or negatively.

The witch and the goddess (Indick, 2012: 80) are two archetypes which represent, respectively, negative and positive expressions of the Jungian mother archetype. Although the mother plays a formative role, being the first attachment a newborn forms in the world (Indick, 2012: 80), the mother may carry inherently negative characteristics that are embodied by the witch archetype. The witch is associated with death and harbours a connection with those who have already passed through it (Indick, 2012: 82). The witch archetype manifests in various tropic character forms, such as an old woman who may later transform into a young beauty, the evil queen or stepmother, the cannibalistic witch, and the like (Indick, 2012: 82, 85, 87).

In contradistinction, in mythology, the goddess is associated with light or darkness and their various connotations, fertility and sexuality, moral attributes, birth and rebirth, nature and earth, among others (Indick, 2012: 81-82). The archetypal goddess may find expression in the loving mother fairy-tale character who undergoes death, but who reappears as the fairy godmother and acts as supernatural aid to the princess (Indick, 2012: 91). Ramaswamy (2014: 147) refers to this archetype as the "wise woman" who represents the female equivalent of the wise old man or wizard and who often possesses supernatural gifts, such as the ability to see into the future.

However, the binary between the positive and negative aspects of the mother archetype is not always as unambiguous, as a character may demonstrate attributes of both the goddess and

the witch. This may be observed in the characters of Lady Galadriel in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and Tia Dalma from the *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise. Both characters aid the protagonists in their quests by providing them with insight and supernatural objects. However, both characters also exhibit darker facets to their power, such as Lady Galadriel's brief transformation into a fierce being when she is tempted by the ring and Tia Dalma's uncontained wrath when she turns into the mythological sea nymph, Calypso.

The positive and negative sides of the mother archetype are also found in the father archetype. The wizard and the dark lord exhibit, respectively, the positive and negative attributes of the Jungian father archetype (Indick, 2012: 91). The wizard, who is often not the biological father of the hero, assumes the role of a positive father-figure who acts as both a herald and a wise mentor (Indick, 2012: 91). The wizard is often portrayed as a benevolent king or a wise old man (Indick, 2012: 91) dressed in recognisable flowing robes with a white beard (Ramaswamy, 2014: 127). The wizard implores the hero to make personal sacrifices for the greater good, just as they would (Indick, 2012: 97).

On the other hand, the dark lord is the antagonistic force in the hero's quest and sacrifices others in an insatiable pursuit of power (Indick, 2012: 91, 97). Ramaswamy (2014: 101, 106) categorises the dark lord under the villain archetype, as representing the embodiment of the thematic component of evil, one whose goals and objectives directly oppose the hero's. A character may also become villainous by falling into the archetypal category of the traitor who deliberately deceives the hero (Ramaswamy, 2014: 175) for their own gain. Conversely, the dark lord's motivations for their evil objectives are often obscured, and they are presented as inherently evil by nature (Lissauer, 2014: 1280). Lissauer (2014: 1280) groups characters such as Sauron from *The Lord of the Rings* within this category. Sauron is an evil overlord who appears in the form of a giant flaming eye and who seeks to conquer the fantastical realm of Middle Earth, in opposition to the wizard, Gandalf, and other heroic characters.

The wizard and the dark lord are often familiar enemies and archetypal adversaries, and the hero is burdened with the task of overcoming the ultimate evil power of the dark lord (Indick, 2012: 97). The hero may be guided by the mentorship of the wizard as the wizard's character often possesses more experience and supernatural ability than does the hero.

Indick's final category of archetypes includes humans, beasts, and the combination of the two, man-beasts. I consider these archetypes categories of form as they describe the physical shape or body that the above-mentioned archetypes might take in the fantasy film. For

example, the protagonist-hero might be a hobbit, as in *The Lord of the Rings*, the herald a beast in the form of an owl as in *Harry Potter*, and the love interest a humanoid fish creature as in *The Shape of Water*.

Next, I explore the archetypal form of man (Indick, 2012: 98), the human. Tolkien (2008: 32) demands the presence of “very human, everyman characters” in the fantastical realm. I use Indick’s (2012: 98) term, “man”, to refer to ‘human’ characters, regardless of their expression of gender. An example of this archetypal character-form is the “man of nature”, a civilised man who willingly chooses to live in nature as a wise recluse who often possesses healing abilities (Indick, 2012: 111-113). In Del Toro’s films, *Pan’s Labyrinth* and *The Shape of Water*, the protagonists are presented as human characters, although there are hints that they are more than this. Ofelia⁹⁹ in *Pan’s Labyrinth* is presented to be the princess of the underworld while Elisa develops gills in the final scene of *The Shape of Water*.

Evolutionary theory complicates the distinction between man and beast by framing man as a hominine descendant of ape-like creatures (Indick, 2012: 98). Indick (2012: 99) speculates that it is perhaps the very need to draw this distinction that constitutes the definitive difference between man and beast. Fantasy often deliberately blurs this distinction, by combining human and beast forms. Man-beasts carry both the sapient wisdom of man and the bodily attributes of beasts. They, however, surpass the limits of man by functioning as oracles, teachers or immortal beings and are often portrayed as dubious in nature (Indick, 2012: 106-107). Examples of man-beasts include centaurs (man-horse), satyrs or fauns (man-goat), minotaurs (man-bull), and sphynxes (man-cat), among others (Indick, 2012: 106-108).

The distinction between human and beast attributes becomes blurred in the man-beast whose combined characteristics are depicted in the form of a homogenous being (Indick, 2012: 108-110). Examples include therianthropes, humans capable of shapeshifting, such as werewolves and vampires, and wild men who exists in a state between man and beast, such as the yeti (Indick, 2012: 108-110). Other fantastical characters that are neither fully beast nor human include dwarves and giants, ghosts and other undead forms, and other monstrous creatures such as “trolls, orcs and goblins” (Indick, 2012: 120-127).

⁹⁹ Ofelia’s character is also indicative of the trope that often involves fantasy protagonists being children (Smith, 2004: 448), as they are commonly associated with innocence.

Pertaining to the beast, Indick (2012: 115-120) provides list of animals from the phenomenal world that commonly feature in fantasy (see Figure 14, below). Concerning the presence of animals from the phenomenal world in fantasy, Tolkien (2008: 36) disqualifies animal fables from “faerie” (pure fantasy) due to their exclusion of humans and because the animals exist merely as “humans with animal masks on” with the purpose of preaching morality or presenting satire. Regarding purely fantastical beasts, fantasy often features creatures such as dragons, unicorns, phoenixes and griffins (Ramaswamy, 2014: 122, 123, 214, 215). As these beasts are tropic of fantasy, they also function as recognisable visual iconographies.

As regards the archetypal forms of man, beast and man-beast, I find that transformation and how characters may shift and transform between these archetypal forms emerges as a salient trope in filmic fantasy. Transformation (Fowkes, 2010: 9; Moen, 2013: xiv; Selbo, 2015: 178) in fantasy films may be good or bad, or physical or emotional, but is nevertheless prompted by the imaginative ability of fantasy to create wonder (Moen, 2013: xiv). Such transformation is expressed, for example, in the ability of the protagonist or their rival, the antagonist, to take risks to compel change that inevitably influences the course of the narrative (Walker 2012). By taking risks and making decisions, the character is led to evoke and experience change. The theme of the transformation of a character’s emotional nature, however, becomes somewhat ambiguous when considering a film’s character arc.

A character’s arc traces their emotional progression and transformation through the course of a narrative and illustrates how the lessons and obstacles they encounter serve and shape them (Snyder, 2005:135). Such character arcs and the theme of emotional or inner transformation are not unique to the fantasy genre. However, fantasy allows for physical transformations which are made possible by the fictional world’s rupture from phenomenal reality (Fowkes, 2010: 9) and by the presence of magic. For example, in *The Shape of Water* (Del Toro, 2017), Ella Esposito emotionally arcs by transforming from a timid character to the saviour of an amphibian creature as well as undergoing a physical transformation when she grows gills in order to be able to breathe underwater. Countless other examples exist, such as Nagini’s transformation into a snake in *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* (Yates, 2018) and Ravenna’s transformation into a murder of crows in *Snow White and the Huntsman* (Sanders, 2012).

Figure 14 summarises my investigation into Indick’s fantasy archetypes. I provide examples of fantasy character types that embody the archetype from mythology, fairy tales and fantasy texts.

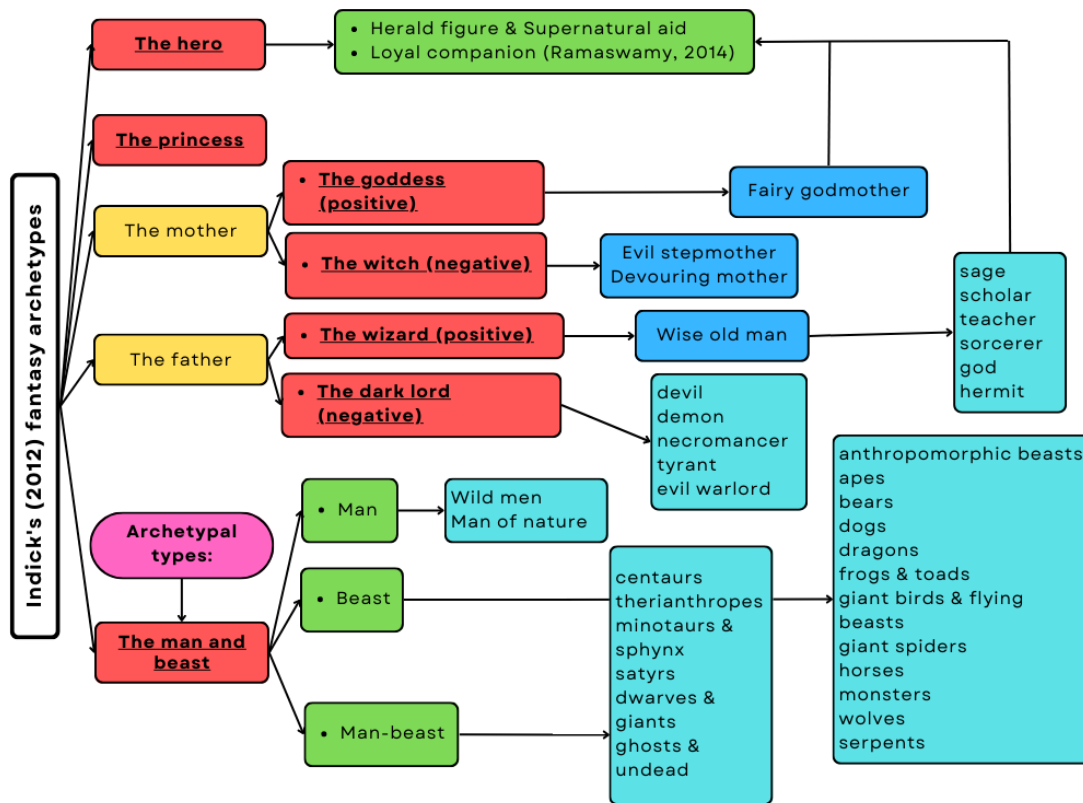


Figure 14: Indick's (2012) fantasy archetypes – a summary. (Illustration by the author).

3.5 Filmic fantasy settings

A setting includes the “spatiotemporal” indication of events (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019: 142) and thus refers to the spatial (space) and temporal (time) space in which a fantasy narrative is set. The temporal and spatial elements are intrinsically linked as they influence each other. Both time and space, along with their emotional ambience and connotations, affect characters and contribute to defining them and intensifying the obstacles they face (Rabiger, 2006: 46). As such, the place-time coupling establishes expectations regarding the world of the story and the conflicts the character might encounter and should reflect an “ontological rupture” (Fowkes, 2010: 2) from phenomenal reality (see Chapter 2). The salient fantasy settings that emerged from the scholarship I discuss in this section are the Middle Ages, spaces of nature and spaces of industrialization, and urban environments.

Roine (2016: 15) positions the (European) Middle Ages as the generic tropological setting in which fantasy narratives are set. Films such as *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Snow White and the Huntsman* (Sanders, 2012) and *Dungeons and Dragons: Honour among Thieves* (Daley & Goldstein, 2023), amongst many others, employ pseudo-medieval fantasy settings. The Middle Ages refers to a specific temporal context, but it inevitably influences the nature of the geographical spaces that are encountered. This period provides rural and pastoral landscapes which provide a suitable arena for narratives involving “magic, heroism, and absolute good and evil” set against a historical pagan and Christian backdrop (Fowkes, 2020: 31,39). I hold that pagan and Christian influences can be seen in the above-mentioned films through the framing of evil characters as witches and those who practise dark magic, while the heroes and those who fight for good are often associated with Christian elements such as purity, innocence and light.

The pseudo-medieval fantasy film draws on the time period’s material cultures (castles and manor houses), technologies, transportation (ships and horses) and character classes (royalty and peasants) (Sullivan, 2004: 438). Medieval influences are also found in tropological fairy-tale settings: small villages, woods (Greenhill & Allen, 2018: 231) and castles. The specific historicity of the medieval timeframe in fantasy may also point to the use of specific locations such as medieval England in *Dragonheart* (Cohen, 1996) and in *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword* (Ritchie, 2017).

At this point, it is necessary to return to the discussion¹⁰⁰ on the binary of nature and industrialisation. Ekman’s (2013) analysis of fantasy settings clearly illustrates that natural landscapes underly much of fantasy’s narratives. These landscapes include mountains, rivers, and marshes (Ekman, 2013: 36, 37, 47, 56, 109). In tandem with natural landscapes, fantasy narratives often portray a pastoral ideal (Atteberry, 1980: 186) where ‘good’ is associated with nature, green pastures and light (Loconte, 2015: 6-7). Nature represents a shelter, a safe-haven and a place of temporary rest on the hero’s journey (Ramaswamy, 2014: 184) – as may be seen in the tranquil elven home of Rivendell, located between mountains and waterfalls in *The Lord of the Rings*. On the other hand, nature may also take on a treacherous form – such as the dark forests or woods popular in fairy tales in which characters often meet or confront temptation and danger in the form of strange creatures (Fowkes, 2010: 164). Some ideological problematics may, however, emerge in the positioning of pastoral spaces as utopian and as

¹⁰⁰ See Section 3.3 *Filmic fantasy theme tropes*.

inherently good. The European imagery that is often reinforced in the representation of pastoral spaces in films such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *Narnia* may position certain Western culture-specific spaces and peoples as 'good'. This, by implication, positions those spaces outside pastoralist locations, as well as the peoples occupying them, as bad or evil. I investigate the ideological problematisations of the connotation of pastoral spaces as good within the context of white Afrikaner identity in Chapter 4¹⁰¹.

In opposition to the imagery of nature found in the green pastures and enchanted woods, spaces of industrialisation are often framed as intrusive and evil (Loconte, 2015: 6-7). The machinery used in industrialisation represents the destruction of the environment, and therefore, by association, the destruction of all that is good (Fowkes, 2010: 135-136). These spaces of industrialisation often leave barren places in their wake as the industrialising process exploits surrounding natural spaces for resources and pollutes them (Fowkes, 2010: 136). What is left is barren "wastelands" (Ramaswamy, 2014: 178) which represent the consequence of evil. In *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (Jackson, 2003), the tower of Isengard is surrounded by pits in the gaping earth where militant Uruk-Hai orcs are bred and weapons manufactured among fire, steel and mud (McLarty, 2021: 177). To feed the fire of industry, the trees of the surrounding wood are cut down by the orcs, illustrating the dichotomy between growth and nature, on the one hand, and the destruction caused by industry, on the other. Similarly, in James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009, 2022), the lustrous green planet of Pandora, which has a spiritual link with its indigenous peoples, is exploited by intruding mining industries which cause harm to the natural spaces and threaten the way of life of the indigenes.

Fantasy narratives are sometimes set in urban environments, as in the urban fantasy sub-genre. The urban city space might emerge as a novel creation, of which the fantastical forms an intrinsic and distinctive part (Irvin, 2012: 201). Such cities are often located in new realms or on other planets (Walters, 2011: 125), which also constitute tropic spaces of fantasy. What is essential is that these spaces involve the imaginative creation of novelty (through neologisms) in relation to cultures, creatures, rituals, and the like (Kolev, 2016: 1). Fantastical cities may otherwise be modelled on existing cities, allowing an exploration of how elements of the fantastical may harmoniously co-exist with urbanity in the contemporary setting (Irvin, 2012: 200). For example, the *Fantastic Beasts* film franchise is set in New York in the 1920s

¹⁰¹ See Section 4.4.2.2. *Longing for the rural idyll: the ownership of land.*

and explores how the world of wizardry co-exists with non-magical people and contexts. In such settings, in addition to those that are purely fantastical, fantasy relies on fantastical visual iconographies to reinforce how the setting is ruptured from phenomenal reality.

3.6 Filmic fantasy visual iconography tropes

Visual iconographies are visual codes that are repeatedly used in genre films and thereby become recognisable to audiences (Sobchack, 2012: 125). This recognition is accompanied by an understanding of what these codes symbolise and, hence, they function as signs. Visual iconographies working as signs operate as a “short-hand” between audiences and filmmakers by advancing an understanding of the plot without the need for excessive verbal or visual explanation (Sobchack, 2012: 125-126). These iconographies include the objects, locations and costumes presented in the genre film and serve to create the context in which the plot unfolds (Sobchack, 2012: 125). Setting, plot and characters, as discussed in the previous sections, all include visual iconographies and may themselves constitute visual iconographies. In this section, in order to avoid repetitiveness, below, I discuss only those iconographies not yet mentioned in previous discussions. I also acknowledge that fantasy films may encode their own iconographies in order to carry a fantastical significance unique to a specific fantasy film. My investigation here is concerned with those general and recognisable iconographies that emerge in various fantasy film texts.

It is not possible here to list all iconographies associated with the fantasy genre. For this reason, I classify them in terms of a so-called ‘meta-motif’ and make reference to the most prominent motif and trope found in the fantasy genre: magic. Tolkien (2008: 32) is clear that magic in fantasy does not reflect the hoax-magic of conjurers. It is a ‘real’ tangible magic.

The fantasy genre often makes use of magical devices as vehicles for the supernatural or extraordinary. Such devices are those “fantastical elements” that both aid and obstruct the hero in their journey (Selbo 2015: 121). Examples include Frodo Baggins’s ring in *The Lord of the Rings* and Harry Potter’s invisible cloak that carries magical powers for a limited time (Selbo 2015: 121). Other examples include “flying brooms, magic talismans” and “wands” (Fowkes, 2010: 5, 9). Mirrors, crystal balls and other devices that aid seeing are often found in the hands of powerful wizards, revealing both events in the narrative and the inner workings of the seeking character’s mind (Ramaswamy, 2014: 210). Ramaswamy (2014: 208) also

draws attention to the maze or labyrinth as a common visual element which represents the often treacherous and confusing journey of the hero.

Although the magic in the fantasy world is 'real', it is often not permanent and may wear off at a specific time, such as at sunset (Smith, 2004: 451) or midnight, or as the result of an action such as true love's kiss. This time-bound property of magic illustrates that it often presents both a threat and a challenge (Smith, 2004: 451), having both a light and a dark side. This dual nature can also be seen in fantasy's use of elements (fire, water, air and earth) and precious metals (such as silver and gold) and stones (Ramaswamy, 2014: 216, 217), which may be used by forces of good or evil.

Visual iconography in fantasy also includes symbolical iconographies such as certain numbers or colours which hold mythological or religious significance. For example, three and seven are numbers associated with unity, spirituality and enlightenment (Ramaswamy, 2014: 219). Colours such as red and green may be used to represent the binary of nature as against the fires of industrialisation, as may be observed in *The Lord of the Rings*, although these connotations of good and evil may also be reversed.

The final iconographic element I mention due to its prominence in filmic fantasy films (though I have investigated it as a trope of filmic fantasy themes) is the iconography associated with war. As per Loconte's (2015: 67-65) analysis of *The Lord of the Rings*, war is often associated with fire, smoke and weapons of mass destruction which may be magical in nature.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have investigated salient filmic fantasy tropes pertaining to plot structure, theme, character, setting, and visual iconography. I summarise this investigation by highlighting a number of prominent tropes. Concerning plot structure, I draw attention to Vogler's (2007) writer's journey as a screenwriting model based on Campbell's *hero's journey*, which draws its structure from myth and constitutes the plot-structure of many filmic fantasy narratives. Within the fantastical world, the characters are often confronted by good and evil, which are prominent themes. These themes manifest in physical battles between these forces and are, as such, also associated with life and death. Other salient themes may include physical transformations and the positioning of home as a haven.

The fantasy characters that encounter situations associated with these themes are categorised according to Indick's (2012) fantasy character archetypes. These archetypes include the hero; the princess; the mother, as either goddess or as witch; the father, as either wizard or dark lord; and man, beast and man-beast combinations. These characters often find themselves in salient fantasy settings that resemble the Middle Ages and the technologies associated with it. This environment speaks to the conflict between nature and industrialisation. Alternatively, the narrative may be located in urban environments, either reimagined real cities and other urban spaces or novel fantastical urban spaces. The socio-political and historical contexts in which fantasy narratives are set may also speak to real historical timeframes and events, which allows for the creative reimagining of history and its expression through fantastical iconographies. Finally, as regards salient fantasy filmic iconography, I identified magic and devices, time of day and the temporal limitations associated with magic. Other iconographies included elements, precious metals, and the metaphorical use of numbers and colours.

In conclusion, in line with ontological definition of fantasy presented in Chapter 2, the tropes of filmic fantasy actualise the ontological rupture between phenomenal reality and the fantastical world through the supernatural and magical nature of the latter. I return to the fantasy tropes identified in this chapter in Chapter 5 when I investigate which of the salient filmic fantasy tropes can be found in Afrikaans mythological narratives. In the next chapter, I turn my focus to white Afrikaner identity in order to contextualise the markers of this identity that find expression in Afrikaner mythological narratives.

CHAPTER 4: WHITE AFRIKANER IDENTITY

4.1 Introduction

“Facts do not tell us who we are. Stories do” (Cowan, 2019: 6).

In Chapter 3, I investigated the salient tropes of the filmic fantasy genre in order to guide my construction of a framework for a fantasy screenplay that interrogates white Afrikaner identity. As contextualised in Chapter 1,¹⁰² my need to question white Afrikaner identity arises from its current identity crisis. This identity crisis is the result of South Africa’s transition to a democracy in 1994, which uprooted many of the pre-1994 identity markers of white Afrikaners. As such, in post-1994 South Africa, many young white Afrikaners experience a liminal identity as they attempt to reconfigure their identity by distancing themselves from problematic identity markers that were historically anchored in nationalist Afrikanerhood (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 639).

It is these nationalist markers of white Afrikaner identity, along with the identity’s current markers, that I aim to investigate in Chapter 4. This I undertake to contextualise white Afrikaner identity in order to demonstrate how it is the filmic fantasy genre can be used to question, challenge and imagine new configurations of this identity. In order to question this identity, I need an understanding thereof, of how it is constructed and how it is tied to the concept of narrative. This chapter thus aligns with sub-questions 3 and 4: What is cultural narrative identity, and what are the markers of white Afrikaner identity?

Cultural narrative identity constitutes the theoretical framework by means of which I investigate white Afrikaner identity from Section 4.3, *White Afrikaner identity pre-1994*, onwards. In the first section of this chapter, I formulate a theoretical framework of cultural narrative identity as involving those narratives that construct cultural identity – which, in turn, guides a culture’s modes of behaviour and determines how it constructs meaning pertaining to itself and the world around it. In this chapter, I argue that the construction of cultural narrative identity exists

¹⁰² See Chapter 1, 1.1 *Background and introduction*.

as a process of cultural myth-making and that questioning the myths of a culture equates to questioning the very identity of the culture itself.

After constructing the theoretical framework to discuss identity, I contextualise current post-1994 white Afrikaner identity by exploring markers of pre-1994 nationalist white Afrikaner identity.¹⁰³ In the context of both pre- and post-1994 Afrikaner identity, I explore how these identity markers find expression in Afrikaans films. This exploration is undertaken in order to establish how this identity is expressed in film. This exploration forms a basis for the creation of the framework for a fantasy screenplay that, in Chapter 6, aims to question Afrikaner identity through a consideration of filmic tropes. Investigating Afrikaans films and the markers of Afrikaner identity that are perpetuated as tropes allows valuable insights into Afrikaner identity both before and after 1994. As Müller-Funk contends (2003: 43), narratives (in particular, “their occurrence in specific media and genres”) provide frameworks for understanding reality. Moreover, cultural commodities such as films offer narrative expressions through which people imagine and reimagine their unity as a community (Steyn, 2016a: 65), thereby providing insights into a cultural identity and its identity markers.

In investigating the markers of pre- and post-1994 Afrikaner identity and their expression in film, I argue that many post-1994 Afrikaans films rely on a sense of “cultural traditionalism”¹⁰⁴ (Broodryk, 2015: 81), portraying hegemonic nationalist ideals by means of nostalgic representations of markers of pre-1994 Afrikaner identity.

Finally, having established the theoretical framework and having contextualised white Afrikaner identity, I link fantasy, as discussed in Chapter 2, with Afrikaner identity in order to formulate the central argument of this chapter, namely that fantasy in film can act as a creative strategy through which to interrogate white Afrikaner identity within its current liminal state.

¹⁰³ I acknowledge the multiplicity and heterogeneity of the cultural and political orientations of white Afrikaners, both historically and at present. However, this chapter is concerned with investigating the historically dominant political and cultural configuration of white Afrikanerhood. This nationalist Afrikaner identity attempted to construct a myth of Afrikaner cultural homogeneity. I investigate how the myths that contributed to this imagining of a ‘pure’ cultural identity shaped and influenced the socio-political and cultural landscape of South Africa during apartheid. Furthermore, I explore the consequences of this dominant white Afrikaner identity’s rupture from its position of power during South Africa’s shift to democracy, and how it impacted on the markers of this identity.

¹⁰⁴ Cultural traditionalism, in this context, refers to a longing for and adherence to historical or traditional cultural values by framing the past as a time of supposed stability which trumps a culture’s present state (Broodryk, 2015: 81).

In the following section, I commence my investigation into the cultural narrative identity of white Afrikaners, starting with identity and how its exists as a process of narration.

Figure 15, below, illustrates my approach to Chapter 4.

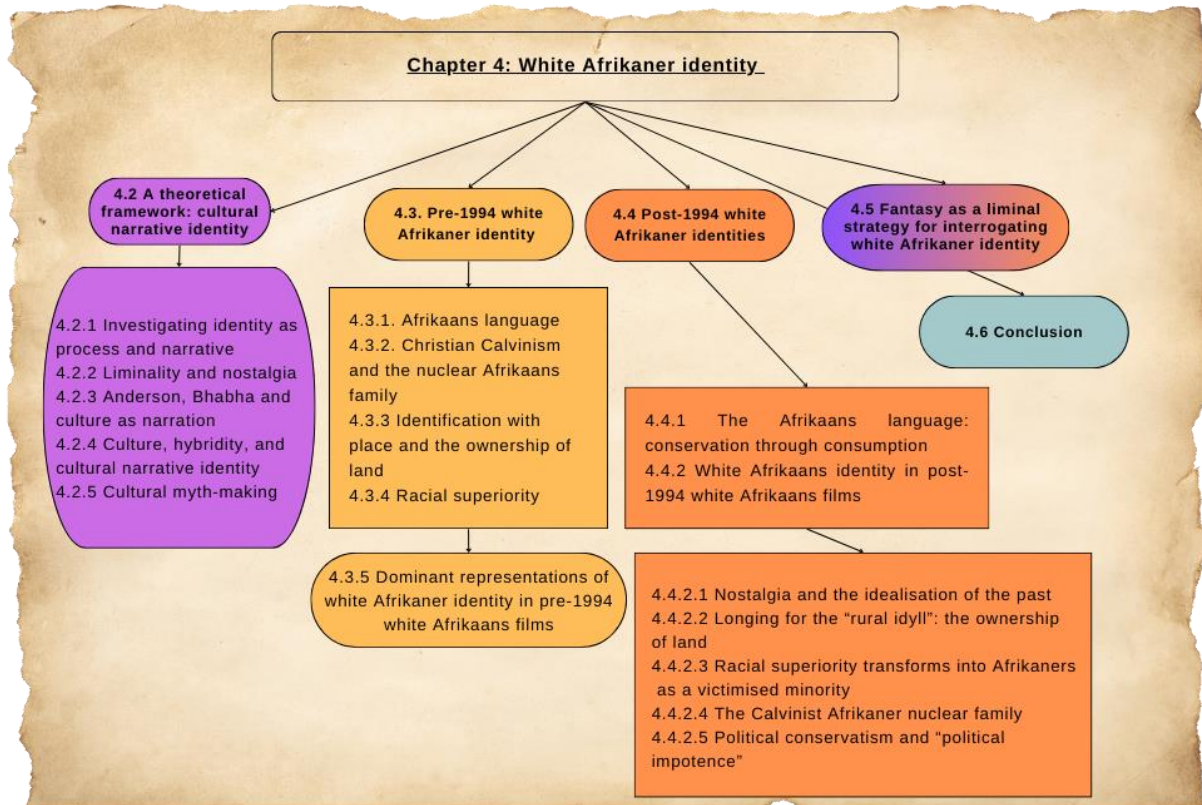


Figure 15: Structure of Chapter 4. (Illustration by the author).

4.2 A theoretical framework for cultural narrative identity

In the sections that follow, I embark on formulating the concept of cultural narrative identity from the starting point of identity. I identify the process of narration as a fundamental aspect of identity construction and investigate how the narration of shared experiences implies a social dimension to identity that gives rise to cultural identity.

I further investigate how a rupture between identity and the narratives that shape it may lead to the identity finding itself in a liminal state (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 666). I approach the concept of liminality via the principles of Victor Turner (2011: ix), who views a liminal space as a transformative space in which social structures and systems of power can be disrupted, albeit temporarily. Later, I relate these ideas to Homi K Bhabha's (1994, 53-55) concept of the "third space of enunciation"¹⁰⁵, a liminal and hybrid space that exists at the interstices of the different cultural spaces an identity may inhabit.

I unpack liminality with a focus on its transformative potential for identity (re)construction. I consider how nostalgia may obstruct the transformative potential of liminal spaces when identities are opposed to change and long for past states. Nostalgia leads me to Anderson's (2006) principle of imagined communities in terms of which cultures and nations may use narratives of the past to continue imagining themselves as a community. This then links with Homi. K. Bhabha's (1990) concept of the nation as a process and product of narration, which occurs through pedagogical and performative narratives. Bhabha's theory of the nation as narration has been applied to the realm of culture by scholars such as Herman Wasserman (2000) and Stuart Hall (2015). In like manner, I apply Bhabha's concept to culture in this dissertation.

I investigate culture as the product of narration along with how narration may be used to construct cultural identity, acknowledging Bhabha's (1994: 25) theory of cultural hybridity. This constructing occurs by using narration as a means to imagine and keep imagining, through an ongoing process of narration, a culture as an imagined community. In other words, narration becomes the means through which cultures imagine themselves to be communities – they narrate their 'comm(unity)' through cultural narratives in the course of the process of cultural

¹⁰⁵ I discuss the "third space of enunciation in Section 4.2.4 *Culture, hybridity, and cultural narrative identity*.

myth-making. I turn to Barthes (1991) to investigate the process of cultural mythmaking and how myths become naturalised in cultural narrative identities.

As concerns the process of mythmaking with regard to white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, I use the term ‘internal’¹⁰⁶ myths to refer to those myths that aim to construct a cultural identity, for example, historical ‘accounts’ of a culture’s origins – or what are also referred to as originary myths. ‘External myths’, in contrast, refer to mythological narratives (myths, fables, folklore, fairy tales and legends) that emerge as creative expressions of a culture’s identity.

4.2.1 Investigating identity as process and narrative

The term ‘identity’ is overburdened by a vast number of meanings and uses in a variety of contexts (Anthias, 2018: 139). In this study, I am concerned with Afrikanerhood as a cultural and national identity. In this section, to conceptualise my understanding of the term ‘identity’, I first briefly investigate identity as personal identity. Next, I broaden the investigation to consider how identity is shaped by social aspects that relate to how the narrative of one’s personal identity may be shared by others and how these shared narratives contribute to the narrative identity of a culture.

From this study’s epistemological constructivist¹⁰⁷ perspective, identity is a subjective construct of the human (body)mind¹⁰⁸ reinforced through human actions and interactions (Cornut, 2018: 1, 139). It is defined by a “state of distinctiveness” achieved by a subject through an act of separation from other sets of distinct characteristics, that is, identities (Brock & Tulasiewicz, 2018: 1). The isolation of a set of supposedly distinctive attributes or characteristics occurs due to a variety of pressures and choices (Brock & Tulasiewicz, 2018: 1).

Anthias (2018: 139) critiques this view of identity as an apparently concrete, static or fixed state of “being”. For Anthias (2018: 139), this interpretation of identity does not take into

¹⁰⁶ I elaborate on internal and external myths in Section 4.2.5 *Cultural mythmaking*.

¹⁰⁷ As set out in Chapter 1, 1.3 *Philosophical worldview informing the research*.

¹⁰⁸ From a monist perspective, experiences that shape identity are experienced, situated in and enacted through the (body)mind. It is impossible to determine where the boundary of the mind ends and the body begins as the mind functions within and through the body and, therefore, the mind and body form an inextricably integrated unity, the bodymind (Money, 1956: 212; Warczak, 2020: 564).

account that identity involves continual “processes of becoming”. If, according to Anthias (2018: 139), identity wrongly refers to who a person ‘is’, as a fixed state of identification, then Anthias’ “processes of becoming” refer to the ongoing journey towards identity as a destination, despite that destination constantly changing. What identity is ‘to become’ is subject to continual change due to societal and personal pressures and influences. Identity, much like genre, as I interpret it in Chapter 2, is an ongoing and ever-changing, fluid process that attracts various characteristics or identity ‘tropes’, if you will, in the course of the process of continuous becoming.

A part of this process of becoming involves the subject expressing their own lived experiences through narration (Anthias, 2018: 139); this constructs, and continues to construct, a sense of self. In this vein, Hall (1996: 4) frames identities as the product of the “narrativisation of the self”. McAdams and McLean (2011: 100) state that the evolving narratives of the self create a sense of “unity, purpose and meaning” in a person’s life, constructing a “narrative identity” – the conveying of narratives that play a role in the formation and construction of one’s identity (McAdams & McLean, 2013: 235), formed by the personal agency and subjectivity of the individual in shaping, relaying (Schwartz, Luyckx & Vignoles, 2011: 3) and performing these narratives.

Besides personal agency in the construction of personal identity, the process of narrating the self also implies a social dimension to its construction. For example, by narrating the self through one’s narrative identity, one’s personal identity is both constructed and performed, in the course of which the “listener, reader, or viewer is implicated as witness, audience, collaborator, and co-constructor” (Lapadat, Black, Clark, Gremm, Karanja, Mieke & Quinlan, 2010: 78). Narratives of the self does not exist in a vacuum; rather they speak to shared experiences and are shaped by them. Narrative identity, and the shared experiences encapsulated in it, is “contextualised” by the culture to which an individual and their narratives belong to or identify with (McAdams & McLean, 2013: 100) and its ideological underpinnings. For example, for white Afrikaner cultural identity¹⁰⁹, the shared experiences constituting the

¹⁰⁹ I acknowledge that white Afrikanerhood is not homogenous in its expressions of cultural identity and that there exist various expressions of white Afrikaner cultural identity besides and beyond the identity markers listed here. In this study, I am concerned with a specific expression of white Afrikaner identity as contextualized in Chapter 1, *1.1 Background and introduction* and *1.3.1 My positionality as a researcher*. I do not argue that all members of this cultural identity conform to the identity markers listed here, but rather investigate these markers as the ones most prominently associated with the specific configuration of white Afrikaner cultural identity as a whole.

narrative identity of the culture include¹¹⁰: speaking the Afrikaans language, a Calvinist religious orientation, racial superiority, the centrality of the nuclear family, and the ownership of land.

In line with my understanding of identity as a process, cultural identity, like personal identity, is in a process of continual becoming and exists as an ever-changing process due to the dynamic nature of culture (Wasserman, 2000: 95). Cultural identity can be defined as a deeply rooted consciousness of culture that includes active participation in and identification with a specific approach to reality (Brock & Tulasiewicz, 2018: 5), achieved through cultural narratives (Müller-Funk, 2003: 43). These narratives enable the shaping of a cultural identity as a mutual system of values, norms, and the mutual structuring of experience (Brock & Tulasiewicz 2018: 4).

4.2.2 Liminality and nostalgia

If identity (and here I refer specifically to cultural identity) is constructed through its narrative identity, then a rupture between that identity and its narratives leaves the identity without ‘narrative anchors’ to ground it. Consequently, the identity may be suspended in a state of “betwixt and between-ness”, that is, a liminal space (Turner, 2011: 95). In this section, I investigate the concept of liminality, how it exists as a transformative¹¹¹ space, and how identities may resist this transformation through nostalgia.

As a sociological concept, liminality originated in the ideas of French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in 1909 and was translated and elaborated through the work of British cultural anthropologist Victor Turner (Wels, Van der Waal, Spiegel & Kamsteeg, 2011: 1). It is on Turner’s (2011: 94) work that I base my understanding of liminality as a transitional state

¹¹⁰ I discuss these identity markers in *4.3 Pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity* and *4.4 Post-1994 white Afrikaner identities*.

¹¹¹ I acknowledge that the liminal space carries potential for catalyzing both transformational and transportational change. Whereas transformation refers to permanent change, transportation refers to a temporal state of change after which one is transported back to their initial state of being (Stephenson, 2020, 15 & 19). In this study I refer to the transformative potential of liminality as I am concerned with questioning the core markers that define white Afrikaner identity, which no longer find grounding in the socio-political systems of contemporary democratic South Africa – as such, necessitating transformation.

located between a past and a coming state, one that is defined by ambiguity as it shares either few or no attributes with the past or future state.

The transitory nature of liminality means that it must eventually evolve into a new state of being (Turner, 2011: 94). The process of liminal transition involves three stages: separation, liminality and reincorporation (Turner, 2011: 94). The first stage involves disengagement and departure from the previous identity conception during which the potential of as yet unexplored possibilities arises (Benvenuti, MacGregor, De Klerk, Padayachee & Dison, 2022: 91). The second stage entails “betwixt and between-ness” (Turner, 2011: 94) – the identity is no longer located whence it came nor arrived at a new destination. The third stage is “belonging”, that involves the identity’s attachment to a space or, in the case of this study, a new identity conception (Benvenuti et al., 2022: 91, 92).

Beech (2011: 287) applies Turner’s liminality to the process of identity reconstruction, defining it as the disruption of an identity in order to reconstruct a new identity that is “meaningful for the individual and their community”. A liminal identity is thus both “no longer” and “not yet”, meaning that it has moved beyond its previous identity construction but has not yet reached its new reconfiguration (Wels, Van der Waal, Spiegel, Kamsteeg, 2011: 1). The liminal identity thus occupies multiple spaces at once; in other words, it is a hybrid identity,¹¹² a state of being “neither the one nor the other” (Bhabha, 1994: 41).

The liminal space offers fertile ground for re-evaluating, questioning and transforming identity (Maksimović, 2023: 152). Meyer and Land (2005: 373) ascribe the conditions that evoke changes to identity to “threshold concepts” and “troublesome knowledge”. Threshold concepts are doorways to uncharted and often initially problematic approaches to thinking that were previously inaccessible (Meyer & Land, 2005: 373). This inaccessibility may have been brought on by the boundaries of a previous state of identity that limited certain conceptual thinking due to the perpetuation of certain cultural narratives. New approaches to knowledge made available by the ‘crossing’ of threshold concepts may disrupt previous understandings of the specific knowledge, rendering it ‘troublesome’, and lead to new, fresh perspectives on, approaches to and understandings of the previously inaccessible modes of thinking. They may also lead to transformation¹¹³ of the identity (Meyer & Land, 2005: 373).

¹¹² I discuss hybridity in Chapter 4, 4.2.4 *Culture, hybridity, and cultural narrative identity*.

¹¹³ I argue that fantasy may achieve this in Section 4.5 *Fantasy as a liminal strategy for questioning white Afrikaner identity*.

Yet when, for example, examining white Afrikaner identity in post-1994 democratic South Africa, it is clear that not all members of a cultural identity are willing to forego the previous narratives¹¹⁴ and to embrace the transformative potential of the liminal space. This attachment to past narratives and past states as a means to circumvent the transformative potential of the liminal space involves a sense of nostalgia.

The word nostalgia comprises two parts, the Greek words *nostos*, referring to a “return home” and *algia*, a feeling of “longing” (Boym, 2016: 7). Nostalgia is the sentimental longing for a home now lost, or the remembering of a romanticised, and sometimes imagined, version, or narrative, of the past (Steenkamp, 2016: 317) which has been brought into the present (Sedikides & Wildschut, 2018: 2). Nostalgia exists as a cognitive and emotional space in which an identity can be located; it revolves around the memory of a past space which extends beyond the lifetime of the physical place. As such, nostalgia functions as a strategy of memory that is used to navigate ongoing change, disruption and the displacement of communities from spaces of belonging. Moreover, in the context of white Afrikanerhood, nostalgia may exist as a strategy to resist transformation in the liminal space by the clinging to narratives of the past which perpetuate their erstwhile privilege.

The process of narration thus concretises a time or space of belonging that anchors identity in a historical past and reasserts the narratives that constructed that identity (such as originary narratives which I discuss in the next section), resulting in its reification. Nostalgia further enables identities to be imagined as a unity through sharing in narratives of the past, as per Anderson’s principle of imagined communities.

4.2.3 Anderson, Bhabha and culture as narration of identity

Anderson (2006: 6) refers to communities that form around a communal aspect such as culture, location, religion, or for a multitude of other reasons as “imagined communities”. An “imagined community” exists as a mode of identification by means of which most members, though they never meet nor interact, “imagine” themselves as a collective with concrete

¹¹⁴ I refer here to pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity markers which I discuss in Section 4.3 *Pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity*.

boundaries that separate them from others (Anderson, 2006: 6) and so serves to define the identity of the community.

Nations, for example, are “imagined” through the ideologies that nationalism perpetuates (Anderson, 2006: 6). Anderson (2006: 7) argues that the construct of ‘nation’ is an “imagined political community” that is “limited and sovereign”, which indicates that the nation has “finite boundaries” and holds a position of ultimate determinate power. Members of a nation, who, in many ways, hold very different beliefs and ideas, are unified under the banner of the ‘nation’ and as such, associate themselves with the same “cultural practices” and identify with the national identity and its boundaries (Anderson, 1991: 6-7). The members of a so-called nation imagine their unity through narratives that pertain to their geographical location and their proximity to other members of the nation, their history and the myth of origin and their beliefs and values, which are perpetuated through their national narratives. These narratives, which I understand to be the narrative identity of the nation, cultivate an emotional attachment to the imagined community of the nation and reinforce the individual’s sense of belonging to this community (Anderson, 1991: 5).

Anderson’s ideas are applicable beyond the locus of nation and can be applied to the way cultures are constructed (Calhoun, 2016: 12), as I undertake in this study. Calhoun (2016: 12) states that Anderson’s theory of imagined communities speaks to “social imaginaries, institutionalised cultural ways of calling realities into being and constituting practices” (Calhoun 2016: 12), that is, those shared cultural practices that shape their understanding of reality. As contextualised in the previous section, in the context of this study, I understand these cultural practices to be the narratives through which a cultural identity and its understanding of reality and the behaviour in it is shaped.

Furthermore, Calhoun (2016: 12) states that the concept of imagined communities calls attention to the “dynamics of socially and culturally organised imagination as processes at the heart of political culture, *self-understanding* and solidarity” (emphasis added). I highlight the term “self-understanding” as inherent in the concept of narrative identity, by means of which identity is imagined through ‘narratives of the self’. A cultural community would share communal narratives of the self in a mutual language¹¹⁵ through which they enhance

¹¹⁵ I discuss this further in 4.3.1 *Afrikaans Language* and 4.4.1 *The Afrikaans language: conservation through consumption*.

“solidarity” by imagining themselves a cultural unity. Language itself becomes a narrative through which cultural communities may imagine their unity.

In order to investigate *how* these shared narratives are formed within cultures and how they aid in the imagining of cultural identity – for example, Afrikanerhood – I turn to Bhabha’s (1990: 3, 297) concept of nation as a product of narration, an idea which has been applied to the sphere of culture by scholars such as Wasserman (2000) and Hall (2015) in their investigations of the construction of culture and cultural identity. To contextualise the application of these ideas to culture, I first explore Bhabha’s ideas on narration in relation to the nation.

Bhabha (1990: 139) understands cultural identification as operating ‘in the name of’ the ‘nation’. This means that ‘the nation’ and ‘the people’ become central figures and are perpetuated through narratives, including “cultural histories, myths and meanings”, which gives them a sense of legitimacy. The nation is thus a cultural and “narrative construction”, an idea that is perpetuated through the cultural myths that are continuously retold among those people who identify with and ‘belong’ to the nation (Bhabha, 1990: 139). For Bhabha (1990: 1-7), the nation as a “narrative construction” emerges from “competing hybrid cultural discourses and practices” and therefore relies on meaning that is negotiated among the members of the imagined community. This ‘negotiation’ is not isolated from systems of power within the nation, which perpetuate narratives that bolster certain ideological agendas.

The narratives shaped and told by those in power create the “truths of the nation”, including the myths of its origins, its values, boundaries, and sense of unity, which are in turn enacted by its people (Bhabha, 1990: 139). The retelling of these narratives leads to the continuous imparting and reinforcement of the nation’s rules, norms, values and symbols (Bhabha, 1990: 139), as conceived by those in power. As such, the narratives that construct the nation rely on “unstable knowledge”; that is, the knowledge perpetuated through the narratives is subject to shifts due to changes in the positioning of social classes and those who hold political power (Bhabha, 1990: 1-7). The narratives through which a nation is narrated are thus continuously being negotiated by national subjects.

Bhabha (1990: 1) argues that a nation, as an imagined community, exists as a “continuous narrative of national progress” – the continuous process of national becoming, according to Anthias’ (2018: 139) approach to identity. Here, progress is indicative of the nation undergoing continuous changes and shifts (whether progressive or regressive) that is captured through

the narration of this progress. This “narrative of national progress” is ambivalent as it relies on the presence of both “pedagogical” and “performative” narratives (Bhabha, 1990: 297). Bhabha (1990: 297) frames this ambiguity as follows:

[T]he people are the historical ‘objects’ of a Nationalist pedagogy ... and the people are also the ‘subjects’ of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principle of the people.

Pedagogical narratives are the historical accounts of a nation that are perpetuated through its traditions (Bhabha, 1990: 299). Pedagogical narratives teach members of the nation the narrative of their nation’s origin, and as such, the narrative of their identity as part of the nation. For this reason, Bhabha (1990: 297) frames a nation’s people as “objects of a nationalist pedagogy” – they are the products of a discourse of national pedagogy perpetuated through the nation’s narratives, including its originary narratives.

I understand narratives of origin (or originary narratives) to be a type of pedagogical narrative. Bennington (1990: 121) argues that, in attempting to define a nation, there may be a focus on the narrative of the nation’s origins as the “centre” of the nation. As Bennington (1990: 121) states, “at the origin of the nation, we find a story of the nation’s origins”. This ‘centre of the nation’ is shaped by narratives of historical events and by myths of pioneering figures and national heroes, all of which are situated in a historical context and may be recalled with nostalgia (Bennington, 1990: 121).

Pedagogical narratives indicate that the nation is “designated by itself” (Bhabha, 1990: 299). This means that the nation takes on an active, agentive role in formulating the narrative of its own historicity by determining what is included in it and by narrating its own collective identity as a nation. As Kotze (2013: 50) states, history is “continuously and creatively deconstructed and reconstructed on both individual and collective scales”. Originary narratives are constructed alongside specific ideologies that deliberately exclude certain events and narratives from its memory. They cannot be assumed to be unproblematic or unbiased as they are subjectively constructed narratives of the past (Kotze, 2013: 47). However, the nation is not limited to the narratives of its origins – as mentioned above, it exists as a continuous process of national becoming. This continuity is reflected in Bhabha’s (1990: 297) concept of performative narratives.

The people of the nation are active agents who produce and reproduce the narrative of the nation through continuous, everyday actions and the performance of their national identity (Bhabha, 1990: 297). The resultant performative narratives are thus the products of how the discourses constructed in pedagogical narratives are “negotiated” in everyday life (Janzen, 2006: 177). Performative narratives involve the construction of national signs and narratives through a lived, continuous process of formulation whereby “scraps ... of life must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a national culture” (Bhabha, 1990: 297). The process is thus one of the active construction of the nation through “a conscious act of imagining” (Roy, 2006: 60)

Bhabha refers to the “performative time” in which these narratives are formed as “the present of the people’s history” (1990: 303). “Performative time” indicates that performative narratives are constructed in the *now* – through various repetitive processes by which narratives of the nation are formulated, performed and shaped (Bhabha, 1990: 303). This gives performative narratives the power to subvert and challenge those structures and ideologies shaped by pedagogical narratives (Bhabha, 1990: 297), especially within post-colonial and liminal spaces. This is, for example, what is occurring in the case of many young white Afrikaners who are attempting to reimagine a new Afrikaner identity (as discussed in the introduction of this chapter).

Conversely, many white Afrikaners nostalgically rely on pedagogical narratives as a result of the uprooting of their identity markers. This complicates performative expression of their imagined historical white Afrikaner nationhood. In the post-1994 context of white Afrikanerhood, the production and consumption of Afrikaans films can be seen as the creation of “national signs” (Bhabha, 1990: 297). As such, performative narratives may also reify limiting pedagogical narratives as, for example, in the case of some post-1994 Afrikaans films that cling to and portray markers of nationalist white Afrikaner identity¹¹⁶. In relation to pedagogical and performative narratives, it becomes clear that the process of narration may both bolster and challenge the construct of the nation.

The duality of pedagogical and performative narratives is also reflected in the formation of culture. Pedagogical narratives refer to those grand narratives¹¹⁷ (such as Calvinism and

¹¹⁶ See 4.4.2 *White Afrikaans identity in post-1994 white Afrikaans films*.

¹¹⁷ Grand narratives guided much modernist thinking in the first half of the 20th century. Jean-François Lyotard coined the term ‘grand narratives’ in his book, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984: xxiii) in reference to a system of thought which is interpreted as a supposedly

patriarchal structures) and originary narratives (such as the myth of civil religion) that are historically situated in a pre-1994 context but still serve to inform Afrikaner neo-nationalism¹¹⁸ today.

Wasserman (2000: 96) applies Bhabha's theoretical framework of pedagogical and performative narratives to the formation of cultural identity in the context of Afrikaner narratives. According to Wasserman (2000: 95), as with the idea of the 'nation', culture is an ever-changing construct and is continuously re-formed through ongoing social processes which require the negotiation of cultural identities and their pedagogy – meaning the ideologies that are expressed through cultural narratives. Culture is aimed at the present (performative narratives) but is continuously shaped and changed by the influences of history (pedagogical narratives) and shifting power dynamics (Wasserman, 2000: 95). Pedagogical narratives provide the foundation on which performative narratives continue in the imagination of the culture in the course of performative time, in other words, in the present of the culture. Due to the changing nature of culture, pedagogical and performative narratives are constantly shifting and changing. This means that performative narratives, through their ongoing process of meaning construction, constantly question the pedagogical frame provided by pedagogical narratives (Huddardt, 2005: 121).

In order to foster a developed understanding of how culture may exist as narration, in the following section, I define culture before investigating its hybrid nature and the manner in which the concepts of culture, narration and identity work together within my theoretical framework for cultural narrative identity.

4.2.4 Culture, hybridity, and cultural narrative identity

Due to the multitude of applications of and meanings¹¹⁹ associated with 'culture' (Cuddon, 2013: 179), I can only attempt to define my understanding of the concept within the very specific parameters of this study, which necessitates omitting some of its attributes. Here, I

universal truth and claims to explain historical events, the distribution of power, social structures, and the like (Mazarakis, 2016: 14).

¹¹⁸Afrikaner neo-nationalism refers to a political and ideological movement focused on reinstating the ideals and unequal power structures of white nationalist South Africa that implemented and maintained the racially discriminatory and oppressive apartheid system (Van der Westhuizen, 2019a: 38).

¹¹⁹ See seminal cultural theorists: Arnold, 1869; Boas, 1940; Tylor, 1871.

turn to Spencer-Oatey's (2008: 3) broad definition of culture as a social construct which relates to series of underpinning assumptions, morals, values, beliefs and dispositions which influence but do not dictate or control behaviour. These assumptions are communicated through cultural narratives and affect how the behaviour of others is read, as well as, according to Hall (2020: 7), providing a shared framework for cultural meaning-making.

Müller-Funk (2003: 43) states that a culture, "as the realm of identity", exists as a "narrative community". This emphasis on "narrative community" indicates that narratives form the *glue* that binds together the different elements of culture and prescribes the modes of behaviour associated with it (Cupsa, 2018: 181). In the context of culture, narrative identity thus refers to those specific narratives that construct the self-image of the culture and determine how it locates itself within and engages with the world with a sense of cultural solidarity, through, for example, its cultural myths – such as its originary narratives. A change in culture, therefore, happens in tandem with a change in the culture's narratives (Müller-Funk, 2003: 43). These shared meanings and modes of behaviour, in other words, the cultural identity, rely on a form of shared language (Hall, 2020: 7) by means of which narratives are conveyed, one which cultivates a sense of unity within the culture.

This unity is often underscored by a sense of supposed cultural purity and is perpetuated through cultural narratives that attempt to create a seemingly unbroken link between the history of the culture (through pedagogical narratives) and the present of the culture (through performative narratives). For example, in white Afrikanerhood, the idea of a pure white Afrikaner culture is perpetuated through pedagogical narratives that locate the origins of white Afrikaners in a supposed cultural unity. This supposed cultural unity is sustained in the present of the culture through performative narratives, such as Afrikaans films¹²⁰ that maintain the idea of Afrikaners as a unity.

This notion of cultural purity is problematised by Bhabha's (1994) notion of cultural hybridity. Hybridity is located at the intersections between cultures where an identity may occupy multiple cultural spaces simultaneously (Cuddon, 2013: 344). Bhabha (1994: 2, 34, 35) considers cultural hybridity the result of the process of colonisation whereby the culture of the coloniser was not only imposed on the colonised, but also adopted¹²¹ by the latter and

¹²⁰ I discuss representations of white Afrikaners cultural identity in film under 4.4.2 *White Afrikaans identity in post-1994 white Afrikaans films*.

¹²¹ I wish to acknowledge here that Bhabha's approach to colonialism does not aim to disavow the horrors of colonialism by framing the colonised as passive receptors of colonial power and of the imposing of their cultures; rather, it aims to give agency to the colonised, with their appropriation of

performed back to the coloniser as an assimilated part of their own culture. The performance disrupts the myth of a ‘pure culture’ on the part of the coloniser, as the culmination, integration and appropriation of cultural elements result in hybrid cultural identities on behalf of the colonised. These hybrid cultural identities – people identify with, and imagine themselves part of, multiple cultures and their narratives simultaneously. As Bhabha (1994: 25) states, hybrid identities, pertaining to cultural spaces, are “neither the one, nor the other”, but “new” spaces where all these cultural influences can be negotiated. (I discuss Bhabha’s third space of enunciation below.)

In a post-colonial and postcolonial¹²² context, the multiple historical cultural ‘belongings’ of an identity may become inseparably integrated within the hybrid identity, and its plurality or multiplicity may find expression in hybrid linguistic forms such as creole languages (Cuddon, 2013: 344). For example, the cultural hybridity of Afrikaner identity, among others, is expressed in the Afrikaans language. Afrikaans was historically formed through multiple cultural influences, including the heritages of the Dutch, French and other European settlers at the Cape, those of peoples native to South Africa as well as the various cultures¹²³ that encountered one another at the Cape in the course of plying their trading routes.

As cultural hybridity refers to the simultaneous identification with multiple cultural spaces, it functions as a site of ambiguity wherein an identity is situated “betwixt and between” cultures, indicating, as per Turner (2011: 94), a space of liminality. Moreover, as regards cultural hybridity, Bhabha (1994: 34-36) refers to an “intermediate space”, a so-called “third space of enunciation” that exists at the interstices of the various cultural spaces. In this third space, cultural hybridity is not to be understood as identification with multiple cultures as fixed, homogenous entities; rather, it acknowledges that culture is dynamic and shifting – there is no ‘pure’ culture – and that cultural identities are thus intrinsically hybrid entities (Bhabha, 1994: 37, 38; Norval, 2012: 313).

In this third space of enunciation, meaning is negotiated between the cultural sites (Bhabha, 1994: 36). The third space functions as a place of questioning and negotiation between cultural identities and enables cultures and their associated signs to be viewed and understood in a

the imposed colonial culture as their own, which disrupts the myth of a ‘pure’ or superior culture on the part of the coloniser.

¹²² My use of post-colonial refers to the time-period that chronologically follows the end of a colonial era. Postcolonialism, on the other hand, is an academic field concerned with the impact of colonialism in relation to issues such as gender, race and class hierarchies (Cuddon, 2013: 550, 551).

¹²³ I discuss these cultural influences in Section 4.3.1 *The Afrikaans language*.

new light (Bhabha, 1994: 55-56). This is done by shifting the focus from cultural homogeneity to cultural ambiguity (Bhabha, 1994: 36-37). In this ambiguous third space, no cultural hierarchy exists. This is accomplished by acknowledging cultural hybridity through the recognition of marginalised narratives that may exist outside pedagogical originary narratives in post-colonial contexts. Applying Bhabha's theory of nation as narration (see 4.2.3 Anderson, *Bhabha and culture as narration of identity*) here to his theory of cultural hybridity and the third space of enunciation, it indicates that the negotiation of a hybrid cultural identity is thus undertaken through the negotiation of its cultural narratives. I illustrate Bhabha's third space in Figure 16 below.

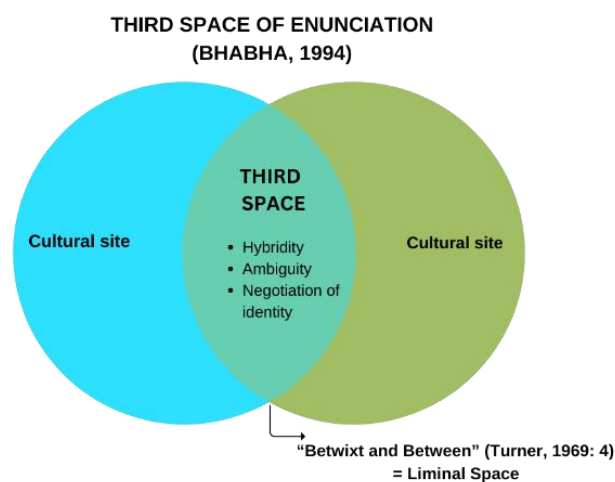


Figure 16: Bhabha's (1994) third space of enunciation. (Illustration by the author).

Due to the interwoven relationship between narratives, culture, and identity, discussed in the above sections, what I refer to as 'cultural narrative identity' is the specific narratives perpetuated in a culture that serves to construct the identity of the culture, and so, guide behaviour and the ways in which meaning is made (Cupsa, 2018: 181). In framing the formation of cultural narrative identity using Anderson's and Bhabha's theories, I understand the identity of a culture to be *imagined* through its pedagogical and performative narratives and shared history, the language it is told in and, according to Berk (2016: 68), the myths it perpetuates. These myths are related to originary narratives as myths of origin. As Anderson (2006: 6) states, "[c]ommunities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined". This process of imagining through narration involves

the creation of cultural myths that, in turn, construct a culture's cultural narrative identity, as I discuss in the following section.

4.2.5 Cultural myth-making

In this section, I build on the definition of myth provided in Chapter 2¹²⁴ where I investigated myths as narratives that provide culture-specific interpretations of the seen and unseen world (Mills, 2020: 203-204). A culture's myths describe how a moral or purposeful life should be lived in that culture (McAdams, 2011: 110). Myths are shared narratives, such as ordinary myths, through which a sense of unity is imagined within an identity (Lubbe, 2002: [sp]). Myths function to "validate and inform cultural beliefs and practices" (Berger, 2016: 93-95). Myths, which function as a mode of messaging or signification (Barthes, 1991: 107) hence reflect unique attributes of cultural identity and cultivate an inner dialogue with the culture itself (Grant, 2003: 28).

Cowan (2019: xiii) describes the explanation of phenomena through the creation of narratives as "mythic vision", which refers to "larger frames of meaning into which we continually write ourselves and through which we often give our lives direction and purpose". This speaks to the concept of cultural narrative identity: myths, as narratives, are told and retold (Valipour, 2016: 209) within a specific cultural context which serves to construct cultural identity by forming part of the culture's narrative identity (Cupsa, 2018: 181).

In his seminal work, *Mythologies*, Roland Barthes (1991: 113) investigates how myths are formulated in society using a semiological¹²⁵ approach in which meaning becomes associated with an object or a concept (the signifier). The associated or signified meaning – the myth – is consequently accepted by cultures and societies (Frog, 2018: 21) as a "factual system" though it is only a "semiological system" (Barthes, 1991: 130). Barthes (1991: 128) calls this phenomenon "naturalisation", the process by which the created myth, that is a cultural narrative, is perceived as constituting and describing the natural order of things (Frog, 2018: 21). Barthes (1991: 128) states that "myths transform history into nature", indicating that historically constructed myths become so naturalised within a culture that they are accepted

¹²⁴ See 2.4.2.1 *Fantasy and myth*.

¹²⁵ Semiology is the science of signs, signals and their construction of meaning (Cuddon, 2013: 643). A semiological approach, in the context of myths, is concerned with understanding how meaning is created and understood through mythological narratives.

as the natural order of things, 'how things have always been'. This brings to mind Bhabha's (1990: 297) assertion that the nation exists as form of narration comprising pedagogical and performative narratives.

In line with the definition of myths provided at the beginning of this section, I position pedagogical and performative narratives as myths. Like myths, pedagogical narratives function according to Lubbe's (2002: [sp]) definition of myths as shared narratives that narrate a culture's origins and prescribe cultural modes of behaviour. Similarly, like myths, performative narrative offers what Mills (2020: 203-204) ascribes to myths: culture-specific explanations for phenomena. Furthermore, performative narratives, like myths, functions as a mode of signification. As indicated above, Barthes (1991: 107) defines myths as a mode of messaging or signification, while similarly, Bhabha (1990: 297) defines performative narratives as a "sign of national culture". As I apply Bhabha's principles to culture, performative narratives thus functions as a signifier of culture, like myths.

In terms of pedagogical narratives, originary narratives become naturalised in cultures which serve both to naturalise and normalise certain narratives, behaviours, perceptions, values; how cultures imagine their place in the world; and how others relate to them and their place in the world. In the context of white Afrikaner mythological narratives, pedagogical narratives can refer to those nationalist narratives that mythologised the history of white Afrikanerdom, such as the myth of the Afrikaner's "civil religion" (Moodie, 1975: 2). According to South African sociologist Thomas Dunbar Moodie (1975: 1-2)¹²⁶ in his book, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom*, the myth of civil religion constitutes "the sacred saga of Afrikanerdom". Civil religion designates the origins of the white Afrikaner nation in which Calvinism plays a central and determinate role (Moodie, 1975: 1). Moodie (1975: 1) states: "in the Afrikaner civil religion, God imbues all history with ultimate meaning". In other words, all events encapsulated in civil religion are underscored by a theme of Calvinism and the narrative that the history of the Afrikaner was determined by God.

The myth is built on the belief that the Afrikaners' ancestors were of Western Europe descent and that the arrival of these white ancestral settlers on South African soil in 1652 was part of a higher predestination to fulfil a religious mission to "maintain justice and bring the light of the

¹²⁶ I regard Moodie's *The Rise of Afrikanerdom* (1975) as a seminal source in this study as it captures white Afrikaner history as it was narrated through Afrikaner nationalist propaganda. It provides valuable insights into how civil religion functions as a pedagogical narrative and how it contributed to the cultural narrative identity of white Afrikaners historically and, arguably, continues to contribute today.

Gospel and civilisation to Africa” (Van der Merwe, 2009: 37). This mythological history of civil religion broadly includes the time period between Britain’s colonial claim to the Cape in 1806, the Great Trek and the various conflicts that arose between the Voortrekkers, the indigenous peoples of South Africa and the British colonial powers. The myth ends in 1914. In Table 1¹²⁷ below, I summarise the historical events that Moodie (1975: 1-11), in *The Rise of Afrikanerdom*, presents as constituting the “ideal and typical description” (Moodie, 1975: vii) of the originary narrative of white Afrikanerhood.

Table 1: The events of the civil religion of Afrikaners, according to Moodie (1975: 1-11). (Table created by the author.)

Civil Religion (Moodie, 1975)
Jan van Riebeeck establishes a settlement at the Cape in 1652. In 1688, 200 French Huguenots who flees religious persecution join the settlement (Moodie, 1975: 2).
“Afrikaners were Calvinists of Western European origin and a nation in their own right before arrival of the English” (Moodie, 1975: 2)
British imperial occupation: British liberal black policy (Moodie, 1975: 3); victimisation and killing of Afrikaners by British rule (Moodie, 1975: 3-4); anglicisation policy impacts on churches and education (Moodie, 1975: 4); oppression of Afrikaners after their assistance in the Anglo-Xhosa war (Moodie, 1975: 5).
The Great Trek: Afrikaners leave Cape colony and head north (Moodie, 1975: 5)
Attack on the Boers by British army and Mzilikazi (Moodie, 1975: 5).
Victory against the Matabele at Vegkop, reinforcement of supplies from the main Voortrekker company, and the pursuit and punishment of the Matabele (Moodie, 1975: 5).
Trekkers move east. Piet Retief is sent to purchase land (Natalia) from Dingaan. After Retief pays, he and his men are murdered, and the Zulu army sets after the trekkers (Moodie, 1975: 6). Attack of the laager by the Zulu army.
Arrival of Andries Pretorius and his men, the swearing of the <i>geloofte</i> (oath), and the trekkers’ retaliation and victory in the consequent Battle of <i>Bloedrivier</i> ¹²⁸ (Battle of Blood River, or the battle of Ncome River) (Moodie, 1975: 6).
Establishment of the Republic of Natal (Moodie, 1975: 7).

¹²⁷ In Chapter 6, I use this table to construct the Afrikaans-fantasy plot structure that reflects white Afrikaner identity.

¹²⁸ I acknowledge the problematisations and sensitivity in the contemporary South African context in relation to this historical event.

British annexation of Natal (Moodie, 1975: 7). The trekkers move over the Drakensberg mountains (Moodie, 1975: 7).
Establishment of the Republic of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic (Moodie, 1975: 7). Temporary “pastoral bliss” (Moodie, 1975: 7).
British annexation of Transvaal Republic in 1877 (Moodie, 1975: 7).
First Freedom/Boer War between Britain and trekkers over the Republic of the Transvaal in 1880-1881, the renewal of the Blood River oath, and independence for the Transvaal due to trekker’s victory (Moodie, 1975: 7-8).
Discovery of gold in the Transvaal in 1886 and the emergence of “imperialist capitalism” (Moodie, 1975: 8). The Jameson Raid in the Transvaal in 1895 to overthrow the Boer government, inspired by the British prime minister of the Cape Colony, Cecil John Rhodes (Moodie, 1975: 8).
Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir Alfred Milner, makes “impossible demands” supported by force; negotiations between British and the Boers fail, and Boers declare war against Britain in 1899 (Moodie, 1975: 9).
Anglo Boer War: Free State and Transvaal declared British colonies; guerrilla attacks by Boer generals and their bands; burning of farms and detention of Boer women and children in concentration camps (Moodie, 1975: 9-10). The Boers surrender and sign an unsatisfactory peace treaty in 1902 (Moodie, 1975: 10).
Two Boer generals join the imperialists. When the Second World War broke out in Europe, Afrikaners are expected to fight alongside British soldiers against German South-West Africa in World War II (Moodie, 1975: 10).
Due to the Boer generals’ allegiance with the imperialist cause, a Boer rebellion arises due to the Boer alliance with Britain (Moodie, 1975: 10). General Smuts smothers the rebellion and sends Jopie Fourie, a Boer rebel against the alliance, to face a firing squad in 1914 (Moodie, 1975: 10).
Establishment of Nationalist Party ¹²⁹ in 1915 and consequent active rise of Afrikaner nationalism (Grundlingh, 2019: [sp]).

The civil-religion myth discussed above ties in with the concept of originary narratives as it provides a pedagogical frame for the establishment of Afrikaner cultural identity and the

¹²⁹ I investigate white Afrikaner nationalism under the Nationalist Party in 4.3 *Pre-1994 White Afrikaner identity*.

narratives that construct this identity through the process of cultural myth-making. The narratives embedded in civil religion that later constituted the pedagogy of nationalist Afrikanerhood include a belief in godly predestination bolstered by an oath for protection sworn to God that was followed by a victory over the Zulu regiments. This reiterated the existing narratives of Afrikaners being a chosen people of God, a right to land ownership, racial superiority, and patriarchal systems of power as reified through Calvinist beliefs. These narratives evolved to become some of the key markers of Afrikaner nationalism. This occurred through a process of naturalisation whereby the civil-religion myth and its inherent ideologies became normalised in the white Afrikaner mindset to the extent that they formed a motivation and justification the later implementation of apartheid strategies.

With reference to Barthes' semiological approach to cultural myth-making, the civil religion myth and its pedagogy became so naturalised within the cultural narrative identity of white Afrikaners that it overshadowed and marginalised any other ethnicity or race's share in the Afrikaans language or in the places white Afrikaners wished to inhabit. Afrikanerhood and its associated privileges, such as the ownership of land, became the sole 'property' of white Afrikaners based on this myth of civil religion and Godly predestination. In this case, myths such as 'originary narratives' served to promote a pedagogical framework through which to view history, motivated by an ideological purpose – here, the exclusion of other peoples and their identities – in order to imagine the boundaries of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

The creation of boundaries around a cultural collective relates to Anderson's (2006) notion of imagined communities as cultural narrative identity is imagined through the narratives it either perpetuates or excludes. That is, culture and its boundaries exist as an act of myth-making. As such, "the creation of myths is not innocent" (Barthes, 1991: 61) but is almost always prompted by an ideological agenda. It is in this act of imagining that fantasy can play a role in the process of cultural myth-making and, consequently, in the construction of narrative identity. As may be observed, Barthes' principle of naturalisation plays a central role in the creation of cultural narrative identity– here, in the context of white Afrikanerhood's naturalising of pedagogical myths such as civil religion.

Pertaining to the creation of cultural narrative identity through myths, I distinguish between two types of myths that contribute to the construction of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity: internal and external myths. Internal myths¹³⁰ are those culture-specific narratives that

¹³⁰ I recognise that cultural narrative identity consists of myths other than internal myths. I discuss my delineation of 'eternal' myths in Chapter 5.

originate within a cultural group and which function to actively construct cultural narrative identity and its markers – in this context, the civil religion of white Afrikaners. Internal myths are overtly concerned with constructing cultural identity through the process of cultural myth-making. In framing civil religion as an internal myth, I understand the latter as a process of narration in which the origins of the fundamental markers of white Afrikaner identity are described through a claimed historicity; yet, the myth is merely a product of ideology and constitutes the pedagogy through which the identity is understood.

In this study, I frame Moodie's (1975: 1-2) notion of civil religion as the dominant internal myth, as he states that his interpretation of civil religion draws primarily from the speeches of Afrikaner nationalist president Paul Kruger, and a pamphlet published in 1899 by the Transvaal government. Moodie (1975: 1-2) draws from these sources to convey how the pedagogical history of the Afrikaner was narrated and imagined by those who purposefully aimed at bolstering Afrikaner identity. Moodie's (1975) civil religion thus links myth with narration. Furthermore, Moodie (1975: 2) argues that his interpretation of the civil religion is in line with the one "developed" by Afrikaans author CJ Langenhoven, who penned many external Afrikaner myths. I highlight Moodie's use of "developed" here to underline the civil religion myth's mythological nature and the claim that the narration of an ordinary narrative exists as a process of cultural myth-making.

Not all Afrikaans myths are, however, so overtly concerned with themes of establishing culture, community, and identity, such as civil religion. Investigating white Afrikaner identity and its various mythical narratives, it becomes evident that various types of mythologies exist within the context of white Afrikaner narrative culture. External myths exist as mythological narratives¹³¹ that have emerged from within the culture; these are not deliberately aimed at establishing identity but are creative expressions of it. I discuss external myths in Chapter 5.

¹³¹ I reiterate that I use 'mythological narratives' as a collective term to refer to myths, folklore, fairytales, fables and legends.

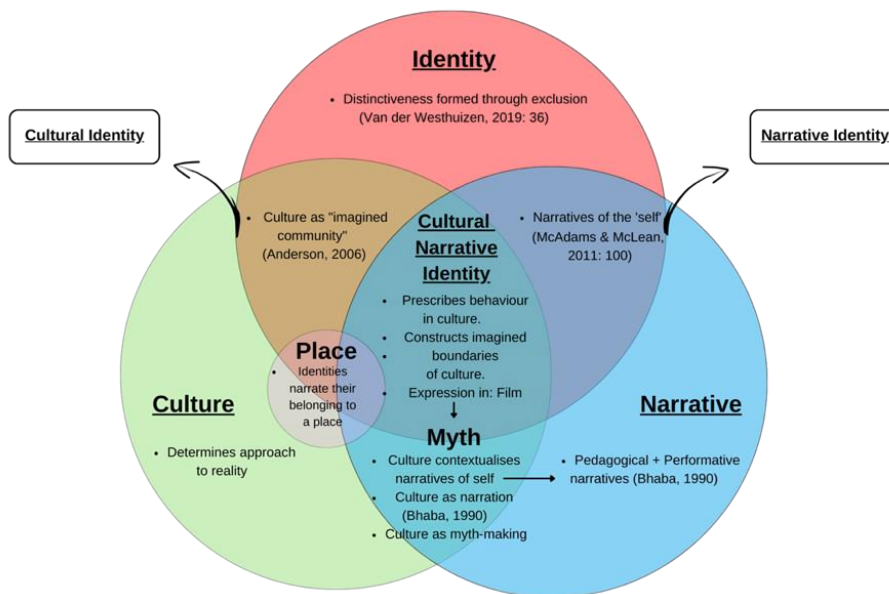


Figure 17: Relationship between identity, narrative and culture. (Illustration by the author).

Based on my investigation of the theories pertaining to the interwoven relationship between identity, place, narrative, culture, and myths, as illustrated in Figure 17, above, I summarise my theoretical lens in the following statement.

This study views narrative identity as the practical activation strategy for identity construction through which identities, despite their inherent hybridity, are able to imagine themselves as a 'comm(unity)'. Cultural identities, which is what this study is concerned with, continuously narrate themselves into existence and into social or geographical spaces through pedagogical and performative narratives; they exist as a form of cultural myth-making. The narratives through which the identity is imagined exist as the markers of the culture's identity. When a cultural identity's narratives (and thus its markers) are disrupted by processes of change, the identity crosses the threshold into a liminal space. This liminal space functions as a third space of enunciation in which the various narratives of a cultural identity's hybridity are negotiated. The liminal space thus offers those belonging to a cultural identity the opportunity for change and identity reconfiguration. I illustrate this theoretical framework in Figure 18, below.

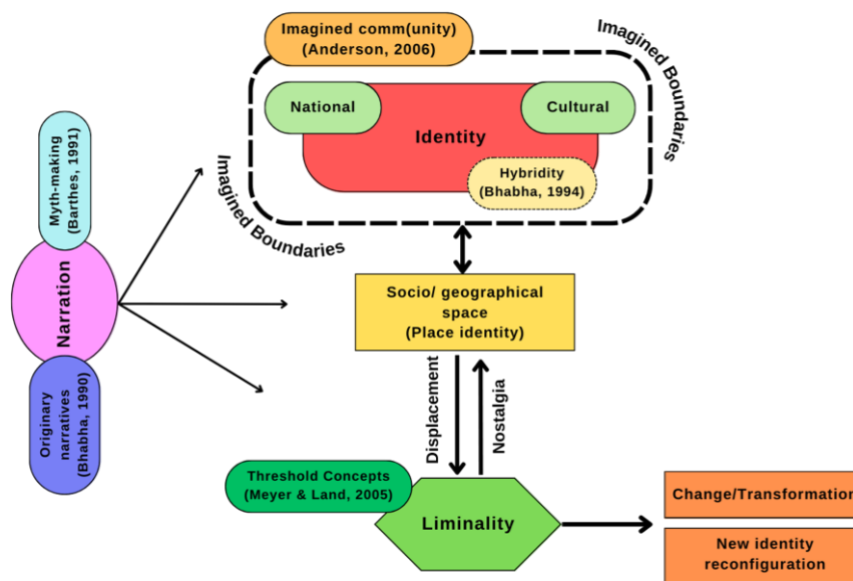


Figure 18: Schematic of the theoretical framework used in this study (Illustration by the author).

In the following section, I investigate the formation of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity using the theoretical framework discussed above. I examine the specific pedagogical myths that led to the imagining of a white Afrikaner nation and the various identity markers that defined the nationalist Afrikaner identity. In other words, I investigate white Afrikaner culture as a process of myth-making and consider what ideologies are perpetuated in this myth. This investigation into the various narratives that construct white Afrikaner culture is undertaken by means of an investigation into Afrikaans film both before and after -1994. I understand films as performative narratives that, in the case of white Afrikaner identity, serve to uphold the ideologies perpetuated through white Afrikaner pedagogical myths, such as its originality narratives.

4.3 Pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity

In this section, I apply my theoretical framework for cultural narrative identity to the contextualisation of white Afrikaner identity and myth-making in relation to pre-1994 nationalist Afrikanerhood. It is necessary to contextualise which narratives contributed to the imagining of white Afrikanerhood before the advent of democracy in 1994, in order to understand how

white Afrikaners are currently renegotiating (Steyn, 2019: 9) their identity as an imagined community.

This being the case, I first broadly investigate white Afrikaner identity and related Afrikaner nationalism before 1994, focusing on how it attempted to foster cultural homogeneity.¹³² My delineation of 'pre-1994' white Afrikaner identity refers specifically to Afrikanerhood as it was moulded under the National Party from their coming to power in 1948 until the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994. I acknowledge that Afrikaner nationalism and the establishment of an 'Afrikaner' identity has a longer history of development. This I touch on only briefly. I view the pre-1948 historical development of white Afrikaner nationalism as a gradual progression leading to the establishing of these markers within the white Afrikaner mindset. I am specifically concerned with the markers of Afrikanerhood that reached their height of expression at the onset of apartheid.

I broadly and briefly discuss the historical development of white Afrikaner identity by referring to some of the key historical events that, in my view, shaped the markers of Afrikanerhood and the idea of the Afrikaner nation. As such, my account is necessarily incomplete. This I undertake to contextualise the originary narratives through which nationalist Afrikanerhood imagined its identity; these were consequently uprooted with the advent of democracy in South Africa. In other words, to understand the extent to which post-1994 white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity has been displaced from its position in the socio-political context of democratic South Africa, it is necessary to investigate how these narratives anchored white Afrikaner identity in a pre-1994 context.

My understanding of the Afrikaner nation is informed by Anderson's (2006: 6) notion of the nation¹³³ which he defines as a political community with imagined boundaries. The Afrikaner nation in itself exists as a collective fantasy in that, as defined by Anderson (2006: 6), it is an imagined community – both its unity and the boundaries to this unity are imagined. If the Afrikaner nation and its imagined unity relies on an element of fantasy, then Afrikaner nationalism, as a construct of multiple narratives and myths, can be seen as the collective fantasy of a nation. It is through fantasy that nations imagine themselves a community and through which they navigate the "ambiguities" (Glynos, 2011: par. 75) introduced by the

¹³² I acknowledge that cultural identity is not homogenous but heterogenous in its diverse expressions of identity. However, Afrikaner nationalism constructed and reified a myth of cultural homogeneity to uphold and bolster the narrative of a unified white Afrikaner nation.

¹³³ I discuss nation as an imaginary community in 4.2.3 *Anderson, Bhabha and culture as narration of identity*.

inherently hybrid nature of culture and identity. Rose (1996: 4) states that fantasy is the glue that binds (hybrid) cultural identities to phenomenal reality; in other words, it is the fabric of the imagination through which nations and cultures imagine their community and their unity to be 'real'.

The limited and imagined 'boundaries' of nations relates to the concept of identity and its inherent principle of exclusion (Van der Westhuizen, 2019a: 36), an act of separation from other identities (Brock & Tulasiewicz, 2018: 1). This act of separation concerns nationalism's often-extremist belief that common attributes of people such as "language, religion, or ethnicity" provide grounds for "separate and distinctive political communities" (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 2006: 259). Within these "political communities", nationalism creates a unifying bond that makes its members feel safe (Okoth, 2006: 1) within the boundaries of the imagined community.

Within the imagined boundaries of a political identity that has been formed around certain common characteristics, nationalism exists as an active strategy for unifying any divergent elements, such as hybrid identities and cultures, languages, religions, and ethnicities (Ashcroft et al., 2013: 259). This is accomplished through a process of negotiation between various identities and their narratives in order to ultimately foster feelings of uniformity and community between the members of a group (Bhabha, 1990: [sp]). This attempt at uniformity through national identity implies that the outcome of these negotiations of identity will be seen as beneficial by, and to, some individuals within the dominant group (Desai, 2010: 421 as cited in Kotze, 2013: 37) but will marginalise others. Nationalists hence focus on asserting the privilege of their specific imagined political community. In the context of white nationalist South Africa, this process of 'negotiation' was undertaken by means of tactics of the enforcing of dominance, indoctrination and cultural interpellation which favoured white Afrikaners in all spheres of socio-political and economic life.

Afrikaner nationalism had very early and tentative roots among a group of farmers called *vryburgers* or 'free burghers'. This group of Dutch and other European descent found solidarity against the oppression of British rule¹³⁴ and separated from the Cape colony – gradually from

¹³⁴ South Africa was subject to first Dutch and then British colonisation over the course of some centuries. This was motivated by European expansion for military, political and economic purposes. By 1650, the Netherlands had developed into the major European trading power. Its Dutch East India Trading Company traded on routes all along the coast of Africa through to India and the far East, and established trading posts, including the one at the Cape (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 40). Whether Dutch or British, Eurocentric norms, values, culture and knowledges were upheld as the centre of civilisation and human evolution. People from across Europe, including Dutch and German immigrants, British

around 1834 and later en mass as part of the *Groot Trek* or Great Trek (c. 1835-1838) – and moved into the interior of South Africa to establish settlements (Giliomee & Mbenga 2007: 108). This move was prompted by dissatisfaction with the policies of the colonial government (Kriel, 2021: 1200). Giliomee (2004: [sp]) states the Great Trek was not a desperate escape from imperialist oppression, but rather a decisive and well-orchestrated mass revolt in response to the Afrikaners' perceived political marginalisation by the colonial government.

While the white Afrikaner-nationalist approach to history interprets the Great Trek in terms of the need to establish a white Christian independent republic (Dladla, 2018: 430, 431), it led to bloodshed and the violent displacement of indigenous South African peoples (Majavu, 2022: 5).

The development of a new creole language, Afrikaans, in the Cape colony (Willemsse 2016: 3) became a mode of group identification and resistance for the *vryburghers* and *trekboere* (migrating farmers), although its use was not limited to these groups¹³⁵. The gradual development of Afrikaans as a language, together with the *Groot Trek* and the first and second Anglo-Boer Wars (1881 and 1899-1902) are key historical markers for the gradual formation of white Afrikaner identity and nationalism. The historical development of Afrikaans as a language included the establishment of Afrikaner organisations in the late 1800s by the first self-proclaimed 'Afrikaners' in the colonial Cape. These were aimed at the establishment and protection of the Afrikaans language and culture. These organisations were created in response to the British imperialist presence at the Cape (and the threat of its impeding presence in the self-declared Boer republics). They were important early agents in the development of Afrikaner nationalism (Kriel, 2010: 403). These organisations included the GRA (*Genootskap van Regte Afrikaanders* or Society of True Afrikaners), established in Paarl in 1875, and the ATV (*Afrikaanse Taalvereniging* or Afrikaans Language Association), established in 1906. Traumatized by the "cultural humiliation" Afrikaners endured during the Anglo-Boer War (Grundlingh, 2019: [sp]), Afrikaner cultural organisations aroused a "post-war

missionaries, merchants and French Huguenots gradually arrived at the Cape (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 60) The Dutch settlers transplanted their European traditions onto the newfound country (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 42, 46, 64), as did the later British colonisers (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 85). In 1795, the British took control of the Cape Colony, lost it to the Dutch in 1803 and regained control in 1806 (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007: 85). In 1910, the Cape colony and the (self-declared) Boer republics were integrated into the Union of South Africa. Though still British territory, Britain gave dominion over other races to the minority white population.

¹³⁵ I discuss this in more detail in 4.3.1 *Afrikaans language*.

activism” aimed at a “national awakening’ of Afrikaners” and at the institutionalisation of their language (Kriel, 2010: 407).

In 1914, the National Party, which actively advanced Afrikaner interests and Afrikaner nationalism, was founded (Grundlingh 2019: [sp]). It was supported by events such as the establishment of the *Broederbond* (League of Brothers) in 1918 in Johannesburg, by leading middle-class white Afrikaners. The Broederbond was a nationalist endeavour that appealed to the ordinary Afrikaner and actively promoted Afrikaner nationalism by setting out to advance the interests of white Afrikanerhood on all fronts (Giliomee & Mbenga 2007: 289). This period saw a gradual increase in the number of other specifically white Afrikaans institutions set on the nationalist advancement of the Afrikaans culture. These institutions included the *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge* (FAK), and youth organisations, such as the *Voortrekker* groups, (Giliomee & Mbenga 2007: 279).

Amidst the poverty of the 1930s Great Depression, the *Broederbond* developed economic development strategies known as *volkskapitalisme* to support Afrikaners (Grundlingh, 2019). Furthermore, the centenary memorial celebration of the Great Trek in 1938, and the laying of the Voortrekker Monument’s cornerstone (Giliomee & Mbenga 2007: 279, 289) provided tremendous traction for Afrikaner nationalism and its “propaganda of white supremacy” (Grundlingh, 2019).

With the rise of black African nationalism, Afrikaner nationalism’s reliance on the narrative of white supremacy resulted in the Nationalist Party’s attempt to include white English-speakers¹³⁶ under an umbrella of white nationalism to foster “white racial solidarity” (Dubow, 1992: 234). However, white Afrikaners were always at the forefront of privilege in white nationalist South Africa. Afrikaner nationalism became an active system of separation and social hierarchy that determined the ordering of social life and privilege in South Africa during the reign of the Nationalist Party. The criteria for privilege in the apartheid system were based on the narratives that constituted Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. Giliomee (1997: 126) views “superior state power, white unity, and black political fragmentation” as the defining pillars of Afrikaner domination during the apartheid years. By implementing these narratives as the ideological norm of apartheid South Africa, white Afrikaners could imagine themselves

¹³⁶ The need to foster white nationalism by bolstering white solidarity between English- and Afrikaans-speakers involved a clear acknowledgement of their cultural heterogeneity and historical “incompatibility” that stemmed from Afrikaners’ history of struggles against the British colonial occupation (Dubow, 1992: 234).

a nation whose members were all white, Afrikaans-speakers¹³⁷ with Calvinist Christian values, descendants of the Voortrekkers who were predestined to rule South Africa as per the myth of civil religion.

With this background in mind, Afrikaner nationalism may be seen as an amalgamation of interwoven ideological narratives pertaining to “themes of religious, racial, and cultural purity, superiority, calling, and the struggle for autonomy against oppression, which included the struggle for an independent language” (Verwey & Quale, 2012: 553).

The discussion now moves to the key markers of Afrikaner identity that I identify from literature. These markers include the centrality of the Afrikaans language (Steyn, 2016a: 35), white supremacy (Steyn, 2004: 148), the Christian religion as rooted in Calvinism (Tamarkin, 2020: 1) and the positioning of Afrikaners as a chosen people of God through the myths of “Godly predestination” (Van der Merwe, 2009: 37) and civil religion (Moodie, 1975: 2), the centrality of the patriarchal nuclear family structure (Vestergaard, 2001: 20–21), the ownership and inhabitancy of land (Paleker, 2019: 1981), and political conservatism as expressed in racial superiority based on whiteness¹³⁸ (Bothma, 2017: 6).

4.3.1 The Afrikaans language

Álvarez-Mosquera (2017: 639, 640) highlights language as a central marker of identity. Individuals reaffirm their participation within an ethno-linguistic group by speaking its language and, as such, language functions as a process of “social categorization” (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 640). Language thus acts as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion, aids in the construction and identification of social groups such as cultures and becomes a vehicle for the expression of cultural narrative identity. For example, the Afrikaans language bound together grand narratives including Calvinism, patriarchal structures of power, and Afrikaner nationalism, which can be seen to be key factors that historically shaped white Afrikaner identity (Nel, 2010: 2).

¹³⁷ I acknowledge that, during the white nationalist period in South Africa, not all Afrikaans-speakers were white. Rather, here, I refer to the Afrikaner nationalist ideal which imagined the Afrikaner nation as white, Afrikaans-speaking Christians.

¹³⁸ I discuss whiteness in more detail in *4.4.2.5 Political conservatism and racial superiority*.

Historically, and even today, many Afrikaners view the Afrikaans language as a “sacred language” which stands as the cornerstone of white Afrikaner identity (Steyn, 2016a: 35) and as a “repository of Afrikaner heritage” (Steyn, 2004: 158). With reference to the formation of nationhood, Anderson (2006: 13) states that religious communities are historically bound together by “a sacred language and written script”. In terms of Afrikanerhood’s Calvinistic and patriarchal orientation, the Bible may be viewed as Anderson’s religious “written script”. The sacred scripture of the Bible, translated into the sacred language of Afrikaans in 1933 (Botha, 2020:115), became a founding text in terms of which to position originary narratives and the articulation of cultural narrative identity, as well as to justify Afrikaner nationalism. This script and its religious myths informed Afrikaner ways of life, such as the patriarchal nuclear family structure. These ideas were compounded by ideas of rights to land propagated in nationalist Afrikaans songs, for example *Die Vlaglied* that tied together Christianity, nationalism and land.

I provide a brief historical overview of the development of the Afrikaans language to illustrate how interwoven it is with the originary narrative of Afrikaner identity and its identity markers. The term ‘Afrikaner’ stems from the colonial Cape where it was used to refer to “natives or the offspring of slaves and free blacks” – the literal translation of the Afrikaans word is “African” (Giliomee, 2003: 22 as cited in Kotze, 2013: 35). Hein Willemse¹³⁹ (2018: 4) summarises the development and expansion of Afrikaans as a recognised language in the early Cape settlement by means of three historical instances. First, fragments of a prayer written by a student in Cape Malay dialect of Afrikaans in Arabic script in an 1860 textbook were found to resemble contemporary Afrikaans, “apart from the phonetic spelling” (Willemse, 2018: 1-3). This “Arabic-Afrikaans” language was used as a mode of linguistic expression and communication in daily life, such as for the writing of shopping lists, for education, and the like and reflected the most intimate parts of Cape Muslim identity and religion (Willemse, 2018: 3).

Second, the dissemination of Cape Dutch to the north-western parts of the colonial Cape and what is today southern Namibia occurred as a result of the migration of the “*trekboere*”, descendants of Khoenkhoen and European liaisons (Willemse, 2018: 3). This migration greatly influenced the use of Cape Dutch from the late 1800s to the early 1900s as it became the language of “trade, culture and education” (Willemse, 2018: 3). The creole language – then known as “Cape Dutch’, ‘Cape Malay’, or by racially derogatory terms, such as

¹³⁹ Hein Willemse is a South African literary critic known for his work on the origins and marginalised histories of the Afrikaans language as well as its canonisation and creolisation (Van Niekerk & Van Wyk, 2022: 3, 4).

‘Hotnotstaal’ and ‘Hottentots-Hollands’, ‘Kitchen-Dutch’, ‘mongrel Dutch’ or ‘Afrikaa’ (whence ‘Afrikaans’) – was spoken by the peasantry, the urban populace, regardless of their ethnicity, and the middle working class of the Cape (Willemse, 2018: 4). The language drew influences from Dutch, “Portuguese creole”, “Malay-varieties”, Indonesian and Khoekhoe (Willemse, 2016: 3; 2018: 6).

Third, the creole language, as spoken by the above-mentioned groups, began to be formalised in 1875. The “white Cape Dutch middle class” began the first resistance movement in the name of the Afrikaans language by establishing the GRA (Willemse, 2018: 4). The GRA sought to unify white Cape Dutch speakers through a spirit of nationalism by claiming the Afrikaans language as their “linguistic vehicle” and calling themselves “Afrikaners” (Willemse, 2018: 4). Through the resistance of the GRA, Afrikaans gained political and cultural traction (Kirsten, 2018: [sp]). The GRA argued that Afrikaans was a “*landstaal* (national language)”, from where on nationalist notions of Afrikaans as a “*volkstaal*” (national folk language) and a “white man’s language” further developed (Willemse, 2018: 5). This was in response to Afrikaans being stigmatised as a lesser language, one lacking the capability to express complex intellectual thinking (Willemse, 2018: 5). Willemse (2018: 4-5) states that:

Members of the GRA “sought to actively demarcate ‘their language’ to the point of diminishing and stigmatising other speakers’ claim to it, declaring their own version of Cape Dutch as prestige Burger Afrikaans, the distinct ‘white man’s language’.

Through this appropriation of the Afrikaans language, the term ‘Afrikaner’ came to be associated mainly with white Christian speakers. This association contributed to white Afrikaner’s imagining themselves as having a cultural identity with their own distinct language and thereby contributed to their resolve to seek cultural autonomy. The resistance of groups such as the GRA to the stigmatisation of Afrikaans, along with recognition of it as an official language in 1925 (Alberts, 2016: 320; Kirsten, 2018: [sp]), formed part of an originary narrative that mythologised the relationship between white Afrikaners and the Afrikaans language as a fundamental part of their identity.

4.3.2 Christian Calvinism and the nuclear Afrikaans family

As with the Afrikaans language and whiteness, Christianity, in particular, Calvinism, became a defining pedagogical narrative for Afrikaner identity and for what it meant to be civilised (Kotze, 2013: 33) and racially superior. In fact, Tamarkin (2020: 1) positions Christian nationalism as the very “core of Afrikaner identity”. I understand Christian nationalism as the reliance of Afrikaner nationalism on the values and fundamentals of Calvinism. The *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Blackburn, 2016: [sp]) defines Calvinism as a form of “Christian Protestantism” which views the Bible as sovereign law, ascribes all determinate power to the will of God, and believes in the predestined salvation of those called to the faith. It perpetuates the idea that God is sovereign and that creation submits to God’s will (Walls & Dongell, 2004: [sp]).

The origins of white Afrikaner Calvinism date to the arrival of the Dutch settlers at the Cape. They predominantly belonged to the Protestant Dutch Reformed Church, the *Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk* (Marx, 2008: 201-203). Calvinism forms a “branch of Protestantism” and constitutes the “*volksgeloof*” (religion of the people) of Afrikaners (Marx, 2008: 201-203). Calvinism became increasingly ingrained in Afrikaner cultural narrative identity in the course of the Great Trek, during which the Voortrekkers relied on the narrative of Godly predestination and their oath with God to grant them victory over indigenous South African peoples in order to gain their land.

Through their Calvinist values, Afrikaners imagined the boundaries of Afrikaner identity (Timms, 2017: 28) and determined the elements of a moral life, including patriarchal¹⁴⁰ power structures in which male figures in authoritative positions represented a Godly authority, along with an emphasis on the nuclear, heterosexual family unit (Vestergaard, 2001: 20-21). This family unit refers to a married couple with children (Koenig-Visagie & Van Eeden, 2013: 6) presenting the supposedly ideal family structure. Traditional Christian Calvinist Afrikaner women are expected to be “morally pure” (Marx, 2003: 1) and to serve as subservient wives to their husbands (Steenkamp, 2016: 329, 330). Moreover, the wife is expected to bear children for her husband and look after these children as a mother (Steenkamp, 2016: 329, 330). This gendered expectation is reflected in the nationalist notion of the *Volksmoeder* (“mothers of the nation”), that depicted the ideal Afrikaner woman as responsible for protecting

¹⁴⁰ Traditionally, patriarchy means “the rule of the father” (Ehrenreich, 1995). It has come to be associated with a gendered binary view which defines identities as either masculine or feminine (Gilligan & Snider, 2018: 4) and with the masculine occupying a privileged position. This privilege finds expression in the positioning of the masculine ‘father’ figure as the authority and head of governance (Blackburn, 2016: [sp]).

the Afrikaner nation from decline by bearing children and raising them within the Afrikaner way of life (Pretorius, 2019:68). This was her duty both to her nation and her family (Pretorius, 2019: 68).

Other stereotypical patriarchal gender roles include positioning Afrikaner women as “belonging in the home”, by being responsible for all spheres of domesticity such as cooking and cleaning (Pretorius, 2019: 68). Children are expected to be subservient and obedient to their parents. While underage, the children are dependent on the parents, and the family, as a social unit, shares a residence (Fortunato, 2017: 13; Kruidenier, 2014: 116) with the father as head of the household and breadwinner. The family hierarchy reflects Calvinist values linked to biblical teachings according to which people are expected to be subservient to God. Just as God as Father is ordained ruler over His people, according to a patriarchal Calvinist ‘model’, men are viewed as rulers over their subservient families and those over whom he is supposedly appointed.

The father is thus responsible for providing for and protecting his family, and the family members are expected to respect and obey him. The role of the father is associated with leadership, authority, and discipline, and that of the mother with servitude, nurturing and caring. The father’s role shares qualities with the role of church leaders in relation to their leadership of their flock and with the idea of God as Father of humanity. The Afrikaner nuclear family holds traditional, conservative values and is motivated to build the nation through reproduction (Andrews, 2022a: 3, 10, 11), a goal reinforced by its patriarchal and heteronormative structure and Calvinist values.

Historically, the framing of God as Father and protector can be witnessed in the originary narrative of the Great Trek (Vosloo, 2020: 350), including the Battle of Blood River discussed above, where the Voortrekkers faced the Zulu army. Outnumbered, the Voortrekkers made a vow that if God would protect them, they and their future generations would commemorate the day as a sacred one (Vosloo, 2020: 350). The victory over the Zulu army, commemorated by a monument, was read as proof of the Voortrekker’s Godly predestination which justified their inhabitancy and ownership of, and rule over, the land. During the centennial commemoration of the Great Trek in 1938, “the Voortrekker Monument’s cornerstone was laid” (Giliomee & Mbenga 2007: 279). The sacred celebrations of the oath sworn to God would become deeply associated with the monument. The monument is designed in such a way that, on the 16th of December, known as *Geloftedag*, the Day of the Covenant, a ray of sunlight falls on a cenotaph at its centre which is engraved with the words “*Ons vir jou Suid-Afrika*,” We for thee,

South Africa (Autry, 2012: 151). These words commemorate those who lost their lives during the Great Trek and its conflicts and bolster the historical Voortrekkers' – and thus also white Afrikaners' – narrative of belonging in South Africa.

During the centennial commemoration, the *Kerkbode* (“the official Dutch Reformed Church newspaper”) published several articles in which the Voortrekkers' “heroism”, “perseverance and religiosity” was highlighted (Vosloo, 2020: 352). This relationship between Christianity and Afrikanerhood reached its ideological height with the drawing of parallels between the Biblical myth of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt and the Afrikaners' Great Trek (Kotze, 2013: 33). Giliomee (2004: [sp]) states that Afrikaner leader Paul Kruger, believed in and propagated the notion of Afrikaners as a chosen people who, akin to the Israelites, were bound by a covenant with God to execute His divine plans. As with the Israelites, white Afrikaners endured treks – from the colonial Cape, a site of oppression – to a destined “promised land” that would offer them independence from British rule (Moodie, 1975: 5). This narrative of Godly predestination is encapsulated in the myth of civil religion.

It was this “promised land” that the National party aimed to create from 1948 onwards by developing a “unique national character” (Kotze, 2013: 32) for white Afrikaner identity, as imagined via narratives that upheld notions of racial and cultural supremacy – such as the myth of Godly predestination and civil religion. This mythological account of white Afrikaner history was reinforced by the National Party so as to imagine an Afrikaner nation as a distinct people chosen by God. This in turn served to validate and motivate their position of superiority within the country. It enabled Afrikaners to “mould” an identity and space for themselves in South Africa that was accompanied by “a sense of belonging and security” (Steyn, 2016a: 35), along with a predestined right to the land which found its later implementation in the infamous apartheid laws (Kotze, 2013: 32). In fact, Vestergaard (2001: 21) notes that “opposing apartheid mean[t] opposing not only one's own people, but also, ultimately, the will of God”. According to the principles of nationalist Afrikanerhood, the very narration of an Afrikaner nation was seen as both the will and work of God (Moodie, 1975: 2).

4.3.3 Identification with place and the ownership of land

Referring back to the myth of a biblical “promised land”, white Afrikaners sought to root their cultural identity in South Africa through the ownership of land and its inhabitancy. The

relationship between a people's ownership of land, as expressed in their cultural identity, and how this enables them to construct a narrative of belonging speaks to the concept of 'place identity'. In this section, I briefly discuss place identities, as peoples identification with a place, before investigating how white Afrikaners narrated their belonging to South Africa through the ownership of land and how land ownership constitutes a marker of white Afrikaner identity.

'Place identity' refers to a specific geographical location or environment which exists as the site of an identity's experiences and narratives and which cultivates a relationship and attachment between the identity and the place¹⁴¹ (Dlamini, Tesfamichael & Mokhele, 2021: 122). The attachment between identity and place involves a feeling of belonging. Belonging, according to Anthias (2018: 142), is always "located", as it describes the relationship between the self and a social or physical space that exists beyond the self. The notion of belonging is problematic in that it brings to the fore questions pertaining to who decides what identity belongs to which place, based on what criteria, created by whom and to what purpose. Notions of originary belonging versus settling (and settler) patterns further problematise this belonging. This is especially relevant in previously colonised spaces, such as South Africa, that contain multi-cultural, racial and ethnic identities that have experienced displacement and forceful dispossession of places of belonging.

In South Africa, place identities are socially constructed phenomena, and are especially influenced by colonialism, the land-ownership policies of white nationalist South Africa and the later post-1994 land-redistribution policies of democratic South Africa, which I elaborate on later in this section. Place identities are continually in the process of change due to the ever-shifting boundaries of the nation and its constituent cultural identities. The social construction of place identities is influenced by the relationship between a place and various social factors that are bound to it such as "race, ethnicity, history, culture, religion and language" (Dlamini et al., 2021: 122).

These factors are inevitably accompanied by the convergence of various systems of power at a specific location, and these influence subjective experiences in the specific place. For example, historically, in South-Africa as a social site, the doctrine of white dominance led to

¹⁴¹ I differentiate between place and space as follows: place refers to a physical, geographical location with coordinates and exists as an absolute "point in space" (Al-Menshawy, El-Sieedy & Abuzekry, 2021: 3). Place may also refer to the location of experiences and the unique characteristics that are associated with a place (Al-Menshawy *et al.*, 2021: 3, 4). Space is a more abstract concept – it is undefined and continuous and may include figurative spaces such as spaces of thought (Giesecking, Mangold, Katz, Low & Saegert, 2014: xx).

white Afrikaners' privileged access to land and resources, which was motivated by a narrative of Godly predestination. Moreover, white Afrikaners' need to establish a place identity led to the displacement and complication of various indigenous people's place identities in South Africa.

As distinction and autonomy formed essential parts of white Afrikaner identity, the *trekboere's* refusal to conform to the cultural standards of British colonisation led to their migration from the Cape colony (Kotze, 2013: 57-58). This migration in turn led to the establishment of independent *boere republieke* (Boer republics) and *volkstate* (states) (Majavu, 2022: 5; Moodie, 1975: 5). The occupation of land by these *republieke* and *state* was motivated by the myth of Godly predestination, by which was understood that the possession of the land as a God-given right of the Afrikaners. Taking into account the religious context, Schutte (2017: 216) states that Godly predestination intertwined Afrikaner nation, culture and land to such an extent that it represented Afrikaners' ideological trinity. This trinity is illustrated in the lyrics of the *Vlaglied*¹⁴² (flag song) (Schutte, 2017: 247):

Ons nasie se grondbrief van eiendoms land, Uitgegee op gesag van die Hoogste se hand. / Our nation's land deed of ownership of land, Issued by the authority of the Highest's hand.

These lyrics reinforce the idea that the hand of the Highest (God) issued a land deed to Afrikaners, of which the nationalist flag was the symbol. This positioned Afrikaners as the rightful, God-ordained owners of the land and involved the promise to maintain the land for future Afrikaner generations. The myth of the right to land further cultivated the belief that Afrikaners held a unique, almost spiritual connection to the land (Van Zyl, 2008: 135). This belief was rooted in the ordinary narrative in which the Voortrekkers during the Great Trek supposedly "tamed and civilised" South African soil to establish farmlands (Paleker, 2019: 1981) where they could follow a peaceful agrarian Afrikaner way of life independent of British rule. This relationship between the boers and the soil they cultivated is believed to be unique to Afrikaners and could not be experienced by South Africans who spoke English (Steyn, 2004: 147). The myth of Godly predestination thus cultivated as sense of Afrikaners' belonging to the land and led to the imagining of Afrikaner's place identity.

¹⁴² The *Vlaglied* was published in the first FAK song collection (1937) and was sung ceremonially at the hoisting of the old South African flag (Schutte, 2017: 233). The words of the *Vlaglied* were written by prominent Afrikaans author CJ Langenhoven and set to music by FJ Joubert (Steyn, 2013: 266).

I argue that Afrikaners' imagined ties to the land functioned as a strategy to disguise the inherent ambiguity and cultural hybridity within white Afrikaner cultural identity. This served to bolster a white Afrikaner nationalism in terms of an imagined narrative of belonging. As Otkoth (2006: 1) states, "Nationalism is in a sense the search for belonging".

By associating their identity with and embedding it in a concrete place of belonging, Afrikaners were able to imagine for themselves an unambiguous identity rooted in the narrative of a specific space. During apartheid years under the Nationalist Party, Afrikaners' relationship with their God-given land took the form of the segregation of cultural and racial identities (Abrahamse, 2014: [online]; De Villiers, 2018: 48; Kotze, 2013: 61; Steyn 2016a: 12). The apartheid system implemented several laws, such as the Land Act, that reserved the right to 87% of South African land to white people, while black people had access only to 13%, which was generally of poor quality, that did not fall within the boundaries of 'white' land (Majavu, 2022; 8). The disproportionate division of land, along with spatial segregation, and the forced removal of peoples from land (Mdege, 2019: 14) reflected the Nationalist narrative of white supremacy. Later, during the post-apartheid years, this relationship with the land would be nostalgically reflected up on (Van Zyl, 2008: 136) when white Afrikaners are forced to share spaces with people whose identities differed from their own.¹⁴³

4.3.4 Racial superiority

White Afrikaners' relationship with the land during apartheid was based on a narrative of Godly predestination which in turn bolstered the narrative of white supremacy that grounded their belief that their whiteness entitled them to own the land. Bothma (2017: 6) holds that whiteness formed a grand narrative that implied socio-political "normality, dominance, and control". Kotze (2013: 28) contends that nationalist white Afrikaners were occupied with matters of race and racial superiority. They rooted their distinction as a nation in their white skin, which was considered the nucleus of their identity (Kotze, 2013: 28), along with, a Calvinist Christian religious orientation.

¹⁴³ Despite the anti-discriminatory principles of South Africa's democracy, the exclusively white Afrikaner movement and town of Orania maintains racist and discriminatory nationalist ideas in post-apartheid South Africa (Majavu, 2022: 2, 4).

'White', in South Africa, refers to light skin colour (Green, Sonn & Matsebula, 2007: 403), while 'whiteness' frames white skin in relation to identity and a privileged social positioning (Rasmussen *et al.*, 2001, as cited in Steyn & Conway, 2010: 283; Lindner, 2018: 44) that perpetuates racial inequalities. Lindner (2018: 44) refers to Leek's (2014: 214) definition of whiteness as those practices aimed at the safeguarding and continuation of this privilege. In hegemonic systems, whiteness often functions on a "hyper-visible" level, which paradoxically leads to its "invisibility" (Lindner, 2018: 44). Hyper-visibility refers to the positioning of white-skin colour as the norm, as is evident in the use of the term 'non-white' as a racial category (Lindner, 2018: 44). 'Invisibility' occurs as a result of the positioning of whiteness as a norm, which centralises and naturalises white skins, enabling white-skinned people to focus first and foremost on their personal identity as their racial orientation exists beyond racial categorisation (Lindner, 2018: 44). This invisibility cultivates a "blindness" towards privilege – the invisibility of privilege experienced by those who occupy privileged positions, specifically those associated with white privilege (Steyn, 2019:13).

Melissa Steyn (2004), a key South African scholar in whiteness studies (Van Wyk, 2014: 16), states that whiteness studies aim to reveal the privilege, hegemonic norms and racial subjectivities pertaining to whiteness and how it strategically conceals its impact (Steyn & Conway, 2010: 285). Steyn (2004: 144) notes that the racial order inherently, yet almost unnoticeably, functions to maintain the "comfort, convenience, affirmation, solidarity, psychological well-being, advantage, and advancement of whites". In the South African context, this statement found expression in the apartheid system that utilised whiteness as the basis for structuring social life (Majavu, 2022: 19).

As discussed above, the National Party that came to power in 1948, broadly propagated a white nationalism that reinforced narratives of whiteness and white superiority as its ideological strategy (Bothma, 2017: 6) and, more specifically, coupled with cultural superiority, promoted white Afrikanerhood. Those who were not white were both limited and disadvantaged by the nationalist apartheid system in various aspects of daily life, including freedom of movement, access to facilities, quality of education, financial compensation, the expression of cultural identities, feelings of self-worth, and the like. As Ndlovu-Gathsheni, in an interview with Omanga (2020: [online]), explains, colonialism and apartheid in South Africa committed "culturecide" (the elimination or supplanting of a culture), "epistemicide" (the destruction of a culture's knowledge) and "linguicide" (the supplanting of one language with another), all of which had a considerable impact materially, epistemologically and ontologically.

The unequal racial hierarchy constructed by the privileged position of whites was a function of the myth of Godly predestination that positioned them as a pure people chosen by God, as against the cultures of the black indigenes who they perceived as heathens (Steyn, 2004: 149). This myth illustrates the interweaving of whiteness, Christianity and nationalism that constituted white Afrikaner identity and which intertwined notions of Afrikaner identity, nationalism and apartheid to a degree that they became inseparable (Verwey & Quayle, 2012: 557).

The pedagogical narratives of nationalism and the related markers of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity were reinforced through the performative narratives of Afrikaner culture which found expression in its cultural commodities. In the following section, I discuss the portrayal of Afrikaner identity with a specific focus on pre-1994 Afrikaans film as one such cultural commodity – and how the consumption of these films led to the reinforcement of the narratives that constructed pre-1994 white nationalist Afrikaner identity.

4.3.5 Dominant representations of white Afrikaans identity in pre-1994 white Afrikaans films

During apartheid years, the National Party reinforced its various narratives of cultural superiority and elitism through the elevation of the Afrikaans language and its attendant cultural commodities such as films, television, theatre, literature, and so forth (Steyn, 2016a: 69). Films made by white Afrikaner filmmakers for consumption by white Afrikaner audiences were supported by prejudicial subsidies provided by the National Party-run state (Paleker, 2019: 1980). The “state’s formalized involvement” in funding promoted narratives that included romanticised portrayals of white Afrikaner culture (Steyn, 2016a: 884). This support provided to white Afrikaner cinema served as a strategy to bolster white Afrikaner Nationalism (Paleker, 2019: 1980).

Bothma (2017: 6) states that many nationalist Afrikaans-language films mirrored the discriminative socio-political systems of power and reinforced the notion that “the nation, in terms of space, culture, money and the ability to determine what is ‘natural’, was the property of [white] Afrikaners”. Examples of nationalist Afrikaner films include *Die Bou van ‘n Nasie* (Albrecht, 1938), *Geboortegrond* (De Wet, 1946), *Hans die Skipper* (Peake, 1952), and *De Voortrekkers* (Shaw, 1916).

Due to the promotion of nationalist Afrikaner films, Paleker (2019: 1978) positions apartheid-era Afrikaans films as pretending at being a “national cinema” rather than them understanding what they were, that is, an “ethnic cinema”. Ethnic cinema, in nationalist South Africa, was defined by the inclusion and representation of ethnic groups, which, within the nationalist frame, referred to black¹⁴⁴ peoples and cultures (Paleker, 2019: 1978). Based on the discourses implemented by the apartheid government to frame “ethnic minority groups”, the marginalisation of ethnic films served to position Afrikaans films, which promoted the nationalist narratives, as the dominant national industry of the day (Paleker, 2019: 1978). These ‘national cinema’ films served to establish a national film industry that reinforced the ideology of the superiority of white Afrikaners (Paleker, 2019: 1982). Film, therefore, became an important propaganda narrative device for the nationalist government (Paleker, 2019: 1982). Nationalist Afrikaner films functioned as performative myths through which national signs were created that reinforced the pedagogical myths of Afrikaner identity.

Many of the markers of pre-1994 Afrikaner identity were reflected in the tropes present in white Afrikaner films. These tropes include an idealised representation of the patriarchal Afrikaner family (Paleker, 2019: 1989) as seen in *Geboortegrond* (De Wet, 1946) and *Hans die skipper* (Peake, 1952) (Van Coller & Van Jaarsveld, 2018: 6); a romanticised depiction of Afrikaner identity and culture as in *Doodkry is min* (Uys, 1961a) and *Hans en die rooinek* (Uys, 1961b), especially with reference to the ownership of land, as seen in *Sarie Marais* (Coley, 1949), and *’n Plan is ’n boerdery* (De Wet, 1954); the traditional, ‘pure’ way of life as was lived on a *boereplaas* (boer farm) (Steyn, 2016a: 74; Bothma, 2017: 27) in *Daar doer in die stad* (Uys, 1954) and *Kom tot rus* (De Witt, 1977). Jansen van Vuuren (2021: 42–43) traces the propaganda-like support for the farm space as Afrikaners’ “*geboortegrond*” (the place of birth with reference to soil) or to the writings of the film critic Hans Rompel who reified the farm space as central to Afrikaner identity.

Relative to the sacred farm space, the “city” and its English influences is framed as evil and corrupting (Steyn, 2016a: 86) as seen in *Die goddelose stad* (Botha, 1958), and *Geboortegrond* (De Wet, 1946). Here, I briefly elaborate on this trope. The vilification of the city is rooted in its “multiracism” (Broodryk, 2015: 192) whose influences are seen as a threat to the puritanical Afrikaner way of life that finds expression in the rural space. I argue that the positioning of the city as antagonistic within film was specifically aimed at highlighting, through

¹⁴⁴ Paleker (2019: 1978) acknowledges that debates surrounding nationalist ethnic cinemas were centred on the identity politics of whites and blacks and excluded Indian, coloured and multiracial ethnicities, which led to feelings of marginalisation and anger.

juxtaposition, the purity and ‘goodness’ of the rural lifestyle. This speaks back to the Afrikaner narrative regarding place identity based on the myth of Godly predestination which framed the farmland as the space where the Afrikaner would be closest to God, their purpose, and their people – as opposed to the city.

Another trope involves the depiction of white superiority (Bothma, 2017: 6) such as in *Die groot wit voël* (Bryce, 1956), *Geboortegrond* (De Wet, 1946) and *Katrina*¹⁴⁵ (Rautenbach, 1969). White superiority and the romanticised depiction of Afrikaner identity were reinforced through the myth of Godly predestination (Van der Merwe, 2009: 37) and civil religion (Moodie, 1975: 2) as tropes in Afrikaans film, such as *Die bou van ‘n nasie* (Albrecht, 1938) and *De Voortrekkers* (Shaw, 1916).

The myth of civil religion highlights the importance of land ownership as a marker of Afrikaner identity. In filmic adaptations of *plaasromans* (farm novels), and films that drew from the narrative traditions of *plaasromans*, farmlands played a central role as “the origin of the Afrikaner folk” (Paleker, 2019: 1981). Examples of such films include *Moedertjie* (Albrecht, 1931), *Geboortegrond* (Botha, 1958) and *Die kandidaat* (Rautenbach, 1968). The ownership of land, and the representation thereof on screen, played an important role in establishing Afrikaners’ autonomy, as having a distinct cultural identity.

As discussed in this section, many of the markers of pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity are reflected as tropes in Afrikaans films. These markers were based on the narratives that constructed the nationalist Afrikaner identity and, as such, Afrikaans films stood as expressions of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. I summarise the tropes of pre-1994 white Afrikaans film in Figure 19, below.

¹⁴⁵ Although Botha (2006: 3) argues that *Katrina* critically engages with the horrors of the apartheid and racial classification through a narrative that revolves around a coloured woman living in a white community, Broodryk (2015: 129) hold that the film may be read as advocating for the acceptance of Western religious modes of thinking in order for redemption to occur.

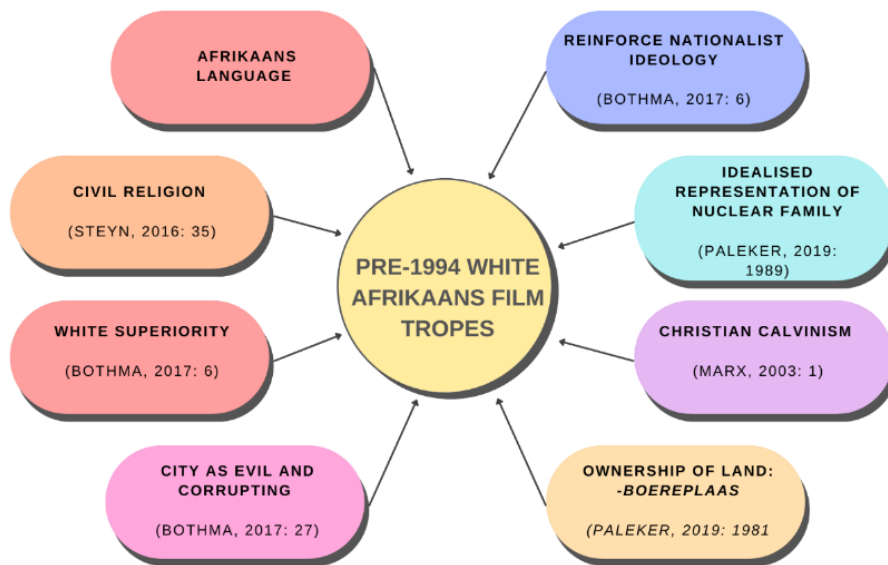


Figure 19: Pre-1994 white Afrikaans film tropes. (Illustration by the author).

Through encouraging the portrayal of these tropes and thus reifying them as tropes of Afrikaner identity through Afrikaans film, the National Party denied the inherent hybridity of Afrikanerhood by creating a myth of cultural homogeneity. Through this depiction of homogeneity, the National Party aimed to increase Afrikanerhood's cultural and political power by focusing on the unity of Afrikaner identity and strengthening the narratives by means of which it imagined itself a comm(unity). However, the myth of Afrikaner homogeneity was uprooted with the advent of democracy and the surfacing of previously marginalised histories that foregrounded narratives of cultural hybridity. In the next section, I investigate how white Afrikaner identity and its identity markers that were shaped in the pre-1994 nationalist Afrikaner context find expression in a post-1994 setting.

4.4 Post-1994 white Afrikaner identities¹⁴⁶

The advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 was a watershed time that created an ontological rupture between the fundamental pillars of white Afrikaner identity and the socio-political context in which its markers were anchored (Van der Merwe, 2009: 31). Due to white Afrikaners' "political conservatism" (Broodryk, 2016: 64), including the white superiority that developed in tandem with the nationalist movement, the transition to the current democratic political landscape of South Africa was complicated as these markers struggled to find an anchor. The decline of cultural and political power that white Afrikanerhood had historically held drove the cultural identity of white Afrikaners into distress (Abrahamse, 2014): [online].

In this period, many marginalised histories were brought to light that questioned white Afrikaner pedagogical and originary narratives and threatened the pillars of white Afrikaner identity. These histories included narratives pertaining to the Afrikaans language that disrupted and destabilised the nationalist hegemonic narrative that Afrikaans was the sole property of white Afrikaners. A case in point is the recognition and inclusion of previously marginalised groups and their modes of Afrikaans (Willemse, 2018: 8, 9), such as Afrikaaps, under the banner of 'Afrikaans'.

When communities are confronted with the loss of their mythologies, they are also likely confronted with the loss of their identity (Smart, 2006: 131-132, as cited in Berk, 2016: 72). What I refer to the 'loss of mythologies' in the context of white Afrikanerhood is the uprooting of nationalist myths due to the questioning of these in previously marginalised histories. Many scholars (Giliomee, 2014; Kotze, 2013; Van der Merwe, 2009; Steyn, 2016a, c; Verwey & Quayle, 2012; Visser, 2007) argue that white Afrikaner identity is undergoing an identity crisis, while still discovering how to formulate and position a new Afrikaner identity in the contemporary socio-political context. To my mind, this crisis is partly due to the uprooting of the narratives through which white Afrikaners previously imagined their identity in the pre-1994

¹⁴⁶ My use of the plural form 'identities' is deliberate as these pertain to white Afrikaner identity in a post-1994 milieu. Firstly, it serves to recognise the cultural heterogeneity and hybridity that surfaced (albeit historically present too) due to marginalised histories coming to light. Secondly, within the context of this study, it highlights the delineation of two groups of white Afrikaners. This includes those who attempt to reconfigure their identity in order to root it in a democratic South Africa and encourage the plurality and multiplicity of their identity. Others nostalgically cling to the identity markers of the past. This nostalgic attachment leads to historical white Afrikaner tropes reverberating within present-day democratic South Africa.

context. This causes a rupture between Afrikaner identity and the narratives that have constructed this identity. That is to say that their cultural narrative identity has been destabilised.

In line with this argument, in what follows, I discuss post-1994 white Afrikaner identity by categorising current white Afrikaner identity into two groups,¹⁴⁷ both of which aim at either establishing or re-establishing an identity within the current political context. In doing so, I am aware of the reductionist impulse in the categorisation – it does not fully articulate the plurality of identities and positions in relation to the post-1994 cultural space. However, I offer the categorisation for the sake of clarity regarding my enquiry into what I perceive to be the two dominant responses to white Afrikaners' current identity crisis and their reaction to their identity's liminal state.

The first group comprises those white Afrikaners who nostalgically cling to pre-1994 identity markers as a strategy to cope with the uncertainty of the liminal space. Anchoring their identity in nostalgia, they are able to continue imagining themselves as a community, a nation and a culture by clinging to traditional nationalist Afrikaner narratives and values. These narratives find expression in cultural commodities such as film, while the performance of this identity is linked to the consumption, and thus support, of these commodities (as discussed in the following section).

The need to navigate the uncertainty of the liminal space by clinging to pre-1994 markers of identity is due to cultural schizophrenia brought on by the tension between their "dual identities as both Afrikaners and South Africans", and by historically having been both the oppressed (under British colonial rule) and the oppressor (Kotze, 2013: 36). This ambiguity associated with Afrikaner identity speaks to its hybridity and positions Afrikaners in a liminal space in which they bear multiple narratives and occupy multiple spaces of identity at once.

The second group comprises those young white Afrikaners who currently find their identity in a liminal state but deliberately move towards transformation as they wish to reimagine¹⁴⁸ their

¹⁴⁷ In no way do I argue that my delineation is inclusive of all expressions of white Afrikaner identity. I discuss these two groups as they provide the opportunity for fantasy to question this identity and to provide a platform for the imagining of a new identity.

¹⁴⁸ As per my discussion on identity in Section 4.2.1, I understand identity as a continuous process of becoming. As such, my reference to the 'reimagining' and 'reconfiguration' of white Afrikaner identity in this dissertation is done with the acknowledgement that no new 'set' or 'fixed' identity will be established, but that Afrikaner identity will continue in its process of 'becoming' due to ever changing social structures. Rather this reimagining focuses on distancing white Afrikaner identity from those

white Afrikaner identities. Álvarez-Mosquera's (2017: 648) delineation of "young" refers to those of 18-25 years of age, based on the parameters of his study. I, however, acknowledge that this liminal position may be held by any white Afrikaner regardless of age. Here, however, I choose to focus on the *born frees*, South Africans born in the democratic era, as they are my peer group, and I wish to aim my creative work at them as a target audience based on my own subjective experiences and my inherent knowledge of this group. My position is thus that *born frees* may wish to distance themselves from the negative associations of their cultural identity with the apartheid regime, at whose construction they were not present, although they reap the broader benefits from this historical system of privilege.

Although many young white Afrikaners have been born after the advent of democracy, they remain confronted with an identity that is associated with the negative socio-political events of the apartheid years (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 640; Giliomee, 2004: [sp]). This negative association, along with what I hope is the need to use this privilege for social justice and the eradication of inequalities, prompts the need in some to reconfigure their identity so that its markers are more compatible with the current contemporary socio-political context. I argue that this reconfiguration of identity is a reconfiguration of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, as critically engaging with a cultural identity means critically engaging with the narratives that construct the identity, the narratives whereby the boundaries and the unity of the identity are imagined.

To contextualise this second group, I first provide a brief investigation into what I perceive to be the current markers of a post-1994 white Afrikaner identity in the same way as these were delineated for the first group discussed above. In this vein, in this section I discuss the markers of post-1994 white Afrikaner identity as well as the attempts by some white Afrikaners to conserve the previously prevailing pre-1994 identity markers. This I undertake by exploring white Afrikaners' commitment to consuming Afrikaans cultural commodities as well as by investigating post-1994 white Afrikaans films as one such commodity through which the markers of Afrikaner identity are nostalgically expressed as filmic tropes. I then return to my discussion of the second group and their liminal identity, indicating how fantasy provides a strategy to navigate this liminality¹⁴⁹.

nationalist identity markers that are nostalgically clung to by many Afrikaners as a supposedly 'set' configuration of their identity.

¹⁴⁹ See 4.5 *Fantasy as a liminal strategy for questioning white Afrikaner identity*.

4.4.1 The Afrikaans language: conservation through consumption

De Villiers (2018: 49) states that Afrikaans-speakers today are still coming to terms with the shift in status of the Afrikaans language, which is now one of twelve¹⁵⁰ official languages and no longer the primary language of “education, science, research, governance, radio and TV, public announcements, etc.” as it was in white nationalist South Africa. The ousting of the language from its position of dominance has caused a fear in Afrikaners that they will no longer be able to express themselves culturally – or even in their own language (Steyn, 2016a: 485). This cultivates an underlying fear that Afrikanerhood, its cultural power, and the remainder of white privilege that is carried with it, are threatened. Paleker (2019: 1988) refers to this phenomenon as an “ethnic angst” concerning the slow deterioration of the Afrikaans language and, consequently, its cultural identity and cultural power. Such threats, in addition to “drought[s], farm murders, [and] black economic empowerment” contribute to Afrikaners’ feeling of victimisation¹⁵¹ (Giliomee, 2015 as cited in Steenkamp, 2016: 326).

Giliomee (2014: 573) argues that the conservation and survival of Afrikaner identity greatly depend on the resilience of the Afrikaans language as the cornerstone of Afrikaner identity (Steyn, 2016a: 35) to the extent that it remains an essential marker of white Afrikaner identity today (Broodryk, 2016: 64). As such, Afrikaans speakers have taken the protection and promotion of Afrikaans as a spoken language into their own hands through creative and at times drastic approaches (De Villiers, 2018: 50). As a result, Afrikaners are the prime “producers, sellers and buyers of Afrikaans-language media and cultural commodities” (Steyn, 2016a: 25, 28). These contemporary Afrikaans cultural products are aimed at and “tailored to the imagined needs of white Afrikaans-speakers” (Steyn, 2016a: 2) as a cultural group.

The consumption of these cultural commodities serves to “reaffirm the imagined boundaries of Afrikanerhood” (Steyn, 2016a: i), that is, as “a community – a distinct group with a distinct culture” (Steyn, 2016a: 65). As Van der Westhuizen (2019: 38) states, “[i]ndividuals become Afrikaners by being consumers of Afrikaner culture”; to this extent, Afrikaner identity is enacted and reaffirmed through consumption (Steyn, 2016b: 500). Film, as one such as cultural commodity, acts both as a cultural artefact, through which white Afrikaners may nostalgically

¹⁵⁰ South Africa has twelve official languages, including sign language.

¹⁵¹ I discuss Afrikaner victimhood in 4.4.2.3 *Racial superiority transforms into Afrikaner victimised minority*.

hark back to a time of an anchored identity, and as a platform by means of which current conceptions of identity and its boundaries can be interrogated and reimagined. In white Afrikaans films, the repeated presence of the markers of white Afrikaner identity thus become tropes. As a consequence of their consumption, Afrikaans commodities have the ability to “(re)fashion identity, to (re)animate cultural subjectivity, to (re)charge collective self-awareness, to forge new patterns of sociality, all within the marketplace” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009: 26).

Another strategy for the conservation of the Afrikaans language is inclusivity. In contrast to the nationalist narrative of exclusivity, De Villiers (2018: 48) notes the “traditional white Afrikaner community” currently seeks to broaden the horizons of the community by including all Afrikaans speakers, regardless of race, in the “Afrikaans community”. That is to say that they imagine their unity based on their shared use of the Afrikaans language, while still recognising their cultural and racial heterogeneity. This is largely due to the community’s attempt to grow its numbers to protect its cultural heritage, specifically the Afrikaans language (De Villiers, 2018: 48). Yet, there is the danger of continuing interpellation into cultural hegemony. Despite these attempts at inclusion, Timms (2017: 17) states that, due to the association of the term ‘Afrikaner’ with apartheid, it “is most likely never used as a marker for people of color”. The language’s remaining associations with apartheid still carry notions of white privilege and racism due to the nationalist apartheid regime’s discriminatory endorsement of white Afrikaans culture and the language on which it is based.

Timms (2017: 16) contends that contemporary understandings of “Afrikanerness” still commonly revolve around the conceptions of white skin and speaking the Afrikaans language. Though apartheid has formally ended, the influence of white power persists in both symbolical and tangibly material ways (Van der Westhuizen, 2019: 35), Afrikaans remaining associated with the apartheid regime and whiteness. As Willemse (2018: 1) states, Afrikanerhood’s socio-political past has framed Afrikaans as the language of “racists, oppressors, and unreconstructed nationalists”. These associations, along with the existence of right-wing, white-supremacist Afrikaner organisations such as the AWB (Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging/Afrikaner Resistance Movement), Front Nasionaal (National Front) and the whites-only, strictly Afrikaans-speaking town of Orania (among others¹⁵²) mean that (neo)nationalist tendencies and ideas such as racism remain associated with the language

¹⁵² Other South African towns that hold a strong neo-nationalist position include Kleinfontein (Paleker, 2019: 1990) and Balmoral (Van Wyk, 2014: 13) .

despite the existence of diverse, previously marginalised groups that speak Afrikaans as a first language.

Referring to white Afrikaners as a homogeneous cultural group is also problematic. Many white Afrikaans-speaking communities have diverse cultural identities. Willemse (2018: 1) states that Afrikaans is a “cross-border language spanning sizable communities of speakers in Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe”, and is “spoken across all social indices”. Moreover, in South Africa, various expressions of, and identifications with, white Afrikanerhood exist among white Afrikaans-speakers. For example, within my own white Afrikaans-speaking community, I have encountered a variety of cultural expressions of white Afrikanerhood – different Afrikaans dialects, religious orientations, expressions of gender, political orientations, and the like. This reflects the cultural hybridity inherent in white Afrikaner culture, which disrupts the historical nationalist myth of Afrikaners as a homogenous cultural identity.

Furthermore, the association of Afrikaans with even the heterogeneous grouping of white Afrikaners is statistically inaccurate (De Villiers, 2018: 47). The 2011 census administered by the South African government indicates that, at the time, only 40% of Afrikaans-speakers were white (Lehohla, 2011: 23-24). Willemse (2018: 1) states that “six in ten of the almost seven million Afrikaans speakers in South Africa are estimated to be black”. These statistics illustrate why the term ‘Afrikaner’ can no longer, as it did in the white nationalist years, rely on a specific racial delineation to define it – people from many different racial and ethnic groups speak Afrikaans as a first language. This serves to disrupt Afrikaner pedagogical myths that tied the originary narrative of white Afrikaners to the development of the Afrikaans language in such a way that Afrikaans was seen as the ‘property’ of white Afrikaners. In questioning this pedagogical myth, white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity is also disrupted, which in turn uproots those narratives through which those people subscribing to a white Afrikaner identity imagined its boundaries. In other words, by disrupting the narrative that a white skin is a prerequisite for being an Afrikaans-speaking Afrikaner, the Afrikaner identity and the markers that define Afrikanerhood are also questioned.

The cultural diversity I discuss above is expressed in Afrikaans-language films. For example, films such as *Nommer 37* (Dumisa, 2018) and *Barakat* (Jephta, 2020) have predominantly Afrikaans dialogue but portray cultural expressions of Afrikanerhood that differ from those of the specific white Afrikaner grouping referred to in this study. In the next section, I discuss Afrikaans films to illustrate how the uprooted pre-1994 Afrikaner identity markers find expression as tropes in such films in the post-1994 era. In this discussion, I refer specifically

to 'white' Afrikaans films as an acknowledgment of the cultural heterogeneity and hybridity that exists in relation to the Afrikaans language¹⁵³.

4.4.2 White Afrikaans identity in post-1994 white Afrikaans films

The discussion of pre-1994 Afrikaans films and their representations of Afrikaner identity followed an investigation into the markers of nationalist Afrikaner identity. However, in this section on the post-1994 context, I frame my entire investigation of Afrikaner cultural identity and its markers within the context of the Afrikaans film tropes. This is due to South-Africa's shift to democracy which resulted in the markers of white Afrikaner identity no longer being able to find anchorage in the socio-political context. Rather, these markers find anchorage in cultural commodities such as film and are consequently expressed as tropes of Afrikaans film.

Speaking to the impact of South Africa's socio-political shift on Afrikaans film, Paleker (2019: 1979) argues that the reorganisation of social and political life that occurred with the advent of democracy in has shifted Afrikaans film from being considered "national film" to the "margins" of the South African film industry. Here, it functions as a form of "new ethnic cinema" (Paleker, 2019: 1979). It is from this position that Afrikaans films are now produced "as part of an entrenched Afrikaner nationalism vying for political and cultural space" (Paleker, 2019: 1979). Through filmic expressions of Afrikaner identity markers as filmic tropes, and the consumption of these by white Afrikaans-speakers, the imagined boundaries of Afrikanerhood are re-established, encouraging cultural solidarity, if not homogeneity. This re-establishment of identity occurs both through the shared experience of watching the narrative on screen and through the affirmation of identity in the representations on screen.

As stated above, post-1994 white Afrikaans film often serves to reaffirm markers of pre-1994 cultural identity by packaging them as filmic tropes. These tropes nostalgically harken back to the past as a time of supposed prosperity (Paleker, 2019: 1989; Van Zyl, 2008: 128), a romanticised version of the 'Afrikaner way of life'. They include the idealisation of the *platteland* (the South African countryside) and the *boereplaas* (Boer farm), the framing of Afrikaners as victims in the current socio-political context (Steyn, 2004: 153), a "strong sense of family", the

¹⁵³ I acknowledge that cultural heterogeneity in relation to the Afrikaans language also existed in the pre-1994 context; however, due to the narrative of white racial superiority, sensibilities pertaining to this heterogeneity were of a different nature.

“dominant religious position occupied by Christianity, and a “sense of political conservatism” (Broodryk, 2016: 64). It is here that Broodryk’s (2015: 81) criticism of Afrikaans cinema as a “cinema of political impotence”¹⁵⁴ is especially compelling as the construction of new narratives have the potential to disrupt historical constructs of nation, culture and identity. Despite this, many post-1994 Afrikaans films nostalgically cling to nationalist Afrikaner identity markers as a response to the liminal state of their identity. Below, I discuss these tropes in post-1994 Afrikaans films.

4.4.2.1 Nostalgia and the idealisation of the past

The emergence of nostalgia and its ‘symptoms’, in white Afrikaners coincided with the shift from white nationalist rule to a democratic South Africa (Van Zyl, 2008: 134, 136) as this uprooted past anchors of Afrikaner identity and placed Afrikaner identity in a liminal space.

From the 1960s until the fall of apartheid, white Afrikaners enjoyed political, economic, social and cultural growth and privilege through a system of capitalism that positioned white Afrikaners as beneficiaries (Van Zyl, 2008: 135) and hence experienced no sense of longing for the suffering their ancestors had endured (Van Zyl, 2008: 135).

In contemporary South-Africa, however, since the shift in political power in 1994, this mentality has changed (Van Zyl, 2008: 136). Van Zyl (2008: 136) notes that although white Afrikaners still enjoy the remnants of that privilege in the contemporary era, it does not compare with the “flourishing decades” they experienced during the white nationalist decades. They navigate their current dissatisfaction via the “comparative nature of nostalgia” (Van Zyl, 2008: 139), nostalgia acts as a coping mechanism, allowing people to manage the instability of change (Steenkamp, 2016: 318, 320), especially as this relates to the rupturing of place identities. Such management is achieved by their escaping to idealised notions and images on-screen which “mitigat[e] the harsh frame of reality” by evoking a nostalgic lens through which to look back on the past and view it as unproblematic and harmonious (Steenkamp, 2016: 318).

Through nostalgia, Afrikaners mythologise their past and maintain their view of themselves as a *volk* (nation), an imagined community, via the narration of shared experiences of this

¹⁵⁴ See Chapter 1, 1.1 *Introduction and background* .

idealised past. Taking Bhabha's (1990: 1) approach to Anderson's (2006) imagined communities by means of pedagogical and performative narratives into account, I argue that because Afrikaners' nationalist identity markers can no longer find anchorage in the context of democratic South Africa, their ability to partake in the continuous construction and performance of narratives pertaining to their cultural identity, in other words, the construction of performative narratives, is disabled. Afrikaner identity now finds itself in a liminal space. Transformation within this liminal space can only occur when, as Du Plessis (2022) contends, Afrikaners abandon the constructed myths of an idealised past and open up their narrative identity to acknowledge marginalised histories.

However, especially with reference to a number of Afrikaans films – such as *Stuur groete aan Mannetjies Roux* (Eilers, 2013), *Prêville* (Korsten, 2012), *Liefeling* (Webber, 2010) and many more (Broodryk, 2015: 6, 198, 200) – this opportunity for transformation and identity reconfiguration seems to be contested by an attachment to Afrikaner nostalgia which continuously re-draws the laager of Afrikaner identity. Afrikaners now turn out performative narratives imbued with nostalgia, disguising them in the form of cultural commodities such as films, which they consume in an act of cultural conservation (Steyn, 2016b: 485).

4.4.2.2 Longing for the 'rural idyll': the ownership of land

One such nostalgic trope found in Afrikaans films is white Afrikaners' longing for the "rural idyll" and its associations of "simplicity, contentment and continuity [...] in the midst of societal change" (Van Zyl, 2008: 139). The title of Van Zyl's article "O, Boereplaas, Geboortegrond!" stems from the song "O Boereplaas", whose lyrics portray a deep love for the Boer farm as the *geboortegrond*, (Van Coller & Van Jaarsveld, 2018: 8). The 'yearning' for the idealised *platteland* (countryside) and farm is rooted in the pre-1994 conception of land, its ownership and inhabitancy as important markers of white Afrikaner identity.

I contextualise this yearning for land as follows: South Africa's transition to democracy framed South Africa as a space of enunciation¹⁵⁵ in that previously marginalised narratives, oppressed by the nationalist regime and pertaining to, for example, place identities, were voiced. By voicing their own narratives of belonging, many of these marginalised histories and narratives

¹⁵⁵ With reference to Bhabha's (1994) third space of enunciation. See 4.2.4 *Culture, hybridity and cultural narrative identity*.

questioned and disrupted the white Afrikaner narrative that Afrikaners had a God-given right to land and that South Africa ‘belonged’ to them. This caused not only a rupture between Afrikaner identity and place but also an ontological rupture within Afrikaner identity.

The ontological nature of this rupture concerned white Afrikaners’ understanding of the world as it is shaped by the narratives that construct their identity and with the places in which they have narrated a sense of belonging. A place identity is ruptured either through the uprooting of the identity from a place of belonging or by the place itself undergoing change. Such change may occur for a multitude of reasons (for example, resource redistribution) and may lead to feelings of alienation, estrangement, and a sense of uncertainty within the identity previously rooted in the place (Rostami, 2016: 157).

In other words, the rupture between a cultural identity and its narratives of belonging may lead to a liminal state. Specifically, within the context of white Afrikaner identity, the identity and its markers shifted their anchor from ownership of a physical place to a space of remembrance which became tainted with idealisation and a romanticised idea of the past and its familiarity (Rostami, 2016: 157). As Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff (2014: 77) indicate, place identity may shift from a current experience of a physical environment to the remembering of it; in such a case, its narratives are influenced by “memory, interpretation and fantasy and imagination” – in other words, nostalgia.

Nostalgia becomes problematic when feelings of “longing” for the past are replaced by feelings of “belonging” in the past (Boym, 2001: xv). This hinders the identity’s crossing of the threshold within the liminal space to engage with the troublesome knowledge of identity displacement as a result of the overshadowing need to return to a past state. Pertaining to this past state, Van Zyl (2008: 141) holds that “the platteland as it exists in Afrikaners’ romanticised notions, as a utopia of simplicity and contentment, does not exist in reality and never existed in the past”. This utopia, however, does exist on screen.

By positioning the *platteland* as a mythological and “proverbial heaven”, where Afrikaners were free to pursue their “traditional agrarian way of life” on the *boereplaas* (Bothma, 2017: 27), Afrikaans films promote Afrikaner nostalgia (Bothma, 2017: 103; Van Zyl 2008: 138). Jansen van Vuuren and Verster (2018: 111) describe Afrikaans films such *Platteland* (Else, 2011), *Vrou soek Boer* (Kraak, 2014) and *Leading Lady* (Pretorius, 2014) as offering nostalgic representations of the “innocent pastoral years”. This innocence is rooted in the association of the *platteland* or the *boereplaas* with “*veldvrede* (field peace), kind-hearted neighbourliness,

family values and security” (Van Zyl, 2008: 128). In films such as *Mense van die Wind* (Schroder, 2022), *Meerkat Maantuig* (Schutte, 2017), *Uitvlucht* (Van den Bergh, 2015), and *Die Ongelooflike Avonture van Hanna Hoekom* (Van den Bergh, 2010), the *platteland* is portrayed as a landscape that brings healing, both intra-personally within characters and interpersonally in their relationships, through a belief in the peace and wisdom its landscapes and people provide. As Van Zyl (2008: 141) has it, the *platteland* functions as a banner for “comforting feelings of rootedness and belonging, familiarity, morality and virtue, security and contentment”, as against the city, which is often framed as the space to which characters embark in search of freedom and self-actualisation, but where they experience some degree of adversity and, as such, must return to the sanctuary of the rural space to heal.

Nostalgia serves to further communalism and a sense of shared cultural identity to counter the “cultural anxiety” of the present (Abrahamse, 2014: [online]). In other words, nostalgia becomes a strategy by means of which white Afrikaners keep imagining themselves as an imagined community by nostalgically clinging to narratives, and thus the identity markers, of the past. I use the ‘past’ here to denote white nationalist South Africa, during which white Afrikaner identity reached its zenith of power and privilege. Nostalgia promotes the idea that it is only through “solidarity” with a cultural identity that Afrikaners can “live a meaningful life in South Africa” (Steyn, 2016a: 25; Bothma, 2017: 5). Nostalgia evokes and sustains a feeling of unity within “communities experiencing social disruption and dislocation, helping to restore societal confidence” (Van Zyl, 2008: 134). An example of a film that promotes this idea is *Treurgrond* (Roodt, 2015; Steyn, 2016a: 167), an Afrikaans drama that portrays land claims and farm murders as two physical threats to white Afrikaner farmers and the romanticised *platteland* as a haven (Steyn, 2016a: 120).

4.4.2.3 Racial superiority transforms into Afrikaners as a victimised minority

These threats portrayed in *Treurgrond* bolster the contemporary Afrikaner myth, held by many white Afrikaners, of becoming a victimised minority in democratic South Africa (Steyn, 2016a: 121). Furthermore, they reinforce anxieties about ‘their’ country, ‘their’ land, ‘their’ language, religion, societal position, political orientation, and culture being “under attack” (Steyn, 2016a: 121; Steenkamp, 2016: 318).

It should be noted that the pedagogical myth of racial superiority may not be overtly prominent in Afrikaans films but rather found covertly in the positioning and representation of identities in relation to each other. The representation of white Afrikaners as victims of the socio-political context of democratic South Africa may thus function as a covert form of racism and racial commentary by introducing a victim-and-oppressor binary in to white–black identity politics, in which white Afrikaners and Afrikaner culture are framed as victims.

This myth of victimhood is constructed around the shift in power in the new South Africa's political system (Steyn, 2016b: 499) and reflects anxieties regarding Afrikaner cultural identity (Steyn, 2004: 153). As Du Plessis (2022) states, victimhood is the Afrikaner's reaction to the uncertainty presented by change and results in the formation of a *laager* to protect their identity and ensure its continuation. The narrative of victimhood in Afrikaans films is further perpetuated by films taking on political themes and expressing political and cultural anxieties, such as in *Treurgrond*, and, albeit through parody, *Poena is Koning* (Esterhuizen, 2007; Steyn, 2016b: 496-497).

4.4.2.4 The Calvinist Afrikaner nuclear family

Central to the traditional Afrikaner way of life is the patriarchal nuclear family structure (Steenkamp, 2016: 330). As in the pre-1994 context, Calvinism, as a marker of white Afrikaner identity, is perpetuated in contemporary white Afrikaner films through nostalgic representations of traditional Afrikaans nuclear families on-screen. As discussed in 3.2 *White Afrikaner identity pre-1994*. Afrikaner nuclear families aspired to “puritanical [family] values” based on the patriarchal, Calvinistic, and heteronormative structures inherent in Afrikaner nationalism (Steenkamp, 2016: 330).

This nuclear structure enforced traditional patriarchal, Calvinist gender roles¹⁵⁶. In post-1994 white Afrikaans films, the father figure is often portrayed as “particularly patriarchal” (Andrews, 2022a: 3). Afrikaans films contain representations father figures framed as the leaders of communities, households, and congregations who are ‘burdened’ with the responsibility to lead and to provide, which serves to either reinforce or to challenge the Calvinist patriarchal narrative. In films such *Verraaiers* (Eilers, 2013), *Treurgrond* (Roodt, 2015) and *Dominee*

¹⁵⁶ See 4.3.2 *Christian Calvinism and the nuclear Afrikaans family*.

Tienie (De Jager, 2018), the patriarchal father or male figure is presented as benevolent, which serves to reinforce traditional conceptions of the role of white male figures.

Additionally, Andrews (2022a: 3) notes that Afrikaans father figures are portrayed as guardians of heterosexuality who must ‘protect’ their sons against the erosion of the white masculine patriarchy brought on by homosexuality in films such as *Skoonheid* (Hermanus, 2011), *Kanarie* (Olwager, 2018), *Stropers* (Kallos, 2019), and *Moffie* (Hermanus, 2019). These films disrupt and challenge the white male patriarchal father figure (Andrews, 2022a: 3) by portraying the changing nature of narratives that construct identity.

As regards the representation of women in Afrikaans films, these are still often tied to portrayals that conform to traditional Afrikaner gender roles. This may be witnessed in the representation of female characters as mothers, wives and love interests who are in need of a white heterosexual male figure to save them from whatever circumstances they are battle. This can be seen in films such as *Klein Karoo* (Van den Bergh, 2013), *Vrou soek Boer* (Kraak, 2014), *Leading Lady* (Pretorius, 2014), and *Kuberliefde* (Esterhuizen, 2020). The white Afrikaans male saviour is often linked to the farm space where female characters are portrayed as inept in saving or managing their farm on their own, such as in *Platteland* (Else, 2011) and *Sonskyn Beperk* (Kraak, 2016).

Unpacking the above-mentioned post-1994 Afrikaans film tropes – nostalgic portrayals of the *platteland* and the *boereplaas*, the nuclear Afrikaans family, and the centrality of Calvinism inherent in these Afrikaner ways of live – it becomes evident that post-1994 Afrikaans films still cling to utopian civil-religion portrayals of Afrikaner culture. In presenting idealised portrayals of the past, nostalgia functions as a form of “selective erasure to present a sanitised version of reality to an audience” especially in such media texts (Baines, 2013: 249; Steenkamp, 2016: 315). Examples of this may be observed in Korsten’s (2012) *Prêtville*’s romanticising of “a minority’s political idea of self-governance” and in the lack of “political context or awareness” of Du Toit’s (2011) *Hoofmeisie*’s story world in which its narrative takes place (Broodryk, 2015: iii, 134).

4.4.2.5 Political conservatism and “political impotence”

Political conservatism surfaces as another trope of Afrikaans films by means of which Afrikaners cling to pedagogical myths that bolstered their privilege in the past. Political

conservatism refers to white Afrikaners' negative reactions to the socio-political shifts (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2008: 61) brought on by the advent of South African democracy and their preference for previous systems of political order and power which were centred on their privilege.

Political conservatism speaks to nostalgia, through which some white Afrikaners hark back to nationalist and apartheid politics, a context in which a white skin and being an Afrikaner meant being on top of the social hierarchy. As such, nostalgia becomes a strategy whereby Afrikaners cling to political conservatism in order to preserve their privilege which has come into question in the liminal space where identities and their narratives have been disrupted and challenged by previously marginalised narratives. The nostalgic longing for the historical systems of Afrikaner politics, such as self-governance, independence, racial superiority and political power and autonomy can be witnessed in films such as *Prêville* and *Hoofmeisie* (Broodryk, 2015: iii, 200, 201, 134) in which the story world is presented as being almost exclusively white and positions of authority are held by whites.

The nostalgic longing for nationalist politics is also covertly reflected in what Broodryk (2014: [sp]) refers to as “political impotence” whereby many post-1994 Afrikaans films do not actively engage with apartheid, nor with the socio-political realities of democratic South Africa, but rather frame their narratives within imagined, neo-nationalist, politically conservative spaces that exclusively portray aspects of “white culture”. Such films do not engage with the “daily realities of post-transition South Africa and what it means to be ‘Afrikaans’ or an ‘Afrikaner’” (Broodryk, 2015: 81) but continue to reinforce narratives that facilitate the imagining of Afrikanerhood as a distinct identity.

That is to say that many Afrikaans films reflect a yearning for the past (Broodryk, 2015: 81) rather than functioning as a platform that evokes dialogue in order to negotiate identity in a ‘new’ South Africa. These films perpetuate the inherently political idea that solidarity in support of the Afrikaner identity is the only way to function and survive in the new South Africa, and so enable a cycle of continued consumption of Afrikaans cultural commodities as a physical show of support (Steyn, 2016a: 25) and cultural solidarity. In the course of this consumption, white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity is constructed using politically conservative narratives which reify nationalist ideologies and, in this manner, function as a form of neo-nationalism.

Based on this discussion on post-1994 white Afrikaner identity, it is clear that the contemporary form of this identity (notwithstanding exceptions) is imagined and maintained through the

repackaging of Afrikaans identity markers in cultural commodities such as films. Contemporary Afrikaans film thwarts attempts to imagine a post-1994 Afrikaner identity, rooted in South Africa's democracy, by nostalgically harking back to a time of supposed stability, although it carries the potential to question these pre-1994 identity markers. The markers of post-1994 white Afrikaner identity as filmic tropes are illustrated in Figure 20, below. Figure 21 provides an overview of pre-1994 and post-1994 Afrikaans identity markers which exist as the narratives that constitute the cultural narrative identity of white Afrikanerhood.

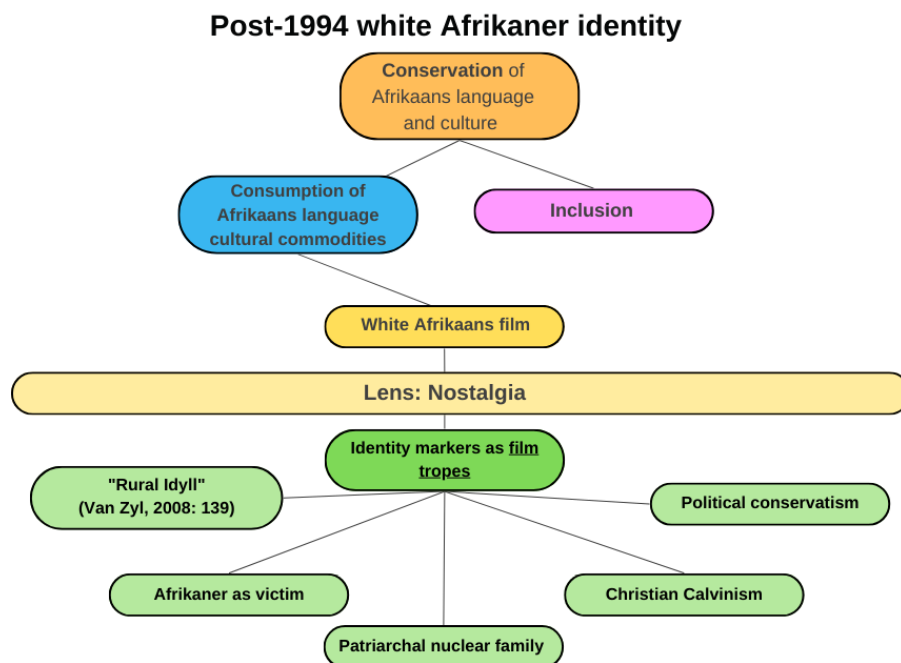


Figure 20: Markers of post-1994 white Afrikaner identity. (Illustration by the author).

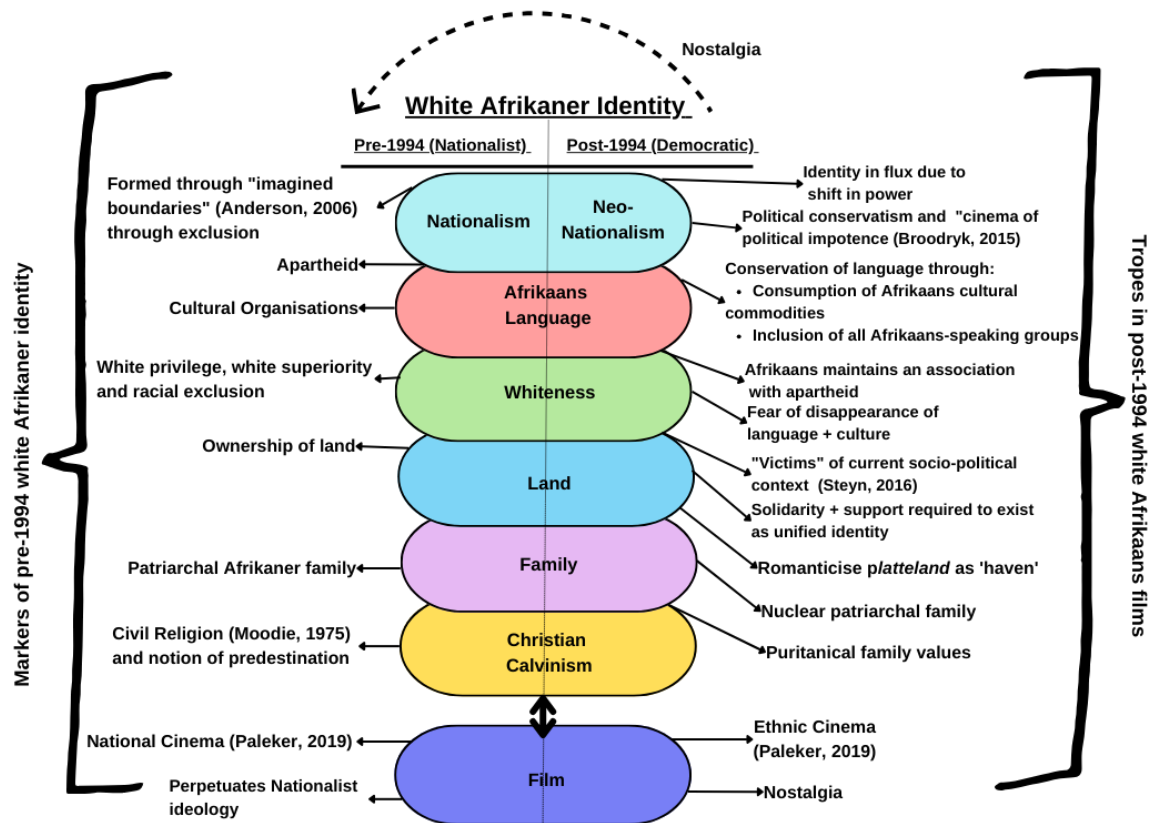


Figure 21: Overview of pre- and post-1994 white Afrikaner identity makers. (Illustration by the author).

4.5 Fantasy as a liminal strategy for interrogating white Afrikaner identity

In this chapter thus far, I have established a theoretical framework pertaining to cultural narrative identity and have contextualised pre-1994 and post-1994 white Afrikaner identity through this lens. In this section, I return to my grouping of those young white Afrikaners who experience a liminal state of identity in the course of their attempts to reconfigure their Afrikaner cultural narrative identity (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 639). Here, I introduce the concept of fantasy into the context of white Afrikaner identity and investigate how the fantasy genre may function as a creative liminal strategy to critically engage with the reimagining of white Afrikaner identity. This I undertake by investigating how the fictionality of the fantasy world may function according to Bhabha's metaphor of the third space of enunciation in order to critically engage with cultural narrative identity. In addition, I explore how fantasy allows for

the reimagining of identity and how it may inspire a renegotiation and re-engagement with identity in the phenomenal world.

Although Bhabha (1994: 53-55) defined the metaphor of the third space of enunciation in the context of the coloniser–colonised relationship, I argue that, theoretically, the filmic fantasy genre may function as a third space, which would make it an ideal liminal platform for the reimagining and renegotiation of young white Afrikaners' identity. I base my argument in my contextualisation of fantasy in Chapter 2¹⁵⁷.

Through estrangement, fantasy enables the audience to inhabit multiple spaces at once. These spaces include the fictional fantasy world which must enchant the audience (Tolkien, 2008: 52-53), as well as their own phenomenal reality and the social and cultural knowledge that informs the lens through which they view and construct meaning within the fantasy world. The fantasy world thus becomes an ambiguous space in which the audience occupies a position of hybridity, being both in the fantasy world and the phenomenal world.

The audience thus inhabits a “betwixt and between” (Turner, 2011: 94) space where identity is in constant negotiation between the two spaces. The fantasy world thus functions as a liminal space, a so-called third space, where identity can be renegotiated within the boundaries of the fictional world and may allow for the creation of alternative perceptions, interpretations and understandings of the phenomenal world. This negotiation is based on Bhabha's (1994: 34-36) theory that, within the third space, meaning is negotiated between the different spaces that the hybrid identity occupies. Given the transitory and thus temporal nature of liminal spaces (Turner, 2011: 94), the audience, having negotiated and critically engaged with matters of identity, must pass through the liminal and transformative fantasy space in order to re-engage with phenomenal reality.

¹⁵⁷ See 2.4.2 *The fantasy genre*.

I illustrate how fantasy may function as a third space in Figure 22 below.

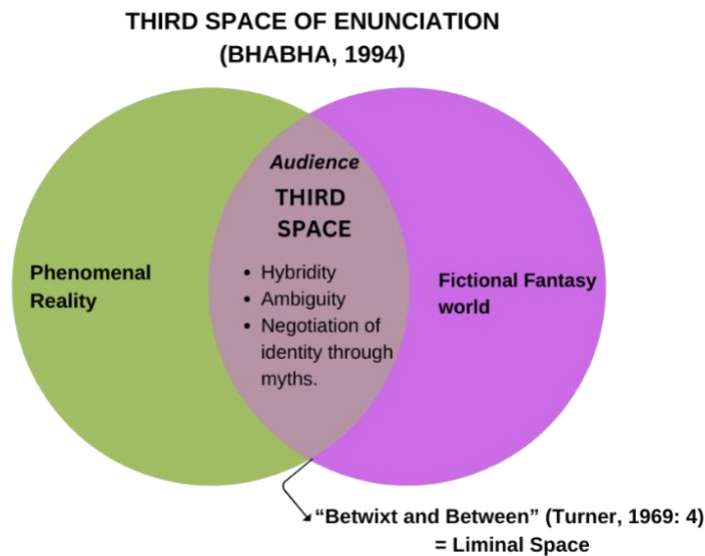


Figure 22: Fantasy as enabling a third space of enunciation. (Illustration by the author.)

As fantasy draws from cultural myths to construct the fictional fantasy world (as discussed in Chapter 2), it provides a representation of cultural narrative identity, of which these myths form part, as well as a critical distance from the identity through the fictional nature of the fantasy world. By engaging with the myths that form part of a culture's cultural narrative identity and the ideologies that these myths perpetuate, fantasy as a third space allows the audience to negotiate with and question those pedagogical and performative myths through which a culture imagines its identity. This allows for the questioning and renegotiation of cultural identity itself.

Álvarez-Mosquera (2017: 645) argues that creativity is central to the liminal space as this related to initiating a new identity. Fantasy too relies solely on novel creativity which enables the imagining of new identities and possibilities, safeguarded by the parameters of its fictionality. This renegotiation of identity may in turn be reflected in the phenomenal world as the audience passes through the liminal fantasy space.

Furthermore, Walters (2011: 30) argues that fantasy's imagining inspires a "re-engagement" with the phenomenal world and its concerns. It is this re-engagement that I believe is especially relevant in relation to white Afrikaner identity and its possible reconfigurations. A re-engagement with the contemporary political context of South Africa, which Broodryk (2016) argues Afrikaans films lack, can be executed within the parameters of the fantasy world, and the usable knowledge gleaned from it can be implemented in the phenomenal world.

In the sense then, embracing the fantasy genre as a strategy for reimagining Afrikaner identity within its current liminal state allows for the creative negotiation of the Afrikaner identity's inherent hybridity from the critically distanced vantage point of the fictional fantasy world. From this vantage point, there is no need to escape into nostalgic imaginings as the audience is aware of the fantastical fictionality of the space and may freely experiment with the reimagining of identity within its boundaries. This critical distance allows for the cultivation of broader and more objective perspectives which may evoke change and transformation in their re-engagement with the phenomenal world. As Weinstock (2022: 49) states, fantasy enables its audiences to cultivate new and creative perspectives and approaches to identity and to an array of other societal challenges by presenting other worlds in which aspects of the phenomenal world are presented in a new light:

By estranging us from the world we know through the presentation of worlds that function according to different principles, fantasy works possess the capacity to provoke critical reflection on our familiar world – to let us reconceive nature as history and recognize that the way things are is not necessarily how they have to be (Weinstock, 2022: 49).

Besides fantasy drawing from myths to create fictional worlds, it also plays a role in the formation of narratives that contribute to cultural identity. As it draws from myth, and myth incorporates elements of fantasy in its explanation of reality¹⁵⁸, fantasy itself thus forms part of the narrative identity of a culture and hence acts both to reflect and construct narrative cultural identity. Within a culture, myths thus exist as a collective narrative of fantasy (Glynos, 2011: par. 74). Following this argument, the myths of Godly predestination and civil religion, which serve to construct the idea of the Afrikaner nation, thus exist as a collective white Afrikaner fantasy. Such an interpretation, aided by the critical distance that the fantasy world evokes through estrangement, may act to foreground the fictionality of the myths and their construction by means of internal and external myth-making.

¹⁵⁸ See Chapter 2, 2.4.2.1 *Fantasy and myth*.

4.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to contextualise white Afrikaner identity in order to argue that fantasy may function as an effective liminal strategy for critically engaging with white Afrikaners' identity crisis in the post-1994 socio-political context of South Africa. In this conclusion, I draw together my theoretical framework of cultural narrative identity and the markers of white Afrikaner identity to reiterate how Afrikanerhood is imagined through its ideological narratives and how it finds expression in Afrikaans films.

I began this chapter by framing my understanding of identity, especially cultural identity, as a process of narration in terms of which the members of an identity construct their sense of self by narrating their experiences, which in turn constructs their narrative identity. This narration exists as a process of myth-making whereby the naturalisation of a myth leads to unquestioned acceptance of the myth as a fundamental part of an identity, where it is then seen as constituting the natural order of things instead of being a socially and ideologically constructed narrative (Barthes, 1991: 128). Cultural narrative identity, as the imagining of a cultural identity through the narratives it perpetuates, thus also exists as a process of myth-making – narratives are constructed to perpetuate certain ideologies and pedagogies. I described 'internal myths'¹⁵⁹ as those narratives aimed at constructing a cultural identity through culture-specific originary myths or pedagogical myths that deliberately aim to re-enforce a certain ideology that constructs a culture's identity.

I investigated how narration functions as a strategy through which communities, such as nations and cultures, as per Anderson (2006), imagine themselves as a (comm)unity. I acknowledged that these imagined communities, especially as they pertain to culture, do not imply cultural homogeneity but rather, as per Bhabha (1990), admit to hybrid cultural identities and the effects colonialism has had on the formation of such hybridity. Afrikaner identity's hybridity can historically be located in the formation of the Afrikaans language on the basis of various cultural influences as well as in the effects of the colonisation of South Africa by Britain. Besides the hybridity inherent in the origin of Afrikaner cultural identity, Afrikaners also enacted hybridity in later years. Despite having been in the position of the colonised, white Afrikaners took on the position of the coloniser by dominating, uprooting and oppressing cultures and their place identities during apartheid years.

¹⁵⁹ I elaborate on external myths and how they function as performative narratives in Chapter 5.

I investigated the markers of pre-1994 white nationalist Afrikaner identity whose boundaries were imagined through pedagogical narratives that included the centrality of the Afrikaans language (Nel, 2010: 2); Calvinism and the belief in Godly predestination, through which God gave South Africa to the Afrikaners (Schutte, 2017: 216); the ownership of land based on this predestined 'right'; and white racial superiority. Identities narrate themselves into myths of belonging pertaining to place, based on their experiences of, and in, specific places. White Afrikaners narrated a place identity in South Africa through the internal myth of civil religion whereby Voortrekkers 'received' the right to own and rule the land, as predestined and ordained by God. This myth of Godly predestination bolstered Afrikaner place identities by cultivating the myth of a special bond between the land and the Afrikaner, one which was inaccessible to other ethnicities. This myth, along with white supremacy, was a key narrative in justifying apartheid land distribution laws.

The above-mentioned markers of Afrikaner identity found expression in nationalist Afrikaans films that reinforced Afrikaner cultural narrative identity on-screen through representations of the idealised nuclear family (Andrews, 2022a: 3,10,11); Calvinism and its patriarchal ideology (Koenig-Visagie & Van Eeden, 2013: 6), the ownership of land, in particular farmlands (Broodryk, 2016: 64); the city as evil and corrupting, as against the serenity and purity of the farmland (Steyn, 2016a: 86); white superiority (Bothma, 2017: 6); the bolstering of the myth of civil religion; and the central position of the Afrikaans language in Afrikaner culture.

I argued that, in post-1994 South Africa, these nationalist markers have ruptured from the socio-political space in which they found anchorage, and thus, as Steyn (2016a) suggests, now find expression in spaces that allow for nostalgic remembrance and imagining, that is, cultural commodities such as film. In Afrikaans films, nostalgic representations of pre-1994 Afrikaner identity markers are presented as film tropes, which in turn contribute to the formation and enactment of a post-1994 Afrikaner identity.

I identified the following tropes: the positioning of the farmland and lifestyle as a 'rural idyll' (Van Zyl, 2008: 139), the translation of white superiority into the portrayal of white victimisation (Steyn, 2016a: 121) and the threatening of the Afrikaans language and Afrikaner culture, the representation of traditional gender roles pertaining to the nuclear family structure on the basis of Calvinist values (Andrews, 2022a: 3), and the political conservatism which results in Afrikaans films not portraying the realities of democratic South Africa (Broodryk, 2016: 64) but rather clinging to story worlds that are dominantly racially white.

Due to the uprooting of nationalist narratives, to which many white Afrikaners still nostalgically cling, Afrikaner identity experienced an ontological rupture from its narratives, which shifted the identity into a space of liminality. Within this liminal space, threshold may be crossed, leading to engagement with problematic knowledge. It is in relation to this liminal space that I delineated two categories of white Afrikaners: those who use nostalgia to cling to pre-1994 markers of Afrikaner identity, and those younger white Afrikaners who, according to Álvarez-Mosquera's (2017: 648), wish to transcend the liminal space by utilising its transformative abilities to reimagine white Afrikaner identity as compatible with South Africa's current socio-political context.

Finally, I investigated fantasy as an effective strategy for navigating the liminal state of Afrikaner identity and for utilising the transformative potential of the liminal space to question the remaining pedagogical markers of Afrikaner identity. Through the estrangement that the fantastical world evokes, fantasy functions as an expression of Bhabha's (1994) Third Space of Enunciation wherein white Afrikaner identity and its myths may be reimaged and reconfigured, and its cultural hybridity negotiated.

In the following chapter, I investigate what salient tropes of filmic fantasy may be found in Afrikaans mythological narratives, as expressions of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

CHAPTER 5: IDENTIFYING FANTASY TROPES IN AFRIKANER MYTHOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, I contextualised white Afrikaner identity and its identity markers according to the framework of cultural narrative identity I developed there. In broad terms, this framework considers Afrikaner identity as imagined through the narratives that form part of its narrative identity, such as myths. The construction of cultural identity can therefore be seen as a process of cultural myth-making. As regards the myths that contribute to Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, I differentiated between internal and external myths. This differentiation was undertaken to acknowledge what I perceive to be the dominant types¹⁶⁰ of myths within the category of Afrikaner mythological narratives. I investigate internal myths as pedagogical narratives that actively construct white Afrikaner cultural and national identity.

In Chapter 4, I identified and contextualised Moodie's (1975)¹⁶¹ interpretation of the myth of civil religion as the dominant internal nationalist myth through which white Afrikaners have historically (and arguably, presently) imagined their cultural and national identity – it encapsulates many markers of white Afrikaner identity. In this chapter, my investigation into external myths as creative and often fantastical expressions of Afrikaner cultural identity aims to establish touchpoints with the fantasy genre.

In chapters 2, 3 and 4, I established that internal and external¹⁶² mythological narratives (myths, legends, folk tales and fairy tales) are expressions of cultural narrative identity from which some fantasy texts draw to generate culture-specific narrative elements that are representative of their cultural narrative identity within their novel fantastical worlds (Atteberry, 2014: 2; Fowkes, 2010: 1). In a similar vein, here, I investigate how my fantasy framework might potentially draw from white Afrikaner mythological narratives to identify fantastical

¹⁶⁰ I acknowledge that my limited classification of Afrikaner mythological narratives into two category types is not exhaustive. I utilise these categories in particular as they are the ones that appeared as the dominant myth categories in the course of my research process.

¹⁶¹ As established in Chapter 4, I regard Moodie's *The Rise of Afrikanerdom* (1975) as a seminal source as it captures white Afrikaner history as it has been narrated through the dominant myth of civil religion.

¹⁶² In the context of white Afrikaner mythological narratives, external myths contain traces of the fantastical from which a fantasy screenplay that interrogates Afrikaner identity may draw. I acknowledge that other cultures' internal myths may also contain elements of the fantastical. As such, I make reference to both internal and external myths as sources from which the fantasy genre may draw.

elements that are representative of Afrikaans cultural narrative identity within the context of a filmic fantasy screenplay.

The aim of this chapter is encapsulated in the sub-question: “What salient fantasy tropes can I extract from Afrikaner mythological narratives?” To address this question, I undertake a thematic analysis of how Afrikaans mythological narratives reflect salient tropes of fantasy in a sample of internal and external Afrikaner mythological narratives.¹⁶³ My use of the term ‘fantasy tropes’ here refers to both ontological fantasy tropes (discussed in Chapter 2) and filmic fantasy tropes (discussed in Chapter 3).

The analysis contributes new insights to the existing body of knowledge of fantasy in white Afrikaner mythological narratives. I understand the themes¹⁶⁴ that emerge from my thematic analysis to represent a new category of tropes that personifies how fantasy is expressed in Afrikaner myths. My reason for positing these identified themes as ‘tropes’ rests on this study’s understanding of tropes as recurring elements, “narrative pattern or device[s]” (García-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021: 2), as established in Chapter 2¹⁶⁵. As I identify the themes in my thematic analysis according to their salience¹⁶⁶, they are thus the result of their recognisable and repeated use across the analysed Afrikaner mythological narratives. As such, within the context of this study, these themes function as tropes of my narrative sample. I refer to these new tropes as ‘fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythology’ (FTAMs). The FTAMs thus function as fantastical elements that are representative of Afrikaans cultural narrative identity. In Chapter 6, I use the FTAMs to create a framework for a fantasy screenplay that interrogates white Afrikaner identity.

To identify FTAMs, which constitutes the main aim of this chapter, I follow the trajectory described below. I begin by contextualising my delineation of white Afrikaans mythological narratives. I then provide an overview of the categories of internal and external myths as briefly contextualised in Chapter 4. Next, I move on to the thematic analysis of internal and external Afrikaner mythologies in order to identify the FTAMs and how Afrikaner mythological narratives

¹⁶³ Cultural narrative identity may find expression in other forms of mythological narratives, such as folk songs, folk dances, folk medicines such as *boererate* (medicinal Boer cures) and weatherlore (Burden, 2011). Due to the scope of this study, I focus my analysis on mythological narratives such as folk tales, which exist as narrative stories and which contain narrative elements such as structure, theme, plot, setting, character and visual iconography.

¹⁶⁴ Themes in this context refers to the patterns that can be identified from within the coded categories of a data set (Joffe & Yardley, 2004: 57) in a thematic analysis.

¹⁶⁵ See Chapter 2, 2.3 *Trope theory: navigating fluid genre boundaries with tropes*.

¹⁶⁶ See 5.4 *Applying thematic analysis to identify FTAMs in Afrikaner mythological narratives*.

express tropes of fantasy. I begin by explicating my approach to the analysis, including how I constructed the sample of mythological narratives that I will perform the thematic analysis on, and my approach to implementing thematic analysis to identify FTAMs. In the next section, I explore the meaning and implications of the term ‘Afrikaans mythological narrative’.

The remainder of Chapter 5 is dedicated to the exploration and interpretation of the outcome of the thematic analysis. I structure the discussion of this exploration according to the units of analysis I used in Chapter 3 to investigate the salient tropes of filmic fantasy. These are plot structure, theme, setting, character and visual iconography. My continued use of these units of analysis is motivated by the focus of this dissertation on creating a framework for writing a fantasy screenplay as the units constitute some of the basic building blocks of a screenplay narrative (McKee, 1997: 32, 43, 68, 100, 114, 401). For each of these units of analysis, I investigate how the salient tropes of fantasy find expression in the sample of mythological narratives and what FTAMs emerge from this expression.

Figure 23 provides an illustration of the layout of this chapter.

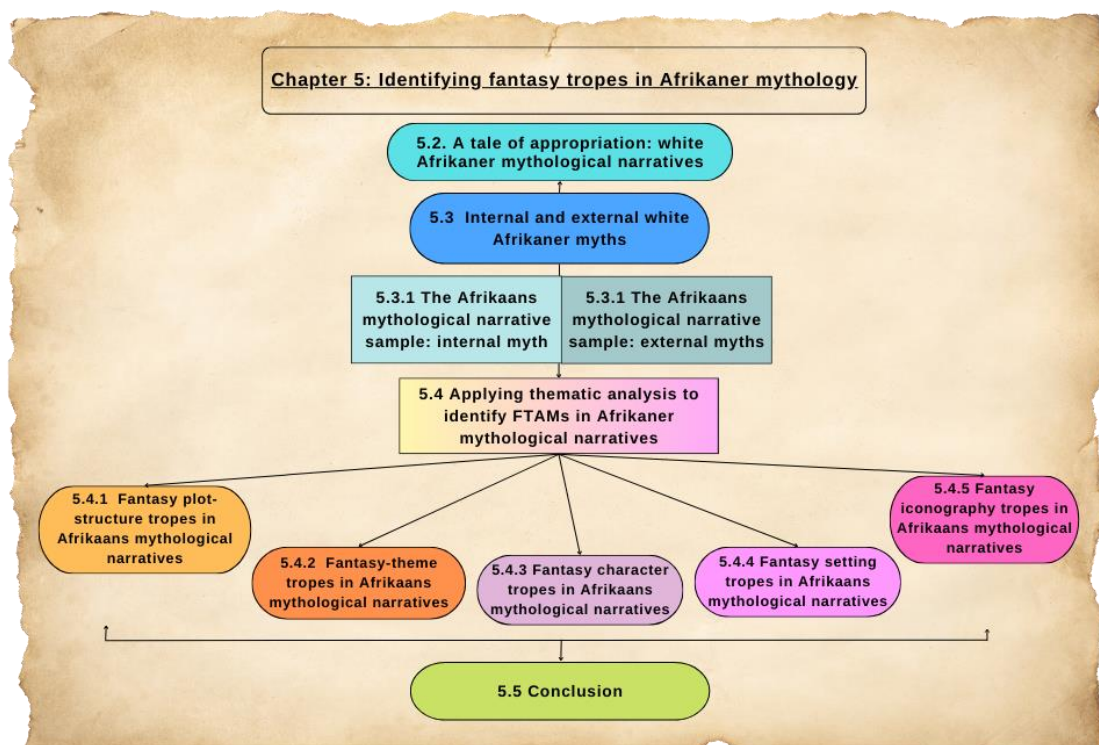


Figure 23: The structure of Chapter 5. (Illustration by the author).

5.2 A tale of appropriation: white Afrikaner mythological narratives

Using the phrase ‘white Afrikaner’ to describe Afrikaans mythological narratives is often a problematic delineation. Much of what fed into white Afrikaner narrative culture has been appropriated, borrowed and taken from other cultures. This study is, however, not primarily concerned with debates regarding the origins, appropriation and validity of these myths and folktales, but rather with the role these narratives play in the construction of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

Examples of such appropriated narratives include popular fairy tales, such as *Aspoestertjie* (Cinderella), and *Rooikappie* (Little Red Riding Hood) which, according to preface in the Human and Rousseau collection of fairy tales by Charles Perrault (1967), came to South Africa with the French Huguenots when they settled in the Cape (1688-1689). *Antjie Somers* has often been interpreted as a white Afrikaans folk tale due to DF Malherbe’s 1924 Afrikaans poem about the character. Gorelik (2021: 17) traces the narrative’s origins back to the folklore motifs of European settlers, which were then combined with “Cape legends or folktales about robbers”. Another example is the *Jakkals en Wolf* (Jackal and Wolf) tales that originate in Khoi oral traditions (Van Niekerk, 2018: 80). In these oral traditions, the tale is known as *Jackal and Hyena*, and has been appropriated for white Afrikaner literature and folk tales. There are many more such examples.

The inclusion of such appropriated mythological narratives in white Afrikaner culture can arguably be attributed to, amongst other things, settler colonisation, the multicultural contact zone¹⁶⁷ of the early colonial Cape and, as discussed in Chapter 4, the creole origins of the Afrikaans language. This attribution occurred despite Afrikaners’ attempts to disentangle Afrikaans from the creole associations of the language in the course of an increasing focus on hierarchical racial divisions and notions of cultural superiority (Steyn, 2004: 148) in the period leading up to the apartheid era.

As indicated in Chapter 4, this disentanglement led to white Afrikaners occupying a position of political power and privilege during the apartheid years based on their internal myth of cultural superiority. This myth enabled them to subjugate the narrative and cultural spaces of other cultures. As Bhabha (1991: 128) states, the result of the appropriation and assimilation

¹⁶⁷ The concept of a ‘contact zone’ was introduced by Mary Louise Pratt in 1991 (Schorch, 2013: 70). Contact zones involve “relationality and contiguity” in a manner similar to “standpoint theory, perspectivism, intersectionality and relationality” (Schorch, 2013: 70). Contact zones are used in “feminist theory, critical race theory” and “postcolonial theory” and the like (Schorch 2013: 68).

of myths is that the origins of the narratives are lost over time. Consequently, they become accepted and naturalised¹⁶⁸ within a culture (Barthes, 1991: 128). As a myth is naturalised, it becomes part of the cultural narrative identity of the specific cultural group and consequently influences how the people of that culture imagine and enact their identity.

Cultural appropriation is inherently problematic; however, it is one of the cornerstones of white Afrikaans cultural narrative identity. By including these narratives, I do not wish to validate appropriation, but rather to recognise that white Afrikaner culture is constructed from the narratives of various diverse cultures. This serves the goal of this study – to question white Afrikaner identity (through filmic fantasy tropes). With this in mind, this study includes mythological narratives that have been appropriated for white Afrikaner culture.¹⁶⁹

In the following section, I explore the external mythological narratives that have been appropriated into white Afrikaner culture in order to establish touchpoints with fantasy, as well as the dominant internal myth of civil religion aimed at constructing nationalist Afrikaner identity.

5.3 Internal and external white Afrikaner myths

In Chapter 4, I established that the retelling of narratives serves to construct and reify the culture's identity because culture exists as a collection of narratives (Müller-Funk, 2003: 43) and that the act of narration thus exists as a process of cultural myth-making. Van der Merwe (2009: 33) states that the retelling of mythological narratives is a process that evolves over generations. In the course of this process in which the myth is “internalized by [a] group”, it acquires a “truth-factor”, regardless of whether the myth is true (Van der Merwe, 2009: 33) or where it originated. I posited that this “truth-factor” is the result of Barthes' (1991: 128) process of naturalisation, in which the myth becomes accepted as the natural order of things. In the context of this study, the terms ‘myth’ and ‘mythological narrative’ do not imply that the myth's narrative contents are either true or untrue. Instead, they qualify it as being situated, and

¹⁶⁸ I discuss naturalisation in Chapter 4, in *4.2.5 Cultural myth-making*.

¹⁶⁹ Despite Afrikaner nationalists' attempts to create a narrative of cultural homogeneity, heterogeneous expressions of Afrikaner culture prevailed. I acknowledge that the myths used within my narrative sample originate in the vast array of heterogeneous expressions of Afrikaans culture and include those cultural influences that have contributed to the formation of the Afrikaans language.

possibly naturalised, within a specific cultural context through its retelling and the continual citing thereof.

In Chapter 4, I briefly discussed internal and external myths in order to establish the different types of Afrikaner myths that contribute to white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. While, internal myths provide insight into the pedagogy, socio-political discourse, and history of white Afrikaner identity, the creative expression of external myths provides touchpoints with the salient tropes¹⁷⁰ of the fantasy genre. Hence, in order to consider and question white Afrikaner identity and the narratives that construct it in as broad a sense as possible, I analyse both internal and external mythological narratives in my thematic analysis. The aim of the following sections (5.3.1 and 5.3.2) is to start this process of thematic analysis by first establishing the data set, which includes compiling a list of internal and external narratives which will serve as the narrative sample on which I perform the thematic analysis.

5.3.1 The Afrikaans mythological narrative sample: Internal myths

In order to establish the narrative sample, I start with internal myths. As has been established, the dominant internal myth included in the sample is Moodie's (1975) account of the civil-religion myth, which comprises of a collection of selected historical events. Although there are admittedly many other internal Afrikaner nationalist myths, I argue that the myth of civil religion serves as the central axis upon which Afrikaner cultural identity relies as it best encapsulates the markers of white Afrikaner identity (as set out in Chapter 4).

Furthermore, in Chapter 4, I drew from Bhabha's (1990: 297) theory that a nation is narrated by mean of pedagogical narratives (including originary narratives) and performative narratives, and I applied it to the domain of culture. In 4.2.5 *Cultural mythmaking*, I tied pedagogical narratives to my delineation of internal myths such as the myth of civil religion as both aim to construct the identity of a culture through narratives that perpetuate the pedagogy relating to how the culture should be imagined.

¹⁷⁰ I discuss the ontological tropes of fantasy in chapter 2 and the salient tropes of filmic fantasy in chapter 3.

As established in Chapter 1¹⁷¹, my decision to include one nationalist myth in my narrative sample is due to the myth of civil religion and its 'sub-myths' being dominant in Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. Moreover, I established in Chapter 1¹⁷² that the themes that emerge within a thematic analysis are not determined by their quantifiable recurrence within a data set, but rather by their relevance to the research question and the code-categories (Nowell *et al.*, 2017: 8) and their own salience to internal myth-making. As such, analysing only one internal myth does not impact on the identification of its themes when set against a larger sample of external myths.

To avoid ambiguity regarding the analysis of an internal myth, I reiterate that this study investigates the myth of civil religion not through the lens of historical accuracy or factuality but as a constructed and narrated mythological narrative that contains elements typical of genre (plot structure, themes, characters, settings and iconographies). As I have already undertaken an in-depth investigation of internal myths in Chapter 4, I move on to consider external myths.

5.3.2 The Afrikaans mythological narrative sample: external myths

Having justified my use of a dominant internal myth, I turn to those external myths I include in my sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives.

In a manner similar to my discussion of internal myths as pedagogical narratives in Chapter 4, parallels can be drawn between performative narratives and external myths. External myths exist as the creative output of cultural identity that are formulated through cultural myth-making and told and re-told within a culture's narrative identity. External myths may exist as what Bhabha (1990: 297), with regard to performative narratives, describes as the ongoing "signs of national culture". In other words, external myths are continuously formulated by the people of a nation or culture in order to express national or cultural identity through acts of 'ongoing' signification. I use 'ongoing' as new mythological narratives may continuously surface as elements are added to a culture's history over time. I acknowledge that external myths may, however, also exist as pedagogical narratives, such as mythological narratives based on

¹⁷¹ See 1.5.2.1 *Establishing a sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives.*

¹⁷² See 1.5.2.2 *Coding, identifying and presenting the themes.*

historical events that are re-told as folk tales and that carry pedagogical ideas. An example from my narrative sample is that of the myths concerning Boer heroes.

Diverse myths exist in the *external myth* category in white Afrikaner culture. As established in Chapter 1, my use of the word ‘external’ is deliberate as I recognise that the mythological narratives included in this description may not all have originated within white Afrikaner culture. Rather, as indicated at the beginning of this chapter, many of these myths are sourced from external cultural spaces and have been appropriated and assimilated into white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

Regarding the categories of external myths, I draw from the categories of white Afrikaner mythological narratives described below. Van der Merwe (2009: 38) identifies narratives of Boer heroes, while Coetzee (1960) refers to disputed histories and people,¹⁷³ ghost narratives, animal fables and magical creatures that may possess the ability to shapeshift. I further identify myths based on Calvinist religious beliefs, fairy tales and fables as prominent Afrikaner external myths and include them in the list. I summarise the narrative categories in Figure 24 below.

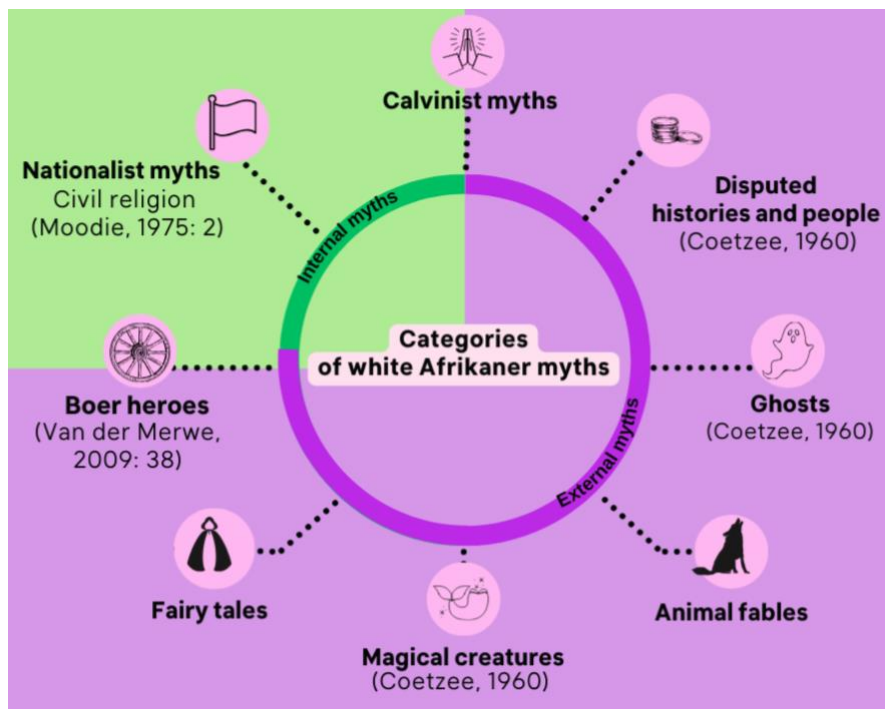


Figure 24: Internal and external categories of white Afrikaner myths. (Illustration by the author.)

¹⁷³ Disputed histories and people refer to characters that emerge from Afrikaans mythological narratives. It is unclear whether some of these people existed historically; others have become such well-known characters that some believe them to have been real.

In this section, I investigate the external myth categories set out in Figure 24 and draw examples from Afrikaner cultural narrative identity with the purpose of establishing a sample of narratives to analyse pertaining to how the tropes of fantasy find expression in them.

I begin with the category of Boer heroes which explores national mythological heroic figures, many¹⁷⁴ of whom came to prominence during the Great Trek and the Anglo-Boer War (Van der Merwe, 2009: 38). Boer generals were imagined as *volkshelde*, “national heroes”, due to their tenacity in battle (Steyn, 2014: 139). I argue that ‘Boer hero myths’ are situated on the border between *internal* and *external* white Afrikaner myths. These ‘heroic’ figures exist within the ‘story world’ of the myths contained within the larger myth of civil-religion and usually serve as a mythologised historical account of conflict faced by white Afrikaners. These myths simultaneously aim at constructing a history of Afrikanerhood through the validation of its historical figures, while, as Van der Merwe (2009: 34) states, the mythological accounts also exist as imaginative “bedtime stories”.

The latter are the result of historical accounts of ‘heroic figures’ that are mythologised through the process of retelling, in the course of which myths may change, disappear (Van der Merwe, 2009: 33), become overdramatised or be altogether misinterpreted over time (Segal, 1999: 13, as cited in Jansen van Vuuren, 2015: 19). During era of white nationalist South Africa, white Afrikaner myths were perpetuated to reinforce nationalist ideology by portraying heroic examples of white Afrikaners who served to validate their identity and to create a sense of “belonging” in South Africa (Jansen Van Vuuren, 2015: 64), thereby contributing to a nationalist cultural narrative identity. In this manner, although rooted in historical events (Van der Merwe, 2009: 33), the Boer hero is elevated to a mythological figure that serves as a signifier for nationalist ideology (Jansen van Vuuren, 2015: 19). The figures in these tales include Christiaan de Wet, Koos de La Rey, Danie Theron and Dirkie Uys (Grobbelaar, 1981: 188).

One such historical Boer figure who has gained mythological status in white Afrikaner culture is Siener van Rensburg, a Boer advisor during the Anglo-Boer War (Snyman, 2005: 17). *Sieners* were “rogue mystics” who were viewed as “latter-day prophets” due to their supernatural ability to see the future (De Villiers, 2011: 85, as cited in Kotze, 2013: 34). Although *sieners* were among the heroic figures of the Boers, I categorise myths that feature

¹⁷⁴ I acknowledge that a figure such as Wolraad Woltemade is a heroic figure from the time of the Cape settlers before the advent of the Great Trek.

them as related to Calvinist myths as they were often regarded as messengers from God and were hence viewed as religious figures. Another recurring character in white Afrikaner mythological narratives that is linked to biblical mythology is the devil (Burden, 1993: 79). The devil's appearance is aligned with the Calvinist perception of the character (Burden, 1993: 79) as Calvinism formed one of the fundamental markers of both historical and nationalist white Afrikaner identity. I hence also situate this category between internal and external myths. Tales featuring the devil include that of Renier de Winnaar (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993: 203), a witty Afrikaner figure in competition with the devil, and that of Captain van Hunks, who held a pipe-smoking competition with the devil on Table Mountain (Burden, 1993: 82; Grobbelaar & Harris, 1993: 32).

The myth of Van Hunks serves as an explanation for the name Devil's Peak, adjacent to Table Mountain, as well as for the cloud blanket that covers the latter (Heale, 1995: 11). Van Hunks and his tale can then also be categorised in Coetzee's (1960) category of disputed histories and people. The title of this category does not aim to represent a disavowal of the content of its myths but rather simply reflects the contentious nature of their historical accuracy, despite the tales being widely known. In this category, I also include the tale of Antjie Somers (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993: 197), that of Racheltjie de Beer,¹⁷⁵ who sacrificed her life to save her brother, and the legend of Paul Kruger's lost millions (Heale, 1995: 36). Although Kruger himself was a prominent figure in Afrikaner history, it is his supposed treasure that constitutes the disputed element.

The next category pertains to myths of ghosts (Coetzee, 1960) which aligns with Valipoor's (2016: 209) definition of myths as narratives that explain the presence of "supernatural forces". Afrikaans supernatural or ghost narratives include mythical figures such as Table Bay's haunted ship, The Flying Dutchman (*Die Vlieënde Hollander*) (Heale, 1995: 32) the appearance of the Voortrekker ghost woman, Langkappie (Grobbelaar, 1970: 18), *Die spook van Uniondale* (The ghost of Uniondale) (Maartens, 2014a) and the ghosts in the Castle of Good Hope (Heale, 1995: 40). Burden (2011: 104) also includes the appearance of animal ghost creatures in Afrikaans folklore, such as fire-spitting primates, headless dogs, ghost cows, turkeys and ostriches.

¹⁷⁵ There is much controversy regarding whether the tale of Racheltjie de Beer is a myth or whether it has a historical basis. There exists speculation that the tale might be based on the supposed true story of Hazel Milner that occurred in the USA (News24, 2020). For this reason, I group it in Coetzee's (1960) category of disputed histories/people.

Pertaining to animals, Coetzee (1960) refers to stories and fables featuring animals as prominent in Afrikaner culture. These mythological narratives include tales of *Jakkals en Wolf* (Jackal and Wolf), *Hasie* (rabbit), and the tales of *Kees* (Baboon). Relating fables to fantasy is, however, problematised by Tolkien's (2008: 36) argument that fables are not fantasy as they often do not include human characters and exist with the simple purpose of preaching morality, as discussed in Chapter 3. Yet, as many of the Jackal and Wolf tales do include the character of the *boer* (farmer), along with the fact that they are central to white Afrikaner narrative culture, I include them in this study.

Regarding the category of magical creatures and shapeshifters, Grobbelaar and Harris' (1993: 13) book *Die Mooiste Afrikaanse Sprokies* includes tales such as *Die Rob-Vrou*, a shape-shifting woman who appears in the form of a seal; that of a seven-headed monster; and those of human-eating giants, such as *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter* (Old One-eyed Human-eating Giant) (Grobbelaar, 1987:47) and *Brolloks en Bittergal* (Langenhoven, 1983: 161), two human-eating wizards. The character of the witch is also found in Afrikaans folk tales, such as *Liewe Heksie* (The Friendly Little Witch) and her friend, *Blommie*, a dwarf. I also include the legend of the Klein Karoo¹⁷⁶ *watermeid*¹⁷⁷ (mermaid) in this category. The mermaid is both depicted in Klein Karoo rock art and said to have been observed by inhabitants of the Klein Karoo (Rust & Van der Poll, 2012: [sp]).

The imagery of fairy-tale characters such as mermaids, witches and dwarfs involves Afrikaans appropriation of European fairy tales that are re-set in the South African landscape. Jenkins (2002: 89) states that Afrikaans fairy tales historically played an important role in the formation of a white nationalist Afrikaner identity. These fairy tales appropriated to Afrikaans draw both from their European versions and from the landscapes and contextual surroundings of South Africa (Jenkins, 2002: 89). As such, the fairy tales reified the belonging of an identity of European heritage to the South African landscape (Jenkins, 2002: 89). Examples of these fairy tales include "The Serpent's Bride" and "The Story of the Shining Princess" (Van der Westhuizen, 2019: 121) as well as Afrikaans versions of the German character, *Uilspieël* (*Eulenspiegel* in German) (Jenkins, 2002: 100). Examples of European fairy tales whose translated versions have been incorporated into white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity

¹⁷⁶ The Klein Karoo is a dry, semi-arid area in the southern interior of South Africa that is "endowed with permanent, deep water holes" (Rust & Van der Poll, 2012).

¹⁷⁷ The term 'meid' has become a racial slur for women of colour. However, amongst some ethnic groupings of colour, and in particular contexts, this term does not have these associations. In the context of the historical and contemporary interplay of racial power relations, its use beyond these contexts is considered derogatory and to be hate speech.

include *Rooikappie* (Little Red Riding Hood), *Die skone slaapster* (Sleeping Beauty), *Bloubaard* (Bluebeard), *Aspoestertjie* (Cinderella) and *Die gestewelde kat* (Puss in Boots) (Perrault & Brink, 1967).

Having described the categories of the external myths, I now move on to compile a list of Afrikaans internal and external mythological narratives which will function as my narrative sample. This is undertaken to establish the data-set on which I perform the thematic analysis, to achieve the aim of this chapter – to identify FTAMs. For each of the above-mentioned categories, I identified narratives that I deem model examples of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, based on my own subjective experience of white Afrikaner identity, as a cultural insider. I then reduced the sample to three narratives in each category. I made the selections on the basis of the myths either overtly reflecting elements of Afrikaner identity, or, as far as possible, containing fantastical elements.

With reference to Figure 24, internal and external categories of white Afrikaner myths and the mythological narrative categories delineated depicted there, I deliberately omit the category of Calvinist myths as it constitutes a grand narrative that permeates other internal and external narrative myth categories. Calvinism is not only a prominent theme in the myth of civil religion but also finds expression in some of the external narratives investigated in the narrative sample¹⁷⁸.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that there exist many versions (both published, oral and mediated such as films) of each of the mythological narratives in the sample and that different versions may reveal the presence of different fantasy tropes. Therefore, for the sake of clarity and the study's credibility and replicability, pertaining to my method of analysis, I make reference to the authors of the specific versions I have read. I chose external myths from those mythological narratives published in collective works of which the titles indicate or claim a belonging to Afrikaans culture. These book titles include *Die Mooiste Afrikaanse Sprokies* (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993), *Towerlantern: Afrikaanse oustories oorvertel deur Pieter W. Grobbelaar* (Grobbelaar, 1987), *Die Twee Broers en ander Afrikaanse Kampvuurstories* (Grobbelaar, 1970), and *Die Afrikaanse Kinderensiklopedie* (Albertyn, 1955). I especially relied on the works of renowned Afrikaans scholar and folklorist Pieter W. Grobbelaar. Grobbelaar is considered a prominent figure in the documenting of Afrikaans *kultuurgeskiedenis* (cultural history) through collecting and publishing (amongst others)

¹⁷⁸ I elaborate on this under 5.4.2. *Fantasy-theme tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives*.

Afrikaans folk tales, fairy tales, legends and myths in over more than 200 publications (Burden, 2013: 2).

Below, I provide an overview of the mythological narratives that constitute the narrative sample:¹⁷⁹

Internal myths:

Nationalist myths:

- A. The myth of civil religion (Moodie 1975)

External myths:

Ghosts:

- B. *Die Vlieënde Hollander* (The Flying Dutchman) (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993: 208; Heale, 1995: 32)
- C. *Die Heks van Hexrivier* (The Witch of Hexrivier) (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993: 200)
- D. *Langkappie* (Grobbelaar, 1970: 18)

Magical creatures:

- E. *Brolloks* (Langenhoven, 1983: 161)
- F. *Die Rob-Vrou* (The Seal Woman) (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993: 13)
- G. *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter* (Old one-eye human-eater) (Grobbelaar, 1987: 47)

Disputed histories/people:

- H. *Antjie Somers* (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993: 197)
- I. *Van Hunks en die duiwel* (Van Hunks and the devil) (Grobbelaar, 1987: 7; Heale, 1995: 8)

¹⁷⁹ I acknowledge the existence of multiple versions of the mythological narratives mentioned below. For the sake of clarity in the analysis that follows, I add the names of the authors of the specific versions I have read.

J. *Racheltjie de Beer* (Webster, 2003: 11)

Fairy tales:

K. *Rooikappie* (Red Riding Hood) (Grimm & Grimm, 1998: 29)

L. *Pinkie* (Pinky) (Grobbelaar, 1987: 43)

M. *Die betowerde bos* (The Enchanted Forest) (Grobbelaar, 1987: 23)

Fables:

N. *Wolf en Jakkals: Die Bottervat* (Wolf and Jackal: The Barrel of Butter) (Grobbelaar & Harries, 1993: 182)

O. *Bobbejaan en die eina-pere* (Baboon and the ouch pears) (Grobbelaar & Verster, 2003)

P. *Haas en Skilpad hardloop resies* (Rabbit and Tortoise run a race) (Maartens, 2014b: 40)

Boer heroes:

Q. The myth of *Siener van Rensburg* (Seer van Rensburg) (Nöthling, 2012)

R. The myth of Dirkie Uys (Kroukamp, 1985)

S. The myth of Wolraad Woltemade¹⁸⁰ (Grobbelaar, 1981: 29)

5.4 Applying thematic analysis to identify FTAMs in Afrikaner mythological narratives

In this section I utilise thematic analysis, as set out in Chapter 1¹⁸¹, to identify the salient fantasy tropes that can be extracted from this sample of internal and external Afrikaner myths and how the tropes find expression in it. I structure my findings according to plot structure,

¹⁸⁰ Although Wolraad Woltemade is described as a Cape Dutch farmer who lived as a settler in the colonial Cape, I include this myth in the category of Boer heroes as the Afrikaner Boers are considered descendants of the Cape Dutch settlers, as investigated in Chapter 4, 4.2.1 *White Afrikaner identity pre-1994*.

¹⁸¹ See 1.5.2 Phase 2: *Thematic analysis of Afrikaans mythological narratives*.

theme, characters, setting and iconography¹⁸² as units of analysis¹⁸³. I utilise each corresponding set of salient filmic fantasy tropes, identified in Chapter 3 under the units of analysis, as the codes of my thematic analysis. This approach is illustrated in Figure 25, below.

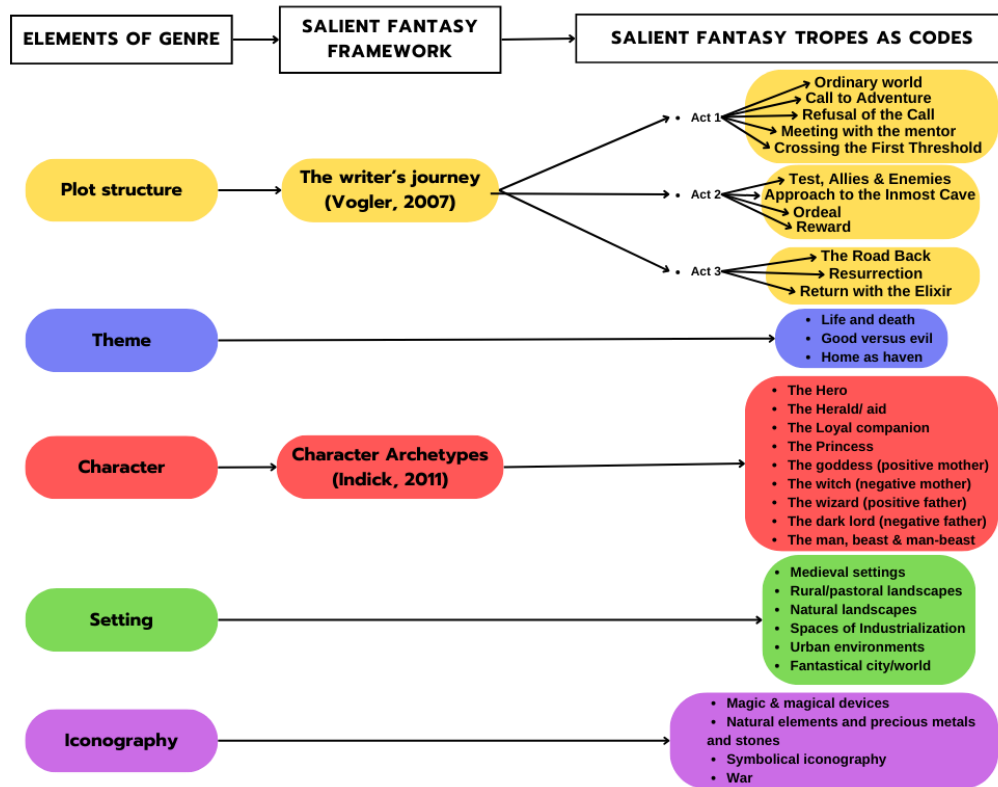


Figure 25: Salient tropes of fantasy as codes for thematic analysis. (Illustration by the author).

¹⁸² I deliberately refer to iconography rather than 'visual' iconography, as the mythological narrative texts from which I draw are literary texts and not mediated texts, such as films. I acknowledge that the language used in literary texts in itself conjures visual images, but deliberately differentiate between filmic visual iconography and literary mythological iconographies for the sake of clarity.

¹⁸³ My understanding of these units of analysis is guided by my use of the terms in Chapter 3.

As per the stages of thematic analysis set out in Chapter 1, after establishing the narrative sample and coding the elements of genre found within the narrative sample, I move on to establish the emergent themes relating to each code. These themes act as expressions of how each of the illustrated codes manifest in the narrative sample. In other words, how fantasy tropes manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives. As stated in the introduction of this chapter, I understand these emergent themes as FTAMs (fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythologies).

Before presenting these FTAMs identified in this chapter, and as per the process of thematic analysis, I review the relevance of the FTAMs identified to the markers of white Afrikaner identity and the tropes of filmic fantasy. During the initial process of theme identification, a vast number arose from across the narrative sample. For this reason, I needed a criterion against which to evaluate them. I turned to salience, a criterion used in my identification of filmic fantasy tropes in Chapter 3, to identify the dominant themes. Salience offers a standard against which to compare themes in order to evaluate whether they should form part of the final set of themes. Those presented in the following sections have thus undergone two cycles of analysis, an initial cycle of theme identification and a second of theme evaluation.

In the next section, I present the most salient and relevant themes identified from the narrative sample. In my analysis, I found that the themes identified in this sample were both, as described by Joffe and Yardley (2004: 57), manifest and latent. In other words, some themes appeared as clearly observable data that directly spoke to the codes, such as the mention of a 'beast' in the character archetypal forms (manifest themes), while others emerged only after a deeper analysis of the implied meaning within the text (latent themes), such as, in *Brolloks*, describing a character as 'ape-like' (Langenhoven, 1983: 162), which is indicative of a beast form. Furthermore, during the process of formulating themes and the interpretation phase of the data, new correlations between the identified themes emerged, which led to the formulation of new themes. In the sections that follow, for each unit of analysis, I provide a diagram to illustrate the naming of the identified themes and how they reflect the tropes of fantasy as codes. The themes identified and presented in this chapter are then implemented in Chapter 6 to create the framework by using the FTAMs to write a fantasy screenplay to interrogate Afrikaner identity.

In the sections that follow, I present the themes that emerged as a result of my thematic analysis.

5.4.1 Fantasy plot-structure tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives

In Chapter 3,¹⁸⁴ I established my understanding of structure as a narrative device that works closely with a narrative's plot, hence my use of the overarching term, plot structure. I investigated plot as a series of narrative events that are plotted into a cause-and-effect sequence (Grindon, 2012: 51), with the placement of a specific plot-point being determined by the narrative's structure. As the research sub-question addressed in Chapter 5 centres on the extraction of salient fantasy tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives, I utilise Vogler's (2007) *writer's journey* as a plot-structure trope of filmic fantasy, as established in Chapter 3.

In the writer's journey, the hero embarks on an adventure that comprises 12 plot stages divided into three acts: "separation, descent and initiation, and return" (Vogler, 2007: xxv, 6). As with the assimilation of myths into Afrikaner narrative identity, the tropic three-act narrative structure of European fairy tales is a structural element of many white Afrikaner myths. This is also the structural pattern of Vogler's (2007) writer's journey.

In this section, I investigate whether and, if so, how the writer's journey plot structure finds expression in the sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives. Vogler (1999: 1) states that it is not imperative that all the plot stages of the writer's journey be implemented¹⁸⁵ in a narrative for it to qualify as conforming to this plot structure. With this in mind, in order to establish how the writer's journey plot structure manifests in the sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives, I investigate whether the three-act structure of the narrative generally reflects the plot trajectory described in the writer's journey.

I performed a thematic analysis, in which I implemented the steps of the writer's journey, by ascribing codes. The identified plot structure FTAMs and which are presented in this section, refer to those steps of the writer's journey that featured most prominently in the narrative sample. I also consider the manner in which they featured. As many of the external narratives in the sample are brief, this resulted in the condensing and combining of some of the writer's journey steps within the identified themes.

¹⁸⁴ See 3.2 *Filmic fantasy narrative plot-structure: one myth to rule them all*.

¹⁸⁵ I acknowledge that Vogler (1991:1) makes this statement in relation to the application of the hero's journey framework to the writing process and not necessarily to the process of analysing a narrative to ascertain whether it adheres to the hero's journey framework.

The results of my analysis indicate that the majority of mythological narratives from the sample conform, to some degree, to the writer's journey. The narratives contain some of its plot points and reflect the three-act structure. Below, I identify the prominent FTAMs relevant to how the writer's journey finds expression within the narrative sample.

Act 1: Separation

- **Ordinary world**

The first trope I identified concerns the discontent and lack of fulfilment many characters experience within their ordinary worlds at the beginning of the first act of the mythological narrative. In *Brolloks*, a young woman named Skoonlief is raised in a cave by an evil wizard, Brolloks, and must endure horrible treatment. In *Die betowerde bos*, Niksnuts' unhappiness at home results from his adopted mother criticising and belittling him. Antjie Somers' trouble emerges from his inability to get along with the other fishermen, while Rabbit is plagued by Baboon's constant harassment in *Bobbejaan en die eina-pere*.

This trope is also reflected in the internal myth of civil religion – the Boers experience the colonial Cape as an oppressive setting where their culture and Afrikaner way of life are both subjugated and endangered.

- **The call to adventure and the crossing of the threshold**

The characters' discontent in the ordinary world often prompts them to answer a call to adventure and to undertake a physical journey to escape their circumstances and search for independence or a place of belonging. In undertaking the journey, the characters cross the threshold into the world of the journey. Examples include *Die betowerde bos*, in which Niksnuts journeys from home to find a place of belonging. In *Rachel'tjie de Beer*, the De Beer family travels to a new farm to find lodgings (and thus a space of belonging), for the winter. In *Antjie Somers*, Andries Somers journeys away from his life as a fisherman to escape the consequences of killing another fishermen in a tussle and to find independence.

Not all the journeys undertaken in the narrative sample are, however, prompted by an escape from circumstances or a search for belonging. In *Rooikappie*, *Die Rob-Vrou*, and *Haas en Skilpad hardloop resies*, the characters each undertake their journeys in Act One for other reasons. However, what is central to this discussion is that the undertaking of a journey in itself emerges as a salient trope within the narrative sample.

In the sample, the most prominent example of the 'journey' plot trope concerns the myth of civil religion: the Voortrekkers move away from the Cape colony in search of land to establish an independent republic to govern themselves. In terms of the myth of civil religion, the ownership of land, independence and belonging forms the overarching, yet illusive, goal of the journey. In search of this illusive goal, the Voortrekkers undertake several journeys that entail trekking through new and distant districts. The trekker's persistence and tenacity in the course of this quest is based on the belief that their Great Trek is a journey predestined and ordained by God. In other words, the call to adventure is a holy one.

- **Meeting with the mentor**

In order to overcome the obstacles they face on their journey, the characters often rely on advice from mentor figures, who may be supernatural, to aid them. In *Brolloks*, a small brook in the forest whispers to Skoonlief that her happiness will come but that there is still work for her to do and, for this reason, she must stay in the horrible Brollok's cave. In *Die betowerde bos*, Niksnuts' adopted father warns him to never enter the enchanted forest and gifts him a gun, a magic staff and a powder horn to help navigate any obstacles he might face on his journey. In *Rooikappie* and *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*, the children are warned by their parents not to veer from the path or stray too far from home. As concerns Boer heroes, Siener van Rensburg's supernatural visions aided the Boers in their decision-making and strategising.

The occurrence of prophetic visions also speaks to the myth of civil religion and the Voortrekkers' steadfast reliance on the assistance of God as the ultimate mentor figure who guides them to fulfil the mission of their Godly predestination.

Act 2: Descent and Initiation

- **Test, allies, enemies and the approach to the inmost cave**

In the course of the journey, a character is often faced with dangerous situations or prompted to perform treacherous tasks. Captain van der Decken must weather a tremendous storm (*Die Vlieënde Hollander*); Tom Ferreira must survive his encounter with a ghost (*Langkappie*), and Elise, a beautiful woman, sends her suitor away to pick a flower from a mountain to win her hand in marriage (*Die heks van Hexrivier*). These tasks may include a character having to face an enemy or a dangerous situation to save someone else.

As regards the latter trope, Skoonlief risks her life to save Kapokkie, Kosie and Rosie from Brolloks, Saartjie faces a human-eating giant in *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*, while Racheltjie de Beer, Wolraad Woltemade, and Dirkie Uys sacrifice their lives to save others.

In the examples, facing an enemy also emerges as a prominent trope. Examples include the encounters between Rooikappie and the wolf, Van Hunks and the devil, Skoonlief and Brolloks, Saartjie and the one-eyed human-eating giant and his wife, and Rabbit and Baboon (*Bobbejaan en die eina-pere*).

In relation to the myth of civil religion, the tasks involve both facing enemies and saving of others. The Voortrekkers' trek from the colonial Cape led them into numerous dangerous situations. These include facing those who opposed the Afrikaner cause, such as the British colonial powers and indigenous South African peoples who owned and inhabited the land through which the Voortrekkers trekked. From the perspective from which the civil-religion myth is told, this involves the 'facing of enemies' trope. As a consequence of the conflicts that arose due to the Voortrekkers' attempts to acquire land, many mythological narratives emerged of Boer heroes who sacrificed themselves for the Afrikaner cause. This speaks back to the external myth category of Boer heroes mentioned above.

- **Facing the ordeal**

As in the writer's journey, the characters in the narrative sample face ordeals which often involve a life-threatening obstacle or situation. Considering the brevity of many of the external mythological narratives, I argue that this ordeal can also incorporate the third-act ordeal referred to as the 'resurrection'.

In the narrative sample, the manner in which the ordeal finds expression is often repetitive in nature – it is presented as a series of repeated challenges. Examples here include Saartjie who leaves her bed three times in the night in the one-eyed human-eater’s house to devise an escape plan for her brothers and sisters (*Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*). Jackal lies to Wolf eight times about eating the butter they stole together, and he convinces Wolf to wait eight days before opening the barrel of butter (*Jakkals en Wolf: Die Bottervat*). Finally, Wolraad Woltemade enters the ocean fourteen times on his horse to save passengers on board a stranded ship before succumbing to the waves himself.

As concerns the myth of civil religion, the ordeals faced by the Voortrekkers involve a continual series of battles and struggles for independence and land. This results in repeated cycles of suffering as the Voortrekkers face one setback after another. The events related to the ordeal and the repeated cycles of suffering include attacks or annexation by either indigenous or colonial forces, consequent warfare, a victory on behalf of the Afrikaners against all odds, the temporary establishment of a republic, the trek to new districts and the repetition of this entire plot cycle at a new location.

- **Reward**

In the narrative sample, the plots of the external myths often involve the characters overcoming the ordeal and gaining their reward by outwitting their enemy or resolving the situation. In *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*, Saartjie outwits the one-eyed human-eating giant by refusing to go to sleep and then escaping from his house. In *Pinkie*, the small character Pinkie saves his own life when he is swallowed by a cow and later stuffed into a sausage by pretending that the cow and sausage can speak and so scaring off threats to himself. In *Bobbejaan en die eina-pere*, Rabbit outsmarts Baboon by convincing him that a hornet’s nest is a pear. In *Hasie en Skilpad hardloop resies*, the slow tortoise outwits the rabbit by patiently completing the race while the rabbit takes a nap, and in *Jakkals en Wolf: Die Bottervat*, Jackal’s wit affords him the chance to eat the entire barrel of butter on his own and then blame Wolf for doing so.

This trope is not as overtly expressed in the myth of civil religion. However, the ‘outwitting’ of the British is a popular theme in Boer hero myths, as with those of Christiaan de Wet and Koos

de La Rey. Although these narratives do not form part of my narrative sample, they are contemporaneous with events which the civil-religion myth spans.

A prominent trope in the civil-religion myth that concerns the reaching of the reward plot point is the Voortrekkers' reliance on their faith. This reliance is expressed in the form of an oath that they swear to God in which they ask for His allegiance in return for their commemoration of the day of their victory. This dependency on God permeates the plot of the myth of civil religion as victories in warfare are ascribed to this Godly predestination and the Voortrekkers' faith in God.

Act 3: Return

- **The road back and the return with the elixir¹⁸⁶**

In the writer's journey, 'the road back' refers to the hero's realisation that they must return to the ordinary world; the 'return with the elixir' plot point refers to the culmination of the writer's journey plot trajectory. The return with the elixir involves the hero taking the wisdom or the object they have obtained either back into their ordinary world or on a new journey. Within the narrative sample, I find that the denouement of the narratives tropically unfolds in one of three ways: a tragic ending, a happy ending or an ending that indicates continuation.

Due to the brevity of the narrative texts of many of the myths in the sample, the road back and the return with the elixir are often combined. With regard to the road back, two tropes emerged at the end of the narratives characters who return to the ordinary world, and those who do not due to the death of the character. Examples of the first trope include Skoonlief, Kosie, Rosie and their father return to their house in the woods (*Brolloks*); Saartjie and her brothers and sisters return home (*Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*); Rabbit outwits Baboon and can return to the garden to eat lettuce in peace (*Bobbejaan en die eina-pere*); and the characters of Rooikappie, Pinkie and *Die Rob-Vrou*.

¹⁸⁶ The hero's journey includes a 'resurrection' plot point between the 'the road back' and 'the return with the elixir'. However, as stated in relation to the 'facing the ordeal' plot point, due to the brevity of the myths, the 'resurrection' and the ordeal often occur simultaneously as the one major obstacle the character must face or overcome.

Characters who do not return to their ordinary world as they either die or take on an undead form include the undead Captain van der Decken and his crew aboard the *Vlieënde Hollander*; the *Heks van Hexrivier*, who haunts the place where her suitor fell to his death; and the characters of Racheltjie de Beer, Dirkie Uys and Wolraad Woltemade who died in the course of undertaking heroic acts. These deaths reflect the trope of tragic endings and continuing endings (the latter is discussed below).

Tragic endings involve characters that either succumb to death or receive what I frame as an 'anti-elixir'. The anti-elixir features in a narrative ending where a character, having survived the ordeal, does not receive a true elixir. In some cases, they return home with no notable elixir at all. Examples include *Jakkals en Wolf: Die Bottervat*, in which Wolf never gets to taste the butter he and Jackal stole but has to take the blame for the theft. Pinkie survives the various precarious situations he finds himself in, but in the end returns to his original job no better nor wiser than he was before. Although the *Rob-Vrou* finds her seal skin at the end of the narrative and returns home, the fisherman and his children are abandoned and may thus be represented as receivers of the anti-elixir.

Another plot trope concerns happy endings in which the characters find what they have been seeking or are in a better position than they started. This alludes to the conflict of the narrative having been resolved. Mythological narratives with happy endings from the sample include those featuring Langkappie, who is finally laid to rest; Skoonlief, who marries and adopts two children in *Brolloks*; the safe return of the children to their home in *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*; Rooikappie and her grandmother's safe return from the wolf's stomach; and Niksnut, who gains independence and wisdom in *Die betowerde bos*.

The final plot trope pertaining to narrative endings involves those narratives that it is implied continue beyond the end of the narrative's third act. For example, in ghost narratives such as *Die Vlieënde Hollander* and *Die heks van Hexrivier*, there is the implication of continuation due to further accounts of sightings. With Antjie Somers, parents continue to use the myth as a warning for children to be obedient; if they are not, Antjie will catch them and throw them in the bag he carries slung over his shoulder. Finally, when Table Mountain is covered in its blanket of cloud, it is said that Van Hunks is smoking with the devil again.

This trope is also relevant to the myth of civil religion. Although Moodie (1975: 2) considers the myth of civil religion myth to have ended in 1914, the history of the Afrikaners continued with the establishment of the National Party, the rise of the apartheid government, and the

current state of Afrikaner identity in democratic South Africa. Afrikanerhood continues its process of becoming as an ongoing narrative.

The FTAMs identified above are illustrated in Figure 27. Next, I investigate the thematic FTAMs evident in the narrative sample.

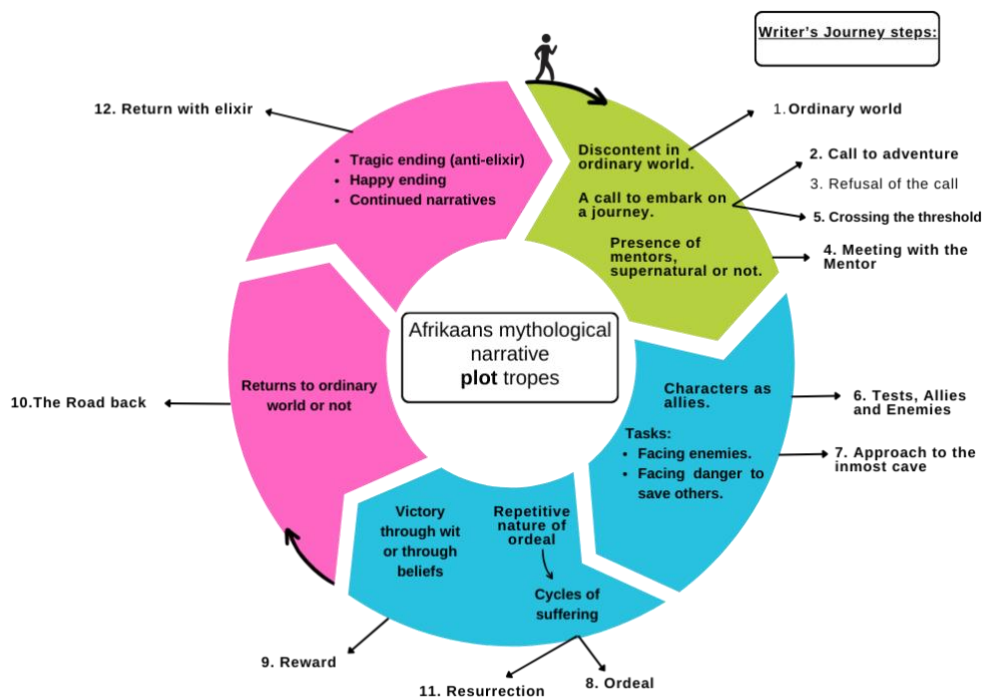


Figure 26: Afrikaans mythological narrative plot tropes. (Illustration by the author).

5.4.2 Fantasy-theme tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives

In Chapter 3, 3.3 *Filmic fantasy themes*, I established that themes (as a unit of analysis) are the intended message, moral lesson or insight embedded in a narrative (Schmidt, 2012: 7). I further established that the overarching salient themes of filmic fantasy include life and death, good versus evil and home as haven. These themes constitute the coding categories in my thematic analysis. In this section, I investigate how the salient filmic fantasy themes (depicted in the purple column, “fantasy”, in Figure 28, below), find expression in the narrative sample (depicted in the red column, “Afrikaans myths”) and what FTAMs consequently emerge. As

the collocation of ‘theme’ and ‘trope’ in ‘fantasy-theme tropes’ may invite some confusion, I reiterate here that ‘fantasy-theme’ in this context refers to the intended message or moral perspective or lesson of a narrative (Schmidt, 2012: 7). As such ‘thematic FTAMs’ refer to those ‘intended messages or moral lessons’ that are repeatedly found within the Afrikaner mythological narratives, and thus function as tropes of the narrative sample – as established in the introduction of this chapter.

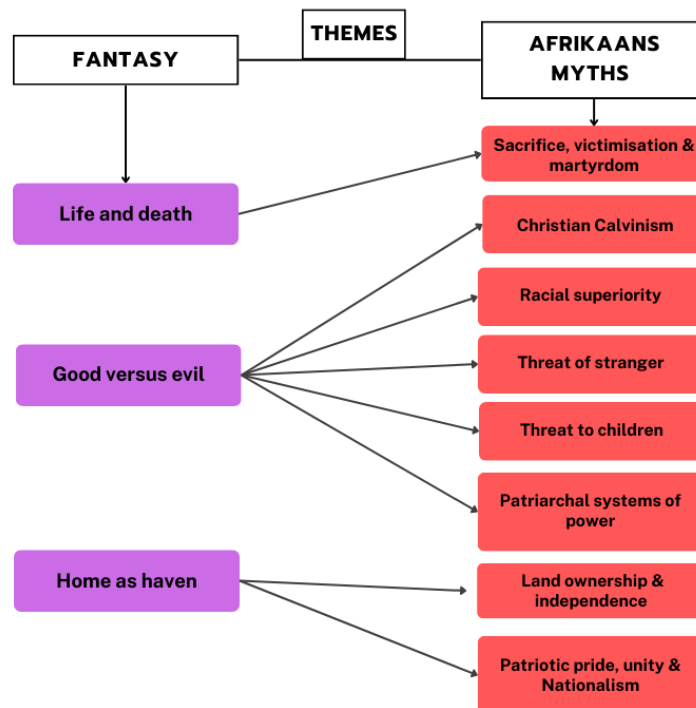


Figure 27: How salient thematic tropes of fantasy manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives. (Illustration by the author.)

- **Life and Death**

Within the Afrikaans mythological narrative sample, the value of life and death are measured against a greater cause. Examples from external myths include Boer hero myths such as those of Dirkie Uys, Racheltjie de Beer and Wolraad Woltemade. In all three myths, the characters sacrifice their own lives to save those of others. The greater cause in these myths is thus the worth of others’ lives. This sacrifice reflects the Calvinist belief of laying down one’s own life

for another.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, Calvinist belief in the existence of an afterlife also reflects the fantasy theme of immortality (Pheasant-Kelly, 2013: 112) as life after death.

In the internal myth of civil religion, this greater cause is Afrikanerhood, which is underwritten by the doctrine of Godly predestination, which both elicited and maintained the narrative that Afrikaners were sent into South Africa to spread the gospel and civilisation in a ‘heathen’ country (Steyn, 2004: 149; Van der Merwe, 2009: 37). Due to the oppression which the Voortrekkers experienced at the hands of the colonial powers at the Cape, this cause became associated with the search for land where they could govern themselves independently. Those who sacrificed or lost their lives in the pursuit of this cause are either celebrated as Boer martyrs and heroes or depicted as victims. Prominent examples of civil-religion events that underscore the themes of Voortrekker sacrifice, martyrdom and victimisation include the attack on the Voortrekkers by the Zulus after the former attempted to negotiate the purchase of land in Natal; the Voortrekker casualties at the Battle of Blood River; and the death of, primarily, women and children in concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War.

Having investigated how the filmic fantasy trope of life and death finds expression in the sample of Afrikaans myths, I identify ‘life as victims and death as martyrs’ as a thematic FTAM.

- **Good versus evil**

The salient thematic fantasy trope of good and evil finds expression in Calvinist ideologies in the sample of Afrikaner myths. In these myths, Calvinist beliefs are used as a touchstone to define moral distinctions between good and evil. In other words, good and evil are defined according to Calvinist Biblical values and understandings.

Afrikaans external myths reflect Calvinist ideas by Christian rituals and beliefs being in their narratives. Examples include the myth of Siener van Rensburg who was believed to receive visions from God, and the presence of the devil in “Van Hunks en die duiwel”. The ghost of Langkappie is unable to find rest until the bones of her and her family have been buried, “soos dit ‘n Christen mens betaam” (as a Christian person should be) (Grobelaar, 1970: 21). Even

¹⁸⁷ The Biblical principle of sacrificing down one’s life for another can be found in verses such as John 15:13: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man may lay down his life for his friends.” Of course, this belief is also illustrated by the example of the Savior who dies for the redemption of His people.

in the fable of *Jakkals en Wolf*, Calvinist themes can be found in Jackal's lie that he is baptising his children.

Calvinism is also ingrained in the moral lessons found in external mythological narratives. In *Die Vlieënde Hollander*, Captain van der Decken's excessive pride leads to a curse being laid on his crew and ship – they roam the sea as ghosts. In *Rooikappie*, *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*, *Die Betowerde Bos* and *Antjie Somers*, children find themselves in dangerous situations when they disobey their parents' warnings.

With reference to the myth of civil religion, Calvinist beliefs include the myth of Godly predestination which framed as evil anyone who oppressed Afrikaner culture or opposed the Voortrekkers' 'holy' mission to establish themselves in independent republics. The belief in Godly predestination thus framed as evil the British colonial forces and the indigenous black South African peoples whom the Voortrekkers encountered on the Great Trek.

- **Good versus evil: racial connotations and the threat of the stranger**

As established in Chapter 4, the internal myth of civil religion's positioning of white Afrikaners as a chosen people amidst the 'heathen' black inhabitants of South Africa (Steyn, 2004: 149) led to formulation of a good–bad binary in relation to white and black racial dichotomies. The result of this was the narrative of white superiority. That is, in the myth of civil religion, the representation of black people is antagonistically framed against that of the Voortrekkers/Boers, highlighting the narrative of white supremacy as a marker of nationalist Afrikaner identity. In the external Afrikaans myths, there is limited representation of ideas of overt racial superiority, apart from the fact that the human characters appear to be predominantly represented as white.

However, Afrikaner representations of good and evil in relation to racial delineations can also be found covertly, underscored by the manner in which Afrikaans myths often frame strangers as a threat. In Afrikaner mythological narratives, the stranger is often revealed as threatening or having ill-intent. Considering this theme in the context of white Afrikaner identity, as contextualised in Chapter 4, it may be deduced that references to 'the stranger' may involve racial connotations.

In the myth of civil religion, this theme finds expression in the Voortrekkers' encounters with indigenous South African groups, as with the negotiations for land between Piet Retief and the Zulu chief, Dingaan. The myth of civil religion states that the negotiations ended in the killing of Retief and his men, followed by an attack on the rest of the Voortrekker laager, thereby depicting Dingaan and the Zulus as dangerous and treacherous.

This theme also finds expression in external myths. In *Die Rob-Vrou*, the strange seal woman is portrayed as unpredictable when she decides to leave her family behind to return to the ocean. In *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*, the initially friendly one-eyed giant who provides lodging for the lost children is revealed to eat children. In *Rooikappie*, the wolf, which presents itself as a friendly figure, eats Rooikappie and her grandmother. In *Die betowerde bos*, Niksnuts follows an enchanting bird which turns out to be a forest spirit leading him to his doom.

- **Good versus evil: the threat to children**

As with the threat posed by the stranger, the threat directed at Afrikaner children and, consequently, at the future of the Afrikaner way of life, is a theme that is prevalent in the narrative sample. In terms of the binary of good and evil, children are depicted as good, and the threat is characterised as evil. As regards the myth of civil religion, in 1814, Britain implemented an anglicisation policy in the colonial Cape whereby English was enforced in schools by English-speaking teachers (Moodie, 1975: 4). The Boers regarded this as a direct threat to their Cape Dutch language¹⁸⁸ and to their children's upbringing. After the Boers embarked on the Great Trek in search of land and independence, other threats to Voortrekker children emerged, including the attacks by indigenous South African peoples and, later, the deadly concentration camps of the Anglo-Boer in which children were placed along with women and those unfit to fight.

The 'threat to children' theme also emerges as a prominent trope in external Afrikaans mythologies as antagonistic forces are often set against children. The significance of this threat stems from the fact that children symbolise the future of the Afrikaner way of life and thus the survival and future of the cultural identity.

¹⁸⁸ Cape Dutch was a historical precursor to the Afrikaans language, as established in Chapter 4, 4.3.1 *The Afrikaans language*.

Characters that are portrayed as child-catchers or child-eaters include Antjie Somers, Brolloks, the Eenoog Mensvreter and the wolf in *Rooikappie*. Other antagonistic forces include the evil wife, mother or stepmother character who often displays malicious behaviour towards the younger protagonist. The framing of the mother and stepmother as evil has been investigated in feminist theory as a patriarchal construct that reinforces the ideologies of patriarchal power structures (Porter, 2013:39). An example of such a mother includes the bitter mother in *Die betowerde bos*. Other narratives in which the children are threatened include those of Racheltjie de Beer and Dirkie Uys.

- **Good versus evil: the patriarchal protector**

In contradistinction to threats to children and the Afrikaner way of life, patriarchal characters are framed as protectors and saviours. Afrikaans myths frame patriarchy as a biblical model or structure of power in which father figures, whether in the context of the family, social institutions, or the broader nation, are seen as representatives of God on earth and, therefore, as good fathers. With reference to the myth of civil religion, this trope finds expression in the exclusively male Boer leadership; here, Voortrekker men are depicted as the protectors and fathers of the nation.

Concerning external myths, patriarchal themes can be found where male characters are framed as saviours. Instances of this include the male voortrekker, Tom Ferreira, who buries Langkappie and her family's bones and lays the ghost to rest (*Langkappie*); Kosie and Rosie's father who saves Skoonlief from Brolloks (*Brolloks*); and Rooikappie, who is saved by the hunter (*Rooikappie*). In *Die Rob-Vrou*, a seal-woman's seal skin is hidden by a fisherman which renders her unable to return to the sea and forces her to marry the fisherman and become his wife. This depicts the patriarchal idea of gender roles in which the woman is wife and mother. In *Antjie Somers*, Andries Somers, who presents himself as a woman and is consequently seen as strange and as a threat, represents the fear of emasculation of the white male (Steenekamp, 2011: 22) which speaks back to the centrality of patriarchal power inherent to white Afrikaner identity.

Having investigated here how good and evil manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives, I theorise that biblical binaries and predestined positions constitute an FTAM. Predestined position refers to the mindset evoked by the myth of Godly predestination which led to themes

of racial superiority which, in turn, in the narrative sample, manifest in the themes of the threat of the stranger, and the threat to children as the future of the Afrikaner way of life. Biblical binaries refer to the dichotomy between good and evil defined according to Calvinist values, such as occur in patriarchal systems of power in which the patriarch is considered an overwhelming force of the good. Another trope associated with the 'good' in filmic fantasy involves the framing of the home as a haven.

- **Home as haven**

As established in Chapter 3, the fantasy theme of home refers to a place of safety, one which cultivates feelings of "longing and belonging" (Mendlesohn, 2012: 126). I bring this in relation with the ownership of land and cultural independence which have emerged as salient themes in the sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives.

With reference to the myth of civil religion, the Voortrekkers' desire to govern themselves independently of colonial systems of power in their own republics set the Great Trek in motion. In Chapter 4, I investigated how place identities are established by narrating feelings of belonging in relation to places. Through the narrative of Godly predestination, Afrikaners imagined a special narrative of their belonging to the land. Ownership of land and the feeling of belonging this would cultivate framed the idea of the independent Afrikaner republics as the 'promised land'. This 'Afrikaner Canaan'¹⁸⁹ existed in the Voortrekker mindset as a space ordained by God, one which provided the promise of independence, and which would be 'owned' once the 'heathen peoples' that inhabited the place had been conquered.

The establishment of these Boer republics was, however, accompanied by a great deal of suffering, as described by the events included in the civil-religion myth. This collective suffering cultivated a sense of patriotic pride in the supposed tenacity of Afrikaners, which in turn led to their sense of pride in a white nationalist South Africa where Afrikaners held the sovereign power of governance. I elaborate on this in the sub-section below.

In the external myths, the theme of belonging is illustrated in the examples that follow. In *Die Rob-Vrou*, the seal woman longs for her home across the waters where she can live with her seal-women sisters. The moment she finds her seal skin, she attains her independence and escapes to the ocean to be with them. In *Brolloks*, Kosie, Rosie and their father live in an

¹⁸⁹ Canaan is a biblical reference to a land of prosperity that was promised to the Israelites in the book of Genesis.

isolated house in the forest which is described as a peaceful and safe place; this ties independence to the ownership of land. Finally, Antjie Somers disguises himself as a woman in an attempt to find independence and freedom after he accidentally kills a man in a fight.

- **Home as haven: nationalism**

Another way in which the trope of 'home as haven' manifests in the sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives has to do with the themes of patriotic pride and nationalism mentioned above. As it concerns the myth of civil religion, Afrikaners' attempts to achieve the ideal of independent governance resulted in several cycles of suffering, such as the conflicts with indigenous South African peoples and the British colonial forces. However, these hardships seemed to cultivate a sense of patriotic pride and unity within the imagined Voortrekker collectivity. Despite the Anglo-Boer War ending with a loss for the Boers, the theme of patriotic pride was reified with the dawn of white nationalist South Africa, which was seen as their rising from the ashes. This patriotic pride fuelled the narrative of Afrikaners' 'belonging' to the land in internal nationalist myths such as the myth of civil religion.

The tropes of patriotic pride, unity and nationalism are primarily found in Boer hero myths, which are situated on the boundary of internal and external myths, as illustrated in Figure 24 in Section 5.3. *Internal and external white Afrikaner myths*. These myths feature characters such as Siener van Rensburg whose visions supported the Voortrekker cause and the idea of Afrikaners as a chosen people. The narrative of Dirkie Uys perpetuates the idea of patriotic unity when he decides to die at his father's side rather than escape to safety in a battle against Zulu warriors. Although the narrative of the myth of Racheltjie de Beer is not grouped with those of the Boer heroes due to questions about whether it is true, I argue that it furthers notions of patriotic unity as Racheltjie dies to protect her brother. Racheltjie's sacrifice personifies another patriarchal idea: that women are expected to sacrifice themselves for their children and family, thereby portraying the values associated with a good maternal figure (Castellini, 2013: 170). Although Racheltjie is merely a child, she makes this gendered expectation manifest.

In conclusion, I argue that the FTAMs that emerge from the themes of independence, land ownership, patriotic pride and unity, and nationalism, speak to places of entitled independence. Myths such as predestination, narratives of belonging and nationalism all serve

to justify the idea that the characters they feature are entitled to places and spaces where they might experience independence.

Figure 29, below, summarises the FTAMs I identify in this section. In the next, I investigate the narrative sample in relation to the tropes of filmic fantasy characters.

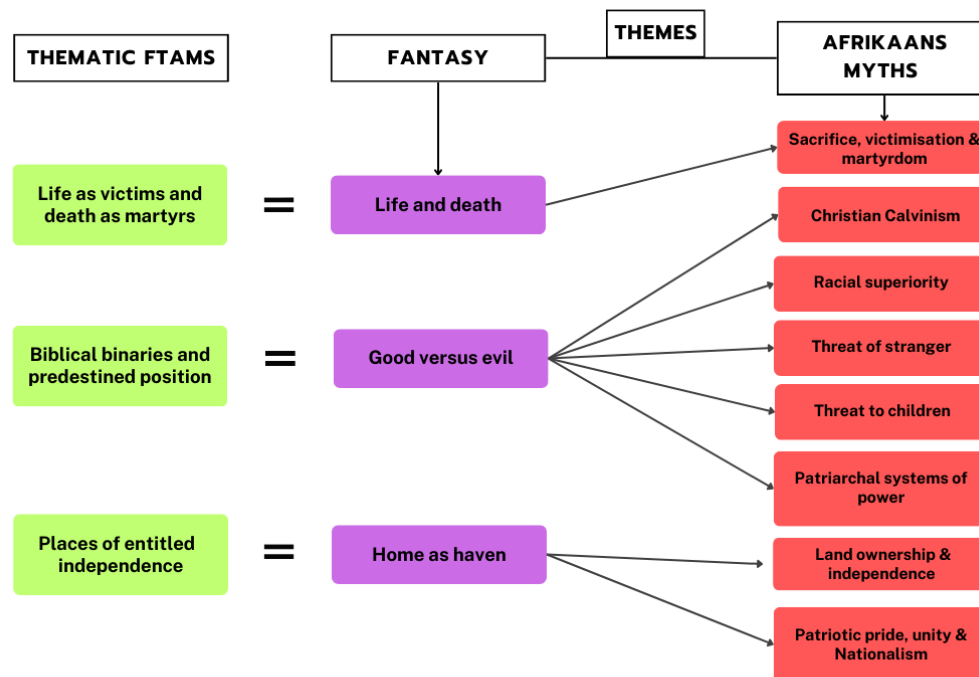


Figure 28: FTAMs of theme. (Illustration by the author).

5.4.3 Fantasy character tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives

In Chapter 3¹⁹⁰, I investigated Indick's (2011) list of fantasy character archetypes as an indicator of the salient character-type tropes used in filmic fantasy. The character archetypes comprise the hero, the herald or aid, the hero's loyal companion,¹⁹¹ the goddess, the witch, the wizard, and the dark lord. The man, the beast and the man-beast emerged as archetypal forms in which the character archetypes could manifest. I implemented these character archetypes as codes in my thematic analysis. From the narrative sample, I categorised the characters from the Afrikaans mythological narratives according to the relevant code and identified what common themes emerged from among the mythological characters. In the next

¹⁹⁰ See 3.4 *Filmic fantasy characters: Indick's fantasy archetypes*.

¹⁹¹ No FTAMs relevant to Afrikaner identity emerged for the category of the loyal companion archetype.

section, I discuss the FTAMs identified in relation to how the characters found expression in the narrative sample and, in turn, how these tropes speak to Afrikaner identity.

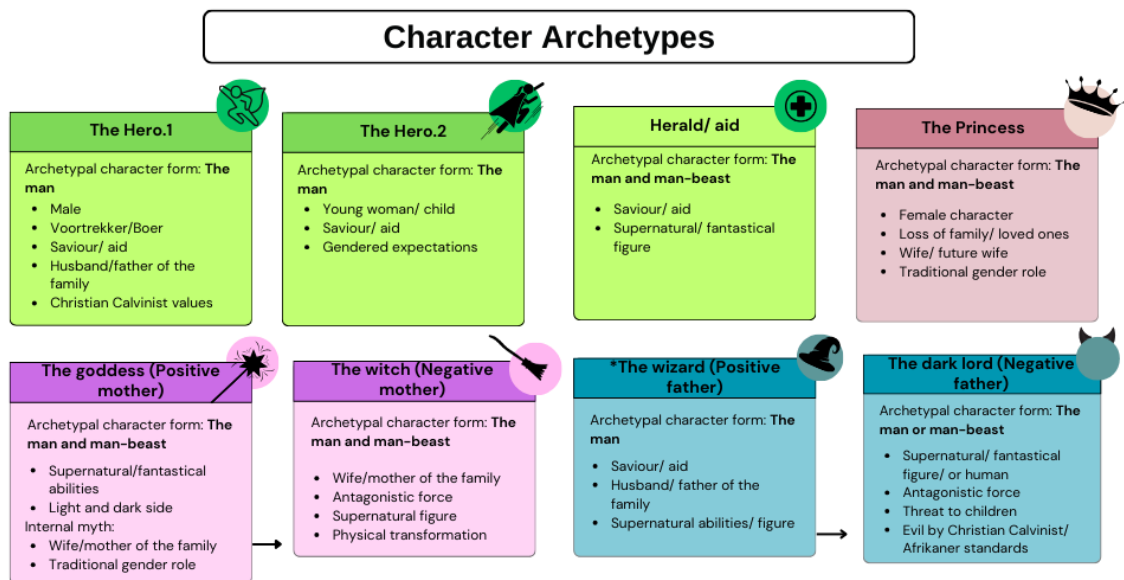


Figure 29: How salient fantasy character archetypes manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives. (Illustration by the author.)

- **The hero**

The fantasy hero-archetype trope manifests within the Afrikaner mythological narrative sample in two ways. The first and most prominent Afrikaner mythological hero-type conforms to Indick's (2012: 40) archetypal male hero. From the tropes that emerge from the narrative sample, I identify a predominantly male Voortrekker/Boer who acts in a capacity of saviour or aid and who may be a husband and/or father of the family. Afrikaner hero characters also conform to the 'man' (human) archetypal form. The framing of a white, male, Boer or Voortrekker father figure as a benevolent, heroic saviour/aid who sacrifices himself, or is willing to put himself in harm's way, for the good of others reinforces Afrikanerhood's patriarchal narrative, along with the narratives of white supremacy and of traditional Calvinist values, such as heterosexuality.

Examples of this hero-type include Kosie and Rosie's father who saves them from Brolloks, Tom Ferreira who saves the ghost of Langkappie by giving her and her family a proper burial, Van Hunks who defeats the devil in a smoking competition, the hunter who saves Rooikappie and her grandmother, Wolraad Woltemade and Dirkie Uys. In civil-religion myth, this hero-type can be found among the male Boer leadership – many of these figures gained mythological and hero status, for example, Louis Trichardt, Koos de la Rey and President Paul Kruger, and many others.

The second type of hero that emerges, although less saliently than the first, is a young woman, often a child, who acts as a saviour/aid by putting herself in harm's way for the sake of others, and who conforms to the 'man' (human) archetypal form. Examples include Skoonlief and Rosie (*Brolloks*), Saartjie (*Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*) and Racheltjie de Beer. Although the myth of civil religion acknowledges women's roles in the Great Trek and its associated conflicts, I find that heroic narratives of the myth of civil religion pertaining to young Boer women are lacking when compared to their male Boer-hero narrative counterparts.

Furthermore, it is notable that, in comparison to the Afrikaans male heroes, the female hero's sacrifice is often motivated in line with gendered expectations and traditional female gender roles, such as looking after children (as all three female heroes save children or a child sibling). The male hero's acts of heroism seem more outwardly directed, such as saving 14 people from a stricken ship, saving a ghost woman and winning a bet against the devil.

Concerning the relationship between a hero and a heroic character, I refer to Lissauer's (2014: 1523) delineation between the two terms, as investigated in Chapter 3¹⁹². Whereas the 'hero' is a central character who is by nature inherently good, the 'heroic' character does good for the purpose of warding off evil (Lissauer, 2014: 1562). I argue that the hero-types identified in the narrative sample are spread across these categories. Characters such as Wolraad Woltemade, Dirkie Uys, Racheltjie de Beer, Skoonlief and Rosie are hero characters as their acts of heroism are self-sacrificial in nature. This speaks to Afrikaner identity's reliance on Calvinist and Biblical values, investigated in the section on 'good and evil' filmic fantasy theme trope, above. On the other hand, characters such as Van Hunks, Tom Ferreira and many of the Boer generals in the civil-religion myths act as heroic characters as their good deeds are simply motivated by warding off an evil – or what they define as evil.

¹⁹² See Chapter 3, 3.4 *Filmic fantasy character tropes: Indick's fantasy archetypes*.

The fantasy trope in which the hero-archetype is framed as an orphan finds more salient expression in Afrikaans myths, though with the loss of only one parent, such as in *Die betowerde bos*, *Brolloks*, and the myth of *Dirkie Uys*. Where the nuclear family is incomplete, such as following the loss of a wife or parent(s), the Afrikaans mythological narrative often completes the family, as seen with Skoonlief, who becomes Kosie and Rosie's mother again in *Brolloks*, the baby who is adopted by the old man and his wife in *Die betowerde bos*, and the unmarried *Rob-Vrou* who becomes a wife and mother. This points to the centrality of the nuclear family as a marker of white Afrikaner identity¹⁹³.

In the internal myth of civil religion, this 'loss of parents' trope pertains to the numerous onslaughts faced by the Voortrekkers, along with the concentration camps of the Anglo-Boer War, which left many Boer children as orphans. Furthermore, the fantasy trope of the hero as the 'chosen one' is evident in the myth of civil religion – the Voortrekkers, according to Godly predestination, are framed as God's chosen people whom He guides to fulfil their Godly mission. This theme of Godly predestination speaks to the fantasy archetype of the herald and aid.

- **The herald/aid**

In the sample, the herald or aid takes on the archetypal form of either a man or a man-beast and often acts as a saviour to other characters. Moreover, the herald or aid also often manifests as a supernatural figure. In the myth of civil religion, the Voortrekkers look to the Calvinist God as a supernatural aid. Siener van Rensburg acts as a supernatural aid during Boer-conflicts as a result of the visions he receives from God, enabling him to advise Boer generals such as Koos de la Rey.

In the external myths, supernatural aids include the skeletons (man-beast) of Niksnuts' undead mother and father who leads him out of the forest and away from danger (*Die betowerde bos*), the forest brook that speaks to Skoonlief, and the various talking animals that help Rosie find her family (*Brolloks*). In *Die Vlieënde Hollander*, the supernatural figure that appears to Captain van der Decken acts as a herald as he ushers the crew into a new undead realm.

¹⁹³ See Chapter 4, 4.3.2 *Christian Calvinism and the nuclear Afrikaans family*.

- **The princess**

The Afrikaans mythological princess either takes the archetypal form of a human (the man) or a man-beast. The tropes that emerge from the Afrikaner mythological characters categorised as this archetype often include female characters, who are either depicted as wives or future wives, and who have suffered the loss of a parent, a family member or a loved one. For example, Skoonlief, whose parents have been murdered by Brolloks, functions as a princess archetype when Brolloks attacks her and Kosie and Rosie's father is there to save her. She then marries their father. In the narrative sample, ghost women also function as the princess archetype. According to Lissauer (2014: 2081), ghost women, just like the princess, exist as female characters in need of saving.

This points to a trope in the sample where the mother and wife seem incapable of existing without her family or her husband. In the tales *Die Heks van Hexrivier* and *Langkappie*, the ghost women are unable to find rest as they long for a lost love or a lost family. Even in the case of *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*, the human-eater's wife is so angry upon hearing of her husband's death that she accidentally sets her house on fire and dies in it herself. The examples position female Afrikaans mythological characters according to traditional Afrikaner gender roles¹⁹⁴ such as the role of wife and mother. However, how the mother character is portrayed often reflects the next character archetypes considered here –the positive and negative mother.

- **The goddess (positive mother)**

In external myths, the Afrikaner goddess may take on the archetypal form of a man (human) or man-beast. In the sample, the goddess character possesses supernatural abilities and may embrace either, or both, the positive and negative aspects inherent in her character. This aligns with my investigation into the goddess archetype in Chapter 3, where the goddess character is described as embracing either or both the light and dark side and its various connotations. An example of this is Skoonlief, who is able to practise magic, such as turning Kapokkie into a butterfly so that she can escape from Brolloks. Skoonlief also appears to Rosie in a dream and teaches her how to wield the dark magic she secretly learned from Brolloks to

¹⁹⁴ See Chapter 4, 4.3.2 *Christian Calvinism and the nuclear Afrikaans family*.

save Rosie's brother (*Brolloks*). Similarly, the ghost of Langkappie functions as a goddess by guarding the bones of her family as a ghost. Yet, her fleshless skeletal form and her ability to scorch a man's hand when shaking it is indicative of her existence as a darker force.

In the myth of civil religion, the positive mother is not a supernatural being; rather, she is depicted in line with traditional gender roles. These roles include the support and protection of her children and subservience and service to her husband (Koenig-Visagie & Van Eeden, 2013: 4). The traditional gender role of woman as wife and mother of a family also constitutes a trope. This trope is prominent throughout the myth of civil religion as it describes the Afrikaner way of life and its traditional Calvinist approach to the nuclear family and gender roles.

- **The witch (negative mother)**

The salient tropes of Afrikaner myths associated with this archetype feature characters who take on a human or man-beast form, who are a wife or a mother, and those who exist as an antagonistic force within the narrative. The 'wife/mother of family' trope may find expression in the form of an evil stepmother, as seen in *Die betowerde bos* – Niksnuts' stepmother's cruelty drives him away from his home. Examples of man-beast witches include the water nymph who steals Kosie out of desperation for a son and keeps him trapped underwater, while Indick's (2012: 86-87) framing of the witch as a cannibal finds expression in *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter* where the human-eater's wife eats children. The character of Antjie Somers, although he is a man disguised as a woman, may also function as this archetype as, according to the myth, Antjie carries a large bag over her shoulder in which she stuffs disobedient children. In *Die betowerde bos*, Niksnuts is lured by a forest spirit who takes the form of a beautiful singing bird. He then encounters the bones of those who have been enchanted before him, and who transform into dangerous skeletons at night. Both Antjie Somers and the forest spirit undergo physical transformations. Although it is unclear how the forest spirit is gendered, I include the character in the category of negative mother archetype as it conforms to Indick's description of the archetype – as harbouring a connection with death and those who have already passed through it (Indick, 2012: 82).

The FTAMs that emerge from these examples represent antagonistic forces that threaten or harm children.

- **The wizard (positive father)**

The sample provided a very limited number of characters that conform to the wizard archetype (investigated in Chapter 4). The characters that was possible to categorise as representing this archetype, along with those for whom it was possibly the case, were older human males who acted in line with the saviour/aid trope by guiding other characters to wisdom. In *Die betowerde bos*, an old man adopts Niksnuts and gives him supernatural objects (a magical staff, a gun and a powder horn) along with the wisdom to avoid the enchanted forest. In another context, Siener van Rensburg's visions help guide the Boers.

In the myth of civil religion, the attributes of the positive father figure as herald and a wise mentor (Indick, 2012: 91) are found in the Calvinist belief in God as Father, which I have investigated in terms of the herald/aid archetype.

- **The dark lord (negative father)**

In contradistinction to the positive father figure, in the sample of Afrikaner myths, the dark lord takes on a man-beast or beast archetypal form. This archetype exists as a supernatural/fantastical figure who is an antagonistic force with devious intent and who may also threaten to catch and eat children. Examples of such characters include the giant one-eyed human-eater who possesses magical devices in his home (*Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*) and Brolloks, the ape-like wizard who steals children and performs dark magic. Other examples include Calvinist characters such as the devil in *Van Hunks and the devil* and fairy-tale characters such as the wolf in *Rooikappie* who devours both Rooikappie and her grandma.

As the civil-religion myth does not contain fantastical elements, the characters that conform to the dark lord archetype are personified in human form. Lissauer (2014: 1208) states that the dark lord's motivations for their actions are often obscured, and they are presented as simply and inherently evil. I identify these characters based on Ramaswamy's (2014: 175) approach to the villain archetype as those whose goals and objectives directly oppose the hero's. In term of Moodie's (1975) 'construction' of the civil-religion myth, black indigenous groups who were in conflict with the Afrikaners, especially the Zulu people, are depicted as inherently violent and thus inherently evil. However, the myth of civil religion fails to acknowledge the marginalised histories and perspectives of the Zulus as, after all, the Voortrekkers may be perceived as encroaching on their land. Other dark lords include the British colonial forces,

including specific figures such as Lord Kitchener, who ordered Boer farms to be burned in as a war strategy known as the scorched earth policy¹⁹⁵ (Jansen van Vuuren, 2021: 42).

- **The man, beast, and man-beast**

For the archetypal categories investigated in this section, I indicate the form of personification of the archetypes as man, beast or man-beast. As with filmic fantasy, in the sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives, I found that the theme of ‘physical transformation’ emerged as a salient trope in relation to how these archetypal forms manifest. Here, such physical transformation is most commonly manifest as a supernatural phenomenon. Supernatural transformation occurs in *Die Rob-Vrou* when the seal woman transforms from a seal into woman. In *Brolloks*, a rabbit is transformed into a giant dog, Kosie into a water nymph, and Kapokkie into a butterfly. In *Die Vlieënde Hollander*, Captain van der Decken and his crew aboard the eponymous ship are transformed into ghost sailors, while in *Die betowerde bos*, the enchanted bird turns into a forest spirit. In *The heks van Hexrivier*, Elise undergoes a supernatural transformation when she dies of heartbreak and turns into a ghost who haunts the place where her suitor died. This trope is not evident within civil-religion myth.

¹⁹⁵ This policy was a war campaign implemented by the British Lord Kitchener. It involved the burning of Boer farms and their livestock and the imprisonment of Afrikaner women and children in concentration camps (Kotze, 2013: 58).

5.4.4 Fantasy setting tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives

This section is concerned with the tropes of filmic fantasy settings, in other words, fantasy's salient space-time contexts and how they find expression in Afrikaans mythological narratives. The filmic fantasy tropes I used to code the texts within the narrative sample include medieval settings, rural or pastoral landscapes, natural landscapes, spaces of industrialisation, urban environments, and fantastical cities or worlds. In this section, I investigate how the salient tropes pertaining to these filmic fantasy settings (depicted in the purple column in the diagram below), manifest within Afrikaner mythological narratives (depicted in the red column), and what FTAM tropes emerge.

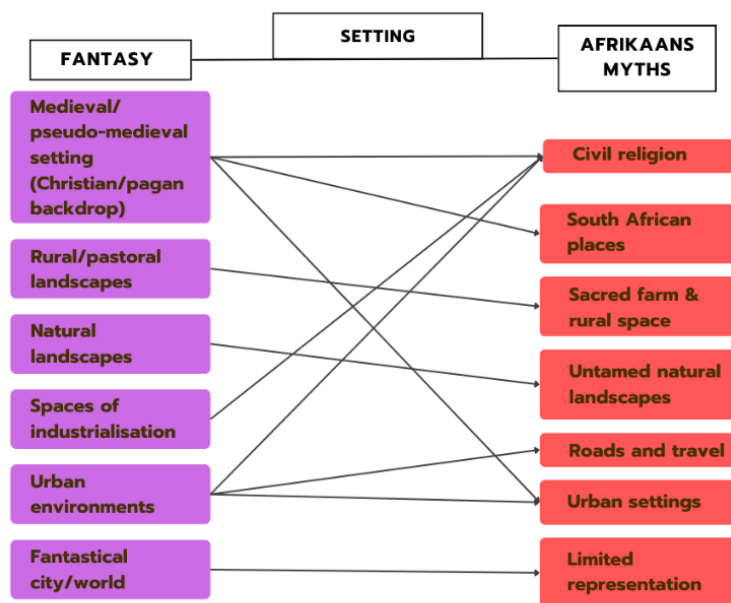


Figure 30: How salient fantasy tropes of setting manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives. (Illustration by the author.)

- **Medieval setting**

As established in Chapter 3¹⁹⁶ the medieval or pseudo-medieval setting is a salient trope of filmic fantasy. Here, the dichotomy of Christianity and paganism generates binaries of good and evil. I turn to my Afrikaans mythological narrative sample and the settings found there to

¹⁹⁶ See Chapter 3, 3.5 *Filmic fantasy settings*.

locate an Afrikaans 'equivalent'¹⁹⁷ to historical European medievalism in terms of historicity and place.

The most prominent example of a specific historical timeframe used in the sample is that spanned by the internal myth of civil religion, which is also reflected in external myths such as Boer-hero narratives. As has been established, the myth of civil religion is bound to a specific South African historical timeframe and the places included in it. The term civil religion is particularly appropriate to the century from 1806¹⁹⁸ and 1914 (Moodie, 1975: 2), a period which involved numerous historical events – and settings – that constitute important components of the mythological history of the Afrikaners. These settings include the places and historical moments surrounding the Cape during its colonial occupation; the Great Trek, in the course of which the Voortrekkers trekked north through the interior of South Africa and established republics in Natal, the Orange Free State and Transvaal; the various conflicts they had with indigenous South African peoples at places such as Vegkop and Blood River; and the culmination of the conflict with the British colonial forces in the Anglo-Boer War.

As has been established, Afrikaners' belief in Godly predestination underscores the civil-religion myth. Van der Merwe (2009:37) states that the Afrikaners believed that their Godly predestination was a religious mission – that their ancestors were placed in heathen Africa to spread Christianity and civilisation. Parallels, pertaining to the religious quests in the medieval timeframe, can be drawn here with the holy missions of the medieval Crusades and the Inquisition.¹⁹⁹

As occurred in the medieval timeframe, the binary of Christianity and unbelievers functioned as a central narrative that influenced much of the Afrikaners' approach to what Fowkes (2020: 31) refers to "absolute good and evil" and, as such, their regard for other peoples. I discuss the Calvinism as defining the binary of good and evil in Section 5.4.2. *Fantasy-theme tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives.*

¹⁹⁷ I use the term 'equivalent' loosely in this context and refer to a creative substitute for the conventional understanding of medieval era, which has no relevance to white Afrikaner identity.

¹⁹⁸ Although the myth of civil religion recognises the establishment of the Cape colony in 1652, I do not include the latter in my delineation of the Afrikaner "Dark Ages" (see below), as I argue that Afrikanerhood as an identity, only developed in the years subsequent to the timeframe included in the myth of civil religion.

¹⁹⁹ The Crusades and the Inquisition refer to the religious wars waged by the Catholic church against those they considered to be pagan (Blackburn, 2016: [sp]; Nilan, 2021: 73).

Other creative parallels can be drawn with the technologies of the medieval times such as transportation by ships, horses, and wagons (Sullivan, 2004: 438) –the settlers at the Cape arrived in ships and the Voortrekkers travelled by horse and ox wagon. Moreover, transportation devices in external mythological Afrikaans narratives also feature old merchant ships, such as *Die Vlieënde Hollander* and *De Jonge Thomas*, from which Wolraad Woltemade rescued passengers. I include these narratives here as they are described as taking place in and around the colonial Cape.

The core timeframe of the myth of civil religion I refer to as the historical ‘Dark Ages’ of Afrikanerhood – a time in which Afrikaners struggled against various ‘heathen’ tribes and the British colonial forces in order to establish a place of cultural independence. On the basis of this discussion, and in light of the parallels between the myth of civil religion and the use of medieval settings in filmic fantasy, I identify the ‘Dark Trek Ages’ as an FTAM.

- **Rural/ pastoral landscapes**

The specific historical timeframe of medievalism also inevitably influences the nature of the geographical spaces encountered. I cite Fowkes’ (2020: 3) statement that medieval fantasy films often feature rural and pastoral landscapes as an ideal space for, amongst other things, magic. These pastoral spaces are associated with goodness, safety and peace (Loconte, 2015:6, 7). These associations find expression in the setting of the ‘farm space’ in Afrikaans mythological narratives in which the farm is presented as a haven. Furthermore, the farm also represents the idea of the “rural idyll” (Van Zyl, 2008: 139) in Afrikaner identity, along with the centrality of land ownership.

In Chapter 4, I discussed these ideas at length and established white Afrikaners’ relationship with land and their perception of the farm and its lifestyle as a space of belonging and harmony. Concerning the myth of civil religion, the establishment of independent republics where Voortrekkers could freely pursue their Afrikaner way of life was dependent on the establishment of farmlands as the core identity of the Boer (farmer) is rooted in an agrarian way of life. The British colonial force’s attack on the Boer farms in implementing the scorched earth policy thus represented an attack on Afrikaners’ way of life and their sense of belonging.

The centrality of the farm space is also reflected in external Afrikaans mythological narratives. Narratives such the *Heks van Hexrivier*, and Rachel de Beer are set solely on a farm, while

Wolraad Woltemade, *Antjie Somers*, *Pinkie*, and *Bobbejaan en die eina-pere and Jakkals en Wolf: Die Bottervat* all feature farm spaces. Due to the importance of rural spaces both as a trope of filmic fantasy and in Afrikaner mythological narratives, I identify the 'fantastic familiar farm' as an FTAM.

- **Natural landscapes**

As with pastoral spaces, natural landscapes constitute another salient trope of the filmic fantasy genre which carries associations with tranquility and safety (Ramaswamy, 2014: 184). Similarly, nature also emerges as a salient trope in Afrikaans mythological narratives; however, rather than tranquility, it often reflects untamed natural elements. These landscapes include the untamed veld, sea, forests, valleys, cliffs, mountains and rivers. Although untamed wildness is linked to the early historical South African context of some myths (meaning that the majority of the South African landscape still existed as natural space), it also underscores, first, the civil-religion narrative that Afrikaners were sent to bring civilisation to a primitive country; and, second, that Afrikaners' special bond with the land enabled them to "tame and civilize" (Paleker, 2019: 1981) the South African soil by cultivating these untamed landscapes so that they became pastoral farm spaces that were havens of safety and tranquility.

This untamedness of South African natural landscapes often leads to the demise of characters in external myths: *Wolraad Woltemade* drowns in the relentless waves of the Cape; Captain van der Decken turns into a ghost when he will not give up his fight against a Cape storm (*Die Vlieënde Hollander*); and the young Boer suitor, Flip, falls off a cliff when picking a disa flower for Elise (*Die Heks van Hexrivier*). The untamed nature of South African natural landscapes thus constitutes another FTAM.

- **Spaces of industrialisation**

As against the elements of nature, settings of industrialisation in the filmic fantasy genre represent the intrusive evil that comes to disrupt the peace and safety of pastoral and natural places (Loconte, 2015: 6-7) and leaves barren wastelands in its wake (Ramaswamy, 2014: 178). In Afrikaans mythological narratives, fantasy's use of spaces of industry, and its framing

as evil, is embodied predominantly during wartime, in terms of the effects on farms, as well as by the oppression of culture as a result of the colonial presence.

This trope finds expression in the myth of civil religion, which provides insights into the impact of apparent progress and industrialisation on Afrikaner identity. I identify a handful of historical events in the myth of civil religion that mimic the effects of industrialisation²⁰⁰ on the fantasy world in relation to Afrikaner identity. This includes the battles fought between the Voortrekkers and the Zulus, which are depicted in the myth of civil religion as having caused ruinous damage to the Voortrekkers, their livestock, and their laagers. External mythological narratives portray the devastating effects of wartime in, for example, the myth of *Dirkie Uys* in which a young Voortrekker boy dies in battle, and in *Langkappie*, in which a Voortrekker family's wagon is burned, leaving only their bones.

Another civil-religion event involves the impact of colonialism in the Cape on Afrikaner cultural identity. This historically estranged white Afrikaners by suppressing the expression of their culture. As with the industrialisation trope in fantasy, which references the destruction of natural spaces to fuel the fires of industry (Fowkes, 2010: 136), I argue that colonialism relies on the “cutting down” and displacement of cultural identities by the dominant positioning of the coloniser's culture. Furthermore, the discovery of gold and renewed colonial interest in the Boer republics led to more conflict between the British and the Boers, upsetting their narratives of belonging the pastoral spaces in the face the nascent intrusion²⁰¹ of the mining industry of the colonisers who wished to exploit the gold resources discovered in the Transvaal. This contributed to the buildup of the Anglo-Boer War during which the scorched earth policy reflected the impact of industry on natural spaces through the burning of Boer farms leaving barren wastelands in their wake.

The results of war and colonisation in Afrikaans mythological narratives thus mimic the impact of industrialisation. It is in this sense that I identify ‘wartime wastelands’ as an FTAM.

²⁰⁰ See Chapter 3, 3.5 *Filmic fantasy settings*.

²⁰¹ I acknowledge here that Afrikaner's presence in the Transvaal was itself intrusive. However, I frame this discussion in the light of the civil-religion myth, thereby acknowledging the mythological status of the narratives constituting the myth of civil religion, such as the Afrikaner's myth of belonging.

- **Urban environments**

Urban environments constitute another salient trope of the filmic fantasy genre, finding expression in new fantastical novel cities or reimagining existing urban places in addition to the inclusion of magic in these places (Irvin, 2012: 200, 201). Within the sample, this trope finds expression in the latter – Afrikaans mythological narratives are often set in South African urban settings which may include a supernatural element. Examples include the ghost of Elise that roams Hexrivier (*Die Heks van Hexrivier*), and that of *Wolraad Woltemade, Die Vlieënde Hollander* and *Van Hunks en die duiwel* in Cape Town.

Many mythological narratives in the sample are set in historical time periods in which South African urban spaces were anything but booming metropolises. I thus apply the delineation ‘urban’ loosely to this category as many of these places existed as no more than small towns during the civil-religion timeframe. At this time, urban settings could be found in the colonial Cape and, to a lesser extent, independent Boer republics, though in the latter, cities only developed of cities, especially after the discovery of gold and the end of independence.

As regards Afrikaans mythological narratives and the expression of urban environments, I identify ‘populated South African places’ as an FTAM.

- **Fantastical city/world**

The final salient setting trope in filmic fantasy includes fantastical cities or worlds. These fantastical spaces are discussed in the contextualisation of fantasy in Chapter 2²⁰² where I argue the fantasy genre relies on the creation of fictional worlds that are ruptured from the ontology of phenomenal reality but are compliant with the rules of the fictional worlds’ own ‘reality’ (Fowkes, 2010: 2; Khakimova, 2021: 220; Todorov, 1973: 42; Tolkien, 2008: 60; Walters, 2011: 18). New and novel fantastical spaces thus follow distinctly different rules than do phenomenal reality. This being the case, here I analyse the sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives not only for myths that contain supernatural characters that are set in places that reflect phenomenal reality, but those in which the settings themselves contain

²⁰² See 2.4.2 *The fantasy genre*.

fantastical attributes. In the external myths I identified only the following: the enchanted forest in *Die Betowerde bos*, the land far over the seas where the seal-women live in *Die Rob-Vrou*, and the underwater palace of the water nymph in *Brolloks*.

However, the myth of civil religion does not mirror this fantastical setting trope as it reflects the history of the Voortrekkers set in phenomenal reality. As a fantasy world's rupture from phenomenal reality is central to my understanding of the fantasy genre, I argue that there is a lack in the representation of fantasy worlds within the narrative sample.

I summarise the identified FTAMs for setting tropes in Figure 32, below.

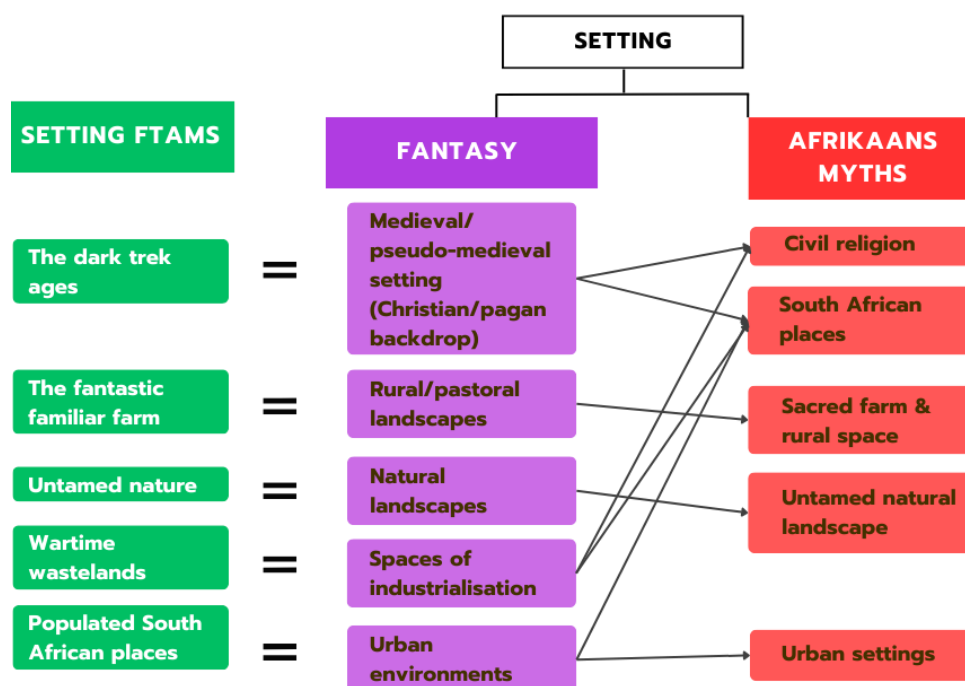


Figure 31: FTAMs of setting. (Illustration by the author).

5.4.5 Fantasy iconography tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives

In Chapter 3, I discussed visual iconographies as those visual codes that are so extensively used in genre films that they become recognisable to audiences (Sobchack, 2012: 125). In this final section, I identify the Afrikaner iconographic tropes that emerge from the sample in relation to the salient filmic fantasy tropes explored in the thematic analysis. In 3.3 *Filmic fantasy visual iconographies*, I identified the following tropic categories of filmic fantasy iconography: magic and magical devices, natural elements and precious metals and stones,

symbolical iconography and iconographies of war. Below, I discuss Afrikaner iconographies in relation to these tropes. These are illustrated in Figure 33.

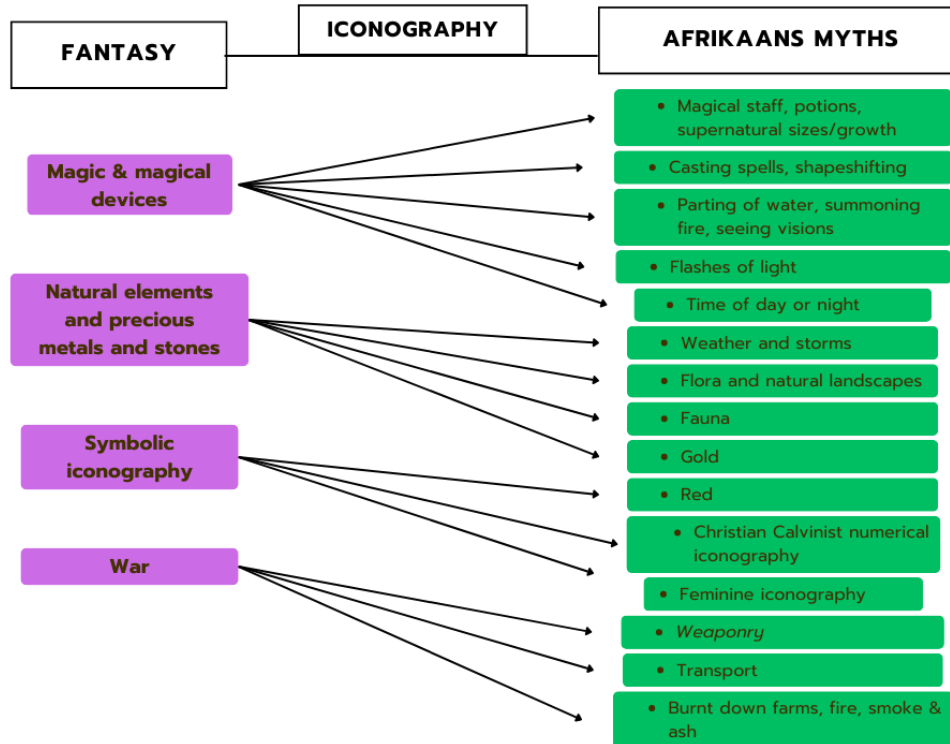


Figure 32: How salient fantasy iconography tropes manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives. (Illustration by the author.)

- **Magic and magical devices**

Despite the internal myth of civil religion not explicitly referring to the magical, there are strong references to the supernatural in Calvinism and its biblical mythologies, which form a fundamental aspect of Afrikaner identity. Although these Christian narratives of the supernatural are not contained within the narration of the myth of civil religion, they do find expression in Afrikaner external myths. For this reason, the discussion here focuses on the latter.

The biblical narratives of the supernatural that find expression in the external myth sample include the parting of water, the association of fire with the devil and his ability to summon it, and visions of the future. An example is the myth of *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter* in which Saartjie places a sheep-bone into a river and its waters part to allow for a safe crossing for Saartjie and her siblings when they flee their enemy, the one-eyed human-eating giant. When Saartjie

throws another bone into the river, the water streams back and washes away the human-eater. This is reminiscent of Moses' parting of the Red Sea with his staff so that the Israelites can safely cross when fleeing from the Egyptians. When Moses lowered his staff, the waters drowned the Egyptians. The appearance of the devil and his ability to summon fire with a snap of his fingers is found in *Van Hunks en die duiwel*; while the seeing of visions is found in the myth of Siener van Rensburg, who was known to read nothing but the Bible in his lifetime and relayed visions of the future which were believed to have from God (Nöthling, 2012: 185).

Furthermore, in the external myths, Afrikaner mythological iconography that is concerned with magical or supernatural devices includes magical staffs, potions and objects that have the ability to expand to gigantic sizes. Examples in external myths include the magical staff given to Niksnuts by his adopted father in *Die betowerde bos*, and the magical staffs that Brolloks dips in evil potions in *Brolloks*. Objects that expand in size are found in *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*, as when Saartjie collects a small bottle filled with pepper, a small box of sea sand and a tin box with needles that later turn into a cloud of pepper, a sand dune and spears growing from the earth, respectively, which are used to defeat the one-eyed human-eater. Magical abilities include the casting of spells (*Brolloks*) and the ability to shapeshift from man to beast (*Die Rob-Vrou*) or from beast to man-beast (*Die betowerde bos*). While Brolloks, and later Skoonlief and Rosie, cast spells, the seal woman in *Die Rob-Vrou* possesses the magical ability to shapeshift into a seal as a result of her magical seal skin.

In external myths, the presence of the magical is often indicated by magical signs, such as flashes of supernatural light. In *Die Vliëende Hollander*, the appearance of a supernatural figure is accompanied by a supernatural flash of light, while the ship itself is later engulfed by a red glow once it has been cursed. Other instances include the flash of moonlight in the seal woman's eyes when she finds her seal skin in *Die Rob-Vrou*, which signals the return of her shape-shifting powers; the bright reflection of sunlight on the needles that turn into spears in *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*; and the light in the devil's eyes that looks like fire, along with his disappearance in a red lightning bolt in *Van Hunks en die duiwel*.

Other indicators of magic, the supernatural or danger include light that is associated with a specific time of day, such as moonlight or the full moon. The seal women in *Die Rob-Vrou* appear at night when the moon is full; it is at midnight that danger strikes when the fisherman steals the sealskin from one of the women. The ghost women in *Langkappie* and *Die heks van Hexrivier* also appear at night, particularly on moonlit or full-moon nights. Other examples

include *Racheltjie de Beer* and Niksnuts, who gets lost in the enchanted forest at night (*Die betowerde bos*).

The fantasy trope of magic or the supernatural in Afrikaans mythological narratives usually finds expression by acting as a sign or indicator of a supernatural event or experience that is either yet to come or is already present. This pertains to supernatural abilities, tools, and light and time as indicators of the supernatural. I thus frame 'signs and indicators of the supernatural' as an FTAM.

- **Natural elements and precious metals and stones**

A salient trope of filmic fantasy is its use of iconography pertaining to natural elements (fire, water, air and earth) and precious metals and stones. Having analysed the sample of Afrikaans myths, I find that the iconography FTAMs especially pertains to nature, including fauna, flora and natural landscapes.

In Afrikaans myths, natural elements find expression in the form of severe weather, especially that pertaining to winds at the Cape of Storms (Cape Town), where air, earth and water collide. This trope finds expression as an aspect of the untamed nature of South Africa. As established in the discussion of the tropes of setting, as concerns natural landscapes, untamed nature is central to the portrayal of South Africa in Afrikaans mythologies. Iconography associated with untamed nature features widely across the narrative sample in both internal and external myths, including the rough seas at the Cape of Storms, rivers, forests, mountains such as the Drakensberg range and ravines. As regards weather, storms and strong winds emerge as a prominent iconography, especially in those narratives that are set in and around the Cape of Storms, though they also emerge as signs of ominous events and eminent danger in *Die Vliënde Hollander* and *Racheltjie de Beer*.

Throughout the narrative sample, the dominant representation of iconography associated with fauna (those that do not serve as prominent characters themselves) can be associated with the farm space. In the external myths, this includes livestock such as cattle, oxen, cows, and dogs, cats, rats, mice, birds and horses. In the myth of civil religion, an emphasis on cattle, oxen and horses is found with reference to their transportation use.

As regards the fantasy trope of precious metals, gold emerges as a prominent metal in Afrikaans mythology and is representative of treasure and temptation. Van Hunks bets his soul against a shipping freight of gold when he wagers with the devil in *Van Hunks and the devil*. In the myth of civil religion, the discovery of gold in a Boer republic leads to conflict between the Boers and the British colonial power which culminates in the Anglo-Boer war.

- **Symbolical iconography**

Symbolical iconography is a salient trope in fantasy and includes the use of colours and numbers. However, following my analysis of how colours and numbers find expression in the sample of Afrikaner myths, I identify female iconography as an additional trope that functions as symbolical iconography. I unpack these iconographies in this section.

Colour functions as a symbolical trope in Afrikaans mythological narratives. In the sample, the colour red is tied to the presence of danger, often of a supernatural nature. The *Vlieënde Hollander* ship glows red; Elise asks her suitor to pick a red disa flower from a cliff where he falls and dies (*Die heks van Hexrivier*); Brolloks has red eyes and yellow fangs; the ghost woman, Langkappie, has glowing red eyes; and the devil in *Van Hunks en die duivel* is described as a red figure with a black cape and a black hat. Red is also symbolic of taking a journey, such as with Rooikappie, who wears her red hood when she goes to visit her mother, and Rosie, who wears a red cape and dress when she enters the forest to look for her parents in *Brolloks*. In the civil-religion myth, red is indicative of death and bloodshed, as found in the naming of Blood River, where the blood of the fallen Zulu warriors was believed to have stained the water red.

Besides colours, the use of specific numbers also constitutes a symbolical narrative trope. The numbers that occur in the sample are encoded with Calvinist meaning and include those that have prominent significance in the Bible. The number seven is significant as there are seven seal women in *Die Rob-Vrou*, and Wolraad Woltemade returns into the ocean seven times to save fourteen people from a stranded ship. The significance of the number three is exemplified by the fisherman who hides the seal woman's sealskin on the third full moon; Tom Ferreira, who waits three nights to see the ghost of Langkappie; Rosie, who three times dreams the same dream in which her mother teaches her a magical spell in *Brolloks*; Andries, who decides to flee to the mountains after being teased for three days in *Antjie Somers*; and the three beds in the giant's house for the children which he visits three times during the night

in *Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*. The numbers three and seven are tied to Calvinist iconography as the number three presents God as Three-fold Unity, while the number seven is viewed as a holy number (Flegg, 2002: 742, 743, 747).

Besides colours and numbers, I also include female²⁰³ iconography here as it carries symbolical associations within Afrikaans myths. The wearing of women's clothing by men, such as in the case of Antjie Somers and Racheltjie de Beer's brother, offers them a degree of protection both from the outside world and from the cold. Even the wolf in *Rooikappie* puts on the grandmother's clothes to disguise (protect) his own identity. Moreover, within the context of Afrikaans mythological narratives, the covering of one's head, such as Rooikappie does with her hood, is reminiscent of the Voortrekker *kappie* (bonnet) worn by Voortrekker woman as protection against the sun in the myth of civil religion and in external myths such as *Langkappie*.

As opposed to the protection offered by women's clothing, the nude female body is representative of vulnerability and sacrifice in Afrikaans mythology. The nude body, as found in *Die Rob-Vrou* and *Racheltjie de Beer* points to a state of transition in the course of a process of transformation, such as when the seal woman changes from a seal into a woman and when Racheltjie transitions into death. Furthermore, the myth of civil religion suggests the theme of nudity when the narratives portray Voortrekker women's dead bodies as mutilated and severed following an attack by Zulu warriors. This attack followed the Voortrekkers' failed negotiations for land with the Zulu chief, Dingaan. As this was an unexpected attack, the imagery of nude bodies serves to underscore the theme of vulnerability perpetuated by the iconography of nudity within Afrikaans myths.

The FTAMs that emerge from expression of symbolical fantasy iconography in the sample thus include colours, numbers and female iconography.

²⁰³ I acknowledge the problems of associating and classifying certain iconographies with 'female' in relation to gender politics as this practice may exclude some identities' expression of 'female-ness'. However, my approach to female iconography in this section is informed by its expression in Afrikaans mythological narratives, its expression of Afrikaner identity and ideologies which I question in the framework of the next chapter.

- **War**

The war trope, which is salient in filmic fantasy, is especially evident in the myth of civil religion and Boer-hero myths due to the various conflicts that accompanied the Great trek and the Anglo-Boer War. The war trope involves prominent weaponry such as guns (*voorlaaiers* and *agterlaaiers*) (muzzleloaders and breechloaders) and spears (*assegaaie*). Voortrekker war-transport included Voortrekker wagons, and Boer heroes are often depicted as riding horses. Moreover, in the context of the Anglo-Boer war, the iconography of burnt farms is especially prevalent. As per the filmic fantasy war trope, the iconography of fire, smoke and ash is indicative of death in war spaces. These also emerge as FTAMs.

Apart from the myth of Dirkie Uys, which is set in a battle between the Voortrekkers and the Zulu army, iconographies of war, as battles between groups, are not as explicitly expressed²⁰⁴ in the iconography of external myths although characters are often involved in conflict situations in which weaponry features. This includes the gun with which Kosie and Rosie's father shoots Brolloks (*Brolloks*), the magical objects that Saartjie throws at the human-eating giant (*Ou Eenoog Mensvreter*) and Niksnuts' gun that he takes on his journey to keep him safe (*Die betowerde bos*).

In this section, I have discussed how salient fantasy iconography finds expression in the sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives and which FTAMs can consequently be identified. I summarise the FTAMs pertaining to iconography that have been identified in Figure 34 below, whereafter I conclude the chapter.

²⁰⁴ I acknowledge that iconographies of war are limited to those present in the myths in the sample and are not indicative of Afrikaner mythological narratives overall.

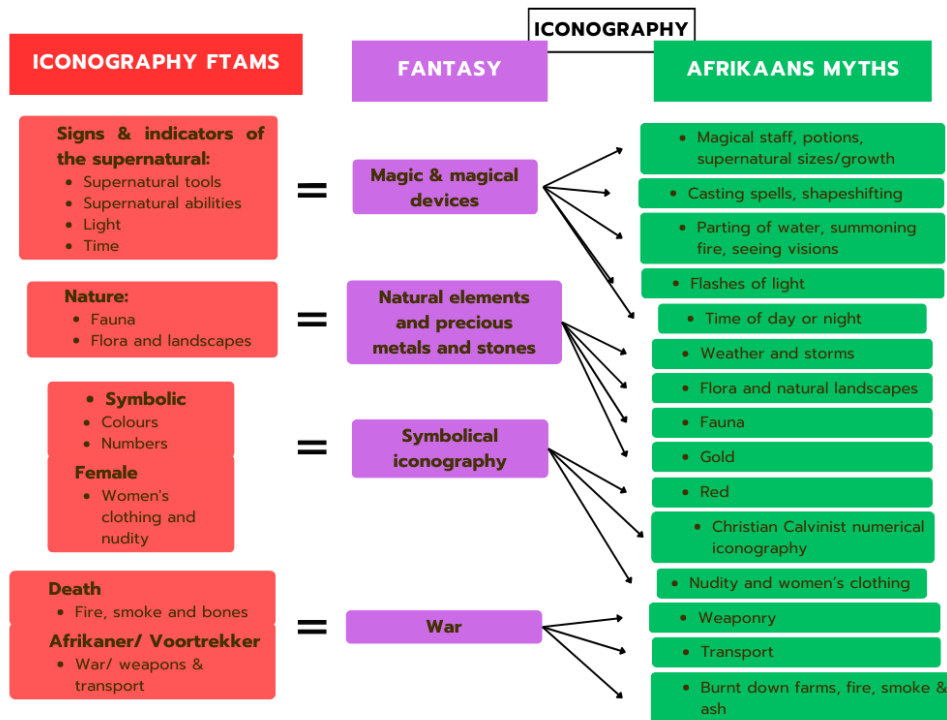


Figure 33: FTAMs in relation to iconography . (Illustration by the author).

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have identified the salient tropes that could be extracted from the sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives. In order to identify these tropes, I performed a thematic analysis in which I used as codes the salient filmic fantasy tropes, established in Chapter 3. For each of these codes, I investigated how they found expression in the texts in the sample. For each code, I consider the themes that emerge from analysis of the sample as tropes Afrikaner mythological narratives. In other words, the identified tropes constitute FTAMs. In the next chapter, I construct a framework for how these FTAMs may be implemented in a fantasy screenplay concept in order to critically engage with and interrogate Afrikaner identity.

CHAPTER 6: A FRAMEWORK FOR A FANTASY SCREENPLAY THAT INTERROGATES WHITE AFRIKANER IDENTITY

“For the mythological hero is the champion not of things become but of things becoming; the dragon to be slain by him is precisely the monster of the status quo: Holdfast, the keeper of the past.” (Campbell, 1990: 311)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is the culmination of my investigation into the fantasy genre and white Afrikaner identity. Its aim is to construct a framework that guides the creation of a fantasy screenplay aimed at critically engaging with white Afrikaner identity. In doing so, I aim to address the sub-question: How can I create a framework for writing a fantasy screenplay that questions white Afrikaner identity?

As the FTAMs I identified in Chapter 5 reflect fantasy within the context of white Afrikaner mythological narratives, the FTAMs in and of themselves are likely representative of the markers of white Afrikaner identity. As such, they reflect the ideologies in Afrikaner internal and external myths. In my view, white Afrikaner identity, as represented through FTAMs, are still very much reliant on the identity markers of pre-1994 Afrikanerdom, as I established in Chapter 4. The aim of this study is to critically engage with white Afrikaner identity through the framework. To achieve this, I examine how the creative application of FTAMs may question and disrupt the markers of white Afrikaner identity. of the vehicle for this examination and interrogation is an original fantasy screenplay concept, titled *Die Waterwewer* (The Water Weaver).

I acknowledge the complexities surrounding the creative representation and reimagining of an identity, such as that of white Afrikaners, within the fictional fantasy world of a screenplay. At a certain point in the attempt to creatively subvert and question an identity, the representation of that identity within the fantasy screenplay may become unrecognisable to the audience. Were this to occur, it would not be perceived as representing, in this context, white Afrikaner identity. The ideal outcome of reimagining white Afrikaner identity through a fantasy screenplay would involve the identity being represented in such a way that it is still perceived as being recognisably ‘Afrikaner’. Yet it must simultaneously disrupt this identification. Such an approach to representation may provoke an audience to question and critically engage with

the narratives through which white Afrikaner identity is imagined. I reiterate that there are countless ways in which the markers of Afrikaner identity may be interrogated through fantasy. What I offer in this chapter is one means of doing so.

I should further reiterate that I do not view Afrikaner identity as homogenous, and I acknowledge that there exist many expressions of Afrikaner and white Afrikaner cultural identity. Due to this heterogeneity, the specific markers of Afrikaner identity and, therefore, the narrative through which the people holding the identity imagine these markers, may differ from the specific white Afrikaner identity I investigate in this dissertation. Moreover, interrogating such heterogenous expressions of Afrikaner identity would necessitate critical engagement with a variety of identity markers by means of various creative implementations of FTAMs. In this study, I limit the explication of this framework to my own creative implementation of the FTAMs present in *Die Waterwewer*, which aims at the interrogation of white Afrikaner identity as I have contextualised it in this study.

The trajectory I follow in this chapter to construct this framework is as follows: I begin by describing *Die Waterwewer* screenplay concept. I provide a detailed synopsis of the concept, which I refer to throughout the chapter. This serves to illustrate the broad possibilities for the application of my screenwriting framework for questioning white Afrikaner identity. Next, I delve into the construction of the framework, which I structure according to the headings of plot structure, theme, character, setting, and visual iconography – these constitute some the basic components of a screenplay. Under each of these headings, I investigate how the creative application of FTAMs, set out in Chapter 5, critically engage with white Afrikaner identity in *Die Waterwewer*. Finally, drawing from this investigation, I construct the framework that guides the creation of a fantasy screenplay aimed at questioning white Afrikaner identity. I illustrate the trajectory followed in this chapter in Figure 35, below.

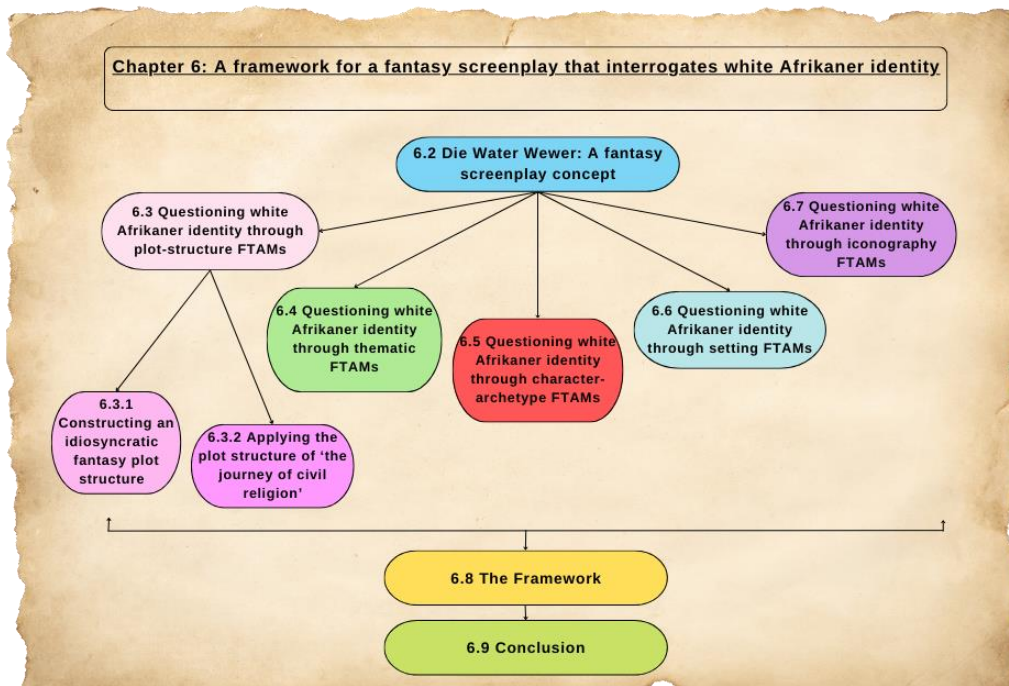


Figure 34: Structure of Chapter 6. (Illustration by the author).

6.2 *Die Waterwewer*: a fantasy screenplay concept

In this section, I lay out the premise for *Die Waterwewer*. This screenplay concept serves as a narrative aid from which I draw in the following sections to illustrate how the application of the fantasy framework, and the FTAMs contained in it, may be creatively implemented to question white Afrikaner identity. My creative process in conceptualising and writing the concept developed and evolved in the course of writing the chapters of this dissertation. White Afrikaner mythological narratives were central to this process. In drawing from these narratives to shape the concept, I established a foundation of embedded white Afrikaner identity markers with which I am able to critically engage through the application of the framework.

I turned to Moodie's (1975) internal, originary myth of civil religion, which is central to my study, to contextualise those pedagogical narratives through which white Afrikaner identity is imagined. In reframing civil religion²⁰⁵ within the context of a fantastical fictional world and,

²⁰⁵ The internal, originary myth of civil religion, as per Moodie (1975), is an account of white Afrikaner history broadly covering the period 1806–1914. It frames white Afrikaners as a chosen people by God who were predestined to move away from colonial oppression at the Cape into the interior of South Africa to establish themselves as an independent republic, and later, a nation.

thereby, evoking' a 'nova'²⁰⁶ that is removed from phenomenal reality, I propose that the myth of civil religion itself can be ruptured by fantasy. In other words, reimagining civil religion through the fantasy genre may uproot the myth from phenomenal reality and its entrenched position in Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. Reimagining civil religion within the liminal third space²⁰⁷ of the fantasy world evokes estrangement as a result of the distance of this context from phenomenal reality. Furthermore, in acknowledging marginalised histories, this reimagining has the potential to disrupt – and to rupture – the problematic and unproductive nostalgia of the 'good old days' to which many white Afrikaners still cling. This rupture may, in turn, allow for the re-evaluation and renegotiation of white Afrikaner identity presented in the civil-religion myth.

Die Waterwewer serves as an example of such a reimagining of the civil-religion myth by means of the FTAMs identified in Chapter 5. I present a detailed synopsis of the screenplay narrative concept here. Although a screenplay aimed at questioning white Afrikaner identity would ideally require the script to be in Afrikaans, for the sake of this dissertation, I provide the synopsis in English.

Die Waterwewer

Many centuries ago, the Saaiers (sowers), a race of jackal-like people, lived atop Monument Helm, a flat mountain that was the last place that the setting sun touched the earth. Here, sonzand (sun sand) grew, a golden seed that granted supernatural strength and energy. The story of how the sun gifted the first of the Saaiers the magical ability to farm sonzand was told over and over around their campfires. The first of their people were the children of many nations – humans, jackals and foxes alike, who were exiled to Monument Helm for various crimes. But this history no one dared speak of. What mattered was that, here, on Monument Helm, they had been chosen by the sun. Here

²⁰⁶ I investigate the concept of "nova" as the point of the difference between phenomenal and supernatural fictional realities (Stephan, 2016: 7) in Chapter 2, 2.4.2 *The fantasy genre*.

²⁰⁷ I discuss the fantasy world as a liminal space in line with Bhabha's theory of the third space, as discussed in Chapter 4, 4.5 *Fantasy as a liminal strategy for questioning white Afrikaner identity*.

they had been gifted *sonzand* and *Sandzang*.²⁰⁸ It was told that the white star-shaped patch of fur on their jackal-foreheads were a sign of the sun's choice. Though the *Saaiers* were but a few in number, in their minds, they were mighty.

To be a *Saaier* was to speak *Sandzang*, the tongue of the *Saaiers*. It was the language believed to make the *sonzand* grow. And so, on top of *Monument Helm*, no one was allowed to speak anything but *Sandzang*. Because *sonzand* were sun-seeds, the *Saaier* farmer-men's hands were always scorched raw. It was thus up to the *Saaier*-women, warrior mothers who wore steel *kappies* (bonnets) as armour, to protect the *Saaier*-men while they farmed.

Yet, one day, the golden glow of the *sonzand* plantations started to fade. At the top of *Monument Helm*, giants appeared. A people from the planet *Windsora*, in search of an empire where the sun never sets to power their strange machines. The giants spoke their language so loudly that hurricanes flew from their mouths and blew away *sonzand* plantations and *Saaier* homes. No *Sandzang* could be heard amidst the thundering of the words in the *Windsora* language. Baby *Saaiers* grew up without knowing anything but the thunderous language of *Windsora*. The giants' bodies were so large that they cast shadows over the entire extent of *Monument Helm*. For weeks, the *Saaiers* hadn't seen the sun and thought surely that they and their *sonzand* would die. The giants were so big, they paid no heed to the small *Saaier*-people. Even when the *Saaier*-women rose up and fought them valiantly, they were too big and their machines too strong.

And so, the *Saaier* leader, the *Zonwagter* (Sun guardian) ordered the *Saaier* people to pack up the remaining *sonzand* and climb aboard seven large *aardvlotte* (earth rafts) to find a new home.

²⁰⁸ My use of Dutch references in the naming of the *Saaiers*' and their way of life (including *sandzang*, *sonzand* and the *Zonwagter*) is deliberate; it indicates the European, and especially Dutch, ancestry of white Afrikaners. I foreground Dutch due to its prominent influence in the Afrikaans language.

The Zonwagter was believed to be able to see everything the sun could see and wore a golden mantle over his face to hide the blinding gold of his eyes. Only the Zonwagter knew the Saaier laws, and when he spoke, the law said everyone should obey.

Guided by the Zonwagter, the Saaiers sailed to the Azania Duine (Azania Dunes), an uninhabited stretch of sea around a scattering of deserted islands. Here they would wait out the last weeks of the dark, moonless winter that loomed over the sea and search for a new mountain as spring broke, one that the sun touched last of all. Among the Saaier-people was an unmarried middle-aged woman named Anza. Anza lived a shunned life as she had not fulfilled her sacred duty to birth a Saaier baby and so protect the legacy of the Saaiers.

The Saaiers' voyage soon turned treacherous - they were set upon by vulture-griffons making their way to Monument Helm to feed off the dead sonzand. The Zonwagter ordered the Saaier-women to fight off the vultures while Saaier-men would dismantle one of the aardvlotte to build roofs to protect the six remaining aardvlotte from the attack from above.

Finally, they arrived in the Azania Duine, surrounded by many islands. Every night the swollen waves washed relentlessly over the decks and roofs of the aardvlotte. The Saaiers were forced to sleep bunched up and uncomfortable in the aardvlotte's crow's-nests'.

By day, the Saaiers fished for their meals. Hundreds and hundreds of fish were pulled from the water. They caught many more than they could eat -the fish were so plentiful! The Saaiers threw the wasted dead fish overboard.

One day, while fishing, Anza imagined she saw a figure in the water. Following this sighting, she was plagued by a recurring dream of an underwater city. Wondering whether she had gone mad, Anza snuck below deck to explore what was known about this stretch of sea in the old books that were kept in a chest. Here, she encountered Argiewa, a young Saaier who was neither woman nor man. Due to being neither one

nor the other, Argiewa had been declared to have no role among the Saaiers. Argiewa spent all their time reading and had thus become exceedingly wise. Argiewa told Anza that they too had seen shadows in the water at night, but they could not be sure. Their Saaier books only spoke of sonzand and their Saaier ways on Monument Helm. They warned Anza not to say anything for questioning the Zonwagter was treason.

That night the aardvlotte were hit by a powerful storm. Anza imagined seeing a flickering light in a wave some distance off but couldn't be sure because of the storm and the dark night. Anza's eye caught upon a chest of sonzand that had come loose from where it had been secured against the waves. She climbed down from the crow's nest and edged closer to the side of the aardvlot to try to save it. Suddenly, a wave washed the chest over the side and pulled Anza overboard with it. As Anza sank to the bottom of the ocean, she opened her eyes - and saw two eyes staring back at her.

The next day Anza woke up on the deck of an aardvlot. Argiewa, who had been watching over her, slipped Anza a small bag of sonzand to keep with her for protection. Confused by her experience the previous night, Anza consulted the Zonwagter, but his reply was that he had seen with his own eyes that the Azania Duine were empty - and that was that.

To relieve the Saaiers from sleeping in the crow's nests, and at the same time to keep them safe from sharks, the Zonwagter ordered that the Saaiers dismantle another one of the aardvlotte to fashion seebene (sealegs), long spear-like poles upon which to hoist the aardvlotte above the sea. The seebene were to be anchored to the seabed and their other ends fastened to the bottom of the aardvlotte to secure them - so that the Saaiers lived above the water, much like on the top of a mountain.

While helping to build the seebene, Anza noticed a group of children whispering to each other. A young boy with a scarf around his neck was excitedly explaining something to the others. He seemed out of breath, and Anza wondered why he would wear a scarf in such heat.

The seebene brought peace for a short time, until one of the Saaier-children disappeared from an aardvlot. Again, the Zonwagter ordered the Saaiers to dismantle an aardvlot to build railings around the remaining four and better fasten them to the ocean floor with more seebene.

Nevertheless, more and more children kept disappearing. When Anza protested that she did not believe that the children were simply falling overboard, she was thrown in jail for insubordination. Here, her only company was Argiewa, who looked after her. Argiewa stayed with the imprisoned Anza until spring arrived. That was when they received word that the Zonwagter had seen the island where the sun sets last of all. He named it Canaan. The Saaiers readied themselves to beach the aardvlotte on the island by pulling some of the seebene from the sea. They fished more and more and dried their catch to preserve it for when they settled in on the new island.

However, soon thereafter, one of the missing children was found drifting in the sea with a huge hole in his stomach and gills growing from his neck. It was the boy with the scarf! With the last of his energy, he pointed to a hauled up seebeen and then passed away.

The Zonwagter declared that it was the work of the See-linge (sea-lings), travellers on the sea-currents that had followed them to the Azania Duine to steal their fish and their sonzand.

The Saaiers declared war. They consumed sonzand, dismantled yet another aardvlot and fashioned magical spears which they shot into the ocean. The war between the See-linge and the Saaiers raged on. In the heat of battle, some Saaiers saw Monument Helm peek out above the waves on the horizon and deeply longed for it. Just then a mighty wave washed them overboard.

Next to Anza's cell, a See-ling burst through the hull of the aardvlot, grabbed Agriewa, and pierced them with a sword fashioned from the bill of a swordfish. Anza was maddened with anger. She grabbed a splintered beam of wood, slipped through a hole she had been carving in her cell wall, and fought alongside the Saaier women. With the help of the Saaiers' sonzand, the ocean was soon waveless and red with blood. Surely all the See-linge were dead. Anza was granted freedom for her bravery in battle.

Amidst the celebrations, Anza saw that the chosen island, Canaan, appeared to be moving. She screamed a warning but the three remaining aardvlotte were still anchored to the ocean floor and were unable to pursue. Chaos broke out amongst the frightened Saaiers, especially when they realised they had no sonzand left to grant them the strength to pursue the island. They grabbed the Zonwagter and pulled off his mantle, only to reveal an old, eye-less, blind man underneath. Chaos broke out. Then, as she stood at the edge of the aardvlot, something grabbed Anza's foot and pulled her overboard.

A See-ling! Anza was amazed - as long as the See-ling held onto Anza, she could breathe! Hastily, the last See-ling grabbed Anza and swam deep below the waves. She could barely believe her eyes. Before her lay a coral-green underwater See-ling city impaled and crushed by the remaining seebene the Saaiers had pushed into the ocean floor. Before Anza lay hundreds of See-linge, all pierced and killed by Saaier spears and See-bene. The Azania Duine was all but empty. The weight of the guilt was enough to sink Anza to the ocean floor; they were no better than the Windsora giants.

Breaking the surface of the water, Anza saw a thousand glistening strings, the Saaiers' fishing lines. Only then did Anza see that the See-ling was no more than skin and bones. Had they been taking the See-linge's fish? They swam until they reached the underbelly of Canaan. From the island's underbelly protruded an intricate network of loose-cut, blood-stained roots that were supposed to root the island to the ocean floor. Only a few attached roots remained, but

these creaked dangerously under the force of the island being pulled by the current. It would soon completely float away.

With his small hands, the See-ling began carefully braiding the roots from fine seaweed threads and weaving them into the sand of the seabed. The See-linge were *Waterwewers*! The Waterwewer indicated the thousands of severed roots around them. He needed more hands. Overwhelmed, Anza pulled herself free from the Waterwewer and swam back to her aardvlot. Here she found the Saaiers in even more disarray than when she had left them; without sonzand and the Zonwagter, they were lost. They would not last much longer.

Anza looked at her adult hands, took the small dose of sonzand from Argiewa, and decided to cut off the tips of her fingers to make them smaller. Just as she was done, she turned around to find the Saaiers staring at the water dripping from her hair. They were not concerned with the blood on her hands but that she had been with the enemy. Before they could catch her, Anza quickly took off her clothes, dove into the water and swam to the Waterwewer.

The Waterwewer touched Anza's neck and gills appeared. Slowly, the Waterwewer taught her how to weave the island roots. Suddenly, a small pair of hands appeared next to Anza's. And another. The Saaier-children, with their small hands and already-gilled necks, had followed Anza into the ocean. And, sure enough, from between the island roots, more children appeared - the missing children from the aardvlotte! Overjoyed at seeing their friends, the children waved at each other, exclaiming how glad they were that the others had finally chosen to join them.

And so, together with the Waterwewer, Anza and the Saaier children rooted the island, and many thereafter, to the ocean floor. Anza and the Saaier children live in the break of surf, a place betwixt and between the sun, the sand and the sea - for, although they had gills, they were still Saaiers too.

As for the Saaiers, the chosen island had turned out to be a quite different from what the Zonwagter had promised. The mountain tops were rocky, dangerous and uninhabitable. It was an unpredictable place often flooded by the sea. And so, with their aardvlotte completely dismantled to build houses on the island, the Saaiers looked to the Saaier-Waterwewers at home in the waves and wondered whether they were not the ones who had reached the true Canaan.

6.3 Questioning white Afrikaner identity through plot-structure FTAMs

In this section, I investigate how the construction of a new fantasy plot-structure may subvert ideologies embedded in the three-act structure, which is salient in my sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives. I then proceed to formulate this new plot structure and explicate how its implementation in *Die Waterwewer* questions white Afrikaner identity.

In Chapter 5, I indicated that the majority of Afrikaner mythological narratives in the sample conform to the tropical filmic fantasy plot-structure, the writer's journey. As such, it constitutes a plot-structure FTAM. However, as established in my critique of the three-act structure in Chapter 2²⁰⁹ and my critique of the writer's journey in Chapter 3²¹⁰, the three-act structure reflects colonial approaches to narratives through its reliance on western structural approaches. The three act structure reflects and reaffirms dominant social ideologies and systems of power (McCrea, 2012: 17). For example, as problematised in chapter 3, the writer's journey illustrates a reliance on the journey of a male, protagonist who pursues Western ideals and conceptions of morality and virtue. Furthermore, it remoulds culture-specific narrative expressions to fit the mould of the three-act structure (Yoshinaga, 2019: 195). The three act-structure thus 'colonises' culture-specific narratives when they are structured according to the writer's journey in film.

This critique is also reflected in white Afrikaner cultural narrative. As established in Chapter 4, during the period of Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa, Afrikaners took on the role of colonisers by subjugating, uprooting and displacing cultures and framing white Afrikaner cultural identity as dominant. Such actions positioned Afrikaner nationalism as a colonial

²⁰⁹ See Chapter 2, 2.2.2. *Transnationalism and a Trojan horse: ideologies embedded in Hollywood genre conventions.*

²¹⁰ See Chapter 3, 3.2 *Filmic fantasy narrative plot-structure: one myth to rule them all.*

enterprise. The Nationalist ideology was upheld by, among other things, perpetuating myths of cultural and racial supremacy, the right to the ownership of land and the elevation of the Afrikaans-language and its cultural commodities. The three-act structure of the plot structure FTAM may thus reify these nationalist connotations and Afrikanerhood's pre-1994 narratives of racial and cultural superiority. Therefore, in order to critically engage with embedded connotations of nationalist white Afrikaner identity within plot-structure, its three-act structure needs to be subverted -in other words, the plot-structure FTAMs. McCrea (2012: 18) holds that by disrupting a dominant narrative structure, the very social structures that underpin this structure are also subverted. In light of this, in the following section, I construct a plot-structure for fantasy that deliberately ruptures the colonial connotations of the three-act structure embedded in the writer's journey – this in turn has the potential to disrupt neo-nationalistic approaches to current conceptions of white Afrikaner identity. A change in the framework of the writer's journey plot structure will in turn prompt a change in its plot points.

6.3.1 Subverting the three-act structure

In order to construct a plot structure that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity, I turn to the internal myth of civil religion. This choice is not motivated by my use of civil religion in *Die Waterwewer* but rather by the fact that civil religion functions as an internal mythological narrative by means of which white Afrikaners imagine the history of their cultural identity; civil religion thus reflects the central markers of white Afrikaner identity. As established in Chapter 4, civil religion is a central mythological narrative that contains the 'sacred' history of Afrikanerhood and the motivation for the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, in the course of which white Afrikaners acted as colonisers of land and of cultures. In order, therefore, to rupture the colonial ideas inherent to Afrikaner nationalism, I need to rupture the colonial nature of the myths (such as civil religion) that construct Afrikaner nationalism.

I thus aim to create a new plot-structure framework that interrogates Afrikaner identity but aligns with the tropes of the filmic fantasy genre. To achieve this, I draw from my analysis of the plot structure of civil religion in Chapter 5, which is based on the writer's journey. I create a new plot structure by adding to and expanding on my analysis of the writer's journey by creatively implementing the plot-structure FTAMs identified in Chapter 5, (which I review in Figure 36, below).

Writer's journey stages (Vogler, 2007)	Ordinary world	Discontentment in ordinary world	Plot-structure FTAMs
ACT 1	Call to Adventure	Call to embark on a physical journey and acceptance of call	
	Refusal of the call		
	Crossing the threshold		
ACT 2	Meeting with the mentor	Presence of mentors (supernatural or not)	
	Tests, allies, enemies	Tests, allies, enemies	
	Approach to the inmost cave	Save others or face enemies	
ACT 3	The Ordeal	Cycles of suffering through repetitive nature of ordeal	←
	Reward	Victory through wit/ beliefs	
	Road back	Returns to ordinary world, or not	
	Resurrection	Cycles of suffering through repetitive nature of ordeal	
	Return with elixir	Tragic ending (anti-elixir), happy ending or continued narrative	

Figure 35: Plot-structure FTAMs. (Illustration by the author.)

Where a plot point of the civil religion narrative did not fully align with a specific stage of the writer's journey, I created a new plot stage. The naming of the plot stages was guided by both the narrative plot point's structural function within the larger mythological narrative and the plot point's placement in relation to the structural trajectory of the writer's journey. I take into consideration that Moodie (1975: 12) highlights especially the Great Trek and the Anglo-Boer War as two overarching events that holds special significance and, therefore, act as important narrative turning points in the mythological narrative.

I illustrate my creative process for the construction of this plot structure, which I title 'the journey of civil religion' in Table 2 below. In the first column of the table, I set out the narrative events (plot points) included by Moodie (1975) in the civil-religion myth, as established in Chapter 4²¹¹. The second column presents the analysis of civil religion as per the writer's journey framework. The third (green) column details the plot stages included in my new

²¹¹ See Chapter 4, 4.2.5 Cultural myth-making.

'journey of civil religion' plot structure. In this column, I expand on the writer's journey stages by creatively adding to them so that the plot structure is specifically tailored to the civil-religion narrative and that the narrative does not merely reflect the plot structure, as I argue is the case of the writer's journey. In the final column, I provide a brief motivation for how I formulated each of the new plot stages contained in the plot structure.

The nature of the plot structure reflects white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity by drawing from the plot of civil religion in such a way that the plot is recognisable within the new plot structure. Using Table 2²¹², by way of example, I explicate the new plot structure and its application to *Die Waterwewer*.

Table 2: Analysis of the civil-religion myth according to Vogler's (2007) stages of the writer's journey, and the construction of the plot structure of the journey of civil religion. (Illustration by the author).

²¹² I acknowledge that there exist many other historical events that influenced white Afrikaner identity within the timeframe represented in the table. However, I foreground the events shown as they have been positioned as dominant by Moodie's (1975) civil religion myth.

Table 2: Plotting the 'journey of civil religion plot structure' according to the myth of civil religion. (Table created by the author.)

	Civil religion (Moodie, 1975)	The writer's journey (Vogler, 2007)	The journey of civil religion	Motivation for the plot structure of the journey of civil religion
	Jan van Riebeeck establishes settlement at the Cape in 1652. (Moodie, 1975: 2). In 1688, 200 French Huguenots who flee religious persecution join settlement (Moodie, 1975: 2).	Ordinary world.	Ordinary world.	The Voortrekkers' journey starts from an ordinary world that is disrupted by the British colonial force which they experience as oppressive.
		ACT 1: (Separation)	ACT 1: (Separation)	
1.	"Afrikaners were Calvinists of Western European origin and a nation in their own right before the arrival of the English" (Moodie, 1975: 2).	Ordinary world.	Discontent in the ordinary world.	

2.	<p><u>British imperial occupation</u>: British liberal black policy (Moodie, 1975: 3), victimisation and killing of Afrikaners in the course British rule, (Moodie, 1975: 3-4), anglicisation policy (Moodie, 1975: 4) and oppression of Afrikaners after their assistance in the Anglo-Xhosa war (Moodie, 1975: 5).</p>	The call to adventure.	The call to adventure.	British colonial policies prompt the Voortrekker's to leave the Cape colony in search of a location to establish a new ordinary world, one in which they can freely perform their cultural identity and govern themselves within an independent Afrikaner republic. This oppression and the consequent impulse to move away from the Cape colony serves as the call to adventure, which is accepted by the Voortrekkers.
3.	<p><u>The Great Trek</u>: Afrikaners leave Cape colony and head north (Moodie, 1975: 5).</p>	(Refusal of the call not relevant)	Acceptance of the call.	The Voortrekkers accept the call and begin the trek away from the Cape colony.
			ACT 2: Descent	Immediately following the acceptance of the call to adventure, the second act commences. I argue this on the basis that the crossing of the threshold into the interior of South Africa is

				accompanied by the introduction of new spaces and threats.
4.	Attack on the Boers by British army and Mzilikazi's Matabele (Moodie, 1975: 5).	Crossing the first threshold.	Crossing the first threshold into the fantastical world and facing threshold guardians.	On crossing the threshold, the Voortrekkers are met by the threshold guardians, such as the British colonial forces who, according to the myth of civil religion, follow the Voortrekkers out of the colony; and the indigenous peoples the Voortrekker's encounter (Moodie, 1975: 5). (In the myth of civil religion the new world is not fantastical; in a fantasy screenplay it should be.)
		ACT 2 part 1: Descent		
5.	Victory against the Matabele at Vegkop, the reinforcement of supplies from the main Voortrekker company and the pursuit and punishment of the Matabele (Moodie, 1975: 5).	Tests, allies, and enemies.	Tests, allies, and enemies.	The Voortrekkers face indigenous groups in battle and receive aid from other another Voortrekker company that serve as allies.

			<p>ACT 3: First Initiation</p>	<p>The repeated threat to the Voortrekkers' goal of cultural and political independence results in the repetition of certain narrative stages, including the momentary achievement of the goal by establishing new republics, which I have titled 'false new ordinary worlds'. These worlds are 'false' as they are almost immediately followed by a disruption by native or colonial forces during the 'breaking the illusion of the false ordinary world' stage. The repetitive nature of this process has led me to view these narrative events as 'cycles of suffering'.</p>
6.	<p>Trekkers move east. Piet Retief is sent to purchase land (Natalia) from Dingaan. After Retief pays, he and his men are murdered.</p>		<p>Approach to the inmost cave A.</p>	<p>The Voortrekkers arrive at a threatening place where they may obtain their goal (land) but are overcome by danger.</p>

7.	The Zulus set off after the trekkers (Moodie, 1975: 6). Attack on the laager by the Zulus. Arrival of Andries Pretorius and his men, the swearing of the <i>geloofte</i> (oath), and the trekkers' retaliation and victory in the subsequent battle of Blood River (Moodie, 1975: 6).		Ordeal A Call upon supernatural mentor.	The Battle of Blood River constitutes the ordeal. Their oath with God serves as a supernatural aid for the Voortrekkers. In Vogler's (2007: 15) writer's journey, the ordeal is the mid-point of the narrative, the stage in which the hero is faced with death, and which leads to the reward stage, in this case, land.
8.	Establishment of the Republic of Natal (Moodie, 1975: 7).		First (false) new ordinary world.	As a reward, the first 'false new ordinary world' is established – the Republic of Natal.
9.	British annexation of Natal (Moodie, 1975: 7). The trekkers move barefoot over the Drakenberg mountains (Moodie, 1975: 7).		Breaking the illusion of first false new ordinary world through tests and enemies.	The colonial forces take possession of the Voortrekkers' temporary haven of independence.
10.	Establishment of the Republic of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic (Moodie, 1975: 7). Temporary "pastoral bliss" (Moodie, 1975: 7).		Second false new ordinary world.	The Voortrekkers establish a second place where their goal of independent governance seems within reach.

11.	British annexation of Transvaal Republic in 1877 (Moodie, 1975: 7).		Breaking the illusion of second false new ordinary world.	The colonial forces again take possession of the Voortrekkers' temporary haven of independence.
12.	First Freedom/Boer War between Britain and trekkers for the Republic of the Transvaal in 1880-1881, the renewal of the Blood River oath and independence for the Transvaal due to trekker's victory (Moodie, 1975: 7-8).		Test, allies and enemies. Return of the supernatural mentor. Establishment of a third false new ordinary world.	The Voortrekkers face the British colonial powers for ownership of the Transvaal Republic. They renew their oath with their supernatural mentor, God, and gain victory over the British. They gain independence for their republic.
13.	Discovery of gold in the Transvaal in 1886 and the emergence of "imperialist capitalism" (Moodie, 1975: 8). The Jameson Raid in the Transvaal in 1895 to overthrow the Boer government, inspired by the British prime minister of the Cape colony, Cecil John Rhodes (Moodie, 1975: 8).		Breaking the illusion of the third false new ordinary world.	The colonial forces take possession of the Voortrekkers' temporary haven of independence, the Republic of Transvaal.

			ACT 4: Second Initiation	As per Act 3, another cycle of suffering follows.
14.	Governor of the Cape colony, Sir Alfred Milner, makes “impossible demands” supported by force, negotiations between British and the Boers fail, and Boers declare war against Britain in 1899 (Moodie, 1975: 9).	Approach to the inmost cave.	Approach to the inmost cave B.	The Boers are in conflict with the British colonial forces and find themselves on the brink of war.
15.	Anglo-Boer War: Free State and Transvaal declared British colonies, guerrilla attacks by Boer generals and their bands, the burning of farms and the detention of Boer women and children in concentration camps (Moodie, 1975: 9-10). The Boers surrender, and the signing of an unsatisfactory peace treaty by the Boers in 1902 (Moodie, 1975: 10).	Ordeal.	Ordeal B.	Ordeal B is not followed by a reward, but rather directly leads into the final act, Act Five. Unlike the writer’s journey’s ‘return’ stage, the Voortrekkers do not achieve their goal, nor do they return to their initial ordinary world in the Cape colony.

		ACT 2 Part 2: Initiation	ACT 5: Unravelling	I have titled the fifth act, 'the unravelling' instead of the 'return' as the conflict with the colonial powers eventually infiltrates within the Voortrekker community itself and leads to disunity within the imagined Voortrekker solidarity.
16.	Two Boer generals join the imperialists and Afrikaners are expected to fight against German South-West Africa alongside British soldiers in World War II (Moodie, 1975: 10).	(The Reward) The road back.	The anti-elixir	Rather than achieving land and independence, the 'anti-elixir' entails the Boers having to side with the colonial British forces in the Second World War for the imperialist cause.
		ACT 3: Return		
17.	A Boer rebellion arises due to the Boer alliance with Britain (Moodie, 1975: 10). General Smuts smothers the rebellion and puts Jopie Fourie, a Boer rebel against the	Resurrection.	Resurrection.	A Boer rebellion arises in which 'true' Boers rebel against those Boers (joiners) who eventually sided with the Imperialist cause.

	alliance, before a firing squad in 1914 (Moodie, 1975: 10).			
18.	Establishment of National Party and the consequent active rise of Afrikaner nationalism (Grundlingh 2019: [sp]).		Constructing a final new ordinary world with elixir.	The narrative and its hero, the collective 'Voortrekker', do not return to their starting point but continue the search for independent freedom. In 1915, the National Party is established and this search for independence ultimately, yet temporarily, culminates in Afrikaner nationalist South Africa.

Before unpacking the stages of the plot structure of the journey of civil religion that emerges from the above investigation, I map out the new plot structure by plotting the various narrative events according to the chronology of the civil-religion narrative. The purpose of this mapping is to illustrate the trajectory of the new structure as well as the dramatic value (whether a stage constitutes a high point, low point, turning point, and the like) of each plot point.

My analysis of the plot points that constitute civil religion and the corresponding naming of these plot points resulted in a plot structure with five acts. The number of acts is determined by the prominent turning points in the civil-religion narrative, in other words, where the narrative took a new direction. Moreover, this map illustrates that, contrary to the cyclical structure of the writer's journey, the journey of civil religion is linear. This indicates that the narrative continues after the fifth act through a new cycle of the plot structure, as is indicated by "Act 1 New World" in Figure 37, below. The repetition of the plot-structure and its linear, ongoing nature is drawn from the history of white Afrikaners, which continued beyond the narrative of civil religion on through to white nationalist South Africa. The narrative of Afrikaner identity, in the context of democratic South Africa, still continues and undergoes new processes of becoming, such as those with which this fantasy framework wishes to assist. In the following section, I discuss the practical application of the above plot structure.

The pattern that emerged from this process of mapping is illustrated in Figure 37, below.

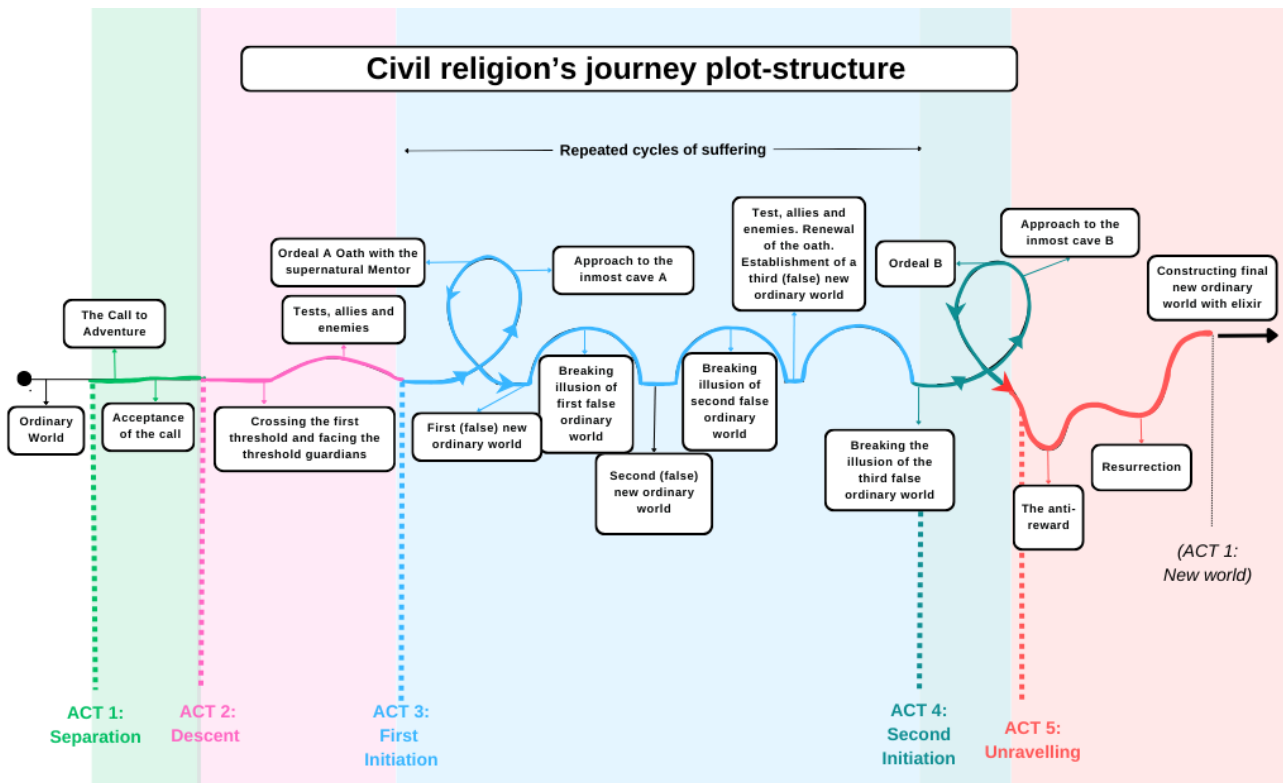


Figure 36: Mapping the plot structure of the civil religion myth. (Illustration by the author).

6.3.2 Applying the plot structure of ‘the journey of civil religion’

In this section, I explain how the above journey of civil religion can be applied to a fantasy screenplay. This is accompanied by examples of the application of this plot-structure in *Die Waterwewers*.

Act 1: Separation

1. Ordinary world: This plot stage correlates with the writer’s journey wherein a hero²¹³ is portrayed in their everyday, ordinary world (Volger, 2007: 10). However, the hero experiences deep discontentment within this space in which they feel oppressed and their sense of self is threatened. In *Die Waterwewer*, Anza lives with her people, the *Saaiers*, on a mountain top where they farm a magical seed called *sonzand*. However, the mountain is overtaken by giants who disrupts the *Saaiers*’ way of life. This is

²¹³ My use of the term ‘hero’ is not limited to male characters but refers to a main character of any gender that undertakes the journey set out in the journey of civil religion plot structure.

achieved primarily by threatening the Saaiers' language, *Sandzang*, which is believed to make the sonzand grow; threatening their home by blowing away their houses and farms; and disrupting their relationship with the sun by casting shadows which left the Saaiers in darkness.

2. Call to adventure: Within the journey of civil religion this call is associated with a physical journey that is to be undertaken and that leads the hero away from their ordinary world. For example, in *Die Waterwewer*, the Saaiers sail to the Azania Duine under the guidance of the Zonwagter. Here, they would wait out the dark winter. When spring breaks, they would find a new island and a new mountain upon which to live.
3. Acceptance of the call: Unlike in the writer's journey, in which the hero shows a reluctance to accept the call (Vogler, 2007: 11), in the journey of civil religion, the hero's discontent, a result of their oppression in the ordinary world, pushes them to accept the call. This call involves the hero embarking on a physical journey that leads them away from their ordinary world. This physical journey finds shape in *Die Waterwewer*: the Saaiers pack up their *sonzand*-farms and flee from the giants by boarding massive aardvlotte to sail away and find a new home.

Act 2: Descent

4. Crossing the first threshold and facing the threshold guardians: As in the writer's journey, the hero enters the fantastical world of the journey which is far removed from their own ordinary world and in which they may encounter threshold guardians who must be overcome for them to gain entrance (Vogler, 2007: 12, 23). For example, the Saaiers sail their rafts out into the unknown realm of the sea. After embarking on their journey, they are attacked by massive vulture griffons who smell the *sonzand* aboard their rafts. The creatures are fought off, and the ships sail to the *Azania Duine*. Here, in a supposedly uninhabited stretch of sea, they would wait for their new home to be revealed.

5. Test, allies and enemies: The hero is initiated into the ways of the new fantastical world through tests, the emergence of enemies, and the appearance of allies (Vogler, 2007: 13). In other words, the hero must be placed in situations where they are forced to interact with the new world, its rules, and those that form part of it (Vogler, 2007: 13). The *Saaiers* arrive in the Azania Duine. Anza imagines she sees a creature in the ocean and confides in Argiewa, who becomes her ally. Argiewa tells her not to tell the Zonwagter about her sighting as he has stated that the sea is empty, and opposing him is treason.

In the journey of civil religion, this turning point constitutes the third act, called the 'first initiation'. The FTAMs established in Chapter 5 include repeated cycles of suffering pertaining to the 'approach to the inmost cave' and the 'facing of the ordeal' plot stages. As the new plot structure comprises an Ordeal A and an Ordeal B, each of these new 'approach to the inmost cave'/'ordeal' cycles constitutes a new act within the plot structure, as they serve as important turning points within the narrative.

Act 3: First initiation

6. Approach to the Inmost Cave A: The hero is pushed to the brink in the (first) dangerous space where they might obtain what they are seeking (Vogler, 2007: 14). In *Die Waterwewer*, Anza imagines seeing a flickering light in a wave one stormy night. She ignores it and climbs down from the crow's nest to save a chest of *sonzand* that has come loose on the deck of the *aardvlot*.
7. Ordeal A and calling upon the supernatural mentor: In the journey of civil religion, this is the first of two life-threatening plot stages, the second of which occurs during Ordeal B. For example, due to the monstrous waves, Anza falls overboard when she tries to grab a container of *sonzand* that has been swept from the deck of the *aardvlot*. She imagines she sees a figure underwater. When she comes to, she has mysteriously been saved. Argiewa gives her a small bag of *sonzand* to keep as protection.

8. First false new ordinary world: After the hero faces and overcomes the ordeal, they find themselves experiencing a moment of peace and harmony brought about by their efforts in the ordeal. However, they are unaware of the temporary nature of this new ordinary world. After Ordeal A, Anza is saved by a mysterious force. The *Zonwagter* orders that one of the Saaier's rafts be dismantled and its wood used to fashion *seebene* that will secure the rafts on the ocean floor. It seems to work, and the rafts seem more secure.

9. Breaking the illusion of the first false new ordinary world through tests and enemies: The illusion of the temporary tranquillity of the first false new ordinary world is broken by the emergence of a new challenge or enemy. In *Die Waterwewers*, one of the Saaier children disappears mysteriously and the supposed safety of the rafts is questioned.

10. Second false new ordinary world: The rupturing in this illusion of tranquillity is mended which results in the hero experiencing a new state of harmony which they believe is sustainable. After the child vanishes from a Saaier raft, the *Zonwagter* states that the child must have fallen into the water and orders that protective barriers be built around the Saaier rafts using the wood from one more of the rafts.

11. Breaking the illusion of the second false new ordinary world: Once again, the harmony of the new ordinary world is broken and the hero is presented with a new challenge or threat. Onboard the Saaier rafts, more children also begin to mysteriously disappear, shattering the illusion of safety aboard the rafts.

12. Test, allies and enemies, the return of the supernatural mentor and the establishment of the third false new ordinary world: Anza decides to confront the *Zonwagter* with her suspicions that the ocean might not be empty and that he might be wrong. The *Zonwagter* throws Anza in the brig where she encounters Argiewa again. The *Zonwagter* claims that he has found the island where the sun sets last of all, thus

establishing a third false new ordinary world, and so the Saaiers ready themselves to go to the island.

Act 4: Second Initiation

13. Breaking the illusion of the third false new ordinary world: Any semblance of peace and tranquillity is irrevocably ruptured. In *Die Waterwewers*, one of the missing children is found in the sea with a huge hole in his body. Furthermore, there are gills protruding from his neck. He points to the seabed before he dies.
14. Approach to Inmost Cave B: The hero once again finds himself at the brink of a life-threatening dangerous situation or task. The Saaiers are shocked at this discovery of the child. The Zonwagter blames the See-linge who had supposedly followed them to the Azania Duine to steal their fish and sonzand. The Saaiers declare war.
15. Ordeal B: This ordeal constitutes another life-threatening situation, as per Ordeal A; however it ends as a low point for the hero – they do not gain the reward they seek. In *Die Waterwewer*, the war between the Saaiers and the See-linge results in the death of Argiewa, the killing of almost all the See-linge and the severing of the island's roots.

Act 5: Unravelling

16. The anti-reward: Although the hero survives the second ordeal, they do not obtain what they need to learn to fulfil their task. Because all the *Waterwewers* are dead, the Saaiers' chosen island, Canaan, slowly starts to drift away on the sea current, leaving behind the rafts with their anchoring poles. Chaos breaks out amongst the Saaiers regarding what to do and whose fault it is. They grab the Zonwagter's cloak and reveal him to be a blind man.
17. Resurrection: As in the writer's journey, this stage involves the final battle faced by the hero wherein the hero is transformed by their near-death encounters and gains what they need to complete their journey (Vogler, 2007: 17). During the resurrection

stage in *Die Waterwewers*, the Saaiers are trapped aboard their rafts while the island drifts ever further away. Anza is stolen away by the last *Waterwewer*. The *Waterwewer* grabs her by the hand and dives into the water. He shows her the damage the Saaiers have caused underwater and how they have severed the island's roots. In addition, Anza realises that the Saaiers have been stealing the See-linge's fish. Then the *Waterwewer* shows her how he weaves the island's roots with his small hands. He indicates that he needs more help. Anza is scared, escapes the *Waterwewer*, and swims to her ship.

18. Constructing a final new ordinary world with elixir: The hero overcame the conflict in the resurrection and learned the lesson or gained the skills or object needed to find final fulfilment (the elixir) (Vogler, 2007: 12). The hero now starts to construct a new ordinary world. This is a place and space removed from the ordinary world they left in the first act. Therefore, contrary to the writer's journey, the hero does not 'return' to their ordinary world with the elixir but constructs the new one with the elixir. In this regard, the structure of the journey of civil religion is not cyclical. As per the above map (Figure 37), the Act 1: New World plot point is indicative that the journey continues, with the new ordinary world being the starting point.

This final plot stage finds expression in *Die Waterwewer* when, on board the raft, Anza sees that the Saaiers will not survive due to a lack of space and their lack of a leader and sonzand. She consumes her last little bit of sonzand, decides to cut off her fingertips to make her hands smaller, and dives into the water. Together Anza and the *Waterwewer* take on the task of weaving the island's roots to the ocean floor with the help of the Saaier children who join them. Here the Saaier-*Waterwewers* live as a hybrid-species and enjoy the freedom of the sun, the land, and the sea, which is envied by the Saaiers whose chosen island is not all it was promised to be.

Having set out the plot structure of the journey of civil religion, I briefly elucidate how this structure critically engages with Afrikaner identity. This engagement occurs through its representation of the narrative structure of the myth of civil religion as a mythological journey that is to be undertaken by the hero of the fantasy narrative. As discussed above, the plot's five-act structure challenges the colonial ideologies embedded in a three-act structure. In this vein, as white Afrikaners took on the role of colonisers in Afrikaner nationalist South Africa,

the five-act structure may disrupt those nationalist ideologies which resurface in Afrikaner neo-nationalism.²¹⁴ It may do this by structurally distancing the civil religion myth from Western approaches to structure, thus rooting the civil religion myth in a white Afrikaner identity - reimagined as ruptured from its Western ancestry and the colonial ideas that came with such a Western association.

Besides critically engaging with what may be referred to as the structural politics of the civil religion myth, that is, with the ideologies embedded in the formal structure form, my five-act plot structure also engages with white Afrikaner identity on a transformative level. I root this argument in the parallels that can be drawn between liminality and the journey of the myth of civil religion. While liminality involves threshold concepts (Meyer & Land, 2005: 73) pertaining to access to new approaches to thinking that were previously inaccessible, the threshold in my plot structure (drawn from the writer's journey) involves crossing a threshold in order to access a new fantastical world where physical transformation might occur.

As I have equated the fantastical world with Bhabha's liminal third space of enunciation in Chapter 4²¹⁵, I position the 'crossing of the threshold' stage of the plot structure of civil religion as a crossing both into the liminal space and crossing the threshold to previously inaccessible knowledge. Such knowledge may include that required to critically engage with the narratives that construct Afrikaner cultural narrative identity through those Afrikaans myths from which fantasy draws to construct its fantasy world. Moreover, the patterns that emerge within the new plot-structure reveal the constructed nature of the civil-religion myth and its political purpose: the bolstering of certain narratives that perpetuate certain ideologies. These ideologies are also reflected in the themes addressed by white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity; these may be challenged through the fantasy framework's approach to theme.

²¹⁴ See Chapter 4, 4.2.3 *Anderson, Bhabha and culture as narration of identity.*

²¹⁵ See Chapter 4, 4.5 *Fantasy as a liminal strategy for questioning white Afrikaner identity.*

6.4 Questioning white Afrikaner identity through thematic FTAMs²¹⁶

In this section, I illustrate how the creative application of the thematic FTAMs may critically engage with white Afrikaner identity. As set out in Chapter 5, the thematic FTAMs I identify (which pertain to how tropic fantasy themes find expression in Afrikaner myths) include life as victims and death as martyrs, biblical binaries and predestined positions, and entitlement to places of independence. These thematic FTAMs reflect white Afrikaner identity and its markers, as indicated in the red column of Figure 38, below.

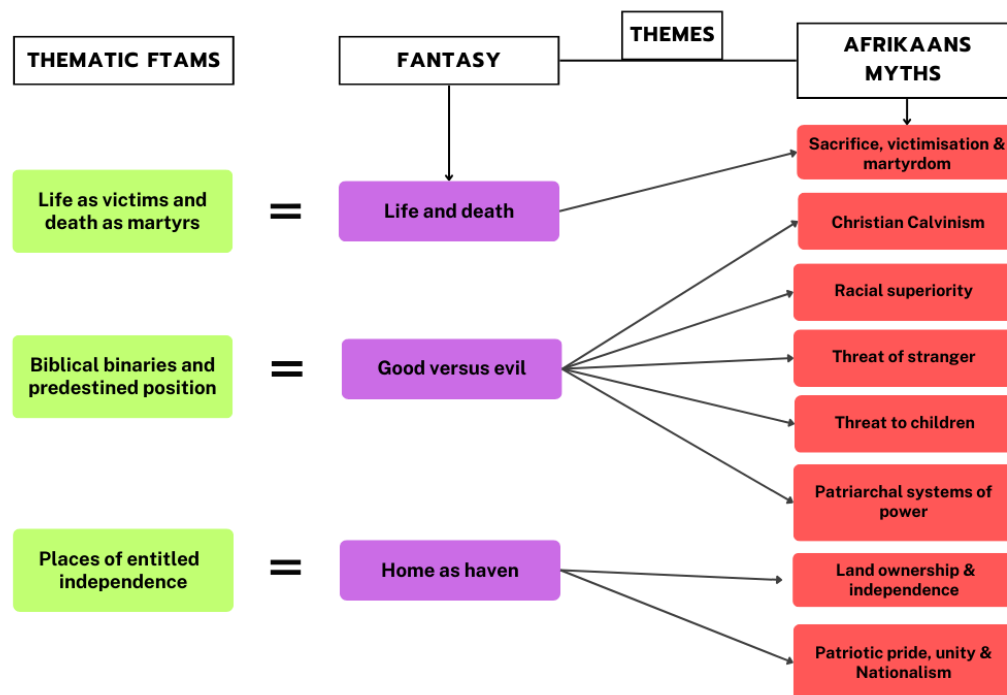


Figure 37: Thematic FTAMs. (Illustration by the author).

As I do not make use of a thematic framework such as the writer's journey framework constitutes in relation to plot structure, in this section, I instead illustrate how FTAMs may be utilised to question white Afrikaner identity on a per-trope basis, based on my application of these tropes in *Die Waterwewer*, constructing the framework in this manner.

²¹⁶ I reiterate here, as per my explanation in Chapter 5, (in 5.1 *Introduction* and 5.4.2 *Fantasy-theme tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives*) my use of theme and trope in the term 'thematic FTAM' refers to the repeated appearance of fantasy themes, as 'intended message or moral perspectives' (Schmidt, 2012: 7) in my sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives.

The first thematic FTAM I unpack is that of ‘life as victims and death as martyrs’, which I use to question victimisation as a marker of white Afrikaner identity in *Die Waterwewer*. In the sample of white Afrikaner myths in Chapter 5, there often exists a clear-cut delineation between who is considered the victim (the Voortrekker/Boer/white Afrikaner) and who is considered the oppressor or attacker (those who oppose the Voortrekker cause or Afrikanerhood and its identity markers). In *Die Waterwewer*, the Saaiers, who allegorically represent white Afrikaners, consider themselves victims of the Windsora giants who ‘colonised’ Monument Helm. This colonisation occurs by means of overthrowing and oppressing the Saaiers’ way of life. Central to this way of life is their speaking their own language, *Sandzang*, which is vital to their process of growing sonzand. Baby Saaiers are unable to learn sandzang due to the ongoing thunderous sounds of the giants who speak their Windsora language so loudly that the Saaiers can no longer hear their own.

The might of the Windsora giants and the hurricanes they cause, displaces the Saaiers by blowing away their homes and farms. In addition, the giants’ bodies cast shadows over the Saaiers, who rely on the sun, both physically and spiritually. These instances allegorically refer to the colonisers’ impact on resources and their interference with the cultural practices of the colonised. This reflects the conflict between the Boers and the British colonial forces at the Cape, circa 1806,²¹⁷ in which the Afrikaners experienced an oppression of their cultural identity, especially pertaining to their language, and the anglicisation of schools and churches. The Windsora²¹⁸ giants are thus allegories of the British imperial forces.

Moreover, by referring to the giant’s “search of an empire where the sun never sets to power their strange machines”, I make reference to the British empire, at the height of its colonial power, was referred to as “the empire on whom the sun never sets²¹⁹” (Levine, 2013: 117). The Windsora giants’ machines refers to the association, albeit problematic, of the West with technological advancement, as established in Chapter 2²²⁰.

²¹⁷ According to Moodie’s (1975: 2) civil-religion timeline.

²¹⁸ Windsora creatively refers to the name Windsor, the surname of the British royal family. Windsora thus ties in with the allegorical representation of the British colonial forces as giants.

²¹⁹ The phrase “the empire on whom the sun never sets” refers to the vast network of colonies owned by Britain at its imperial height.

²²⁰ See Chapter 2, 2.2.2 *Transnationalism and a Trojan horse: ideologies embedded in Hollywood genre conventions*.

Besides their oppression by the Windsora giants, the Saaiers further imagine themselves victims of unprovoked onslaughts by the See-linge, whom they assume steal their children. On the other hand, the See-linge are victims of the ignorance of the Saaiers, whose attempts to anchor their rafts (aardvlotte) in the ocean kill many See-linge. As the presence of white Afrikaners in the interior of South Africa in the course of the Great Trek, and later during Nationalist South Africa, impacted on many indigenous South African peoples, the See-linge serve as a collective allegorical representation of these groups. To critically engage with this theme of victimisation, I introduce a deliberate ambiguity regarding which group of characters in *Die Waterwewer*, the Saaiers or the See-linge, is considered to be the victims.

This ambiguity challenges the FTAM of victimhood in Afrikaner mythological narratives. The framing of people of one identity as victims often occurs at the expense of understanding the impact the presence of those people and their identity have had on other people, their identities and their land. In *Die Waterwewer*, the narrative of Afrikaner victimisation is thus disrupted by a fantasy narrative that considers the mutual impact of both identities on each other 'below the surface', thus questioning the one-sided narrative of white Afrikaner victimisation.

'Martyrdom' constitutes the second component of the 'life as victims and death as martyrs' FTAM. Martyrdom in Afrikaans mythological narratives occurs in the name of a greater cause. In Afrikaner narratives such as Boer hero myths, civil religion, and in the historical nationalist and post-1994 neo-nationalist mindset, this cause is defined by ideas of white Afrikaner independence that necessitates the ownership of land and the separation of their cultural identity from that of 'other' identities. In the fifth act of *Die Waterwewer*, Anza's character sacrifices her life as Saaier to work with the See-ling as a Waterwewer by attempting to correct the wrongs the Saaiers have committed by weaving the roots of the island to the ocean floor again. However, this sacrifice is not motivated by separatist motivations; rather, it is characterised by collaboration and co-existence and the mutual suffering required to attain such a goal. This is further underscored by the Saaier children who choose to become Waterwewers of their own accord. This involves leaving behind an old identity configuration and embracing a hybrid identity, part Saaier and part Waterwewer, one which is rooted in collaboration, to fix past wrongs by building the future together.

Anza and the Saaier children engage with this hybridity by living in a space of liminality within the foamy white-break of the waves, a hybrid place between the land, the sun and the sea. It is only from this place and space of hybridity and liminality, this third space of enunciation, that

they are able to both work on rerooting the island in the sea (correcting past wrongs) and to contribute to establishing the Saaiers on the island (working towards the future). In the context of *Die Waterwewer* – and, I argue, in its larger allegorical significance to identity politics in South Africa – it is only through embracing hybrid identities that the Saaiers, in consideration of the impact of their complex and problematic history, can find a home, in other words, root their identity in the Azania Duine.

I return here to the role of children, which has been mentioned above. In Chapter 5, I established that the filmic fantasy trope of ‘good and evil’ found expression in Afrikaans mythological narratives in themes pertaining to the threat to children and the threat of strangers, amongst others. This positioned those who were seen to be threats to children and to the Afrikaner way of life as evil because, historically, white Afrikaners believed, and arguably still believe, themselves to be a chosen and predestined people. These thematic expressions culminated in the FTAM of ‘biblical binaries and predestined position’. In *Die Waterwewer*, the See-linge are depicted as strangers who pose a threat to Saaier children by stealing them.

When a missing Saaier child is found with a hole in his stomach and gills protruding from his neck, the See-linge are clearly demarcated as the guilty party. However, this belief is disrupted when it is revealed that the child’s death was the result of the Saaiers planting long poles in the ocean in an attempt to survive the waves. Moreover, by the end of the narrative it becomes clear that the children choose to live underwater of their own accord to help root the islands. This serves to bring into question an Afrikaans mythological theme that carries racial connotations:²²¹ the idea of the ‘other’ or the stranger as a threat to children. This in turn serves to interrogate the ‘biblical binary’ of good and evil – and who these binary values are assigned to – as it is the actions of the supposed ‘chosen’ people, the Saaiers, which harm to the child. More broadly, it ties in with Álvarez-Mosquera’s (2017: 639) identification of many young white Afrikaners who choose to distance themselves from the problematic identity markers of nationalist Afrikanerhood. In embracing the imaginative and critical potential of the fantasy genre, *Die Waterwewers* hypothesises what such a ‘distancing’ might look like, settling on the embracing of the cultural hybridity of Afrikaner identity rather than the myth of cultural homogeneity of nationalist Afrikaner identity.

The imagined myth of cultural homogeneity is found in *Die Waterwewer*. The Saaiers deny their historical cultural hybridity as the “children of many nations – humans, jackals and foxes

²²¹ See Chapter 5, 5.4.2 *Fantasy-theme tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives*.

alike”. Rather, they focus on imagining themselves as a homogenous, pure culture based on the colour of the white fur on their foreheads, their sacred Sandzang language and their ability to farm sonzand. Based on this myth of being chosen (which allegorically speaks to the Afrikaner myth of Godly predestination), the Saaier’s attempt to control the waves of the Azania Duine, and thus, to ‘own’ the piece of sea they are anchored in, reflects the FTAM of ‘entitlement to places of independence’. As the Zonwagter had supposedly seen with his supernatural eyes that the Azania Duine were uninhabited, the Saaier’s felt entitled to occupy the piece of sea while they waited upon the revelation of their promised (isle)land. However, this theme of predestination and entitlement is disrupted when the ocean is revealed to be inhabited by See-linge, and the Zonwagter is revealed to be blind.

By interrogating themes of predestination and entitlement, I aim to inspire critical engagement with those narratives through which white Afrikaners have narrated their sense of belonging into South African places. In other words, I aim to question how white Afrikaner place identities are constructed through the myths that form part of Afrikaners’ cultural narrative identity. The theme of independence is also questioned when the narrative reveals the See-linge to be the weavers of the islands’ roots. That is, in order for the Saaier’s to live an independent life on the island, they would be inherently dependent on the Waterwevers to keep the island in place.

In Chapter 5, I investigated how the fantasy trope of ‘home as haven’ found expression in themes pertaining to Afrikaner nationalism, in particular in the white patriotic pride and unity that was cultivated through white Afrikaner suffering in relation to the owning of land. The Saaier’s reliance on the Waterwevers rooting their island in the ocean disrupts these narratives by foregrounding the interdependence of peoples in order to create a sense of home.

In this section, I have investigated a few examples by means of which my use of the thematic FTAMs has critically engaged with white Afrikaner identity in *Die Waterwewer*. In drawing from the thematic FTAMs, reflecting on how they speak to Afrikaner identity, and consequently presenting these markers of identity in a new light within the narrative, I am able to question white Afrikaner identity through the creative implementation of thematic FTAMs. In the next section, I investigate how white Afrikaner identity can be questioned using character-archetype FTAMs.

6.5 Questioning white Afrikaner identity through character-archetype FTAMs

In Chapter 3, I identified Indick's (2011) fantasy character archetypes as a tropic character framework for filmic fantasy. I acknowledged the problems of Indick's (2011) archetypal framework pertaining to the archetypes' gendered associations that reflect Western patriarchal views. Having investigated how Afrikaans mythological characters personify these archetypes, I found that character FTAMs invite a similar critique. These FTAMs reflect traditional gender roles that highlight patriarchal systems of power. I review the character-archetype FTAMs established in Chapter 5 in Figure 39, below.

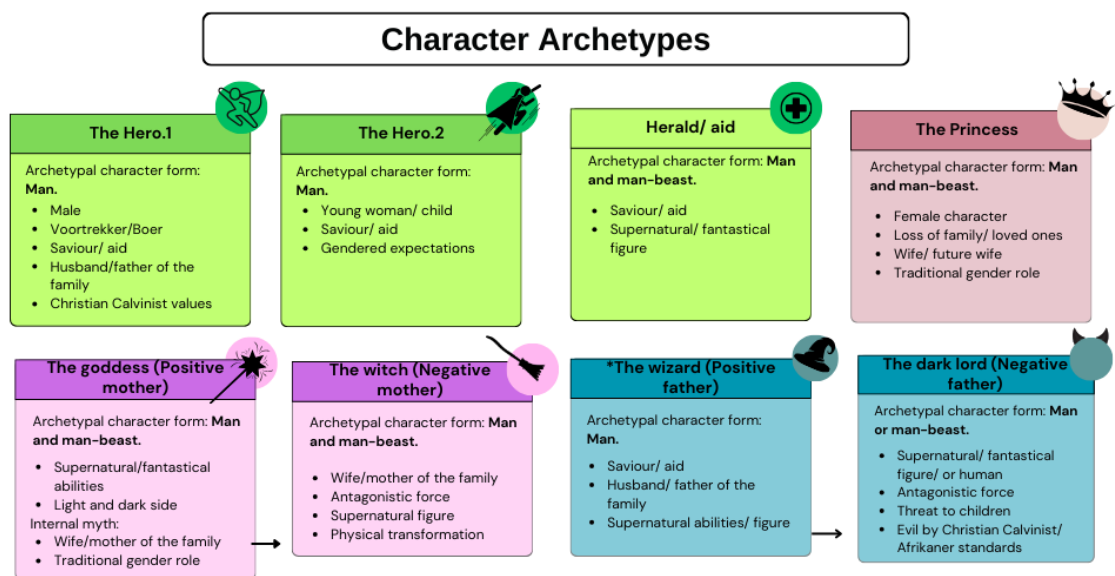


Figure 38: Character-archetype FTAMs. (Illustration by the author.)

In this section, I identify two disruptive strategies for questioning white Afrikaner identity by utilising character-archetype FTAMs. These strategies involve disruption pertaining to traditional Afrikaner gender roles, and the representation of character FTAMs pertaining to notions of race. As white Afrikaners have historically been preoccupied with matters of race and racial superiority (Kotze, 2013: 28), I critically engage with notions of race through Indick's archetypal character-forms, which include the categories of man,²²² beast and mean-beast. I reiterate here, as I stated in the introduction of this chapter, that there are countless options

²²² As per my critique in Chapter 5, I acknowledge the problematic patriarchal connotations to the use of "man" as a collective term to imply the whole of humankind.

for such reimaginings; these would depend on the nature of the narrative and the creativity of the screenwriter. I offer a reimagining of the hero FTAM in *Die Waterwewer* as an example of engaging in a process of disrupting the markers of pre-1994 white Afrikaner identity evident in Afrikaans mythological narratives.

As regards traditional Afrikaner gender roles, both Indick's (2012) hero archetype and Afrikaans mythological character tropes reinforce patriarchal ideologies through predominantly male or female heroes whose acts of heroism seem strongly motivated by traditional female gender roles, as established in Chapter 5. To disrupt this approach, the hero FTAMs may be embodied in a non-gendered body, or any other²²³ gender expression, or by allowing a female hero to undertake heroic acts beyond traditional gender roles. By disrupting the 'position' of the Afrikaner male, the patriarchal ideologies inherent in Afrikaans mythological narratives are challenged.

In *Die Waterwewer*, Anza fulfils the role of the hero. She is a middle-aged, unmarried woman who does not conform to the gender expectation of Saaier women producing a child. In positioning the hero as an older woman, both hero FTAM types illustrated in Figure 39 are disrupted. Anza is not a male patriarchal figure, but a woman whose sacrifice, as per the FTAMs, exceeds the gendered expectations that she protect her family. Rather, as per male hero FTAMs,²²⁴ Anza's sacrifice is more outwardly directed and benefits the greater good.

Anza's sacrifice in the final act of the narrative defies the rules of her people, yet she aids in saving many Saaier lives by joining the See-ling to become a Waterwewer. As Anza has no children, she is further freed to make her heroic sacrifice without repercussions, thereby disrupting the historical Afrikaans narrative of women as '*Volksmoeders*²²⁵ ("mothers of the nation") (Pretorius, 2019:68) as well as the centrality of the nuclear family as a marker of Afrikaner identity. I further disrupt traditional gender rules pertaining to Afrikaner women by positioning Saaier women as warriors who protect the Saaier men while they farm. In *Die Waterwewer*, it is the women who fight off the vulture-griffons while the men dismantle the boats.

²²³ My use of the term 'other' is not aimed at excluding or 'Othering' the genders included in this delineation. I do not mention all gender expressions here as gender politics is not the main focus of this study.

²²⁴ See Chapter 5, 5.4.3 *Fantasy character tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives*.

²²⁵ See Chapter 4, 4.3.2 *Christian Calvinism and the nuclear Afrikaans family*.

The centrality of the patriarchal figure in white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity is further disrupted through my approach to the Zonwagter's character. At first, my depiction of the Zonwagter conforms to patriarchal character FTAMs and the markers of white Afrikaner identity. The Zonwagter, who acts according to both the herald and wizard archetypes, is portrayed as a powerful, chosen patriarchal figure. He leads his people according to the values perpetuated in the Saaier belief systems and has some supernatural abilities. This includes being able to see everything the sun sees, being the only Saaier who knows the law and being an unquestionable figure of authority. Parallels can be drawn with white Afrikaner patriarchal figures who are framed as representatives of God on earth and who, therefore, deserve the subservience of their families (see Chapter 4). However, I disrupt this depiction of patriarchal systems of power when the Zonwagter is revealed to be eye-less, and thus blind, which serves to undermine all his claims to knowledge, leadership and power.

In contradistinction to the Zonwagter and his role and position as patriarchal leader, the character of Argiewa is given no task or position by the Saaiers, despite them being exceedingly wise, as they do not conform to any gender. As the Saaiers have clear-cut gender roles – the men are farmers and the women are warriors and mothers – Argiewa is deemed not to fulfil the criteria required to perform these tasks. This interrogates the occurrence of traditional gender roles – as are also found among Afrikaners – as Argiewa would have contributed greatly to Saaier-society had they been given the chance.

My second strategy for critically engaging with white Afrikaner identity concerns the representation of the hero FTAM and the possibilities that the fantasy genre and its ontological rupture from phenomenal reality present for questioning Afrikaner identity. For example, the hero may exceed the human form and be depicted as an Afrikaans-speaking beast or man-beast, thereby providing a platform for exploring racial themes outside of the boundaries of the representation of human skin colour. For example, in *Die Waterwewer*, Anza belongs to the Saaier people who are represented through a man-beast archetypal form.

By using the fantasy genre's rupture from the ontology of phenomenal reality (Fowkes 2010: 2), which allows for the imaginative depiction of characters, I am able to depict the Saaiers as a jackal-like people. I draw the imagery of the jackal from the Afrikaans mythological narrative sample – the *Jakkals en Wolf: Die Bottervat* myth. My use of the jackal is deliberate as the creature often carries associations of being a trickster or a sly animal (Van Niekerk, 2018: 81), as depicted in the above-mentioned myth. The connotations associated with the jackal

critically engage with notions of racial superiority and white Afrikaner identity as a chosen and righteous people who are predestined to bring light to Africa.

On the other hand, the See-linge are depicted as water-creatures who weaves the roots of islands to the ocean floor. They are thus depicted as a people who form part of their environment and are dependent on it – they cannot live outside the water. In depicting the ‘enemies’ of the Saaiers as a people who are defending their environment due to their dependence on it, white Afrikaner narratives of racial and cultural superiority and civil religion’s framing of indigenous South African peoples as inherently violent and antagonistic is questioned.

Furthermore, the archetypal man-beast forms of both the Saaiers and the See-linge serve to disrupt the notion of Afrikanerhood as a white imagined community and challenge any racial binaries associated with Afrikanerhood. By disrupting race as a foundation from which Afrikaner audiences can relate to the characters on-screen, the audience is forced to make this association based on other recognisable elements. As *Die Waterwewer* makes use of the journey of civil religion plot structure which reflects the recognisable plot of the myth of civil religion, the parallels between the Saaiers and white Afrikaners are created through recognisable plot points and identity markers other than race. These include the Saaiers’ belief in their originary myth which frames them as a special people chosen by the sun; the importance of their language; their relationship with the land, as a place pointed out by the sun; the arrival of a colonial power which leads to the Saaiers’ displacement; and the impact of their presence in a new place on the place itself, its resources and its peoples. Disrupting race (skin colour) as an identity marker serves to encourage reconsideration and questioning of the narratives and identity markers besides race that construct white Afrikaner identity.

In this section, I have investigated a few approaches to the reimagining of character FTAMs in order to subvert notions of gender, gender roles and race as central markers of white Afrikaner identity. This approach to reimagining character FTAMs and how they are personified can be applied to all the archetypes depicted in Figure 39 in order to critically engage with Afrikaner identity. The settings in which these characters appear is another element that may be creatively reconfigured within a fantasy screenplay in order to attain the same objective.

6.6 Questioning white Afrikaner identity through setting FTAMs

As with thematic FTAMs, my investigation into filmic fantasy setting tropes in Chapter 3 did not deliver a specific tropic fantasy framework pertaining to setting but rather a series of different settings that are typically found within the filmic fantasy genre. With this in mind, in this section, I investigate how the setting FTAMs, identified in Chapter 5, may each be applied to critically engage with Afrikaner identity, using the settings of *Die Waterwewer* as examples. Figure 40, below, reviews the setting FTAMS. The setting FTAMS include the dark trek ages, the fantastic familiar farm, untamed nature, wartime wastelands and populated South African places.

Central to the creation or use of fantasy settings in a fantasy screenplay is the fantastical nature of these spaces. In Chapter 2, I defined a core aspect of the fantasy genre as it being rooted in the creation of fantastical worlds that are ruptured from the ontology of everyday phenomenal reality (Fowkes, 2010: 2) but that are subject to the rules of its own fictional reality (Tolkien, 2008: 80). Within a fantasy screenplay aimed at interrogating white Afrikaner identity, the fantastical should thus permeate the construction of all narrative settings in order to create a fantastical world that is critically distanced from phenomenal reality. This allows for critical engagement with the presented settings and the narratives through which characters imagine their sense of belonging within these specific settings.

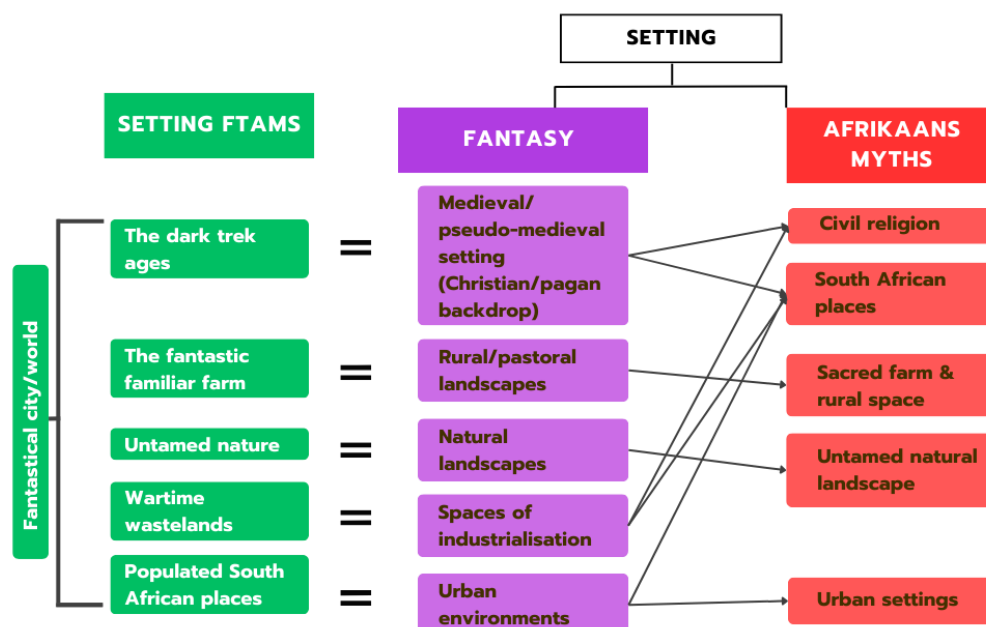


Figure 39: Setting FTAMs. (Illustration by the author).

In *Die Waterwewer*, the fantastical world draws from phenomenal reality and the settings contained in the myth of civil religion but reimagines them within a fantastical context. In Chapter 5, I established the dark trek ages as setting FTAM. This trope emerged as a result of my investigation²²⁶ into a tropic setting that could function as the FTAM equivalent of the filmic fantasy medieval time period. In the sample of mythological narratives, I noted that the time period in which many external Afrikaner myths are set correlates with the time period of the internal civil-religion myth. These correlations are based on the use of similar technologies and methods of travel, the presence of untamed South African natural landscapes and the predominance of rural and farm spaces and the boers (farmers), and often Boers,²²⁷ who occupied these spaces. I identified civil religion's setting in colonial South Africa as the FTAM equivalent of the trope of the Middle Ages. Drawing from the narrative and plot structure of civil religion to construct *Die Waterwewer's* narrative concept, I implemented the 'dark trek ages' as an FTAM, setting the narrative in a fantastical setting that reflects the historical period of civil religion.

With the implementation of the Dark trek ages trope in *Die Waterwewer*, I aimed to critically engage with those narratives through which Voortrekkers constructed their sense of belonging in South Africa. The first of these narratives pertains to the depiction of the land as a place to which the Voortrekkers were entitled through Godly predestination. For example, the Saaier's home, Monument Helm, is representative of Table Mountain and reimagines the Saaier's place identity as being rooted in the very top of the mountain, a place overlooking all the other identities, one that is closest to the sun who gifted them the ability to farm the sonzand that grew there. This speaks to the identity's myths of cultural and racial superiority and of being a chosen people as a result of the myth of Godly predestination. I interrogate the myth of white Afrikaners' inherent right to the land through my creative application of the 'entitlement to place of independence' and 'populated places and the journeys between them' FTAMs.

In *Die Waterwewers*, the Saaier's are displaced from Monument Helm, a place they feel entitled to, when the Windsora giants arrive and oppress them. This displacement is heightened when the Saaier's arrive in the Azania Duine, and they are forced to sleep in the crow's nests to avoid the waves that wash over the aardvlotte. The see-bene represent the Saaier's attempt to 'tame' the land, in this case the sea, by rising above the seawater and

²²⁶ See Chapter 5, 5.4.4. *Fantasy setting tropes in Afrikaans mythological narratives.*

²²⁷ Referring to Voortrekkers and white Afrikaner identity.

rooting themselves on the ocean floor, in other words, the land beneath the water. In this attempt, the aardvlotte are hoisted up on seebene, mirroring the Saaiers' elevated former home, Monument Helm. The Saaiers thus cling to myths through which they previously imagined their identity on Monument Helm, including their elevation atop the mountain, above others, in line with their being a people chosen by the sun.

It is this attempt to reconstruct their previous home, and thus cling to the 'markers' that previously defined their identity and the myths through which they imagined their relationship with the land (their place identity), that causes harm to the See-Linge and results in the conflict between the two groups. Displacement can also be found in the conflicts in which the Saaiers are consequently engaged. The Saaiers' dismantling of the aardvlotte to protect themselves from the elements, such as the waves, and from the vulture griffons, as well as the fact of the missing children, further leads to displacement through the loss of their aardvlotte, which resemble land on the sea.

The water itself is allegorical of the Saaiers' displacement and the liminal state in which they find themselves. The Saaiers' are dependent on land to grow their sonzand, which forms the central marker of their identity. Without land, the narratives through which the Saaiers imagine their cultural identity are thus uprooted and their identity ruptured. The ocean is framed as a limbo, a liminal space between their old home (Monument Helm) and the revealing of the location of their new home (Canaan).

My use of the name Canaan refers to the Israelites' promised land in the Bible. In Chapter 4, I drew the parallels between the Israelites' and the Voortrekkers' treks to a promised land. Naming the promised home of the Saaiers Canaan is thus a deliberate reference to the Calvinist belief that underscores Afrikaner identity. However, this myth of a promised land is subverted in *Die Waterwewer*. Instead of the Saaiers needing to conquer Canaan's indigenous peoples to own the land, they are dependent on them rooting the island on the seabed. Thus, the only way to inhabit the promised land is to work together with the Waterwewers. In *Die Waterwewer*, the promised land thus takes the form of a hybrid space, a space between the island and the sea. Without the help of the Waterwewer, the island, their new home, is unattainable.

However, the Waterwewers are also affected by the Saaiers' displacement. The Zonwagter guides the Saaiers to the Azania Duine, a stretch of sea that he claims is uninhabited. This

myth of an empty sea²²⁸ frames the Azania Duine as the perfect setting for the Saaiers to anchor while they wait for the sun to reveal to the Zonwagter the island on which they would build their next home. However, the Zonwagter's claim to the emptiness of the sea is brought into question by the presence of the See-linge who inhabit the stretch of sea and by the revelation that the Zonwagter is blind.

My use of the term 'Azania' in the naming of the Azania Duine aims to disrupt the narrative of predestination and the right to land by white Afrikaners. Although the term 'Azania' carries many etymological and political connotations which are beyond the scope of my study, I use the term in line with Dladla's (2018: 417) definition of Azania as the name of a South Africa that is free from colonial influences and in which political jurisdiction and power have been restored to those indigenous African groups displaced and oppressed during South Africa's colonisation by white invading groups. In *Die Waterwewer*, the name 'Azania' deliberately engages with the myths of predestination, racial superiority, and the right to the ownership of land by white Afrikaners, as illustrated by the Saaiers, who infringe on the See-linge's land and colonise it by planting in the ocean poles (seebene) that cause harm to both the See-linge and their land. The harm to the See-linge's land is further mirrored in the exhausting of the See-linge's resources by the Saaiers. The Saaiers catch a superfluous amount of fish and so deplete the See-linge's food resources.

As a consequence of the Zonwagter's lie that the waters of the Azania Duine are uninhabited, the Saaiers are unaware of the destructive impact of their attempts to 'own' and tame the waters of the Azania Duine. This leads to my implementation of the next FTAM, that pertains to 'wartime wastelands'. The vast destruction that occurs below the surface of the water is the result of the poles planted in the ocean floor by the Saaiers to anchor their rafts against the waves. This destruction reaches a peak during the war between the Saaiers and the See-linge, which leaves a wasteland of severed island-roots underwater. My use of the FTAM of wartime wastelands thus subverts the white Afrikaner narrative of victimisation by framing the wastelands as a result of the Saaiers' inhabiting of the 'land' and not as a result of the indigenous water-people's attack on them. Moreover, it calls into question the belief in a special or chosen bond with the land – a narrative intrinsic to white Afrikaners and their myth

²²⁸ The supposed emptiness of the ocean also speaks to the 'myth of the empty land'. This myth finds expression in the Voortrekkers' belief that the interior of South Africa was, for the most part, uninhabited and the land, therefore, empty and available (Cezula & Modise, 2020: 2). This myth is, however, not investigated in this dissertation due to the limited scope of this study.

of a right to land ownership – as the Saaiers are unable to inhabit their 'chosen' island without the help of the Waterwewers.

The myth of predestination is also questioned through the presence of a 'promised land' in *Die Waterwewer*. The Saaiers are promised an island where the sun touches the earth last of all and where they would thus be able to grow their sonzand. This island would be their property due to their unique ability to farm sonzand. However, this 'promised land' drifts out of their grasp as the conflict with the See-linge severs the island's roots. The island which the Saaiers wish to inhabit is thus collateral damage in the war they wage. The only way to save the island is not to 'colonise' it as a space of their independence but to sacrifice notions of independence and isolation for ideas of unity and collaboration in reweaving the roots of the island. This acts to question the narrative of political conservatism,²²⁹ which still forms part of Afrikaner identity, in terms of which ideas of racial and cultural superiority mean the isolation and separation of their culture from those of others, ideas which found their zenith during apartheid.

By reimagining the settings of civil religion in the context of a fantastical world, such as islands that have roots and waters wherein magical sea-creatures live, I am able to illustrate the effects of colonisation and of white Afrikaners' belief in their right to the ownership of land from a critically distanced vantage point. In the following section, I investigate how the iconographies that feature in such fantasy settings may also be used to question white Afrikaner identity.

6.7 Questioning white Afrikaner identity through iconography FTAMs

In this final section of my framework, I investigate how the application of iconography FTAMs may be used to critically engage with white Afrikaner identity. Iconography FTAMs represent Afrikaner identity through those iconographies associated with the South African landscape, familiar fantastical imagery from Afrikaans mythological narratives as well as Voortrekker iconography. In order to critically engage with these iconographies and what they represent, familiar Afrikaner iconographies may be reimagined by reassigning them to different

²²⁹ I discuss political conservatism as a marker of white Afrikaner identity in Chapter 4, *4.4.2.5 Political conservatism and "political impotence"*.

fantastical characters and contexts, thus disrupting the centrality of certain iconographies associated with white Afrikaner identity.

As per my investigation into the application of thematic FTAMs and settings, I unpack the application of the individual iconography FTAMs in this section in relation to the application of the relevant tropes in *Die Waterwewer*. In the red column of Figure 41, below, I review the iconography FTAMs identified in Chapter 5.

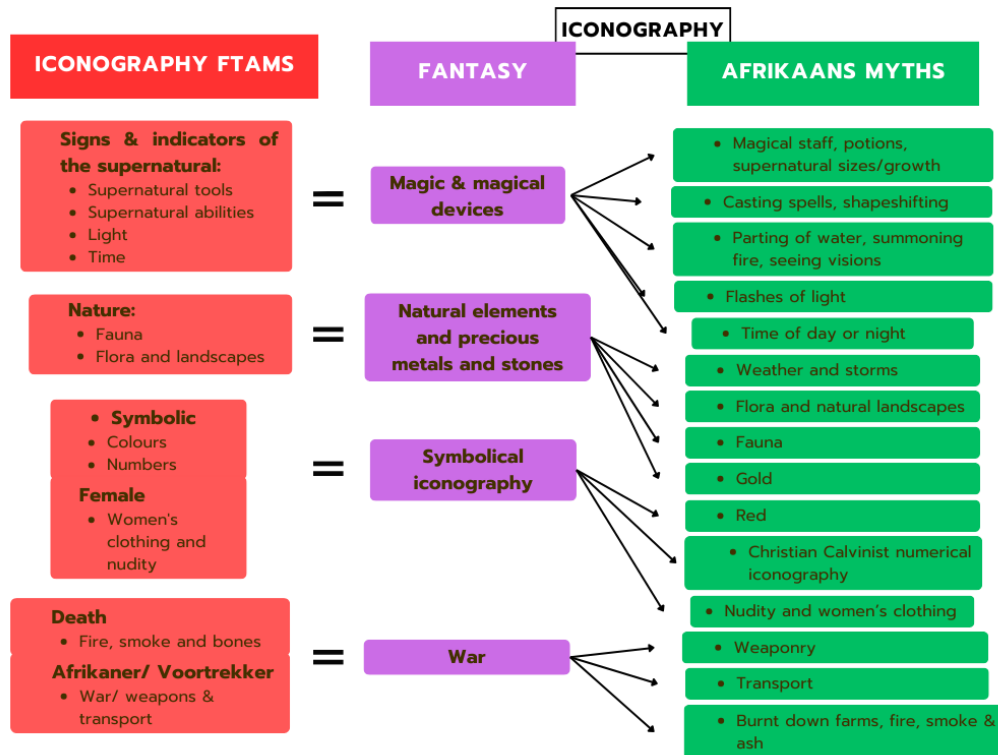


Figure 40: Iconography FTAMs. (Illustration by the author.)

I start with a discussion of my use of sonzand as a central iconographic element in *Die Waterwewer*. In the screenplay concept, sonzand exists as a supernatural golden seed grown by the Saaier people that affords powers of strength and energy. The centrality of sonzand to the Saaier people is a driving force behind their decision to undertake a journey to find a new home. This journey is caused by the threat of the Windsora giants who are killing the sonzand by not speaking the sacred language, Sandzang, which makes sonzand grow. Moreover, as the Saaiers believe the sun to have gifted them the unique ability to farm sonzand, the seed is representative of their identity as a 'chosen' people.

This narrative of predestination and superiority is reflected in the golden appearance of the sonzand seeds, along with the Zonwagter's supposed golden eyes, the golden mantle, and the imagery of the sun's golden rays that set last of all on the mountain where the Saaiers live. The flora and landscapes FTAM includes the fantasy trope of precious metals and gems. This features in the Afrikaans mythological narrative sample in the form of gold, which has connotations of treasure and worth. In *Die Waterwewer*, the value of gold is symbolically attached to the golden sonzand. Moreover, it is associated with the sun and the supernatural abilities and authority of the Zonwagter who is said to have golden eyes. However, this myth is disrupted when the Zonwagter is revealed to be eyeless under his mantle and when the Saaiers' sonzand runs out on the aardvlotte. By gradually doing away with the iconography of gold in the narrative, I aimed to subvert the Saaiers' association with Godly predestination, cultural superiority as well as the Zonwagter's patriarchal, 'chosen' position as leader of the Saaiers.

Furthermore, the representation of sonzand as an agricultural product, serves to critically engage with the centrality of the farm space and the "rural idyll" (Van Zyl, 2008: 139) in Afrikaner identity. It is through what they are able to farm that the Saaiers believe themselves to be a special people chosen by the sun. This is further underscored by sonzand's conferring of supernatural abilities, which make it a rare and valued commodity. However, in the fifth act of *Die Waterwewer*, the Saaiers' sonzand runs out, the Zonwagter is revealed to carry no traces of being chosen by the sun, and thus chaos ensues as the Saaiers lose any sense of purpose or direction. As such, the iconography of sonzand, and the eventual lack thereof, critically engages with the markers that define the 'self-worth' of white Afrikaner identity and to a questioning of how the identity would define itself in an alternative manner when these markers become irrelevant. This hence speaks to the reconfiguration of white Afrikaner identity, where the markers of their previous, nationalist identity configuration no longer hold worth in a democratic South African space.

Besides the iconography of sonzand, in *Die Waterwewer*, I also utilise symbolical FTAMs pertaining to female iconography. These tropes are used to disrupt traditional gender roles and expectations placed on the woman in the white Afrikaner nuclear family. My first example includes the use of iconography associated with nudity in order to engage with depictions of nude female bodies as vulnerable, and often victimised, in Afrikaans mythological narratives. In *Die Waterwewer*, Anza takes off her clothes before jumping into the water to become a Waterwewer and thereby prevent the island from drifting away. Anza's nude body is in line with Afrikaans mythological expressions of nudity – it signifies a brief liminal state in the course

of a character's physical transformation. Anza's nudity signifies her physical transition from Saaier to Waterwewer and from the victim of the Zonwagter's ignorance to saviour of the remaining Saaier people. However, unlike how nudity is traditionally associated with vulnerability, Anza's nudity is not a sign of fragility but rather a display of unrestricted decision-making and, ultimately, of heroism.

Another example through which I subverted the female iconography FTAMs include the depiction of Saaier-women as warrior mothers. Within Saaier cultural identity, the Saaier-women are tasked with protecting the Saaier-men as they are vulnerable while farming *sonzand*. This disrupts the traditional Calvinist gender roles of women being limited by the boundaries of domesticity and reframes the woman as a warrior and a critical asset to society outside of the sphere of the family. I utilise the iconography of a steel Voortrekker *kappie* (bonnet) to tie this disruption of traditional gender roles to Voortrekker identity in order to critically engage with the dominant patriarchal narratives of Boer men as warriors and heroes.

With regard to Voortrekker iconography FTAMs, I reimagined ox wagons, the Voortrekkers' mode of transporting their belongings, as *aardvlotte* (earth rafts). *Aardvlotte* tie in with the previously mentioned liminality of the ocean-space, as the Saaiers are literally and figuratively adrift while waiting for a new island (land) to be revealed. The *aardvlotte* underscore the Saaiers' need for land, as waves wash over the *aardvlotte*'s decks and further displace the Saaiers by forcing them to sleep in the crow's nests. Moreover, as when ox wagons are pulled into a laager when danger approaches, the Zonwagter orders one *aardvlot* at a time to be dismantled to build, in turn, roofs, *seebene* and railings to protect them. This imagery signifies how the boundaries of the identity are 'pulled' tighter and foregrounds the enclaved nature of Saaier identity. However, as a result, the Saaiers experience increasing discomfort as they lose more of their habitable space. Furthermore, their actions lead to damage to the See-linge's 'land' and resources under the water.

This imagery interrogates Afrikaner nationalist and neo-nationalist separatist tendencies that involve them imagining themselves based on an exclusive cultural identity. In other words, it questions Afrikaners' historical need to disentangle themselves from their cultural hybridity. At the end of the narrative, this is contrasted with Anza and the Saaier children embracing their hybrid identities as both Waterwewers and Saaiers. It is this hybridity which allows them to inhabit both the ocean and the land and to break free from the confines of the *aardvlotte*.

These examples of the application of iconography FTAMs as a means of questioning white Afrikaner identity represent merely a few ways in which these tropes may be applied. In the following section, I summarise my use of FTAMs in creating a fantasy screenplay concept that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity within a practically applicable framework.

6.8 The framework

In this section, I present a framework for a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity. This I undertake by summarising the previous sections of this chapter pertaining to my creation of *Die Waterwewer* from FTAMs by distilling the key, concrete nodes of the process. This framework thus describes how to create a fantasy screenplay narrative from the fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythological narratives. I acknowledge that there are many ways to construct such a fantasy screenplay; the framework presented below constitutes but one such way. I understand the framework is the outcome of my specific research process. I present the constructed framework as a series of steps to be undertaken in the process of writing a fantasy screenplay that questions the markers of Afrikaner identity inherent in the myth from which the narrative draws.

Table 3: The framework for creating a fantasy screenplay that questions white Afrikaner identity. (Table created by the author).

A framework for creating a fantasy screenplay that questions white Afrikaner identity.
<p>This framework guides the process of selecting a mythological narrative, unmaking it, and reimagining it as fantasy. As screenwriting is a creative process aimed at creating novel narratives, the framework is guided by a series of questions, rather than rules, in order to elicit the creativity of the screenwriter in the creative application of the framework and the FTAMs that form part it.</p> <p>How does it work? The framework comprises two 'stages'. The first stage describes the deconstruction of the screenwriter's selected myth by means of the FTAMs and identifying how these FTAMs represent the markers of Afrikaner identity within the context of the chosen myth. In the second stage, the myth is reimagined as fantasy and the identified FTAMs are creatively utilised to critically engage with white Afrikaner identity. The trajectory of the framework follows the steps of Stage 1 until the framework states to start again from Stage 2. Stage 2 is approached with knowledge of the myth's plot structure, themes, characters, settings and iconographies identified in the course of Stage 1 and how these speak to white Afrikaner identity. With this information as a basis, the screenwriter can proceed with the creative process of reimagining the myth as a fantasy so as to challenge the markers of white Afrikaner identity inherent to the myth.</p> <p>The dominant markers of white Afrikaner identity (pertaining to post-1994 white Afrikaner identity as it has been shaped by pre-1994 Nationalist Afrikaner identity) comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The centrality of the Afrikaans language to white Afrikaner identity• Calvinist beliefs and values<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The nuclear family○ Patriarchal systems of power• Racial superiority<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Experiencing white Afrikaner identity as one that has been victimised○ Political conservatism: neo-nationalist ideals• The right to and importance of land ownership<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The longing for pastoral spaces



Note: Despite the seemingly chronological layout of my framework, I acknowledge that the creative process of writing is seldom linear; however, I present the framework in a linear fashion for the purpose of illustrating its steps in a logical manner. The screenwriter may thus jump between steps and revisit others as their creative process demands.

STAGE 1:	STAGE 2:
Deconstructing the myth	Reimagining the myth as fantasy
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-right: 10px;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Step 1</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #fff9c4; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; display: flex; align-items: center;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Select a myth</p> </div> </div> <p>Select a mythological narrative (internal or external) that represents white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.²³⁰</p>	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-right: 10px;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Step 2</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #fce4ec; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; display: flex; align-items: center;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Plot the journey</p> </div> </div> <p>- Analyse the myth according to the civil religion journey²³¹ plot structure and its plot stages:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draw from the selected myth and roughly reimagine the narrative within a fantasy context. ○ What is the basic plot of the reimagined myth (the new fantasy narrative)? ○ What missing plot stages need to be added to the reimagined fantasy narrative to contribute to



²³⁰ I discuss cultural narrative identity in Chapter 4 and internal and external myths in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.


²³¹ I discuss the civil-religion journey in 6.3.1. *Subverting the three-act structure* and 6.3.2. *Applying the plot structure of the 'journey of civil religion'*. I utilise the civil religion plot-structure journey in my framework (to be applied to other myths) as it speaks to the foundation of myths on which, and through which, white Afrikaner identity was and, arguably, still is imagined. The purpose of the fantasy screenplays constructed through this framework is to question Afrikaner identity; a plot structure that represents the central markers of white Afrikaner identity provides an effective way to do so.

<p>Act 1: Separation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinary world • Call to adventure • Acceptance of the call <p>Act 2: Descent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crossing first threshold + facing threshold guardians • Tests, allies and enemies <p>Act 3: First Initiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to Inmost Cave A • Ordeal A + calling upon supernatural mentor • First (false) new ordinary world • Breaking the illusion of first false new ordinary world • Second (false) new ordinary world • Breaking the illusion of second false new ordinary world • Tests, allies and enemies + return of mentor+ establish third false new ordinary world <p>Act 4: Second Initiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking the illusion of the third false new ordinary world • Approach to Inmost Cave B • Ordeal B <p>Act 5: Unravelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The anti-reward 	<p>its plot structure representing that of civil religion?</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resurrection • Constructing a final new ordinary world with elixir <p>- What plot-stages does the myth contain?</p> <p>- What stages are missing?</p>	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> Step 3 </div> <div style="background-color: #c8e6c9; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 10px;"> Identify the themes </div> <p>- Which of the following thematic FTAMs find expression in the myth?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life as victims and death as martyrs • Biblical binaries and predestined position • Entitlement to places of independence <p>- Identify the elements/narrative events that provide indication of these FTAMs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How can the identified thematic FTAMs be challenged through the new fantasy narrative? <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p><u>Think about:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What narrative events within the above-mentioned plot stages can be changed to challenge the myth? ○ What is the central theme of the new fantasy narrative and how does it subvert the thematic FTAMs?
<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> Step 4 </div> <div style="background-color: #ffcdd2; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 10px;"> Identify the characters </div> <p>- Write down names or descriptions of all the characters in the myth.</p> <p>- Categorise the characters according to the following character-archetype FTAMs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hero.1: Male, Voortrekker, Boer, saviour/aid, husband/father of the family, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How can the characteristics that define the character-archetype FTAMs be subverted and reimagined? <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p><u>Think about:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subverting: race, ethnicity, gender, language, gender

<p>Christian Calvinist values. Archetypal character form: the man.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hero.2: young woman, child saviour/aid, gendered expectations. Archetypal character form: the man. • Herald/ aid: saviour/aid, supernatural/fantastical figure. Archetypal character form: The man and man-beast. • The Princess: female character, loss of family/loved ones, wife/future wife, traditional gender role. Archetypal character form: the man and man-beast. • The goddess (Positive mother): supernatural/fantastical abilities, light and dark side, wife/mother of the family, traditional gender role. Archetypal character form: the man and man-beast. • The witch (Negative mother): wife/mother of the family, antagonistic force, supernatural figure, physical transformation. Archetypal character form: the man and man-beast. • The wizard (Positive father): saviour/aid, husband/father of the family, supernatural abilities/figure. Archetypal character form: the man. • The dark lord (Negative father): supernatural/fantastical figure or human, antagonistic force, threat to children, evil by Calvinist/Afrikaner standards. Archetypal character form: the man or man-beast. 	<p>roles, patriarchal positions of power, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subverting: the role the archetypal character fulfils within the narrative. ○ Attributing: supernatural/magical powers, supernatural/magical attributes.
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-right: 10px;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Step 5</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px 15px; background-color: #e1f5fe;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Where is the myth set?</p> </div> </div>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the settings present in the myth. - How do these settings speak to the following setting FTAMs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dark trek ages • The fantastic familiar farm • Untamed nature • Wartime wastelands • Populated places and the journeys between them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How can the identified settings be ruptured from their resemblance to phenomenal reality? ○ What are the rules of the new fantasy world and how do they differ from the natural laws of phenomenal reality? <p> <u>Think about:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subverting: natural laws such as gravity. ○ Imagining existing places as fantastical.
<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto 10px auto;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Step 6</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; background-color: #d8bfd8; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto 10px auto;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Identify the iconography</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write down the iconographies present in the myth that may speak to the following iconography FTAMs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Signs & indicators of the supernatural</u> • Supernatural tools • Supernatural abilities • Light • Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How can the identified iconographies be reimagined as fantastical? In other words, what supernatural/magical abilities can be attributed to the iconography? ○ How can fantastical iconographies question Afrikaner identity? <p> <u>Think about:</u></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Nature</u> • Fauna • Flora • Landscapes • <u>Symbolic</u> • Colours • Numbers • <u>Female</u> • Women's dress • <u>Death</u> • Fire, smoke and bones • <u>Afrikaner/Voortrekker</u> • War, weapons and transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subverting what or who the iconographies represent or are associated with in Afrikaner mythological narratives. ○ Subverting the meaning of an iconography from good to bad or bad to good, etc.
<p style="text-align: center;"> Proceed to Stage 2 with the information gathered in Stage 1. </p> 	<p> After having established the key fantasy ingredients with which to subvert white Afrikaner identity as it is presented in the selected myth, the fantasy screenplay can be formulated. This formulation involves constantly revisiting, reframing and negotiating the representation of Afrikaner identity, so that the allegorical meaning remains clear but critically engagement with the identity occurs. </p>

6.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have constructed a framework for the creation of a fantasy screenplay that aims to question and critically engage with white Afrikaner identity. In order to achieve this, the framework needs to fulfill a dual purpose. This includes both reflecting Afrikaner identity in a recognisable manner on-screen and questioning and disrupting the identity so as not to simply bolster the pre-existing markers of white Afrikaner identity through its expression in the fantasy genre. To this end, I made use of the FTAMs (fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythologies), identified in Chapter 5, which reflect Afrikaner identity, as it was identified in Chapter 4. I investigated how the creative application of FTAMs within my fantasy narrative concept, *Die Waterwewer*, could serve to question white Afrikaner identity. I constructed *Die Waterwewer* fantasy concept by drawing from the internal myth of civil religion, an originary and pedagogical myth through which white Afrikaner identity is imagined and attempted to rupture it through reimagining the myth as a fantasy screenplay.

My creative application of FTAMs included the construction of a new plot structure, the journey of civil religion. This plot structure reflects the plot stages of the journey undertaken by the Voortrekkers, as this journey is an originary myth that reflects the central markers of white Afrikaner identity. The plot structure of the journey of civil religion draws from the writer's journey as a plot-structure FTAM but subverts the colonial connotations underlying its three-act structure by using a five-act structure. Furthermore, I investigated the creative implementation of FTAMs in relation to themes, character archetypes, settings and iconographies with a specific focus on subverting the markers of white Afrikaner identity.

This investigation culminated in the construction of a practically applicable framework, as presented in Section 6.8. *The framework* serves as a summary of the key nodes of the process of constructing *Die Waterwewer*. It suggests, through a series of critical questions to the screenwriter, how Afrikaner identity may be questioned by creatively implementing FTAMs and reimagining an Afrikaner mythological narrative within the context of a fictional fantasy world. In constructing this framework, I close my research with an answer to my main research question: How can I use filmic fantasy tropes and Afrikaans mythological narratives to create a framework for a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity?

In the following chapter, I conclude this dissertation by briefly yet critically reflecting on this study, its shortcomings contributions to knowledge, and future avenues for research.

CHAPTER 7: AT JOURNEY'S END – A CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This study has set to out to answer the following research question: How I can use fantasy tropes and Afrikaans mythological narratives to create a framework for a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity? The aim of this research question has been twofold: namely, to address what I perceive as a lack²³² of fantasy films in the Afrikaans film industry, as well as to address critique on Afrikaans films not engaging with the post-apartheid socio-political context of South Africa. This study understands Afrikaans films as cultural texts that reflect processes of meaning construction within Afrikaner cultural identity and that influence the engagement of Afrikaners with the social world (Steyn, 2016a: 4-5).

In constructing the framework, I utilised filmic fantasy as a tool for questioning white Afrikaner identity through the medium of screenwriting. As indicated in this dissertation, white Afrikaners refer to a white Afrikaans-speaking socio-cultural identity around whose privilege white nationalist South Africa revolved (Vestergaard, 2001: 19). This identity experiences a state of liminality that is arguably a result of South Africa's socio-political shift, in 1994, from Afrikaner nationalism to a democracy in which previously marginalised histories have been brought to light. As a consequence, the narratives through which white Afrikaners have historically imagined their cultural identity have been uprooted. This liminal state carries transformative potential as liminality is a space located "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1969: 95) a past and a future conceptualisation of identity. As such, the liminal space allows for the negotiation of identity, as may be seen in the case of many young white Afrikaners who are attempting to reimagine a white Afrikaner identity at a distance from Afrikaner nationalist identity markers (Álvarez-Mosquera, 2017: 640).

It is with the aim of fulfilling the goal of this reimagining of white Afrikaner identity that the study has argued for the use of the fantasy genre. The study views the fantasy genre as a strategy for enabling critical distance from the phenomenal world and for inspiring creative approaches

²³² I acknowledge that my study does not take into account film market preferences or audience analytic models such as reception theory, which may be influential factors in the Afrikaans film industry's output of the fantasy genre. In this study, I can, therefore, make only theoretical arguments regarding the efficacy of the fantasy genre in relation to identity construction, as this pertains to white Afrikaner identity.

to the questioning and reimagining of identity. This goal-oriented process was proposed on the basis of fantasy's ability to construct imaginative fictional worlds that create an ontological rupture between the fantasy world and phenomenal reality and thereby create a critical distance from such a reality. As fantasy draws from myths that form part of a culture's cultural narrative identity, audiences are able to use this distancing to critically engage with the identity represented through the myths within the fantasy world. This, in turn, allows for the reimagining of the identity within the safety of the boundaries offered by the fictionality of the fantasy world.

In the following section, I provide an overview of my dissertation and how the construction of the fantasy framework unfolded in the course of the chapters.

7.1.1 An overview of the study

To construct the fantasy framework, I systematically approached the main research question posed above through its sub-questions, in each chapter. In Chapter 2, I focused on the following sub-question: What is the fantasy genre? I identified fantasy as involving a rupture from the ontology of phenomenal reality, as per Fowkes (2010: 5), and centering on the creation of imaginative fictional worlds that embrace this rupture through the use of magic and new or alternative laws of nature. In creating such fictional worlds, fantasy draws from myths and reimagines them within the context of the fantasy's fictional reality. The aforementioned rupture, which functions as the supernatural 'nova', evokes a sense of estrangement which critically distances audiences from their own reality. It is through this distancing that new perspectives can be formed and identities reimagined within the fantasy world. In Chapter 3, I investigated how these ontological tropes of fantasy may find practical expression within fantasy films. This was guided by the following sub-question: What are the salient tropes of the filmic fantasy genre? I established the salient fantasy tropes based on my units of analysis (plot structure, themes, characters, settings, and visual iconography). This process involved the use of Vogler's (2007) writer's journey plot-structure, Indick's (2012) fantasy character-archetypes, and salient tropes pertaining to fantasy themes, settings and visual iconography.

With this contextualisation of the fantasy genre, the study then required an understanding of white Afrikaner identity and its markers (identity tropes) in order to provide an understanding of how fantasy may be used to question the identity. In Chapter 4, I explored white Afrikaner identity guided by two sub-questions: What is cultural narrative identity? What are the markers of white Afrikaner identity? Cultural narrative identity served as a theoretical lens through

which I investigated white Afrikaner identity. Within the broader context of this study, the purpose of constructing cultural narrative identity as a lens was to establish how white Afrikaner identity is imagined through those myths that form part of its narrative identity. As I established in Chapter 2 that fantasy enables the questioning of myths by presenting them in new and imaginative contexts, interrogating white Afrikaner identity through fantasy would involve drawing from Afrikaner myths and mythological narratives (as the broader category) and presenting them within fantasy worlds.

To construct the lens of cultural narrative identity, I investigated how identity exists as a process of narrating experiences (Anthias, 2018: 139). The narration of these experiences is contextualised by the culture to which these narratives belong and forms its narrative identity. I applied Anderson's (2006) theory of imagined communities to position culture as imagined through this narrative identity. When a culture and its cultural identity are ruptured from the narratives that construct its cultural narrative identity, it is shifted into a liminal state. Within this state, the identity may cling to narratives of the past through which it previously imagined its cultural identity. Bhabha's (1990) theory of the nation as narration, applied to the context of culture, offered insight into how the narratives that construct culture, are formed – through pedagogical and performative narratives.

Through these narratives, a culture may imagine a sense of cultural purity based on its pedagogical narratives and sustained through the performative narratives. In the context of white Afrikaner culture, I argued that pedagogical narratives are those narratives through which Afrikaners historically imagined their identity and its markers, and which were naturalised (referring to Barthes (1991) principle of cultural myth-making) within white Afrikaner identity. Pedagogical narratives include originary myths such as Moodie's (1975) myth of civil religion, which served to contextualise those pre-1994 identity markers through which white Afrikaners imagined their identity.

I positioned performative narratives as including Afrikaans film through which white Afrikaners have been able to reify pedagogical myths and continuously define and imagine their cultural identity. Concerning Afrikaans film, I established that, after 1994, many white Afrikaners still nostalgically cling to pre-1994 markers of white Afrikaner identity and that these markers, because they can no longer find anchorage in South Africa's socio-political context, are expressed as tropes of Afrikaans films. Through these tropes, white Afrikaners maintain their imagining of themselves as an imagined community. In this light, Afrikaans film, as a cultural commodity, can be seen as a mode of myth-making. Afrikaans films may thus sustain the pedagogical myth of Afrikaners as a cultural unity by implying a sense of cultural homogeneity.

This homogeneity is questioned by Bhabha's (1994: 34) notion of cultural hybridity which positions cultural identities as occupying multiple cultural spaces simultaneously (Cuddon, 2013: 344). Bhabha (1994: 34-36) refers to a "third space of enunciation" that exists at the interstices of these various cultural spaces. In this third space, there is no cultural hierarchy, and cultural identity, and thus cultural narrative identity, can be negotiated based on the acknowledgment that all cultures are intrinsically hybrid (Bhabha, 1994:37-38). Nostalgic clinging to a myth of cultural purity thus precludes the transformative potential of the third space to negotiate the narratives that construct cultural identity.

With regard to the role pedagogical and performative narratives (especially those that pertain to myths) play in the construction of cultural identity, I posited that cultural narrative identity too exists as a process of myth-making. Concerning the creation of white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity, I distinguished between two types of myths that feature prominently within this myth-making process: internal and external myths. I drew on this delineation in Chapter 5 to compile a sample of Afrikaner mythological narratives that reflect the tropes of fantasy.

I concluded Chapter 4 by positioning fantasy as functioning in line with Bhabha's (1994) third space of enunciation. When an audience is enchanted by a fantasy film, they find themselves in a third space – a liminal space between the phenomenal and fantasy world. Within this space of hybridity, they may negotiate and question the ideologies perpetuated through the internal and external myths presented within the fantasy world, while keeping in mind how such renegotiations and reimaginations may be implemented within the phenomenal world.

In order to construct such a third space in which white Afrikaner identity may be critically engaged with, I investigated how fantasy may find expression in these white Afrikaner mythological narratives. To this end, in Chapter 5, I addressed the following sub-question: What salient fantasy tropes can I extract from Afrikaner mythological narratives? To answer this question, I undertook a thematic analysis of a sample of internal and external Afrikaans mythological narratives to uncover the salient fantasy tropes. In other words, I investigated how fantasy manifests within white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity. I used my units of analysis (plot structure, themes, characters, settings and visual iconography) as codes. I interpreted the themes that emerged from this analysis as 'fantasy tropes in Afrikaner mythologies' (FTAMs).

In Figure 42, below, I summarise the theories that have been interwoven throughout my dissertation to form the theoretical foundation of the framework I constructed in Chapter 6.

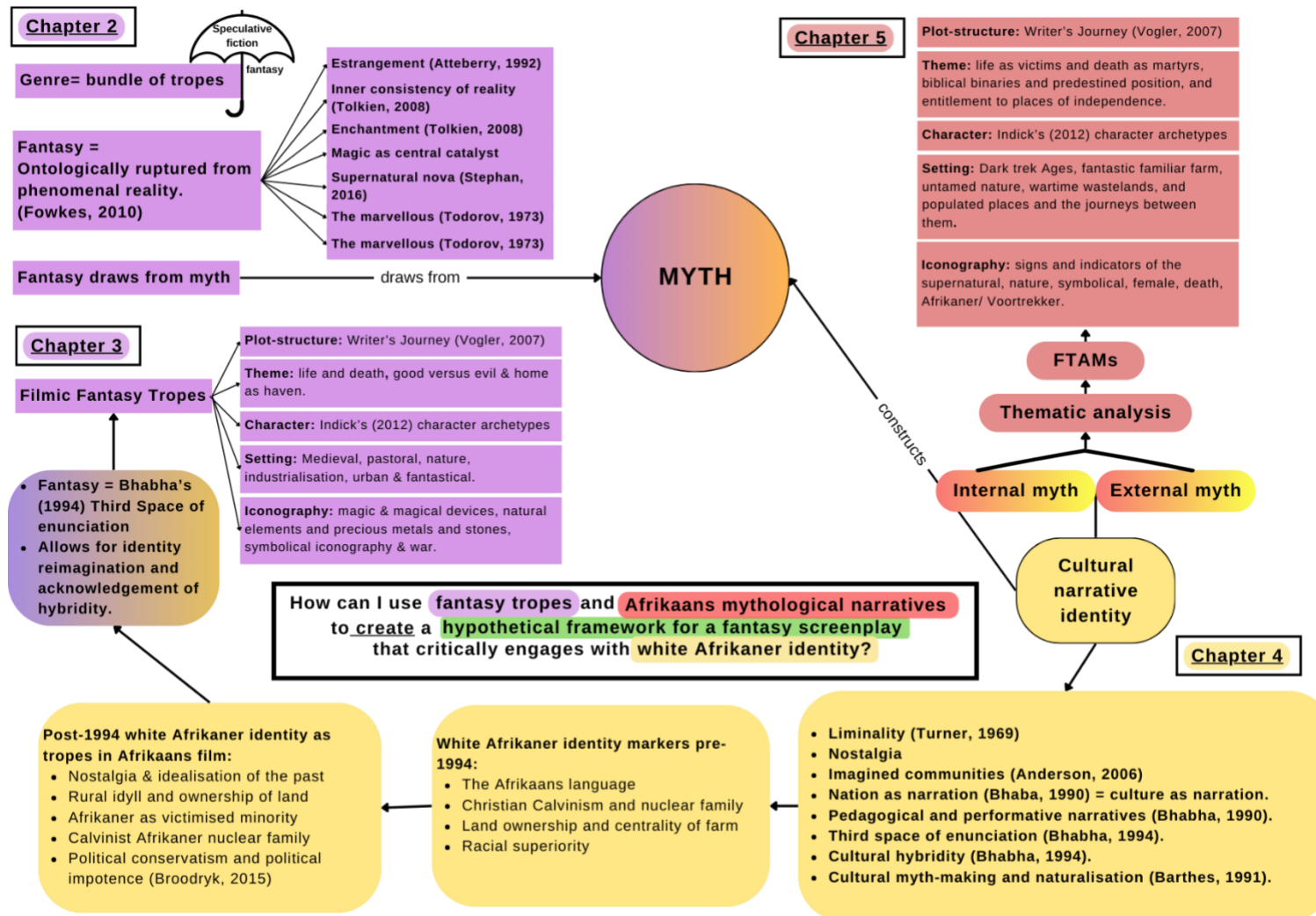


Figure 41: Overview of the main theories used in dissertation. (Illustration by the author).

In Chapter 6, I answered the final sub-question: How can I use the results of these investigations to create a framework for writing a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity? I utilised these FTAMs to construct the framework, which then guides the writing of a fantasy screenplay, as per my understanding of the fantasy genre established in Chapters 2 and 3, for critically engaging with white Afrikaner identity as I contextualised it in Chapter 4. In the next section, I provide a brief critical reflection on the creation of the framework, this study's contribution to the field of study, as well as its shortcomings and an outline of potential future avenues of research.

7.2 Reflecting on the fantasy framework

The construction of a framework that guides the writing of a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity represents the main outcome of this study. I should reiterate here that there are many potential ways in which such a fantasy screenplay could be created and that this framework is but one such a way.

I constructed this framework based on my identification of FTAMs in Chapter 5. In identifying these, I aimed to describe them as broadly as possible to allow for their creative implementation in an array of possible fantasy screenplay narratives. However, as the FTAMs were extracted from a specific sample of internal and external myths, a different narrative sample would have resulted in the identification of different FTAMs and, consequently, in a different framework.

From the identified FTAMs, I constructed the fantasy framework. However, where the application of this framework became complex is with regard to the critical treatment of white Afrikaner identity. The FTAMs served as apt reflections of white Afrikaner identity as the identity imagines itself through its narratives (as established in Chapter 4). Therefore, to question white Afrikaner identity, the FTAMs needed to be reframed by critically, though creatively, engaging with the markers of white Afrikaner identity they represent.

As the creative application of FTAMs will be unique for every fantasy screenplay and screenwriter, I created a fantasy screenplay concept, *Die Waterwewer*, to illustrate examples of such implementations of FTAMs. Through *Die Waterwewer* I illustrated the creative implementation of FTAMs by identifying what aspect of Afrikaner identity each of them represents and deliberately subverting this meaning through, for example, presenting the opposite – subverting positions of power or influence, shifting who is seen as the protagonist

and antagonist, revealing marginalised stories, attributing magical abilities to heighten the impact of choices made by the characters, and the like.

Where the framework may become vague is in relation to the vast amount of reimagining of the FTAMs that may occur. Moreover, with such reimaginings, the challenge lies in maintaining a balance between recognisability and novelty – offering reimaginings that still speak to and represent white Afrikaner identity. Such reimaginings should challenge current and historical configurations of this identity to encourage aspirational, future reconfigurations of white Afrikanerhood. The balance that needs to be maintained between recognisable representation and disruptive reimagining cannot be prescribed by the framework but is to be tried and tested in its application in a fantasy screenplay. The framework and its representation of Afrikaner cultural narrative identity through FTAMs thus serves as a basic frame(work) of reference, a launchpad from which to embark on imaginative applications and treatments of FTAMs to question Afrikaner identity.

The purpose of this framework is, therefore, not to act as a blueprint for a specific fantasy narrative, but as one option or avenue to create a fantasy screenplay with a specific purpose: to critically engage with white Afrikaner identity. This is mirrored in my description of practically applicable steps for a screenwriter to take in writing such a fantasy screenplay. This practically applicable section of the framework is structured as a series of guiding questions that have the purpose of aiding the screenwriter in the subversive application of FTAMs rather than prescribing definitive rules. It guides the specific process of using an Afrikaans mythological narrative, reimagining it as a fantasy narrative by identifying which FTAMs are present in the myth, and then subverting those FTAMs to critically engage with the markers of white Afrikaner identity represented in the myth.

Notwithstanding the complexities associated with the application of the framework, I argue that it and its ‘by-products’, such as the ‘journey of civil religion’ plot structure, contribute to the study of fantasy in Afrikaans film. I constructed the ‘journey of civil religion’ based on Vogler’s (2007) writer’s journey plot-structure and mapped out its trajectory so that it may function as an applicable screenwriting plot structure. The new plot structure of the journey of civil religion reflects white Afrikaner identity by tracing the plot of civil religion. However, it subverts the three-act structure and the colonial connotations inherent in the writer’s journey. This plot structure furthermore contributes positively to the investigation and understanding of historical and originary myths and how these construct identity through ideological agendas by conforming to certain habitual plot structures. Furthermore, the new plot structure maps the development of white Afrikaner identity and its attendant nationalism, consequently offering

new perspectives on civil religion as a constructed myth, such as the recognition of narrative patterns.

The conclusion of this study is that by using fantasy tropes, understanding Afrikaans mythological narratives as expressions of white Afrikaner identity, and identifying how fantasy tropes manifest in Afrikaner mythological narratives, I have been able to construct a framework that can be used as a guide to write a fantasy screenplay aimed at interrogating white Afrikaner identity. In the following section, I further discuss the contribution this research makes to the field of study, beyond the development of the framework.

7.3 Contribution of the study

Although much has been written on Afrikaner identity and the fantasy genre, respectively, I locate the contribution of my study in its integration of these two concepts. This study addresses the lack of fantasy films in the Afrikaans film industry, as contextualised in Chapter 1. I argue for the need for such a film, based not on entertainment value, but on fantasy's ability to aid in the navigation of the current identity crisis experienced by some white Afrikaners. In the course of my research, I discovered a dearth of academic scholarship on fantasy's expression in Afrikaans films. To address this research gap, I created a framework²³³ that guides the writing of a fantasy screenplay that critically engages with white Afrikaner identity.

In order to contextualise white Afrikaner identity – and the need for identity reconfiguration – I constructed 'cultural narrative identity' as a theoretical lens. As Afrikaner cultural narrative identity is constructed on the basis of myths, and as fantasy draws from myth, I foregrounded fantasy as a strategy for critically engaging with cultural identity. This critical engagement is achieved by questioning the ideologies and mechanisms of myth-making that are relevant to cultural narrative identity and that are inherent in myths. I investigated the fictional fantasy world as an expression of Bhabha's (1994) third space of enunciation wherein white Afrikaner identity may be reimagined and reconfigured and its cultural hybridity negotiated.

In the process of constructing this framework, I investigated how fantasy tropes find expression in Afrikaner mythological narratives which lead to the creation of FTAMs. These

²³³ In retrospect, I acknowledge that this framework may also inadvertently function to perpetuate rather than question markers of white Afrikaner identity through the use of fantasy tropes, as the framework relies on the isolation and recognition of problematic Afrikaner identity markers.

FTAMs contribute new insights to the existing body of knowledge of fantasy in white Afrikaner mythological narratives. Furthermore, these FTAMs, which are concerned with how fantasy tropes find expression in Afrikaner mythological narratives, function as a core component of the framework. The FTAMs thus render the framework specific to the fantasy genre. The selection of another genre would have necessitated the study of that genre's tropes.

As these FTAMs reflect white Afrikaner identity, they need to be creatively implemented within a fantasy screenplay in order to subvert the identity. To illustrate the creative application of FTAMs in the context of a fantasy screenplay, I wrote a fantasy screenplay concept, *Die Waterwewer*, which contributes to what I perceive as a lack of fantasy screenplays in Afrikaans (in terms of both white Afrikaner identity and, more broadly, the Afrikaans language as a whole).

I critically engaged with white Afrikaner identity and its reimagining in an attempt to distance the identity from the problematic markers of nationalist Afrikaner identity, so that it better suits the current democratic socio-political context of South Africa. In doing so, I hope to have contributed positively to research into South African identity politics.

7.4 Shortfalls of the study

Besides the limitations of my fantasy framework discussed in Section 7.2, here, I outline other shortcomings relevant to the broader dissertation and to the research process.

A potential pitfall of the framework I created may be found in my use of the internal myth of civil religion to construct the fantasy concept, *Die Waterwewer*, which contains indicators and markers of white Afrikaner identity. Using an external myth may result in new challenges as the markers of Afrikaner identity may be allegorically represented within the myth. This would necessitate a more rigorous analysis of the external myth in terms of how it reflects white Afrikaner identity before the framework could be applied. Furthermore, I have observed many Afrikaans external myths to be short in length while the journey of civil religion has a five-act plot structure. Consequently, it may require much more 'critical creativity' on the part of the screenwriter to extend the myth to include each of the stages of the plot structure.

One component of the process of constructing this framework was identifying the salient tropes of fantasy. This study drew filmic fantasy tropes from scholarship on Western perspectives on fantasy. This was motivated by a consideration of the influence of Hollywood, particularly its genre conventions, on Afrikaans cinema, as discussed in relation to the

influence of transnational cinema. However, a study of the tropes of African fantasy – rather than of Hollywood or Western perspectives on fantasy – may have served more effectively to distance white Afrikaner identity from its nationalist identity markers, in relation to which Western colonial ideas of cultural and racial superiority, amongst others, play a fundamental role. This may also have rooted the reimagining of white Afrikaner identity more firmly in an African context. I see this shortcoming as a potential avenue for future research.

With regard to the patriarchal ideas underlying many of the fantasy tropes identified, including the writer's journey plot-structure, this study could have paid more attention, in Chapter 6, to how the heroine's journey may have contributed to the construction of a new plot structure. Rather than subverting only the hegemonic Western colonial ideas inherent in the three-act plot structure, the integration of the heroine's journey, as formulated by Maureen Murdock (2013) may have offered a way to critically engage with gender as well. The heroine's journey presents a plot structure that is structured around the fulfilment of a female hero and the cultivation of her agency, distinct from that of a male hero (Van Eeden, 2017: 53). Reflecting on my creation of *Die Waterwewer* and my use of a female protagonist, such a journey may have provided new insights into subverting patriarchal, gendered expectations of women in Afrikaner cultural narrative identity.

Another shortcoming pertains to the sample of Afrikaans mythological narratives used for the thematic analysis. A larger sample might have offered more, and better, insights into how salient fantasy tropes find expression in Afrikaner mythological narratives. In addition, asking volunteers who participate in white Afrikaner culture to offer, for study, Afrikaans mythological narratives which they deem to be models of Afrikaans cultural narrative identity, for example, through the use of questionnaires, may have been beneficial. This would have provided a more informed and representative narrative sample rather than one that simply relied on my own choices.

Other shortcomings pertain to the sub-genres of fantasy, which might have provided more nuanced insights into the tropes of fantasy. Due to the vastness of the fantasy genre, my discussion of the genre's tropes was undertaken in a very broad manner. Focusing on a specific sub-genre of fantasy may have guided me in more effectively funnelling my investigation of the fantasy genre. With this research study as a foundation, an investigation of a fantasy screenplay aimed at questioning white Afrikaner identity through the lens of a specific fantasy sub-genre offers potential for future study.

7.5 Avenues for future research

Building on the potential future studies emerging from the discussion of the shortcomings of my research, below, I offer a number of possible future research avenues.

First, the topic of this study offers the opportunity to analyse model fantasy films and to synthesise the fantasy tropes found with those identified in scholarship. This would constitute a more in-depth and detailed study of fantasy tropes and how they manifest practically in fantasy films. Although such an analysis was not feasible within the timeframe and scope of this study, it offers an opportunity for future research.

Second, with regard to the creation of the fantasy framework, the research topic offers the opportunity for an investigation into how the heroine's journey plot structure may subvert those patriarchal ideologies inherent in the writer's journey plot structure. In a similar vein, beyond plot structure, elaborating on, critiquing and improving on this framework also serves as future research opportunity.

Finally, the framework offers the opportunity of the ideas it presents being applied, beyond the level of a concept, to the creation of a fantasy screenplay. This screenplay could then be read and assessed by a panel of screenwriting experts who would be able to provide feedback on the efficacy of both the framework and the screenplay in terms of their right to be referred to as fantasy and their aim of critically engaging with white Afrikaner identity. This screenplay could then be produced as a film and presented to audiences. To test the efficacy of the implementation of the framework, audiences could provide feedback on the film in relation to whether they are aware of the questioning of white Afrikaner identity that it represents and whether the screenplay sufficiently conforms to the fantasy genre and its tropes, based on the audience's expectations of the genre.

7.6 Concluding remarks

This research study was undertaken as an expression of my view that there is a lack of fantasy films in the Afrikaans-language. My investigation into the filmic fantasy genre, how it draws from cultural myths, and its potential to question identity and cultivate new perspectives, lead to a consideration of how the genre may act as a narrative device to engage with many white Afrikaners' current identity crisis. I constructed a framework for a fantasy screenplay that

questions the markers of white Afrikaner identity through its plot structure, themes, characters, settings and iconographies. This questioning is accomplished by creatively and deliberately subverting markers of white Afrikaner identity, represented by FTAMs, as a consequence of the vast imaginative potential that the fantasy genre offers. By integrating white Afrikaner cultural narrative identity and the tropes of fantasy, this framework enables the questioning of white Afrikaner identity by rupturing Afrikaner cultural narrative identity from phenomenal reality. By means of this rupture, and the critical distance it creates, white Afrikaner identity can be questioned and reimaged within the boundaries of the fictional fantasy world.

As a final remark, I should note that my framework is not be seen as involving the formulaic prescription of genre tropes but rather as a set of creative prompts by means of which to engage critically with Afrikaner identity. My hope is that the framework acts as a call to engage with and develop critical, creative genre approaches to the Afrikaans film industry and its representation of white Afrikaner identity. It also has the potential to create 'politically potent' cinema in response to critique of the perceived political impotence of Afrikaans cinema.

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