

**‘Hemel op die *platteland*’: The intersections of land and whiteness in
selected Afrikaans language films: 1961 – 1994.**

by

**Jacobus Johannes Bothma
28533268**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MAGISTER HEREDITATIS CULTURAEQUE SCIENTIAE (HISTORY)

in the

**Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria
Pretoria
2017**

Supervisor: Dr. G. Paleker

Abstract

Land and the symbolism of land is an increasingly contentious issue within the political and cultural landscape of South Africa into the 21st century, more specifically contentious is the demographic distribution of land ownership. It is within this context that the question of the interaction of land and whiteness within Afrikaans-language films, as cultural products which formed part of the historical structure that informed the basis for entitlement to land, is addressed. This dissertation analyses the intersections of land and whiteness in selected Afrikaans-language films from 1961-1994 within the ideological framework of Afrikaner nationalism. The symbolic nature and position of land in its manifestation as the *platteland* within the framework of Afrikaner nationalism suggests that the use of landscapes within Afrikaans-language films could be analysed as more than a record of reality. These films formed part of an ever changing political and cultural landscape in which the *platteland* was given symbolic significance within an Afrikaner nationalist ideology and which informed an Afrikaner nationalist worldview and identity. Twelve Afrikaans-language films and their utilisation of the *platteland* as official and unofficial instances and expressions of Afrikaner nationalism are analysed as part of a canon of cultural products that created and sustained a mythological Afrikaner identity through poetry, literature and film. From the conclusion of this dissertation it is clear that the *platteland* maintained its cultural currency in a variety of ways. From the 1960s its position changed from an initial source of contemporaneous identity formulation to a historical source of heritage that justified specific values, ideas and notions of gender through its intersections with whiteness. Even within the changing political realities of the period analysed, the *platteland* was maintained as an ideological space that served as a connection between the Afrikaner and the land, emphasising the idolised pact between nation and nature. Within a contemporary context with the rise of neo-nationalism within the Afrikaner community an understanding of the ways in which the *platteland* and its relations to whiteness was historically used in film as a cultural product is crucial to be able to understand current notions of Afrikaner identity.



Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank the following people and organisations for their support and assistance during the process of completing this project:

My supervisor Dr. Gairoonisa Paleker, thank you for not only sharing your vast knowledge with me but also for being a mentor and influence in my life in every possible way from the first day I sat in one of your modules. More specifically thank you for your guidance, constant encouragement and patience throughout my Masters studies, it has made all the difference.

The Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, I will be forever thankful that I had the opportunity to be surrounded by historians who share a passion for the discipline and the constant support that was always available. Mrs. Karina Sevenhuysen thank you for always helping or advising with relevant sources and referencing. Zimkhitha Tsotso thank you for helping me navigate the administrative side of an endeavour such as this.

The librarians and archivists at every institutions I used in my researches. A big thank you to Mr. Trevor Moses from the National Film, Video and Sound Archives in Pretoria who made access to many of the films used in my research so much easier. I would also like to thank Mrs. Alett Nel for her assistance whenever I could not find the sources I needed.

My friends both near and far, thank you for all the patience, understanding and unwavering support. Without all of you I would not have been able to find the strength to persevere. Julle weet wie julle is.

My twee stelle ouers, baie dankie. Julle is en was nog altyd my steunpillare.



Table of content.

1. Introduction.	5
1.1. Literature Review	11
1.2. Methodology	15
a. Selection of Material	16
1.3. Structure of Content	17
2. Chapter 2	19
2.1. Die Kandidaat	21
2.2. Katrina	31
3. Chapter 3	40
3.1. Jannie Totsiens	40
3.2. Dit was Aand en dit was More	43
3.3. Weerskant die Nag	51
3.4. Herfsland	54
4. Chapter 4	60
4.1. Broer Matie	61
4.2. The Boetie Films	69
4.3. Fiela se Kind	82
5. Chapter 5	89
5.1. Agter Elke Man	92
5.2. Die Storie van Klara Viljee	101
6. Conclusion	107
7. Bibliography	117
8. Filmography	123



1. Introduction

The last decade of the 20th century witnessed rapid social and political changes in South Africa which posed fundamental challenges to the individual and collective identity formation of Afrikaners. Afrikaners, through multiple avenues, attempted to navigate their new reality with some elements in the community attempting to reformulate their identity within the new political context around elements such as language.¹ Throughout these developments the *platteland*² has maintained a prominent symbolic position within the Afrikaner imaginary and identity well into the 21st century. The prevalence of the *platteland* within Afrikaner culture is reflected by the cynical critique of Afrikaner identity by the popular Afrikaans rock band *Fokofpolisiekar*.³ Their song *Hemel op die Platteland*⁴, released in the early 2000s, speaks of their disillusionment with the myth that some kind of a proverbial heaven exists on the *platteland* which formed part of their inherited imaginary as white South Africans.⁵ As a band known for their engagement with issues of Afrikaner identity at the turn of the century, their vocal apathy towards the *platteland* speaks of the currency the *platteland*, and the myths surrounding it, still held even after the end of official Afrikaner nationalist rule in 1994.

The first decade of the 21st century also saw Afrikaans-language films experiencing a boom in terms of the number of films being produced. This has led, at least on a personal level, to a renewed interest in the history of Afrikaans-language films and their place and role within South African history and society. Even more specifically, keeping in mind the continued symbolism of the *platteland* found in the Afrikaner imaginary, it has led to questions related to the historic role Afrikaans-language films played in the creation and/or maintenance of the *platteland* within the history of Afrikaner nationalism.

Many of these Afrikaans-language films, especially those produced before the early 1990s, are products of a very specific social, political, economic and cultural context which was characterised on the one hand by apartheid and on the other by opposition to apartheid.

¹ C. van der Westhuizen, 'Afrikaners in post-apartheid South Africa: Inward migration and enclave nationalism', *HTS Teologiese Studies*, 2016, 72(1), p.6.

² The term *platteland* can be directly translated to the English word 'countryside', however the multi-layered nature of the notion of the *platteland* will be discussed in the pages that follow.

³ R. Kahn, "Oop vir misinterpretasie": South African journalism's take-up and representation of the music of Fokofpolisiekar', *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 2011, 32(3), p.21.

⁴ Translates to 'Heaven in the Countryside'.

⁵ R. Kahn, "Oop vir misinterpretasie": South African journalism's take-up and representation of the music of Fokofpolisiekar', *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 2011, 32(3), p.23.

This is not to say that these polarities were the only defining characteristics of South African society but rather to acknowledge that many other contextual factors were subsumed within these binaries.

Within this environment, can Afrikaans-language films be positioned as instances and expressions of both an official and unofficial Afrikaner nationalism, the ideological foundation of the National Party which came to power in 1948? It is thus, in a very broad sense, the place of Afrikaans-language films within Afrikaner nationalism in all its complexities that is of interest to this research, especially from the 1960s onward. More specifically, as mentioned, the relationship between these films and their relation to land and whiteness within the ideological framework of Afrikaner nationalism will be the central focus.

Whiteness as a focal point of analysis refers to a socially constructed category, as opposed to a biologically constructed category, in which symbolic and material power and privilege is seen to accrue 'naturally' to white people or those who pass as white. In this research, whiteness is used as an analytic term and will focus specifically on the ways in which whiteness operated within an Afrikaner nationalist framework. Whiteness as an analytic category will consider discursive meanings apparent in Afrikaans-language films focused on the centrality of land in the Afrikaner world view. Whiteness in this research also refers to the power relations through which whiteness represented normality, dominance and control.⁶ These power relations created a master narrative where whiteness within Afrikaner nationalism meant entitlement to the land.⁷ The focus will be on the extent to which Afrikaans-language films reflected these power relations and systemic patterns of discrimination that sustained the idea that the nation, in terms of space, culture, money and the ability to determine what is 'natural', was the property of Afrikaners.⁸

It must also be noted that the meaning attached to race and thus also the nature of whiteness are always time and place specific.⁹ A way of analysing the construct of whiteness is through focusing on racism and racialisation. In the case of South Africa the racist apartheid ideology reflected, as well as grew out of, notions of human difference that already existed. It did however entrench these notions legislatively and ideologically which helped to

⁶ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.9.

⁷ M. Steyn, *"Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used To Be": White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, Albany: State University Press, 2001, p.35.

⁸ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.12.

⁹ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.1.



systematise and rationalise assumptions of difference.¹⁰ How people then define themselves and others are shaped by the dominant political culture in which they exist, which in this case was apartheid. Within this environment of systematised racism and white supremacy the definition of identity is derived from the complex process of interest perceptions by the group in power.¹¹

Land as the next focal point of analyses has been a recurring trope in the Afrikaner imaginary since the formalisation of Dutch rule at the Cape. Indeed, the increase in settler colonial scholarship attests to the centrality of land for European settlers who were part of the great scattering of European migrants from the late 16th and early 17th centuries.¹² As a result, land has emerged as a central character in South African literature and film. While land in South African literature has begun to receive scholarly attention, land in South African cinema has not. When looking at land within the focus of this study it refers to a specific territory, the *platteland* or countryside. The notion of a countryside however, lacks the complex and emotive meanings embodied in the Afrikaans-language word, *platteland*. This defined territory, with which Afrikaner nationalism interacted in very specific ways, became part of a cultural identity. The placement and significance of the *platteland* within this cultural identity creates a complex set of intersections between tangible and intangible elements. Thus the *platteland* refers to not only the tangible, physical environment that includes natural landscapes and land used for agriculture but also to the intangible ideas and norms associated with living outside of cities and/or densely populated areas. In other words the *platteland* includes the farm and *dorp*¹³ as part of a 'domesticated' wilderness.¹⁴

The socio-historical context in which the *plaasroman*¹⁵, together with its symbolic use of the *platteland*, became the dominant genre in Afrikaans fiction in the 1920s and 1930s can be traced back to the discovery of diamonds and gold in the 19th century.¹⁶ However it was especially during the first part of the 20th century and with increasing urbanisation that land

¹⁰ S. Dubow, 'Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Conceptualization of 'Race'', *The Journal for African History*, 1992, 33(2), p.210.

¹¹ H. Adam, Ethnic Mobilization and the Politics of Patronage, in H. Adam & H. Gilliom (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.64.

¹² P. Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the elimination of the native', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2006, 8(4), p.387-409.

¹³ The Afrikaans word for a town.

¹⁴ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.221.

¹⁵ A basic translation would be 'farm novel'.

¹⁶ J. Wenzel, 'The Pastoral Promise and the Political Imperative: The Plaasroman in an Era of Land Reform', *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, 2000, 46(1), p.93.

or the *platteland* became a powerful symbol in the Afrikaner nationalist cultural consciousness.¹⁷ This is evident in the popularity of the *plaasroman* and the re-emergence of the alternative collective term for Afrikaners as *Boere*.¹⁸ During this period when the city was an alien and unfamiliar space the *plaasroman* created a pastoral vision for these urbanised Afrikaners based on the myth of the return to the [soilearth](#).¹⁹ This would develop into an ideologically important genre justifying colonial subjugation and white supremacist claims to Afrikaner ownership of the land.²⁰ Further, the use of *Boer* and Afrikaner, as interchangeable terms of identification, strengthened the special and specific place of the *platteland* within Afrikaner nationalist identity.²¹

Twentieth-century Afrikaner nationalism furthermore saw the *platteland* as the ‘ancestral’ origin and homeland of Afrikaners. Once again literature in the form of the *plaasroman* provides an example of the production of such notions as part of the Afrikaner nationalist movement. Within these novels, the farm, as located in the *platteland*, is seen as the rural origins of Afrikaners and provides an illusion of continuity with what is seen as their collective history and identity.²² Culturally produced memories such as these contribute to what can be referred to as a nation’s narrative of descent.²³ By representing an intimate and exclusive connection between South African land and the Afrikaners, these novels justify the imperialistic territorialism of Afrikaners.²⁴ In this way, the *platteland* is given symbolic significance as the ‘ancestral’ home of the Afrikaner as a community imagined through Afrikaner nationalism.

The role of land within the ideological framework of Afrikaner nationalism suggests that the use of landscapes within Afrikaans-language films could be analysed as more than a record of reality that forms a backdrop for artificial human performances.²⁵ The images of

¹⁷ E. Delmond, ‘Laubser, land and labour: image-making and Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s and early 1930s’, *De Arte*, 64, 2000, p.16.

¹⁸ *Boere* is the Afrikaans word for farmers.

¹⁹ E. Delmond, ‘Laubser, land and labour: image-making and Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s and early 1930s’, *De Arte*, 64, 2000, p.5-6.

²⁰ N. Devarenne, ‘Nationalism and the farm Novel in South Africa, 1883-2004’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35(3), 2009, p.627.

²¹ E. Delmont, ‘Laubser, land and labour: image-making and Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s and early 1930s’, *De Arte*, 64, 2000, p.7

²² N. Devarenne, ‘Nationalism and the farm Novel in South Africa, 1883-2004’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35(3), 2009, p.632.

²³ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.17.

²⁴ N. Devarenne, ‘Nationalism and the farm Novel in South Africa, 1883-2004’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35(3), 2009, p.637.

²⁵ G. Harper & J. Rayner, *Cinema and Landscape*, Bristol: Intellect Ltd., 2010, p.22.

land, used as part of the landscape and its functional position within the Afrikaner nationalist framework, serve as a communal cultural contact between the filmmaker and audience.²⁶ This cultural contact, that is to say the moment an audience is exposed to and comes into contact with these films as cultural productions, in turn serves as an element through which national identity can be maintained, questioned or propagated.²⁷

The *platteland*, as an element of landscape within film, is encoded with meaning by the filmmaker as a producer of film. It is possible that this specific encoding might reflect similar binaries evident in the *plaasroman*. It is a binary in which the *platteland* signified Afrikaner nationalism, while the city was demonised as a place of rampant capitalism, corruption, vice, ill-health and therefore un-Afrikaner cosmopolitanism.²⁸ Thus the focus will be to determine whether the encoded meaning and position given to land within the films links with the identity of whiteness as part of the ideological framework of Afrikaner nationalism. This study therefore aims to contribute to the broader scholarship of South African cinema and studies of land and cultural and political identity formation.

The romanticised geography of the *platteland*, through its portrayal in poetry, literature, paintings and film, were rendered as cultural myths.²⁹ It is romanticised in that it symbolises a place where harmony exists between peasant life and the natural world, a landscape from where the most authentic expressions of culture arises.³⁰

This link between nationhood and landscape is created in two ways. It can occur through the nationalisation of nature and/or through the naturalisation of the nation. The first implies the process through which a nation establishes an imaginary homeland for itself by settling, naming and historically associating itself with a particular territory.³¹ The second refers to when the nation comes to view itself as the offspring of its natural landscape.³²

Afrikaans-language film did not initiate this process, but helped assimilate the landscape into a group of national icons and in the process mediated the construction of an imagined community and their relation to land. Connecting the visuals of a certain landscape with a specific narrative elevated the local and familiar to the national and significant,

²⁶ G. Harper & J. Rayner, *Cinema and Landscape*, 2010, p.22.

²⁷ G. Harper & J. Rayner, *Cinema and Landscape*, 2010, p.22.

²⁸ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.22.

²⁹ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.49.

³⁰ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, 2008, p.22.

³¹ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, 2008, p.48.

³² J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, 2008, p.48.

embedding these landscapes with Afrikaner nationalist identity and therefore Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.³³

The result of this kind of cinematic mediation is thus an image of the world manufactured by Afrikaner nationalism. Geographical territory and nationhood are so intertwined in most people's minds that it is almost impossible to talk about a 'national consciousness' in isolation from the physical territory with which that consciousness identifies itself.³⁴

As we are dealing here, to a limited extent, with identities and the formulation thereof in relation to whiteness and land through film, it is important to keep in mind that both individual and collective identities are multiple and fluid.³⁵ Identities are constructed from various building blocks which themselves are constructed. Identity then emerges emphasising one or some combination of these building blocks depending on space and time.³⁶ Therefore the created and mythological Afrikaner identity that emerged from this process was propagated through poetry, literature and film.³⁷

The time frame for this research will be 1961 to 1994. The date of departure is significant because the period of the early 1950s to the end of the 1970s saw the peak of a collective generalised Afrikaner nationalist identity.³⁸ The year 1960 witnessed the Sharpeville massacre and the banning of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). These events are not only milestones in the history of South Africa, but they are also events that determined and changed the course of South Africa's history. This, together with high economic growth under the leadership of Hendrik Verwoerd when apartheid seemed to be at its most robust in the early 1960s, placed Afrikaners within a very powerful position that included control over cultural production.³⁹ The year 1994 marks the beginning not only of a new political reality for Afrikaners after the first democratic election, but also the end of the Afrikaner nationalist republic which ushered in a period when those

³³ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.50.

³⁴ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, 2008, p.14.

³⁵ D. O'Meara, *Thinking Theoretically? Afrikaner Nationalism and the Comparative Theory of the Politics of Identity: A Tribute to Harold Wolpe*, Paper presented to the Inaugural Conference of the Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust, University of the Western Cape, 1997, p.7.

³⁶ D. O'Meara, *Thinking Theoretically? Afrikaner Nationalism and the Comparative Theory of the Politics of Identity: A Tribute to Harold Wolpe*, 1997, p.7.

³⁷ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.117.

³⁸ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.7-8.

³⁹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.488-489.

who came to be known as Afrikaners went through periods of rapid change and to a certain degree the disintegration of political Afrikaner nationalism in the 1980s and 1990s.⁴⁰

The research aim within this context and period will be threefold as part of the analysis of the intersections of land and whiteness in Afrikaans-language films. The overarching objective is to locate and analyse the intersections between whiteness, land and film as represented in Afrikaans-language films within the historical context of production and exhibition in South Africa within the period indicated. The secondary objective will be concerned with locating the meaning of land and its significance in Afrikaner culture as represented in these Afrikaans-language films. A third objective is related to the impact of these films and is achieved through determining the impact of Afrikaans-language films in shaping Afrikaner conceptions of cultural and political identity and the place of land in this identity.

1.1 Literature Review

When considering the work that has been done on the history of cinema in South Africa it has to be mentioned that this research will not be undertaken in a corrective sense. It will rather attempt to elaborate and build on some of the work that has already been done in this field of research. Even though this research will be based on an extensive collection of primary sources, a short discussion of some key texts, and how they relate to this topic, is important.

The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Cinema,⁴¹ by Keyan Tomaselli is one of these key texts which provide an introduction to various aspects of South African film and the South African film industry. It contributes to an understanding of how the apartheid government used cinema as a legitimising agent by representing apartheid as a natural way of life. It also touches on Afrikaner nationalism and cinematic representations of land, but does not really speak of the link between these two elements within specifically Afrikaans-language films. Tomaselli provides substantial discussion and critique of numerous Afrikaans-language films but does not engage with meanings and representations of land and whiteness in these films.

⁴⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.562-563, p.626.

⁴¹ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989.

*Foregrounding the background: Landscape and ideology in South African films*⁴² written by Edwin Hees is a fundamental text to this research in that Hees analyses the links between landscape and ideology. This is of great importance when considering the ideological framework of Afrikaner nationalism and the place of film, officially and unofficially, within this framework. Through his analysis it becomes evident that many, if not most, of the films produced in South Africa during the years of official Afrikanerdom and apartheid have racist undertones and that landscape as an element of film was also racialised.⁴³ According to Hees landscape in film is not a neutral resource but was used within Afrikaans-language films to naturalise the segregationist discourse of apartheid South Africa and its preoccupation with spatial control.⁴⁴ This research is undoubtedly related to that of Hees, the difference is that this research focuses on the *platteland* as landscape and how its representation was used to naturalise white entitlement to the land within the whiteness encapsulated by Afrikaner nationalism.

The doctoral thesis, *From Matieland to the Mother City: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*⁴⁵, by E.J. Riley, focuses on analysing the representation of landscape, place and identity in the Cape Province⁴⁶ during the years of apartheid. Riley examines the way in which commercial fiction films produced within a specific space contribute and offer insight into the construction of culture and identity. Riley's doctoral research sheds light on how the Cape Province, as a space was used, as part of an apartheid landscape, to inform specific discourses and values through its interpretation and representation in films. She points out, for example, the multiple ways in which the Cape Province was portrayed as the foundational landscape of white South African history, a representation that gave legitimacy to the claim of the Cape as a historically white man's land. Riley pays attention to how the representation of the Cape in South African films has changed through time to reflect the social, political and ideological changes that were taking place nationally during this time. Throughout this paper there is attention given to land as landscape and the implications of the ways in which it is used and, in some instances, of its

⁴² E. Hees, 'Foregrounding the background: Landscape and ideology in South African film', *South African Theatre Journal*, 10(2), p.63 -84.

⁴³ E. Hees, 'Foregrounding the background: Landscape and ideology in South African film', (10) 2, 1996, p.77.

⁴⁴ E. Hees, 'Foregrounding the background: Landscape and ideology in South African film', (10) 2, 1996, p.77.

⁴⁵ E.J. Riley, '*From Matieland to Mother City: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*', (Unpublished Thesis Presented for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, 2012).

⁴⁶ Roughly what is known today as the provinces of the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape.

link to whiteness. However, there is no exclusive attention given to the intersections of land and whiteness within specifically Afrikaans-language films and the ideological framework of Afrikaner nationalism.

Another key text in relation to the portrayal of land and landscape within the South African historical context is *Washed with Sun: Landscape and the Making of White South Africa*⁴⁷ by Jeremy Foster. This source serves as a good introduction to how space can be appropriated by an individual or by a collective and how space can also be used to craft and/or recraft the identity of the individual and/or collective. The author focuses on art and architecture to argue that the South African landscape is firstly a colonial landscape and, secondly, that it has been 'whitened' through different developments. Most central to these developments are the connections that Foster points out between landscape and national identity and the two ways he identifies in which these occur. These two approaches, known as the nationalisation of nature and the naturalisation of the nation, are both of great value in pursuing this research. Though limited to paintings and architecture, Foster illustrates how these mediums act as substitutes for direct engagement between a particular nation and the landscape, but does not look at how film could also possibly be used in a similar manner. By identifying the imagistic (using images to express ideas and emotions) placing of the nation within a specific geographical territory through art and architecture Foster contributes immensely to the approach this research will take.

Herman Giliomee's seminal text, *Die Afrikaners*, provides a crucial historical understanding of the development and changes within Afrikaner nationalism in the twentieth century.⁴⁸ This context is essential to understanding the ideological landscape within which Afrikaans-language films were produced and consumed. Giliomee illustrates that Afrikaners were not a monolithic group and nor was Afrikaner nationalism, in its formulation and articulation, static or unproblematic but rather, responsive to a broader changing context. In view of this, the extent to which Afrikaans-language films were equally responsive to changing conceptions and articulations of Afrikaner nationalist ideology and its link with land will be an important component of this study.

A collection of papers edited by Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido, *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, includes articles specifically by

⁴⁷ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008.

⁴⁸ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004.



Isabel Hofmeyer⁴⁹, Stanley Greenberg⁵⁰ and Deborah Posel⁵¹ that have greatly contributed to an understanding of Afrikaner nationalism. These papers touch on a wide ranging number of elements. This includes the crisis apartheid experienced during the late 1970s during attempts at reconstruction and the rejection of orthodox apartheid ideology for pragmatism in the 1980s. Although none of these papers are directly linked to the topics of film, land and whiteness they contribute to a crucial understanding of the historical context. Building a Nation from Words: Afrikaans Language, Literature and Ethnic Identity, 1902 – 1924⁵², by Isabel Hofmeyer needs to be singled out. Hofmeyer examines how Afrikaans-language literature was used by Afrikaner nationalism as cultural forms of ideological innovation during the early part of the 20th century. Afrikaans literature, as a medium, was utilized to elaborate on nationalist notions and contributed to creating a national history and identity.⁵³ This relates to the possible ways in which Afrikaans-language films similarly played into the Afrikaner nationalist framework.

Daniel Bernardi's edited collection of essays focuses on representations of whiteness in Hollywood cinema. Bernardi's work covers a range of film genres from different periods, from the beach films of the 1960s to *Star Wars* and fantasy films of later periods. Bernardi's focus is on the different ways in which whiteness manifests in these films. Cinematic representations and meanings of whiteness are analysed, for example, through focussing on how concepts such as manifest destiny and civil religion are deployed. Bernardi's analysis focus not only on how land and whiteness are connected in the narrative of Western films, but also in the way land is used as a mere 'backdrop' to reinforce these conceptions. What films include and exclude, in the narrative, film sequence and film frame are important considerations in Bernardi's analysis of the intersection between whiteness and land in the American context. Similarly, considerations of cinematic inclusions and exclusions in

⁴⁹ I. Hofmeyer, 'Building a nation from words: Afrikaans language, literature and ethnic identity, 1902 – 1924' in *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, edited by S. Marks and S. Trapido. London: Longman Group, 1987, p.95 – 123.

⁵⁰ S. Greenberg, 'Ideological struggles within the South African state' in *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, edited by S. Marks and S. Trapido. London: Longman Group, 1987, p.389 – 418.

⁵¹ D. Posel, 'The language of domination, 1978 - 1983' in *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, edited by S. Marks and S. Trapido. London: Longman Group, 1987, p.419-444.

⁵² I. Hofmeyer, 'Building a nation from words: Afrikaans language, literature and ethnic identity, 1902 – 1924' in *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, edited by S. Marks and S. Trapido. London: Longman Group, 1987, p.95 – 123.

⁵³ I. Hofmeyer, 'Building a nation from words: Afrikaans language, literature and ethnic identity, 1902 – 1924' in *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, edited by S. Marks and S. Trapido. London: Longman Group, 1987, p.110, 116.

analyses of the selected Afrikaans-language films will be important considerations in how land and whiteness was configured in the South African context.

1.2. Methodology

Afrikaans-language films are used as primary sources of this study for the reason that cinema as a cultural institution, and films as cultural products, impacts our historical lives and future through its interpretation of race and identity.⁵⁴ Afrikaans-language films will be used in this research as sources of historical evidence in more than one way, as will be discussed below.

Films as primary sources are used in two distinct ways. Firstly, film can be defined as a “recorder of reality”, a “manufacturer of reality” and also a “part of reality”.⁵⁵ As both recorder and a part of reality, film acts as an agent *in* history. Film *in* history therefore considers the ways in which films have impacted public perceptions, opinions and by extension, the adoption of markers of cultural and political identity. The methodological approach to films *in* history is based on a study of audience reception. Afrikaans news media reviews of films, letters to editors from filmgoers, film industry publications, are among the primary sources that will be used to analyse the impact of films in shaping Afrikaner perceptions and opinions.

Secondly, films will be used as sources of historical information about the time in which they were made. In other words, because films both embody and reflect the moment of production, they provide historical evidence about the society, polity, the filmmaker and audiences; evidence about the values, preoccupations and perceptions of that moment of production. For example, films about World War II made during the course of the war, provide historical evidence not only about the war but also about the broader society and how it viewed and experienced war.⁵⁶

In addition to using films as historical sources for information about context of production, exhibition and reception, films are also used as sources of historical evidence based on [the](#) analyses of content and cinematic styles and techniques. In the case of the current research, close textual analyses of the films will focus on the iconography of the *platteland* and how it relates to the ideals and values of Afrikaner nationalism and the

⁵⁴ D. Bernardi (Ed.), *The Persistence of Whiteness: race and contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, London: Routledge, 2008, p.xvi.

⁵⁵ T. Miller and R. Stam (Ed.) *A Companion to Film Theory*, Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 1999, p.3.

⁵⁶ See for example, G. Eley, ‘Finding the People’s War: Film, British Collective Memory and World War II’, *The American Historical Review*, 106(3), June 2001, p.818-838.

resulting interpretation and portrayal of a particular reality rooted in a specific time, place and discourse. This will be done by paying close attention to the way in which land is portrayed as a space and the values it is portrayed as inherently symbolising. In other words, looking at what the filmic *platteland* means to white Afrikaners regarding their sense of place and self. As Pronay argues, 'it is not the impact of a single film or television programme which matters, but the cumulative effect of regular exposure to certain stereotypes and viewpoints.'⁵⁷

Part of the methodology will be the consideration of technical aspects such as camera angles and framing. Cinematic placement, in other words when, where and how land is used as part of the landscape and especially in relation to plot and character, are important considerations in textual analyses. The use of narration and/or music during these landscape scenes that contain land and the nature of the narration and/or music will have to be taken into account as this contributes to what these mean. Simply stated, all the elements that gives meaning to these images, the visual text of these images, must be taken into account.

a) Selection of Material

This research will be based on textual analyses of selected Afrikaans-language films covering the period 1961-1994. Five filmmakers have been selected and these are; Jans Rautenbach, Franz Marx, Jan Scholtz, Katinka Heyns and Regardt van den Berg. These filmmakers occupy a specific space as respected and influential individuals within the Afrikaans-language film industry and broader culture. Most of these individuals had, or continue to have, careers in the film industry that span over a decade and have directed films regarded by some as iconic within the Afrikaans-language film industry. Films that have the South African countryside or, as previously stated, the *platteland* as part of its narrative will be prioritised.

Other primary sources include archival material such as the Department of Trade and Industries material pertaining to the state film subsidy and the National Film, Television and Sound Archives. Major Afrikaans-language newspapers such as *Rapport*, *Die Burger*, etc. will also be consulted. Film industry magazines are additional primary sources. The documentary archives of Afrikaner cultural organisations such as the FAK (Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings) are also important as primary sources.

⁵⁷ N. Pronay, 'The 'Moving Picture' and Historical Research', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 18:3, Historians and the Movies: The State of the Art, Part 1, (July 1983), p.365-395.

1.3. Structure of Content

The structure of the study will be chronological. Following an introduction, each of the four decades will be a separate chapter. Within each chapter the relevant films will be analysed within the historical context of their production. These textual analyses will focus on the extent to which the films reflect and engage with Afrikaner nationalist ideology and the broader political context. A representative selection of films will be discussed chronologically within each decade. This will be followed by analyses of the films and discussions of audience reception.

This first chapter is a brief introduction to the aim of the study. Here concepts will be explained in terms of the study as well as the methodologies to be used in the analysis. This chapter also provides a literature review regarding the secondary sources and presents an overview of the primary source material.

Chapter two will focus on the very first two films produced in the second half of the decade by the director Jans Rautenbach. *Die Kandidaat* (The Candidate) and *Katrina* are two of the three films considered as part of a trilogy by Rautenbach on Afrikaner identity. Textual analyses of these films will be placed within the broader context of a decade that began with the Sharpeville massacre and saw the rise of movements such as the *Sestigers*.

The 1970s, as chapter three, begin with the last instalment of Rautenbach's trilogy on Afrikaner identity, *Jannie Totsiens* (Goodbye Jannie). This decade witnessed more than fifteen films directed by three of the directors researched, Jans Rautenbach, Jan Scholtz and Franz Marx. The majority of these films are light hearted entertainment and mostly comedic or romantic stories with some drama. These include *Dit Was Aand en Dit Was More* (It was Night and it was Morning), *Herfsland* (Autumland) and *Weerskant die Nag* (Both Sides of the Night). The reasons for this level of production in terms of quantity will be placed within what is considered as the last decade of the peak of collective Afrikaner nationalist identity.

Chapter four will look at the increased involvement of the South African military north of its borders inspired by films like *Boetie Gaan Border Toe* (Brother Goes to the Border) by director Regardt van den Bergh. As the 1980s progressed the internal and external pressure on the Afrikaner nationalist government increased and this coincided with a steady decline in the quantity of Afrikaans-language films. It will be considered whether the place and importance (or even absence) of land within films from this decade reflect some of the changing concerns of certain film makers related to the historical context. This chapter ends with the first film directed by Katinka Heyns, *Fiela se Kind* (Fielas Child).

In Chapter five we find only four films produced by the directors in question, of which the first three were produced in the first three years of the decade. A key question this chapter will consider is the degree of impact the broader context of the 1990s had, with important shifts in the political and economic life of the country. It will focus on the question of whether this decade experienced a decline in Afrikaans-language film production, and if so, what this would be attributed to.

The concluding chapter will summarise the deductions and interpretations in the study. The aim and purpose of the study will once again be highlighted but with the addition of the final evaluation of the full study.

2. Chapter Two

The year 1960 marked one among many turning points in South African history. It was a year which witnessed the Sharpeville massacre, the banning of the ANC and the PAC, the introduction of a state of emergency and Prime Minister Hendrick Verwoerd's announcement of a referendum to decide on a republic. After a successful campaign the referendum passed and in May 1961 the Republic of South Africa was born. It was during these first few years of the 1960s that more and more Afrikaner institutions and organisations, such as the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) and later the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC)⁵⁸, became vital instruments in strengthening the hold of Verwoerdian ideology within the Afrikaner community and in the newly formed Republic.⁵⁹ These developments and formations provided the necessary support and motivation for Verwoerd to steer the development of his vision for apartheid into its final phase.⁶⁰ Towards the mid-1960s Verwoerdian apartheid was firmly entrenched in most aspects of South African life and Afrikaner nationalist ideology dictated the nationalist government's agenda. The NP government saw to it that Afrikaner nationalist ideology lay at the basis of most legislation that in itself influenced the role of various institutions and industries as they had to contribute to the maintenance and development of 'white' South Africa. To the South African film industry and environment direct government involvement and the gearing of the industry to play its part in the nationalist agenda was nothing new.

By the time of Verwoerd's death in 1966 South African cinema and more specifically Afrikaans-language cinema was part of the South African landscape. This is evident not only in the small but consistent number of films produced during the 1960s⁶¹, but also when considering the Afrikaner nationalist government's involvement in the industry through official legislation. This legislation included the state subsidy scheme that was established in 1956.⁶² This financial subsidy used gross net income as the sole criterion for qualification for state support to the film industry which at this time was a predominantly 'white' industry. The film subsidy was introduced as an attempt to establish and develop a 'national' film industry but given apartheid racial segregation, a national industry was by definition a 'white'

⁵⁸ Specifically after the backlash from conservatives after the Cottesloe declaration of December 1960 at a gathering of the World Council of Churches in Cottesloe, Johannesburg that criticised apartheid from a theological point of view. .

⁵⁹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.475 – 477.

⁶⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.475.

⁶¹ L. van Nierop, *Daar doer in die Fliek*, Pretoria: Protea, 2016, p.457-458.

⁶² K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.29.

film industry. This subsidy was further differentiated by differential support for English- and Afrikaans-language films.

Since its inception in 1956 the state subsidy scheme had been frequently reviewed. The amendments made in 1969, for example, were an attempt to further stimulate the production of Afrikaans-language films. The changes made increased the subsidy of Afrikaans-language films from 44 percent to 55 percent whereas the subsidy for English-language films stayed at 44 percent.⁶³ The subsidy made it less of a financial risk to produce films in South Africa by giving locally produced films a good chance to recoup costs and make a profit.⁶⁴ However, because of the film industry's dependence on the state to balance profits and losses, a strong possibility existed that the same state would eventually exercise power over the industry in question.⁶⁵ Given the strong support apartheid policies enjoyed among white South Africans one can postulate the extent to which the state would have needed to exercise ideological control over content. For example, Gairoonisa Paleker, in her assessment of the B-Scheme subsidy and the 'black film industry' that was established by means of this subsidy, argued that white filmmakers frequently acted as surrogates of the apartheid state. White filmmakers assumed this position in two important ways. Firstly, and as Keyan Tomaselli argues in the case of Jamie Uys, most white filmmakers uncritically accepted the ideological constructs and policies that formed part of the Afrikaner nationalist framework and therefore offered very limited critique. Secondly, surrogacy can also be argued when considering the degree of self-censorship exercised by many white filmmakers, thereby rendering the need for continuous stringent state control and regulation somewhat unnecessary.⁶⁶

In spite of this surrogate position that many white filmmakers would have assumed, the apartheid state would nonetheless have wanted to exercise utmost vigilance in the matter of the content of films. This influence over the film industry was exercised through its financial involvement and more pertinently, through censorship. By 1931 the Entertainment Act provided for censorship clearance of films before public screening, this however mostly applied to imported material.⁶⁷ This was changed by the Entertainment Act of 1963 that, for

⁶³ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.35.

⁶⁴ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.40-41.

⁶⁵ G. Paleker, 'Creating a 'black film industry': State intervention and films for African audiences in South Africa, 1956-1990', University of Cape Town, 2009, p.51.

⁶⁶ G. Paleker, 'Creating a 'black film industry': State intervention and films for African audiences in South Africa, 1956-1990', University of Cape Town, 2009, p.51.

⁶⁷ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.14.



the first time, made formal provision for the censorship of locally produced material.⁶⁸ The institution that was created through this new legislation was the Publications Control Board (PCB) which had an undeniable effect on the film industry and the content produced by this industry.⁶⁹

Towards the end of the 1960s Afrikaner might was at its highest and apartheid seemed untouchable.⁷⁰ Issues relating to national symbols and language were central to this new wave of [state sanctioned](#) Afrikaner nationalism.⁷¹ The first five year anniversary celebrations of the Republic on May 31st 1966 seemed to confirm the unwavering momentum of Afrikaner nationalism and its ideology of apartheid. As part of the celebrations a festival was held at the Voortrekker Monument and an estimated crowd of 750 000 attended the celebrations, with some describing the event as a highlight in the history of Afrikaner nationalism.⁷² This did not, however, mean that the nationalist government did not experience critique and/or challenges with regards to its authority and rigid ideology. [Cracks were emerging in the façade of Afrikaner nationalist unity as rising internal dissidence challenged the proclaimed hegemony of Afrikaner nationalism of the 1960s.](#)

2.1 *Die Kandidaat*

In 1968 an Afrikaans-language film concerned with Afrikaner identity and what constitutes a 'true' Afrikaner was released. *Die Kandidaat*⁷³, directed by Jans Rautenbach, not only created some controversy but also catapulted Rautenbach to an iconic status as the cinematic voice of the *Sestigers*.⁷⁴ The *Sestigers* was a loosely bound group of writers critical of apartheid that included individuals such as Breyten Breytenbach, Andre P. Brink and Etienne Leroux. In 1973 as part of a paper presented at a symposium concerned with the *Sestigers* Andre P. Brink quotes an unpublished paper he wrote in January 1960 which speaks to the spirit and motivation of this group of writers. According to Brink's article the purpose of the *Sestigers* was to challenge the narrowness, traditions, prudery and blind

⁶⁸ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.14.

⁶⁹ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.14.

⁷⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.487-488.

⁷¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.463.

⁷² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.488.

⁷³ *Die Kandidaat* (The Candidate), J. Rautenbach (Director) & E. Nofal (Producer). South Africa: Emil Nofal Films, 1968.

⁷⁴ M. Botha, & D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, Parklands: genugtig! Uitgewers, 2006, p.51.

ancestral glorification that had a grip on Afrikaner society and identity through their art.⁷⁵ It is clear that this group of people associated the above mentioned characteristics and their advocacy through censorship legislation as one of the foundational causes of the volatile nature of the relationship between Afrikaners and the majority of South Africa's inhabitants. The *Sestigers* wanted to create art that could stand independently as both art and as critique, uninhibited by the "narrowness and bias" of the environment they found themselves in.⁷⁶ The emergence of the *Sestigers* in the early 1960s can be seen as part of what academic Willem de Klerk referred to as the *verligtes* in 1967. This referred to Afrikaners who had made a break with tradition and campaigned for inclusivity, openness and freedom regarding Afrikaner identity and race relations.⁷⁷

As part of the *verligtes* Rautenbach was seen as using his films to raise serious, and often critical, questions regarding Afrikaner identity and the role of the Afrikaner in a multicultural society. These films are products of a very specific social, political, economic and cultural context which was characterised on the one hand by apartheid and on the other by opposition to apartheid. This is not to say that these polarities were the only defining characteristics of South African society but rather to acknowledge that many other contextual factors were subsumed within these binaries. Rautenbach's filmic output during this period occurred when cultural production in Afrikaans-language cinema was strong relative to film production in other languages due to the significant support from the National Party government as well as the broader Afrikaner community. The Afrikaans-language film industry was further boosted by SANLAM's takeover of Twentieth Century Fox (SA) in 1969.

Moral and political censorship through the PCB under the leadership of Jannie Kruger ensured that very few locally produced films critically engaged with the socio-political realities of apartheid.⁷⁸ Even before *Die Kandidaat* was released it grabbed the attention of the media which in turn eventually connected Rautenbach to the Cape 'establishment' that consisted of writers, academics and intellectuals.⁷⁹ This in turn would prove to be extremely helpful in getting the film past the local PCB and its bureaucrats.⁸⁰ After the PCB demanded

⁷⁵ A. Brink, 'Die konteks van sestig: Herkoms en situasie', in J. Polley (Eds), *Verslag van die simposium oor die sestigers*, University of Cape Town, 1973, p.29.

⁷⁶ A. Brink, in J. Polley (Eds), *Verslag van die simposium oor die sestigers*, University of Cape Town, 1973, p.29.

⁷⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.500.

⁷⁸ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, Parklands: genugtig! Uitgewers, 2006, p.47.

⁷⁹ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, 2006, p.45.

⁸⁰ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, 2006, p.45.

that certain scenes be cut from the film Rautenbach shared these with his friends in the media. In the *Beeld* of the 21st of April, 1968 Schalk Pienaar compares *Die Kandidaat* with the play *Die Pluimsaad Waai Vêr* (A tuft blown far) by N.P. van Wyk Louw which was part of the 5th anniversary celebrations of the Republic.⁸¹ It is clear that for Pienaar *Die Kandidaat* has the same importance as the play by the prominent Afrikaans writer Van Wyk Louw. Afrikaner nationalists were critical and scornful of the play because of its representation of Afrikaners as fallible human beings and the questions it raised regarding the Afrikaner nationalist notions of freedom and independence.⁸² It is clear that Pienaar saw this as part of the critical voice from within the nationalist establishment. By making the conflict public and placing the PCB in a bad light Rautenbach, with the help of the media, succeeded in getting the film approved with minimal cuts. Even though this was not Rautenbach's last encounter with the PCB, the content and resulting attention and controversy *Die Kandidaat* garnered placed Rautenbach firmly within the *verligte* camp of the late 1960s.

The plot of *Die Kandidaat* revolves around the search for a new director for the Adriaan Delport Foundation after the passing of its former director. The Adriaan Delport Foundation is a fictional Afrikaner organisation, modelled on the Broederbond and dedicated to the protection and wellbeing of the Afrikaner *volk*. Based on the recommendation of the chairman of the foundation, played by Gert van den Berg, and one of the board members Paula Neethling (Marie du Toit), the board interviews Dr. Jan le Roux (Roelf Jacobs) as the potential candidate for the position. Dr. Jan le Roux seems like the perfect man for the position due to his education and his work amongst less privileged and troubled Afrikaner boys at Boys Town, an institution situated in the *platteland*, namely the Magaliesburg, of which he is both the founder and principal.

The majority of the board members portray fictional characters that represent prominent positions within the ideological framework of Afrikaner nationalism in the context of the 1960s. These include the *sestigers* writer (Cobus Rossouw), the *volksmoeder*⁸³ (Hermien Dommissie), the carpenter as representative of the worker (Willem Esterhuizen), the farmer, the Dutch Reformed minister (Jacques Loots), the professor as protector of the Afrikaans language (Tromp Terre'Blanche), the government official as the representative of official apartheid (Lourens Schultz) and the business man as chairman of the foundation

⁸¹ National Archives of South Africa, Pretoria, S. Pienaar, 'Hierdie films gaan opslae maak', *Beeld*, 21 March 1968, Source PR, Vol. 2/69, Ref. Nr. 2/1/3/3.

⁸² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.488.

⁸³ Translates to 'mother of the nation'.

(Gert van den Bergh). During the proses of the interview it is the *sestigers* writer and winner of the Herzog prize for Afrikaans literature, Anton du Toit (Cobus Rossouw) who relentlessly plays devil's advocate by exposing certain truths concerning Dr. Jan le Roux's past. These truths do not fit into the board members diverse definitions of a true Afrikaner and thus raise questions concerning the suitability of the Dr le Roux's candidacy for the position. These include, for example, the fact that his fiancée is an English speaking Catholic.

The film is set in contemporary 1968. The opening sequence, filmed at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre built in 1962, reflects the urban setting familiar to the majority of Afrikaners by the late 1960s. With the beginning of the 20th century only 10 percent of Afrikaners lived in cities and towns. By 1960 this had increased to 75 percent.⁸⁴ Thus the sophisticated, clinical and modern urban milieu depicted in the opening sequence and the clinical boardroom where the majority of scenes are set is far removed from the traditional rural societies [which](#) were [idealised in](#) Afrikaner nationalism ~~was forged~~.⁸⁵

The modern boardroom where most of the film is set is filled with busts and paintings of Afrikaner leaders such as Verwoerd, Hertzog and Malan. This creates the notion that the Foundation at its core is dedicated to the 'Afrikaner cause'. In other words the work the foundation does is seen as in line with that of the *volksleiers*⁸⁶. This dedication is confirmed by the positive response from the board members after Dr. le Roux sets out his plan for the Foundation under his directorship and the bright future he envisions for the Afrikaner *volk* through hard work and bravery. However, even in these first scenes the hypocritical and superficial nature of the board members, that becomes more and more evident as the plot unfolds, starts to surface.

It is the *volksmoeder* that is the first to expose the superficial nature of the conventional characteristics that some hold to be that of a true Afrikaner when she praises Dr. le Roux on his beautiful open face. The integrity of the rest of the board is brought into question as one by one most of them are exposed as superficial and hypocritical. Dishonesty, manipulation, adultery and disunity within the board is exposed through the many discussions that occur in between and during the board discussions.⁸⁷ Rautenbach uses the *sestigers*

⁸⁴H. Gilliomee, The Growth of Afrikaner Identity, in H. Adam & H. Gilliomee (Eds), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.104.

⁸⁵ D. Welsh, 'Urbanisation and Solidarity of Afrikaner Nationalism', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1969, 7(2), p.266.

⁸⁶ Afrikaans term for 'leader of the nation'.

⁸⁷ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.84-85.



writer to investigate the Afrikaner and to draw attention to the serious problems and contradictions of an Afrikaner identity within the Afrikaner nationalist ideological framework. There is no doubt that *Die Kandidaat* poses very serious questions concerning Afrikaner identity and the role of Afrikaners.

That being said, through villainising the board as a whole, but specifically the daughter of the founder of the foundation Paula Neethling (Marie du Toit), Rautenberg exposes certain myths that form part of the Afrikaner nationalist ideology. Among these myths, the corrupting influence of the city as displayed in the *plaasroman* genre finds its manifestation in Paula who represents a new Afrikaner woman; urban, cold, manipulative and power hungry.⁸⁸ Paula, and by implication the board, is portrayed as a product of the capitalist, corrupt and un-Afrikaner cosmopolitan city.⁸⁹ Here we see that Rautenberg seems to be informed by the old classic Western pastoral myth that implies a binary that critiques the urban and modern as the site of moral decay and cultural compromise.⁹⁰

This idea of the city as a corrupting influence on traditional Afrikaner values and morals as portrayed in *Die Kandidaat* reflect the findings of official reports such as the findings of the Du Toit Commission in the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into European Occupancy of the Rural Areas*. In this 1960 report the city is framed as a breeding ground for “foreign schools of thought such as atheism, international liberalism, materialism etc.”⁹¹ When comparing the similarities between the findings of the official report and the encoded meaning given to the character of Paula Neethling and by extension the majority of the board and its placement within the urban environment, it is clear that Rautenberg shared this notion of the city with official Afrikaner nationalist doctrine despite his label as a *verligte*.

Rautenberg is in fact so critical of the corrupting influence of urban modernity on Afrikaners that he endows an English-speaker, le Roux’s fiancée, with the virtue that is lacking in Paula Neethling. Where Paula Neethling is depicted as hard, manipulative, grasping and without any qualms about breaking up le Roux’s engagement, Jackie as a virtuous woman is soft, kind-hearted, loyal and supportive of le Roux’s ambition and dreams.

⁸⁸ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenberg: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur, Parklands: genugtig!* Uitgewers, 2006, p.51.

⁸⁹ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.22.

⁹⁰ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.169.

⁹¹ As quoted in D. Welsh, ‘Urbanisation and the Solidarity of Afrikaner Nationalism’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1969, 7(2), p.267.

She is in fact so virtuous that the foreman (Don Leonard) goes to great lengths to prevent any harm or pain being inflicted on her. Rautenbach has achieved several things with these two female characters, as well as their placement (*platteland* and the city) and their characterisation. Firstly, it is the Englishwoman who is keeping faith with the land, and who embodies the honesty and simplicity of the land, as opposed to the Afrikaner woman who has shed her connection to the land (and thereby her Afrikaner identity) and adopted the polish and hardness of the city. Secondly, with this framing of these two characters, Rautenbach is opening the land up to English-speaking South Africans. The *platteland* is now able to embrace both English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans. Excluded from this rapprochement are of course all **B**lack South Africans who are invisible in this film.

The focus must now shift to the character central to the plot, the candidate, Dr. Jan le Roux. Immediately after his initial presentation to the board of his plans for the Foundation as possible director two truths about Dr. le Roux are exposed by the *sestigers* writer Anton du Toit (Cobus Rossouw). The tattoo of five dots on his left hand is used to expose his troubled youth and involvement in criminal activities. Unknown to most of the board members this new information makes some of them question the integrity and suitability of the candidate as tattoos are seen as being unAfrikaner. The candidate himself ends up defending his true Afrikaner nature through pointing out his commitment to the Afrikaner *volk* and his triumph over his past.

This is followed by yet another revelation when the board hears of Dr. le Roux's engagement to a Catholic, English speaking white South African. Yet again this leads to some members questioning his suitability for the position, because some of the board members believe that marriage outside of the *volk* threatens the purity of the Afrikaner culture. The purity of the *volk* is thus of utmost importance and in this sense challenged by Rautenbach.⁹² Moreover Rautenbach achieves in *Die Kandidaat* the English-Afrikaner rapprochement that formed part of the [reorientation of NP policy and politics, idea of South Africanism](#).

Prior to this revelation the audience is made aware of Dr. le Roux's romantic involvement with Paula Neethling. After the information about Dr. le Roux's fiancé becomes known it is clear that the candidate himself is actually dishonest and unfaithful. In later scenes that follow it becomes clear that Paula Neethling, the urban black widow, wants to break up Dr le Roux's relationship and have him join her in the city. This series of events

⁹² K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.118.

reveal that not only is the board hypocritical in its ideas of what a true Afrikaner constitutes, but also that the candidate himself is not the honourable Afrikaner he portrays himself as being.

It is here where the place of the *platteland* as landscape and its role and symbolism as used in *Die Kandidaat* comes into question. Boys Town, the institution founded and headed by Dr. le Roux is situated in the Magaliesburg. Situated in the *platteland*, the aim of the institution is to rehabilitate troubled Afrikaner boys within an environment of discipline and agricultural labour. This is evident in the first scene set in the *platteland* where the Afrikaner boys from Boys Town are seen doing physical labour in an orchard.

The purpose of this institution and the place of the *platteland* in fulfilling that purpose is of great symbolic importance in *Die Kandidaat* not only to the young Afrikaners residing at the institution but also for Dr. le Roux. The link between the *platteland* and labour as depicted in this scene and others relates to the interchangeable use of the collective term *Boere* and Afrikaners during this period. The nationalist creation of the Afrikaner as the *boerenasie*⁹³ within this ideological framework is inseparable from the relationship between land and the labour of the land. This reflects the expression of Afrikaner nationalist sentiment through which Afrikaners hark back to a mythological golden age when they were free to pursue their traditional agrarian way of life.⁹⁴

It also feeds into the naturalist tradition wherein the *platteland* as place not only becomes a signifier of character but also a potential character-building force.⁹⁵ Within the Afrikaner nationalist ideological framework the *platteland* signified values such as honesty and truth because as a space it was seen as cultivating these same values.⁹⁶ This created an ideology in which the Afrikaners and their values were both seen as inherent to the land and embodying an old order with traditional values.⁹⁷ These values can further be linked to what was referred to as the Christian-national identity.⁹⁸ These values subconsciously sanitised the

⁹³ Translates to 'nation of farmers'.

⁹⁴ D. Welsh, 'Urbanisation and Solidarity of Afrikaner Nationalism', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1969, 7(2), p.266.

⁹⁵ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.85, 100.

⁹⁶ E. Delmond, 'Laubser, land and labour: image-making and Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s and early 1930s', *De Arte*, 64, 2000, p.10.

⁹⁷ E. Delmond, 'Laubser, land and labour: image-making and Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s and early 1930s', *De Arte*, 64, 2000, p.10.

⁹⁸ D. O'Meara, *Thinking Theoretically? Afrikaner Nationalism and the Comparative Theory of the Politics Identity: A Tribute to Harold Wolpe*, Paper presented to the Inaugural Conference of the Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust, University of the Western Cape, 1997, p.6.

land of the historical processes of thievery and violence through which it was acquired.⁹⁹ The purpose of this sanitised landscape was to legitimise the mythology of Afrikaner nationalism of Afrikaners as ‘natives’ of the *platteland*.¹⁰⁰ It is also important to consider that part of the culture of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness, as sustained and created through the portrayal of the *platteland* within the framework of Afrikaner nationalist ideology, is the link between land, religion and destiny. When combining the idea of destiny with the strong link between Afrikaner nationalism and Christianity, the idea of a manifest destiny seems inevitable.¹⁰¹ Civil religion and manifest destiny were not necessarily the main inspiration for the narratives and portrayals of the *platteland*, but assumptions such as the idea that the Afrikaner as a chosen people are the offspring of its natural landscape can be linked to notions of the Promised Land that forms part of both these ideas.¹⁰²

By placing the troubled Afrikaner school boys within this physical environment faith in the character-building potential of the *platteland* or Promised Land is reinforced in *Die Kandidaat*. In other words the fact that Boys Town as a place of improvement and rehabilitation is situated in the *platteland* feeds into existing nationalist ideology of the time. Towards the end of the film the *platteland* yet again symbolised the rehabilitation of Dr. le Roux and a return to true Afrikaner characteristics and identity.

After numerous debates on the suitability of Dr le Roux for the directorship of the foundation the board finally approves his appointment. The implication of one of the boys from Boys Town, Kallie (Regardt van den Bergh), in criminal activity and the breakup with his fiancé convinces Dr le Roux to decline the directorship. He confesses that his true place and purpose is in the *platteland* continuing his work at Boys Town for the sake of the Afrikaner *volk*. Through his actions the candidate proves his commitment to the Afrikaner cause and redeems his identity as a true Afrikaner. He does this by not adhering to the superficial and hypocritical definitions and characteristics of a true Afrikaner as voiced by the board members throughout the film but through his return to the land. His final words, saying farewell to Me. Neethling, represents not only the end of their affair but also a rejection of the city and its negative influence which she symbolises. This symbolises the return of the

⁹⁹ D. Bernardi, *The Persistence of Whiteness: race and contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, London: Routledge, 2008, p.3, 4.

¹⁰⁰ J. Beningfield, ‘Native lands: language, nation and landscape in the Taal Monument, Paarl, South Africa’, *Social Identities*, 10(4), 2004, p.522.

¹⁰¹ D. Griffiths & M.L.C. Prozesky, ‘The Politics of Dwelling: Being White/Being South African’, *Africa Today*, 56(4), 2010, p.32.

¹⁰² D. Bernardi, *The Persistence of Whiteness: race and contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, London: Routledge, 2008, p.3-4.

prodigal son to his 'ancestral' homeland and the virtues of simplicity, modesty and honesty. In this sense Dr. le Roux subscribes to the typical image of a *volksleier* as ordinary, down-to-earth man, rather than a distant figure on a remote throne.¹⁰³ Dr. le Roux was still part of an exclusive *volk* and his purpose was to safeguard the future of Afrikanerdom. The place of landscape within this film communicated that the *platteland* stands central to Afrikaner identity, even to the modern and educated Afrikaner Dr. le Roux, reaffirming the Afrikaner nationalist narrative of descent to the urban Afrikaner.

The narrative of descent and the resulting nationalisation of nature is further accomplished through the racialisation of space in *Die Kandidaat*. In this regard whiteness in *Die Kandidaat* is rendered invisible through what Steven Farough refers to as sovereign individuality. The foundation of this concept is based on the notion that the white subject is always viewed as a non-racial universal individual, while everyone else, or the Other, is primarily a raced member of a collective.¹⁰⁴ The sovereign individuality of the white subjects in this film is established through the use of collective racial terms to describe the Other: Coloureds, Bantu. In so doing the white subject or whiteness becomes the point from which difference is measured.¹⁰⁵

When looking at *Die Kandidaat* from the perspective of Toni Morrison¹⁰⁶ it is blackness rather than whiteness that has been rendered invisible. This is done through the complete absence of people of colour throughout the entire film. One more manifestation of whiteness and its place within Afrikaner nationalism relates to the idea of whiteness as domination. During the short dialog concerning Coloured and Black people one scene needs to be isolated when speaking of whiteness as domination. In this scene the farmer refers to two of his labourers as 'kaffertjies' when he is interrupted by the government official that points out that the correct official terminology is not 'kaffer' but Bantu. Afrikaner nationalist whiteness as dominance is exposed through its exclusive ownership of the power of naming, defining and decision making.¹⁰⁷ This interaction between the farmer and the government official can be identified as one of the ways in which Rautenbach unmasks Afrikaner nationalist whiteness in *Die Kandidaat* and as part of the serious and often critical

¹⁰³ H. Adam, Ethnic Mobilization and the Politics of Patronage, in H. Adam & H. Gilliom (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.72.

¹⁰⁴ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.36.

¹⁰⁵ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, 2007, p.34.

¹⁰⁶ In her analysis of early American literature titled *Playing in the Dark: whiteness and the literary imagination*, 1993, New York: Vintage.

¹⁰⁷ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.15.



questions regarding Afrikaner identity and its role within a multiracial society that Rautenbach was known for. In this regard it could be possible that the white-only cast symbolises the increasing self-isolation of Afrikaners in addition to the marginalisation of the [Black](#) presence in a white community.

However, the limits of the critical approach of Rauntenbach as a *verligte* is clear when considering the intersections between land, whiteness and Afrikaner nationalism as portrayed in this film. Throughout *Die Kandidaat* Rauntenbach questions Afrikaner identity with regards to race, religion and political affiliation, even exposing some of the absurdities of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. But what then about land? Is there any significance to the film's conclusion where Dr le Roux returns to the *platteland*, the 'ancestral' homeland and origin of the Afrikaner as located within Afrikaner nationalist ideology?

As in the Afrikaner cultural consciousness of the time the *platteland* in *Die Kandidaat* is a powerful symbol. Dr le Roux's final return to Boys Town and the *platteland* follows in the footsteps of the *plaasroman* and the accompanying myth of the return to the [soil](#)~~earth~~. The *platteland* as rural landscape within Afrikaner nationalist ideology, symbolising the 'ancestral' origin of the Afrikaner, coupled with the myth of the return to the land as portrayed in *Die Kandidaat*, reflects an apparent timeless pact between the Afrikaner and the land. This clearly correlates with the unquestioned place of land within the broader framework of Afrikaner nationalist ideology and the resulting idolised pact between nation and nature.¹⁰⁸

It is through the position of the *platteland* in relation to the plot; the character of Dr le Roux as the protagonist and the resulting grand narrative, that Rautenbach perpetuated a particular Afrikaner imagery. Despite the many critical questions that surface during *Die Kandidaat* not a single one addresses or draws attention to how Afrikaner nationalism used and continued to use landscape to mediate the construction of nationhood and the accompanying position of whiteness as power and privilege.¹⁰⁹ The *platteland* as landscape seems to be treated as completely 'natural'.¹¹⁰ This in turn rendered the process of connecting the visuals and symbolism of a certain landscape with a specific narrative invisible. This narrative of *Die Kandidaat* elevated the local and familiar to the national and significant,

¹⁰⁸ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.18.

¹⁰⁹ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, 2008, p.3.

¹¹⁰ E. Hees, 'Foregrounding the Background: Landscape and Ideology in South African Films', *South African Film and Television*, 1996, 10(2), p.64.

embedding the *platteland* within Afrikaner nationalist identity and by extension, Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.¹¹¹

This should not be surprising when considering that by the late 1960s the recursive placement of the nation within a specific geographical territory, initially through literature and later through film, had gained cultural currency.¹¹² This in turn sustained and contributed to both the nationalisation of nature and the naturalisation of the nation respectively. In other words the establishment and continual ratification of an imaginary homeland and the notion that the nation itself is the offspring of its natural landscape assisted in maintaining an ideology that was used to justify colonial subjugation and white supremacist claims to Afrikaner ownership of the land.¹¹³

2.2. *Katrina*

As was the case with *Die Kandidaat* Rautenbach's second film *Katrina* also caught the attention of government officials. The officials responsible for the state film subsidies, after hearing about the project, summoned both Rautenbach and Emil Nofal¹¹⁴ to their offices where they expressed their unhappiness with the theme of the film and threatened to withhold subsidy even if the film was approved by the PCB.¹¹⁵ *Katrina*'s script was based on the controversial bestseller *Try for White* by D. Warner and features an interracial romantic relationship. The plot revolves around the Ecoloured woman Katrina September (Jill Kirkland) who left her Ecoloured village and family to attain a better future for her and her son by passing for white. After getting romantically involved with an Anglican priest, father Alex Trewellyn (Joe Steward), it is Katrina's brother Adam September (Cobus Rossouw) who exposes the true identity of both Katrina and her son, with dire consequences, including Katrina's eventual suicide. The problems associated with this theme within the context of apartheid South Africa were already evident during the filming of *Katrina*. Apartheid legislation prohibited Rautenbach from screening white actors and Ecoloured actors in the

¹¹¹ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.50.

¹¹² J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, 2008, p.47.

¹¹³ N. Devarenne, 'Nationalism and the farm Novel in South Africa, 1883-2004', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35(3), 2009, p.627.

¹¹⁴ Emil Nofal, a South African of Lebanese origin partnered with Rautenbach on a few films during his career.

¹¹⁵ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, Parklands: genugtig! Uitgewers, 2006, p.57.



same scenes.¹¹⁶ This resulted in the casting of white actors to play Coloured characters. The film also generated enough controversy to elicit occasional police surveillance during filming.¹¹⁷

With regards to censorship, Rautenbach anticipated problems and shot two specific scenes that could be removed to appease the PCB and Jannie Kruger but that would not alter the overall narrative structure of the film.¹¹⁸ After Kruger initially wanted to ban the film Rautenbach once again enlisted the help of his *verligte* friends in the Afrikaans media. This included piece by Pienaar and N.P. van Wyk Louw, who defended *Katrina* as a sympathetic portrayal of the 'race issues' facing South Africa.¹¹⁹ This kind of public critique pressured the PCB to make concessions. Due to this pressure only the two above mentioned scenes were cut as requested by Kruger before it was given the green light.¹²⁰

In *Katrina*, just as with *Die Kandidaat*, one of the central themes is cultural identity. In this film, however, the focus is on the controversial race classifications and the implications thereof on specifically the Coloured community and Coloured individuals. The passing of The Population Registration Act of 1950 transformed an incoherent system of segregation into a system built on rigid government sanctioned racial categories.¹²¹ The Coloured category proved difficult to define in that the law only specified that people classified as members of this group were neither black nor white.¹²² Eventually the classification of who was or was not Coloured was based among others on white perception, social status, ancestry and appearance.¹²³ In later years ancestry, especially where the parents had already been classified, enjoyed priority over appearance. The vague and controversial nature of this system of classification created the potential for many borderline cases and the possibility for reclassification.¹²⁴ In 1956 alone 'classifiers' identified almost 100 000 borderline cases.¹²⁵

The rigid classification of people into these racial categories aligned with Afrikaner nationalist ideology. From this nationalist point of view Afrikaners had to have a proper

¹¹⁶ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, 2006, p.59.

¹¹⁷ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, Parklands: genugtig! Uitgewers, 2006, p.59.

¹¹⁸ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, 2006, p.59.

¹¹⁹ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, 2006, p.59.

¹²⁰ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, 2006, p.59.

¹²¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.452.

¹²² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.452.

¹²³ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.452.

¹²⁴ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.453.

¹²⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.453.

sense of colour to maintain proper behaviour.¹²⁶ The nationalist government had to draw legal lines in order to assign white, as well as Black and Coloured people in their 'proper' place in society.¹²⁷ The rationale behind this kind of legislation was fear of racial miscegenation which would pose a threat to the sense of colour distinction that formed part of the foundation of apartheid South Africa and the resulting power and privilege of whiteness.¹²⁸

Even though most people classified as Coloured spoke Afrikaans and ascribed to Western cultural norms, they, excluding those like Katrina who successfully 'passed' as white, were excluded from whiteness and thus could not be part of the Afrikaner nation.¹²⁹ The act of racial classification, but specifically classifying Coloureds as a separate and distinct group despite commonalities with many whites, serves as a testimony to the place of race within the structural parameters of apartheid and the further entrenchment of white identity and whiteness as sources of privilege and power after 1948. This is also evident in the systematic abolishment of Coloured voting rights and political representation from the 1930s.¹³⁰ In 1968 this process resulted in legislation that ended Coloured representation in the House of Assembly, the Senate and the Cape Provincial government.¹³¹ It is within this historical context and contested position of the Coloured population that *Katrina* was produced in 1969.

Nowhere is this reality faced by the Coloured community at the end of the 1960s and the resulting ideas of separate cultural groups, more visible in the film than in the character of Adam September (Cobus Rossouw). As the leader of the Coloured community that Katrina originated from, he believes and supports the principle of separate group identities but also at the same time is extremely bitter towards white people.¹³² In the first scene in which Adam confronts Katrina in the village, he accuses her of stealing her son, Dr. Paul's (Ian Strauss) identity and emphasising that 'they', the Coloured community, need doctors and leaders. This sets in motion the role Adam plays in the plot and his continual emphasis on the importance of identity and its links to community throughout the film. It is these beliefs that ultimately motivate him to expose Katrina and her unknowing son as Coloureds, to Father

¹²⁶ H. Giliomee, The Growth of Afrikaner Power, in H. Adam & H. Giliomee (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.117.

¹²⁷ H. Adam & H. Giliomee, *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, 1979, p.117.

¹²⁸ H. Adam & H. Giliomee, *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, 1979, p.117.

¹²⁹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.340.

¹³⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.345.

¹³¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.509.

¹³² M. Botha, & D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur, Parklands: genugtig! Uitgewers*, 2006, p.57.



Trewellyn. Adam is however not the only character that champions the apparent importance of the separate group identity principle. This is most obvious in the scene where Alida (Katinka Heyns), Dr. Paul's fiancé, is comforted by her Afrikaner working class father after he has told her about Paul's racial identity. While Alida's father is himself visibly emotional and upset as he was very fond of Dr. Paul, he reiterates the unnegotiable nature of one's racial identity. He states that even though the world does not understand it is the way they live, the only thing he knows is that he is an Afrikaner and that Afrikaners only stick to their own. Dr Paul Winters, Katrina's son, is portrayed as continually being drawn to the Coloured community, to serve and minister to them. It is as if his ancestry calls to him and he is ~~instinctually~~ 'instinctually' drawn to them, for they are 'his people' even though he does not know.¹³³ This constant affirmation of the idea of strict separate group identities throughout *Katrina* has resulted in some film historians and theorists viewing *Katrina* as endorsing apartheid policies.¹³⁴

Certainly, the portrayal of Paul Winters and his 'affinity' with the Coloured community would seem to support this contention. Taking this critique further, one can argue that Rautenbach seems to support the idea of racial affinity as inscribed into the genetic composition of individuals, even those who were acculturated into another racial group from birth. This reflects the complicated nature of the construction of race in apartheid South Africa. Even though racial categories during this period largely reflected the way in which bodies were categorised and valued according to socially constructed rules about privilege, power and domination, racial science was not completely absent from Afrikaner nationalism.¹³⁵ The ways in which race was socially constructed drew heavily on the myths of biologically essentialist versions of race within white South Africa and thus had popular currency as self-evident truths.¹³⁶ Despite his *verligte* sympathies, Rautenbach, at least in this instance and aspect, is unable to escape what Deborah Posel refers to as the "common sense" of racial identity, affinity and empathy, endorsing the view of racial categories as primeval.

¹³³ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.178.

¹³⁴ J. Maingard, *South African National Cinema*, Oxon: Routledge, 2008, p.136-137.

¹³⁵ Y. Erasmus & T. H. Ellisson, 'What can we learn about the meaning of race from the classification of population groups during apartheid?', *South African Journal of Science*, 2008, 104(November/December), p.450.

¹³⁶ D. Posel, 'Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa', *African Studies Review*, 2001, 44(2), p.88-89.



Despite this critique there are a couple of scenes that are critical of apartheid and its inhuman laws.¹³⁷ It is also through the focus on these strict, divisive racial lines that Rautenbach exposes some of the absurdities of white identity and whiteness within the Afrikaner nationalist ideological framework. The serious conversation between Father Trewellyn and the 'Coloured' character Kimberley Jacobs (Don Leonard) on racial prejudice, after Adam had told Trewellyn about his sister's true identity, is one such example. The privilege and 'normality' of whiteness is exposed when Jacobs draws attention to Trewellyn's whiteness and the authority that enables structural inequalities according to race. It reveals in a sense that white people in general experience a number of mundane transactions daily, not realising that this is because of their whiteness and that this is not the case for others, in this regards specifically Coloureds.¹³⁸ Cultural capital, specifically that of whiteness, as an acquired set of values, norms, attitudes and experiences that equip people differently for their life in society is exposed.¹³⁹ Towards the end of the film the violence directed towards Dr. Paul by his ex-fiancé's ducktail brother (Regardt van den Bergh) is to teach him a lesson for forgetting his 'proper place' in society as a Coloured. This clearly reveals the preponderant position of white people within a structure where the arbitrary imposition of life and death is one end of the spectrum of power relations that whiteness enacts.¹⁴⁰ As silence about whiteness implicitly serves to maintain the status quo of power relations between Black people and white people it can be said that in this sense Rautenbach does challenge, even if in just a limited sense, whiteness as part of the Afrikaner nationalist ideological framework.¹⁴¹ But what then about the intersections between land and whiteness in *Katrina* if whiteness is so clearly exposed? What place and role does the *platteland* as landscape occupy in this film? And if any does it intersect with whiteness in any way?

This brings us to the Coloured village from which *Katrina* originated and where Adam and Kimberley still live. Filmed on location in the village of Wupperthal this *platteland* landscape features pastoral scenes that include whitewashed cottages, shepherds and their flocks.¹⁴² As one of the many things pointed out by Riley in her doctoral thesis,¹⁴³

¹³⁷ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.180.

¹³⁸ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.41-42.

¹³⁹ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, 2007, p.48.

¹⁴⁰ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.14.

¹⁴¹ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, 2007, p.36.

¹⁴² E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.170.

¹⁴³ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012.

through his idealising of nature, the *platteland* and country people in *Katrina*, Rautenbach dilutes the film's attempted authenticity.¹⁴⁴ The place of the *platteland* together with the character of Adam September represents *Coloureds* as a culturally distinct community, naturalises the location of the *Coloured* in the landscape and links nature, family, God and the law together in a pastoral setting.¹⁴⁵ It can even be said that Rautenbach toed the state line on separate development based on centuries-old notions of blood, origin and place.¹⁴⁶

This study will now turn its focus to the place of the *platteland* within the grand narrative of the film in conjuncture with its portrayal on screen. After Katrina and Paul's secret has been exposed, Paul is, as mentioned earlier, violently assaulted by a group of young white men including his ex-fiancé's brother. He is presumably left for dead, but is discovered by a group of *Coloured* men. He tells them to take him to Adam and thus also the village. The scenes of Paul being carried by the group of *Coloured* men is a powerful symbol of the return of the lost son to his family and community, the *Coloureds*. With the turn of events being what they are Paul thus decided to go back to where he 'belongs' despite the disapproval and eventual rejection of his mother Katrina. During the last confrontation between Adam and Katrina, Adam tries one last time to convince Katrina to join them in the village. He pleads with her that what she's doing is not right and that the village needs individuals like herself and Paul to help improve themselves and to show them how to be proud as a people.

Firstly it is very problematic that Adam sees those who have passed as white as of cardinal importance to the development of the *Coloured* community. Almost as if those who have made the cut, passed the test of whiteness and who have lived as white people should now teach the rest of their community the ways of whiteness. The fact that this *platteland* community with its agrarian way of life seeks the help of their own 'whites' cannot be divorced from the very position and role of the *platteland* in Afrikaner nationalist ideology. It is as if the table is set for the rise of a new proud nation with their own myth of origin and descent along the same lines of origin of the Afrikaner as imagined by Afrikaner nationalism. Situated in the *platteland* and emphasising the hard work that needs to be done Adam only needs those who were assimilated into whiteness to assist the *Coloured* community become

¹⁴⁴ E.J. Riley, 'From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989', 2012, p.170.

¹⁴⁵ E.J. Riley, 'From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989', 2012, p.177.

¹⁴⁶ E.J. Riley, 'From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989', 2012, p.179.



a proud nation with a bright future. This places the responsibility for the Coloured community's prosperity and/or failure on the community itself rendering systemic forces invisible. In this regard it can then be said that while this film does make whiteness visible to a certain extent, it does not do the same with the structure, ideology and myths that brought Afrikaner nationalist whiteness into being. By representing the *platteland* and its inherent values of honesty and truth as the right place for Coloureds to develop themselves and their own nation, the narrative of decent and the naturalisation of the nation as found in Afrikaner nationalist ideology is extended to the Coloured community as a separate entity. In other words, the *platteland* is imbued with such creative force that any racial group, separately of course, can flourish and actualise community potential within strict parameters. In this sense Afrikaner nationalism, and Rautenbach, generously 'shared' the *platteland* with other racial groups.

One cannot of course entirely ignore the fact that in the apartheid racial hierarchy Coloureds were ranked higher than Africans. [This elevated status of coloured people with relation to Africans and how this in-between status intersects with the landscape is pointed out by Gabeba Baderoon. By placing coloured people¹⁴⁷ in the background of the *platteland* landscape of *Katrina* in conglomeration with their in-between status places coloured on the boundary between the *platteland* as an Afrikaner domesticated space and the unknown in which black peril looms. This are in some ways similar to the placing and utilisation of Cape Malay¹⁴⁸ bodies in the paintings of colonial Cape Town.¹⁴⁹](#)

[From within this in-between position](#) ~~the~~ traces of white ancestry, while not conferring on Coloureds an equal whiteness, nevertheless conferred on them racial proximity as very distant genetic kin. Katrina's ability to 'pass' is made possible by the traces of white ancestry which she exploits to achieve a pseudo whiteness. It is a pseudo whiteness because it ultimately fails to insulate her from her 'Colouredness' and rather than be deprived of whiteness, she chooses to denounce life itself.

Katrina's stubborn refusal to divest herself of a false whiteness and assume her 'rightful' racial identity speaks to the absurdity of apartheid classification and the rigidly fixed identities that may have been forced but were also in the end adopted by people across the spectrum. These official categories of race that formed part of this apartheid landscape

¹⁴⁷ [Not referring to white actors playing coloured characters.](#)

¹⁴⁸ [Which within the context of apartheid was seen as a subcategory of the coloured racial category.](#)

¹⁴⁹ [G. Baderoon, *Regrading Muslims: From slavery to post-apartheid*, Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2014, p.37-38.](#)

Formatted: Afrikaans

Formatted: Afrikaans

Formatted: Afrikaans



and the ways in which it was defined and enacted was closely connected to factors of lifestyle and social standing.¹⁵⁰ In the light of her exposed racial identity she has thus lost the higher social standing allocated to her through whiteness. The loss of this specific social position and its consequences is reflected in her failed relationship with Father Trewellyn. For Katrina it is impossible to return to a social standing that is inherently more constricted than that of whiteness due to the hierarchical nature of race identity under apartheid. It is thus clear that for Rautenbach the brutality of apartheid that he wanted to address was not racial identities per se that formed part of the racial ‘common sense’ that permeated white South Africa but rather the hierarchical inequality that accompanied these racial identities.¹⁵¹

Thanks to both the links that Rautenbach had cultivated with the Cape establishment and the controversy surrounding the content of *Die Kandidaat, Katrina* as his second film garnered significant media attention even before it was released. Newspaper articles by journalists such as Scalk Pienaar, Tobie Boshoff and Rykie van Reenen served not only to pressurise the PCB with regards to its intended cuts, but also tantalised the curiosity of the Afrikaner public.¹⁵² It was only after some of the controversy had settled and after a total of 1.3 million South African cinema-goers had seen the film that the *Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns* (The South African Academy for Science and Art) awarded the film a Gold Medal of Honour.¹⁵³ However, this recognition does not reflect the unease many Afrikaners who saw the film experienced. In his book, *Daar Doer in die Fliek*¹⁵⁴, Leon van Nierop refers to some of the intense debates that followed the release of the film in 1969. Issues addressed in the film, such as the then taboo cross-cultural/language relationship Dr. le Roux is involved in, and the portrayal of some Afrikaner characters as dishonest and unfaithful left many Afrikaners upset.¹⁵⁵ Van Nierop even comments on the heavy atmosphere in their family car on their way home after watching *Die Kandidaat* at a cinema in Boksburg. The reaction to Rautenbach’s next film, *Katrina*, was very similar both during

¹⁵⁰ D. Posel, ‘Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa’, *African Studies Review*, 2001, 44(2), p.88-89

¹⁵¹ D. Posel, ‘Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa’, *African Studies Review*, 2001, 44(2), p.89.

¹⁵² National Archives of South Africa, Pretoria, S. Pienaar, ‘Hierdie films gaan opslae maak’, *Beeld*, 21 March 1968, Source PR, Vol. 2/69, Ref. Nr. 2/1/3/3.

¹⁵³ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.85.

¹⁵⁴ L. van Nierop, *Daar doer in die Fliek*, Pretoria: Protea, 2016.

¹⁵⁵ L. van Nierop, *Daar doer in die Fliek*, 2016, p.158-159.



filming and after its release. *Katrina* did, however, surpass *Die Kandidaat* with regards to box office returns with R900 000 compared to the R250 000 from *Die Kandidaat*.¹⁵⁶

These reactions should not come as too much of a surprise when looking at the content and undertakings of some of the largest Afrikaner cultural organisations of the time such as the *Federasie van die Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniging* (FAK) (Federation of the Afrikaans Culture). The range of articles published in the FAK's monthly publication, *Die Handhaaf*, from the same year as the film's release reflect the extremely rigid ideology promoted by the organisation with regards to Afrikaner identity, its language, responsibility and exclusivity. Nonetheless, despite the negative nature of the reactions of numerous Afrikaners to both these film both left an enormous impression on filmgoers, whether positive or negative.

¹⁵⁶ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.150.

3. Chapter Three.

The period of the early 1970s ~~witnessed the lingering optimism was an optimistic one of the 1960s~~ for Afrikaners and the apartheid state, demonstrating the material and ideological confidence of a Republic on track to becoming fully Afrikanerised.¹⁵⁷ However, the year 1970 also ushered in a decade that would lay the structural foundation for the kind of reforms which would discredit the orthodox ideology of apartheid.¹⁵⁸ Public support and the cohesion of Afrikaner nationalism started to show cracks in the late 1960s and early 1970s due to a multitude of reasons.¹⁵⁹

3.2. *Jannie Totsiens*

It was within this historical context that Jans Rautenbach released the last of his Afrikaner trilogy, *Jannie Totsiens*, in 1970. Hailed as an Afrikaans masterpiece, it was the first of Rautenbach's films that was not scrutinised by the PCB due to the fact that the board saw the film as commenting on the state and treatment of the mentally ill.¹⁶⁰ The film is set in a mental institution which is meant to represent South Africa. Here, the insane run the asylum while the ineffective doctor in charge represents the Prime Minister.¹⁶¹ According to Keyan Tomaselli, the plot and setting escaped the intellect of the PCB and apparently the Prime Minister, thus escaping censorship.¹⁶² *Jannie Totsiens* has generated a great deal of interest, with much of this interest focused on interpreting the allegory of the film. The asylum is inhabited by a para-military Ossewa Brandwag figure (Don Leonard) who sees danger everywhere, in the form of communists, hippies and the *swart gevaar*¹⁶³. There is also the demented judge (Jacques Loots) who seems like a perversion of justice through, for example, his obsession with capital punishment. In *Jannie Totsiens* the role of the volksmoeder has evolved and she is now a witch played by Hermien Dommissie. The character of the English nymphomaniac (Jill Kirkland) represents the seductiveness of English culture and the young Linda (Katinka Heyns) symbolises the essence, innocence and purity of Afrikaner idealism. Interestingly the only ~~B~~black character in the film is James, an Indian from Durban, who acts

¹⁵⁷ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.112.

¹⁵⁸ D. Posel, The language of domination, 1978-1983, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman Group, 1987, p.424.

¹⁵⁹ Dan O'Meara, *Thinking Theoretically? Afrikaner Nationalism and the Comparative Theory of the Politics Identity: A Tribute to Harold Wolpe*, University of the Western Cape, 1997, p.9-10.

¹⁶⁰ M. Botha, and D. Steinmar, *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, 2006, p.71.

¹⁶¹ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.86.

¹⁶² K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.86.

¹⁶³ Translates to 'the black ~~peril~~danger'.

as a waiter for the patients in the institution and is also the only truly sane person in the asylum. The asylum is representative of South Africa and details a chronology of the grand and the mean, the heroic and the shameful.¹⁶⁴ This paper is however more interested in the place of the *platteland* in this film and its intersections with whiteness.

The asylum is located on a farm. The majority of the film was however shot in a studio. The exterior shots were filmed on location in the Golden Gate Nature Reserve in the Free State. In one of the few scenes set in the asylum gardens the audience can see what seems to be two people playing tennis, with Jannie (Cobus Rossouw) and Linda (Katinka Heyns) fraternising while a traditional Afrikaans song is playing. Through portraying the patients of the asylum involved in mundane recreational activities of the everyday and without any audible dialogue, the scene creates the impression of normality within the setting of an asylum. However the fact that the camera is out of focus during this specific scene and that it eventually becomes clear that the two people playing tennis are doing so without a ball, it is clear that this was merely a brief illusion of normality from a distance. Within the context of *Jannie Totsiens* as a representation of South Africa, this brief moment of normality at a distance can be seen as commentary on the superficial normality of the reality within and the ideas and beliefs which underpin apartheid South Africa. Just as this moment of perceived normality within the asylum is an illusion, so too is the normality associated with white South Africa and the Afrikaner nationalist whiteness that it is based on.

Whiteness is further exposed through Koos Liebenberg (Don Leonard), the Ossewa Brandwag figure. Throughout the film he interacts the most with James, the Indian. The interactions broadly follow the same recurring pattern. Liebenberg has an outburst in which he reminds James of his subservient position as a person of colour but then later confesses that James is a good man whom Liebenberg apparently holds dear. This exposes characteristics of whiteness, especially whiteness as embodied by what Rautenbach identifies as right wing conservative nationalist Afrikaners. For example, at the dinner table it is Liebenberg who shouts James around and calls him *kaffer*. James however corrects him and tells him that he is an Indian leading to an outburst from Liebenberg. In this scene the terror of domination by whites as seen from a Black perspective in terms of the power of naming and defining and the symbolic and physical use of violence is clear.¹⁶⁵ However, James does not take this abuse quietly thus revealing the cracks in the agency of Afrikaner nationalist

¹⁶⁴ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.127-129.

¹⁶⁵ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.15.

whiteness. The speech by Liebenberg on New Year's Eve is insightful in that it reveals the fear and guilt of whiteness. This is done when Liebenberg first refers to the dangers from without and from within and then moving on to dangers out of the East, the *geel gevaar*¹⁶⁶ and North, the *swart gevaar*. Nearing the end of the very same speech he confesses that he now needs to speak from his heart, not politics, and that he loves James because the Afrikaner and Black man have always known each other. He then declares that he will no longer fight with James, before tearing up and almost becoming hysterical. That same night he, however, just falls into his old habits revealing the structural nature of whiteness that stretches beyond the individuals involved.

This recurring behavioural pattern displayed specifically by the character of Liebenberg reveals an attempt by Rautenbach to draw a definite distinction between politics and the heart within the context of an Afrikaner nationalist framework. Throughout the film, just as in the speech mentioned above, Liebenberg resembles a kind of schizophrenia created by Afrikaner nationalism where people had to constantly negotiate between politics and their real, heartfelt feelings. It is as if Rautenbach is trying to separate the individual Afrikaner, and his/her capacity to form friendly and loving relationships with people of colour, from a nationalist political framework that imposed rigid hierarchies of race that transcended the individual. Rautenbach is basically trying to communicate that Afrikaners are good people with good hearts that have been infected by the absurd nature of Afrikaner nationalist politics. This can be critiqued as an attempted apologia by Rautenbach as he makes no reference to the political agency of Afrikaners and their complicity in Afrikaner nationalism through the ballot box and thus tries to communicate Afrikaner innocence with regards to the status quo.

The place of the *platteland* within this narrative could be identified as having multiple meanings and symbolism. Rautenbach situates the asylum on a farm in a very picturesque part of the Free State. It could be said that in this film the *platteland* as ancestral home of the Afrikaner within the Afrikaner nationalist ideological framework symbolises as such a refuge and space of rehabilitation for the irrational, race obsessed Afrikaners as portrayed in the film. However, when considering the ending the *platteland* seems to have obtained a new symbol, that of a cage. Jannie finally leaves the institution after being accused of murder and almost being killed as punishment. The last scene is that of a car containing who we can assume to be Jannie, leaving the farm. In this final scene the *platteland* is a nuthouse, a cage,

¹⁶⁶ Translates to the 'yellow [danger/peril](#)', referring to communism in Asia.

that Jannie escapes leaving all the crazy Afrikaners behind. The *platteland* in a strange turn of events thus becomes the insane asylum for the insanity that Afrikaner nationalist ideology of the time has become and a symbol of the obsessive Afrikanerisation of the state. This analysis of Rautenbach's trilogy reveals a shift in Rautenbach's conception and cinematic relationship to the *platteland*. In *Die Kandidaat* the *platteland* is infused with healing and regenerative force; in *Katrina* the *platteland* is seen as a creative force which can accommodate and realise **E**coloured aspirations; and in *Jannie Totsiens* the *platteland* is bedlam, a force of destruction and alienation for Afrikaners.

3.3. *Dit Was Aand en Dit Was More*

As the 1970s kicked off an interesting but subtle change occurred amongst Afrikaner leaders in the early years of the 1970s. This is most evident in a conversation Prime Minister Vorster had with his biographer John D'Oliveira in which he proclaimed that Afrikaners wanted to be accepted by Africans as fellow Africans.¹⁶⁷ Vorster did not want Afrikaners to be associated with European colonisers who were increasingly pulling out of the continent from the 1960s onwards. Following this logic Afrikaners as Africans had a legitimate claim to their place and position in South Africa as an 'independent' African nation. As part of this new official narrative white domination no longer needed biological justification, instead history is called upon to legitimise group claims.¹⁶⁸ In other words, the boundaries and orientation of Afrikaner identity moved away from an exclusive European association and adjusted to fit historical and social contexts.¹⁶⁹ This re-imagination of and emphasis on Afrikaners as distinctly African was dependant on, and further legitimised the Afrikaner nationalist narrative of descent and the resulting claims to the land. These developments potentially elevated the symbolic significance of the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary of the 1970s onwards as will be addressed later on.

By the mid-1970s the rigorous Afrikanerisation of the state, as referred to earlier, had spilled over into Bantu education and would eventually spark the Soweto uprisings of 1976, an event that changed the South African landscape fundamentally. From the early years of the 1970s politicians, officials and the Afrikaans cultural establishment saw it as increasingly important for Afrikaans to occupy its 'rightful' place in new **B**black and Asian schools built

¹⁶⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.519.

¹⁶⁸ H. Giliomee, The Growth of Afrikaner Identity, in H. Adam & H. Giliomee (Eds), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.118.

¹⁶⁹ H. Giliomee, *The Growth of Afrikaner Identity*, 1979, p.83.



outside of the homelands.¹⁷⁰ It was within this environment that M.C. Botha, the then minister of Bantu Administration and Development, made the decision that Afrikaans and English would be implemented as languages of instruction on a 50/50 basis for subjects with exams in secondary schools in the Transvaal.¹⁷¹ It was clear that Afrikaner nationalist ideology rather than pedagogical considerations was at the core of these developments.¹⁷² This is evident when considering the role of Afrikaner nationalist institutions like the FAK that in 1975, at a conference, passed a motion to pressure the Nationalist government to enhance the position of Afrikaans in these schools in any way possible.¹⁷³ This new Bantu education policy led to a protest by some twenty thousand students on the 16th of June 1976. The violent reaction by the state sent shock waves through South Africa and the world. The uprisings that followed shook the foundations of the Afrikaner nationalist movement as it spread throughout the country to the campuses of Black universities and Black suburbs. By October 1977 670 people had died as a result of the protests, and resulted in the banning of all Black Consciousness Movements in the country.

Franz Marx's 1977 film *Dit Was Aand en Dit Was More* (It was Night and it was Morning) was released amidst this domestic turmoil. However, by this time the reality of the South African film environment had also changed significantly. The differential censorship based on race was cancelled by the 1974 amendment to the censorship act but retained the right to restrict films to persons in a certain category or at a specific place.¹⁷⁴ Section 47 of the legislation deemed undesirable any film which "(1) brings any section of the inhabitants of the Republic into ridicule or contempt; (2) is harmful to the relations between any sections of inhabitants of the Republic and (3) is prejudicial to the safety of the state, the general welfare or the peace and good order."¹⁷⁵

The year 1976 also saw the introduction of television to the South African entertainment landscape. The result was a drastic reduction in cinema attendance in television reception areas that had a domino effect on the amount of feature films produced.¹⁷⁶ The sluggish conditions that resulted from the introduction of television led to an amendment to the film subsidy legislation in 1977. Despite the new challenges faced by the film industry,

¹⁷⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.530.

¹⁷¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.530.

¹⁷² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.530.

¹⁷³ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.531.

¹⁷⁴ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.16.

¹⁷⁵ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.16.

¹⁷⁶ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.42



by the late 1970s many film makers did not deviate from the recurring thematic *Volks*-film that found its roots in history and its accompanying links with the *platteland*.¹⁷⁷ *Dit Was Aand en Dit Was More* was one such film.

The entire film is set in and around the *platteland* town of Middelburg in what is today known as the Eastern Cape. The plot follows the character of Petrus Verwey (Franz Marx), a bachelor farmer, and his pursuit of and eventual marriage to the town's piano teacher Maggie Aucamp (Magda Beukes). Part of the trials and tribulations that initially push Petrus and Maggie apart is the arrival of the antagonist Sally Vermaak (Lerina Erasmus) who herself grew up in Middelburg before leaving the town to move to Kimberley. Sally is invited by Petrus's grandmother Sofia Verwey (Anna Neethling-Pohl) in a desperate attempt to find Petrus a wife. This is due to the fact that Sofia does not initially approve of Maggie because she doubts her ability to become a *boervrou*¹⁷⁸. It does not however take long before Sally is exposed as nothing remotely close to a *boervrou* and out of place within the setting of the *platteland*. After Sally's departure Sofia convinces Maggie to consider marrying Petrus. Maggie eventually decides to marry Petrus, this despite her confession to Petrus that she still has feelings for the man she was previously in a relationship with and who had left her behind to go and qualify as a medical doctor. It is not long after they married that Maggie's previous love interest Gerrit van Wyk (Heinrich Marnitz), now a qualified doctor, shows up in town. This leads to tension between Petrus and Maggie, with Petrus convinced that he had made a mistake marrying Maggie. Maggie eventually confesses to Gerrit that she no longer wants him and that she loves Petrus. It is at this precise moment that Petrus sees the two together and immediately assumes the worst. He speeds away in anger and on his way to the farm he is involved in a car accident. It is thanks to Gerrit's respect and love for Maggie that he decides to operate on Petrus in an attempt to save his life which saves the day. Petrus lives and the film ends with Maggie finally, and for the first time, confessing to Petrus that she loves him when he wakes up in the hospital after surgery.

The title of the film, *Dit Was Aand en Dit Was More* (It Was Evening and It Was Morning), can be interpreted in two ways. It can be seen to communicate the trials and tribulations of the two protagonists through the symbolism of evening/darkness, but also the end of these trials and tribulations and the new beginning of their lives together as *boer* and *boervrou* through the symbolism of morning. On the other hand it also refers to the passing of

¹⁷⁷ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.111, 112.

¹⁷⁸ Afrikaans term for a farmer's wife.

time, thus normalising and extending the narrative and setting as ‘everyday life’ and communicating that this could just as well have been anywhere within the *platteland*. This is evident in the many scenes throughout the film that portray everyday, run of the mill agricultural activities, from working the fields to images of the familiar and typical *windpomp*¹⁷⁹ and dam. The only piece missing from this traditional Afrikaner nationalist setting is a *boervrou*.

Both of the matriarchal characters Sofia Verwey and Aunt Baby (Olga Heunis), Maggie’s Aunt, urge Petrus and Maggie respectively to get married, citing multiple reasons why getting married is of utmost importance. In a patriarchal society such as white Afrikaner South Africa in the late 1970s, men and women had different roles to fulfil in the Afrikaner nationalist framework. Within this nationalist, patriarchal framework men were seen to embody the agency of the nation, manifest in their place as and in relation to *Voortrekker* heroes.¹⁸⁰ Women on the other hand not only occupied the symbolic space of wife and mother but were also confronted with and limited to the expectations rooted in this symbolic space when looking at their lived experience within the Afrikaner nationalist framework.¹⁸¹ This defines Afrikaner women and their place and role exclusively in relation to their connection to their husbands consecrated by the institution of marriage.

This patriarchal nature of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness is very visible and reflected in many scenes throughout the film. Most of these scenes are, however, centred on two separate but related notions. The first is the role of the woman as the regenerator of Afrikaner culture through the work of domesticity.¹⁸² In this regards it is the ramblings of the matriarch Sofia Verwey that reflect this gendered role of women through her constant emphasis on the importance of a woman being a *boervrou* and the characteristics associated with this role such as being good at cooking and baking. These capabilities are of such importance to Sofia that it is the perceived lack of these qualities in Maggie that initially deems her unsuitable in the eyes of Sofia. It then also comes as no surprise that after Maggie and Petrus are married, Maggie asks Sofia to teach her how to be the best *boervrou* possible. The second relates to the notion of the *volksmoeder* and the perceived primary role of women as biological

¹⁷⁹ Afrikaans for windmill.

¹⁸⁰ M. Jolly, ‘Motherlands? Some Notes on Women and Nationalism in India and Africa’, *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 5(1&2), 1994, p.53, 54.

¹⁸¹ M. Jolly, ‘Motherlands? Some Notes on Women and Nationalism in India and Africa’, 1994, p.53, 54.

¹⁸² M. Jolly, ‘Motherlands? Some Notes on Women and Nationalism in India and Africa’, 1994, p.55.



reproducers the nation.¹⁸³ In one of the first scenes Sofia urges Petrus to find a wife for the sake of the family name. It is clear that the agency of the nation that Petrus embodies is in danger without offspring to continue the legacy. If Petrus failed to marry, and marry the right kind of woman, he would have been endangering the continued existence of the nation. This prominent place of women within the intersections of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness and the *platteland* is once again verbalised when Sofia, upon Sally's arrival, joyfully exclaims that the farm is full of life again. Sofia finally convinces Maggie to marry Petrus by proclaiming that a woman can only be fully realised as such through marriage. However, prior to her eventual marriage to Petrus Maggie is an independent woman with her own job and apartment in the *platteland* town. She thus wilfully sacrifices her independence for a higher cause, that of becoming a wife, *boervrou* and eventually a *volksmoeder* within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary. And she does this through the successful intervention of the matriarch Sofia. There is thus a sense of domestic continuity which is the necessary precursor for *volks* continuity.

Afrikaner nationalist whiteness as encountered in the *platteland* in this film, and in *Weerskant die Nag* that will be discussed later on, also invokes the power relations associated with Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. The paternalistic nature of this whiteness is revealed through the stratification of race through labour, embedding whiteness as dominance and control.¹⁸⁴ Throughout the film Black people are portrayed as merely part of the background and landscape as loyal labourers. Black people are not erased from this landscape, but are seen from the perspective of white subjects in terms of their place according to the ethic of segregation.¹⁸⁵ The status differences between these rigidly stratified races are clear and the social distances between unequal roles coexist simultaneously with great intimacy in the common household or on the *platteland* between master and servant.¹⁸⁶ This is very clear in many scenes, but specifically in a scene where Sofia refers to herself as Granma when holding the hand of and speaking to a little Black girl who assists her with collecting chicken eggs around the farm house. It is clear that whiteness within this particular view of white South Africa and the *platteland* is normalised as a place where Blacks are limited in

¹⁸³ L. Viljoen, 'Nationalism, gender and sexuality in the autobiographical writing of two Afrikaner women', *Social Dynamics*, 2008, 34(2), p.196.

¹⁸⁴ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.9.

¹⁸⁵ D. Posel, The language of domination, 1978-1983, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman Group, 1987, p.437.

¹⁸⁶ H. Giliomee, The Growth of Afrikaner Identity, in H. Adam & H. Giliomee (Eds), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.38.

participation to their role of labour and nothing more. In other words, Black people are portrayed as merely a resource for the continued flourishing of the land and Afrikanerdom in much the same way as water and sunshine.

Placing the characters of the narrative within this seemingly universal and everyday setting of the *platteland* does not only naturalise the positions of Blacks as a group but also the characteristics of each white individual character. The best example hereof is the male lead, Petrus Verwey. It is clear that Petrus as a farmer is the closest to the land and is portrayed as the most natural part of the *platteland*. This is vocalised by Petrus himself when he tells Maggie about life on the farm. Petrus elaborates on his childhood memories of sitting on a hill praying for rain and confessing the joy associated with watching things grow. In this recall of childhood memories he confirms his personal and intimate links to the land. He is an honest, hardworking man and thanks to his close personal links with the land embodies the characteristics embedded in and cultivated by the *platteland*. This is however not the only way in which Petrus is connected to the land. As a farmer, he is physically engaged with the land and this placement of an honest, hard-working male protagonist plays perfectly into sustaining the myths related to the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist ideology. This ritualistic encounter between an Afrikaner man and the land becomes the ontological event of identity formation, a performance in which the landscape and the cultural body-subject are conjointly characterised.¹⁸⁷

The noble characteristics of the *platteland* are extended by implication to the rest of the inhabitants of this *platteland* setting through the arrival of Sally from Kimberley. Sally exhibits, by what had then become, the stereotypical traits of an Afrikaner woman corrupted by the influences of the city. This is made very clear when we are introduced to the backstory of the character, and is further visually enhanced by her physical appearance. The backstory is that Sally was married to a foreigner who was implicated in diamond smuggling that resulted in their eventual divorce. Although Sofia reassures Sally that divorce is not as frowned upon as it used to be it is the very same Sofia who is the first to suspect that all is not as it seems and that Sally is not the *boervrou* she pretends to be. With her red hair and modern clothing Sally is slowly exposed as fake and not at all a suitable match for Petrus. Almost a decade after Rautenbach's *Die Kandidaat* we see a similar portrayal of a certain myth in Afrikaner nationalist identity based on the placement of the *platteland* and the city,

¹⁸⁷ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.84.



that of the urban Afrikaner woman as manipulative and a product of the un-Afrikaner city.¹⁸⁸ The rest of the characters that inhabit the town or surroundings are portrayed through a variety of scenes as also imbued with the qualities associated with the *platteland*. The inherited honesty and integrity of these characters is further enhanced by their juxtapositioning with Sally, the outsider.

Petrus's survival of the car accident, along with Maggie's pregnancy completes the symbolic picture of the *platteland* and the myths it mediates. The picture is not that ideal. An underlying theme in this film is the potential crisis the *platteland* faces if the constant outflow of young people is not stopped. The single status of both Petrus and Maggie is blamed on the lack of eligible young people in the town. This speaks to the reality and fear of a *platteland* depopulating (of white people) that emerged in the 1950s due increasingly to the new-found urban nature of Afrikaners.¹⁸⁹ It is thus clearly communicated that young people are needed to keep the *platteland* not only alive, but also capable of producing true Afrikaners as the union between Maggie and Petrus will now do.

As pointed out at the time by film critic Robert Greig *Dit Was Aand en dit Was More* embodied the traditional unspoilt mythical structure of the rural Afrikaner with his roots in history in which the *platteland* played a central part.¹⁹⁰ By the late 1970s the majority of Afrikaners had been urbanised for almost two decades and many experienced material wealth. The increased secularisation and value changes resulting from an urbanised life diluted traditional culture which in turn systematically made Afrikaner nationalist civil religion, including its links with the *platteland*, less appealing.¹⁹¹ In the case of *Dit Was Aand en dit Was More* this is reflected in the overall reception of the film. Despite initially doing fairly well in Afrikaans-speaking locations immediately following release, it was negative word-of-mouth according to Tomaselli that resulted in disappointing box office returns.¹⁹² The film was released during a time when Afrikaners were comfortably in a position of political and economic power. In contrast to the initial motivations and goals of the mid-20th century Afrikaner nationalists, the Afrikaners of the late 1970s saw Afrikaner power firmly

¹⁸⁸ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, 2008, p.22.

¹⁸⁹ T. Clynick, *A Boerevolk for a Boerestand?: Broedertwis and Two Manuscripts of Platteland Modernity, c.1959*, a paper presented at the University of the Witwatersrand, Institute for Advanced Social Research, 1994, p.7, 11.

¹⁹⁰ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.114.

¹⁹¹ H. Giliomee, The Growth of Afrikaner Identity, in H. Adam & H. Giliomee (Eds), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.128.

¹⁹² K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.149.



established and supported the nationalists because of the good wages, good jobs and good contracts associated with them.¹⁹³ [Even within this context of established Afrikaner nationalist power cohesion within the Afrikaner community and among Afrikaner nationalists were not guaranteed as evident in the Conservative Party \(CP\) split that occurred in the early 1980s which will be discussed in the next chapter.](#) It thus seems as if Afrikaner appeal towards Afrikaner nationalism had entered a period that was less concerned with establishing power and privilege and more with maintaining it. The result was an Afrikaner audience that was not as hungry as before for narratives that legitimised their place and role in South Africa, deeming the need to propagate certain elements of the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary less urgent. However, by 1979 the legitimacy of the nationalist government had taken some strain.

Two books, *The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* (1978) by Ivor Wilkens and H. Strydom and *Brotherhood of Power* (1979) by J.H.P. Serfontein, exposed the Afrikaner Broederbond organisation. *The Super Afrikaner: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* exposed the organisation to the extent where it included an almost complete list of Broederbond members, some 13 262 members in 914 divisions. This occurred at a time when, especially after the Soweto uprisings of 1976, the cornerstones of white supremacy were not as solid as they seemed to be in the golden early years of the republic.¹⁹⁴ In the stability of the early years Afrikaners were willing to accept the secretive Broederbond as one of many organisations that created and maintained Afrikaner unity.¹⁹⁵ However, within the climate of the late 1970s most Afrikaners experienced the extent of the Broederbond's infiltration into Afrikaner institutions, ranging from church and school councils to universities and business organisation, as unnerving.¹⁹⁶ The exposure and mounting critique against the Broederbond was not the only blow to Afrikaner nationalists. The so-called 'Information Scandal' that was exposed in 1978 and led to the eventual resignation of Prime Minister Vorster had a fundamentally negative impact on the image of the National Party leadership, a significant development when considering that just a few years earlier more than 80% of Afrikaners supported the direction of the National Party.¹⁹⁷ These two very public events played their part in that by this time apartheid started losing some of its hegemonic

¹⁹³ Lemon, A., 'The Rise and Fall of Afrikaner Ethnic Political Mobilisation 1943-1999', *South African Geographical Journal*, 2003, 85(2), p.148.

¹⁹⁴ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Bepker, 2004, p.532.

¹⁹⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.533.

¹⁹⁶ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.533.

¹⁹⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.531-534.

character and emerged as more and more instrumental.¹⁹⁸ This resulted in a formalism that left white South Africa increasingly dissatisfied with itself, creating a space for possible critique.

In the meantime the impact of the introduction of broadcast television on the film industry became clear. The competition now faced by the industry led to Satbel, a SANLAM-owned company, to merge independent Ster and Kinekor into Ster-Kinekor with the aim of streamlining costs and improving efficiency.¹⁹⁹ However, despite the fact that film now had to compete with television for the attention of audiences, some R2 400 000 was spent on the production of twelve feature films for white audiences in 1979.²⁰⁰ The rest of this chapter will now focus on two films released during 1979, *Weerskant die Nag* directed by Franz Marx and *Herfsland* directed by Jan Scholtz.

3.4. *Weerskant die Nag*

Weerskant die Nag (Both Sides of the Night) is set in a coastal *platteland* town. In the opening scene we are introduced to the two protagonists Hannie du Preez (Aletta Bezuidenhout) a new teacher in town and Jurgen van Vreden (Nic van Rensburg) a well-known, rich cattle farmer and eligible bachelor. The plot revolves around the relationship between Hannie and Jurgen. The film hints at something mysterious from Hannie's past that makes her reluctant to become romantically involved with Jurgen even though she is attracted to the young farmer. Hannie slowly opens up about her past throughout the film, by telling Jurgen stories from her previous life that the audience gets to see through flashbacks. By means of flashbacks, Hannie's life unfolds before Jurgen and the audience's eyes. These flashbacks reveal Hannie's upbringing on a farm in the region of Clarens in the Free State, her reluctant marriage to a son of a rich farmer from the same region and her escape from her entire world following marital rape soon after her honeymoon. After finally admitting to Jurgen what had happened to her and thus explaining her erratic and sometimes unexplainable behaviour Hannie and Jurgen are romantically involved by the end of the film.

As it became evident in *Dit was Aand en dit was More* this film also portrays the pressure on the two single protagonists to get married. This is mostly visible through the interactions between Aunt Annie (Frances Coertze) and Hannie and Jurgen individually. For

¹⁹⁸ S. B. Greenberg, 'Ideological Struggle within the South African State', in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman Group, 1987, p.393.

¹⁹⁹ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.42.

²⁰⁰ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, 1989, p.37.



Aunt Annie it is incomprehensible why these two young, good-looking Afrikaner individuals are not romantically involved with the aim of eventual marriage. In this regard Jurgen makes his romantic interest in Hannie very clear from the outset while Hannie insists on just being friends. The patriarchal nature of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness manifest in the words of Aunt Annie who makes it clear that it is not good for a woman to be alone without extending the concern to Jurgen, for Jurgen as a man can exist as an individual and independent entity. The perceived dependence of women on men is further amplified through the fact that it is thanks to the intervention of Jurgen that Hannie finally works through her traumatic experience and memory. The film's expression of the patriarchal nature of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness is, however, more complex than this.

Weerskant die Nag without a doubt exposes some of the negative aspects of universal patriarchal elements that form part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness just as with most patriarchal societies. Nowhere is this more evident than in a flashback scene where Hannie's ex-husband Sas Brink (Zac du Plessis) and his father Frederik Brink (Philip Markgraaff) have a conversation in a cattle enclosure not long after their return from honeymoon. Frederik confronts his son Sas with questions regarding the sexual relationship between him and his new wife. After realising that the marriage has not yet been consummated Frederik becomes visibly angry and orders his son to "break her in" irrelevant of the fact she obviously does not love him. That night Sas rapes his wife and it is clear that the patriarchal authority symbolised by Frederik and the language used by him deems women as nothing more than livestock. This is confirmed by an earlier scene on the Brink farm when Jurgen, as a fellow cattle farmer, visits the Brink family with the ulterior motive of inquiring into Hannie's past. When Jurgen is sitting at the table with the Brink family it is clear that Sas's new wife has already produced two sons and that she is yet again pregnant. Through the limited dialogue around the table it is clear that Sas's new wife is very aware of her role, as a woman, to reproduce. The new wife, despite coming across as less likeable than Hannie, is accepted into the family because she is willing to take her place and play her role within the hierarchy of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.

The place of the *platteland*, due to its relation with the patriarchal elements of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness, is also multi-layered and complex. Jurgen on the one hand, as a farmer, exhibits the qualities that seem to be associated with men who occupy this corporeal position within this culturally symbolic landscape, that of honesty and integrity. The question must then be asked, what are the implications of Sas the rapist and his father being themselves rich and successful farmers and occupying the same space? Before the

revelation of Hannie's rape Sas is seen as participating in a range of stereotypical farm activities such as hunting etc. that gives the impression that Sas is or at least was supposed to be an Afrikaner farmer with all that it entails. However, it is his own mother, Esther Brink (Wilna Snyman) who slips the first words of caution to Hannie's mother, Sofie du Preez (Leonie Ross), when speaking of the possible marriage of their children in one of the back flash scenes. Hannie's rape finally proves without a doubt the corrupted nature of the Brink men despite their *platteland* origin. The mother, Esther, is however redeemed from this corruption when it becomes clear that she, not only try to get rid of Hannie before the wedding to save her from these monstrous men, but also helped Hannie escape the farm and the trauma of living on the Brink farm. The *platteland*, at least for Hannie, has been momentarily stripped of its mythical utopian symbolism and has been replaced with one of sorrow, despair and violence.

By the end of the film the situation has changed and the *platteland* has been redeemed thanks to the role of Jurgen. Throughout the film it is clear that Hannie has a connection with the land through her sometimes romanticised recollections that come to the viewer as flashback scenes. This is further proven when it is made known that she decided to marry Sas in an attempt to save her family farm from the financial troubles her family faced. She has thus made the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of their family and its place on the *platteland*. Within her new setting of the coastal town and surroundings it is Jurgen who serves as a constant reminder of her past and its links with the *platteland*. She confesses that Jurgen reminds her of her father, a figure in her life whom she speaks of fondly throughout the film. It can thus be said that Jurgen re-establishes her connections with the land and gradually strips it of the trauma Hannie experienced. Hannie has been avoiding her traumatic past for some years and it is only thanks to her encounter with a true son of the *platteland* who embodies the traditional values inherent to this landscape that she finally breaks the vicious cycle she was trapped in due the her experience. Her reintroduction to the landscape of the farm is part of what has healed her. The final scene of Jurgen and Hannie embracing under the night sky signifies a rehabilitated *platteland* where they can pursue a romantic relationship thanks to Jurgen's intervention which restores Hannie's faith in the 'true' Afrikaner man who is a son of the soil. This changing symbolism of the *platteland* for Hannie as the female lead reveals the *platteland* as a space in which evil can enter but which ultimately reasserts the inherent sanctity of the place. The *platteland* thus reasserts its authority and replaced hurt with healing, hate with love etc. This more nuanced meaning of

the *platteland* is successfully portrayed through the placement of both antagonist and protagonist as originating from the same landscape.

Furthermore the placement of both the antagonists and protagonist within the landscape of the *platteland* reveals certain anxieties faced by many Afrikaners during the late 1970s and the re-evaluation of the future of Afrikaner nationalism that was taking during this time.²⁰¹ The film communicates that there are elements within the Afrikaner nationalist framework that need to be addressed. This can be seen within the context of cultural shifts in the West which started at the end of the 1960s with the hippy counterculture, the associated sexual revolution and second-wave feminism.²⁰² Due to the strong anti-liberal lobby in Afrikaner society many opposed these liberalising influences but with time it inevitably filtered through into mainstream society and raised questions about traditional sexual norms.²⁰³ This somewhat more liberal atmosphere created a space within the Afrikaner nationalist framework to engage in some critical self-reflection to deal with certain problems that could potentially alienate their own people. In the case of this film the problems that need fixing are symbolised by abusive patriarchy and its manifestation on the *platteland* which can be framed as a response to the continuing global shifts in gender relations. However, by also placing the male protagonist within the *platteland* landscape and maintaining his sacred position through rehabilitation it is clear that the system needs fixing and not replacing. The placement of Jurgen on, and of, the *platteland* maintains the culturally significant place of the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary and its accompanying myths. Despite a certain level of critique this once again played into the existing Afrikaner nationalist framework by re-investing rural rather than urban locales as loci of cultural identity, Afrikaner regeneration and meaning.²⁰⁴

3.5. *Herfsland*

The internal crisis the Afrikaner nationalist movement experienced during the end of the 1970s is reflected in *Herfsland* (Autum Land) directed by Jan Scholtz and released in 1979, a few months after *Weerskant die Nag*. The film is mainly set in Worcester and Cape

²⁰¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.537.

²⁰² K. Du Pisani, 'Shifting sexual morality? Changing views on homosexuality in Afrikaner society during the 1960's', *Historia*, 2012, 57(2), p.205.

²⁰³ K. Du Pisani, 'Shifting sexual morality? Changing views on homosexuality in Afrikaner society during the 1960's', *Historia*, 2012, 57(2), p.206.

²⁰⁴ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.254.

Town in what is today the Western Cape Province. The plot centres on Mauritz de Necker (Hans Strydom) who in the beginning of the film buries his wife and is blamed for her suicide by her father Senator Gideon Scheepers (Dirk de Villiers). Mauritz moves back home, to Worcester, to start a new life as an attorney despite warnings from his powerful father-in-law who is out to get him due to the conviction that Mauritz is to blame for his daughter's death. In the midst of the conflict between Mauritz and Senator Scheepers, Mauritz and the Scheepers's foster daughter Carien de Waal (Riana Pienaar) fall in love, further fuelling Senator Scheepers's agenda against Mauritz and his family. Throughout the film the feud between Mauritz and Senator Scheepers intensifies with twists and turns until the end of the film when Senator Scheepers is abandoned by his family because of the petty nature of his resentment and questionable tactics used to intimidate the Mauritz family. Mauritz and Carien get married and the film ends with the newlywed couple being driven away into a new future.

The distrust of the leadership of not only the nationalist government but also leaders within the broader Afrikaner community in the wake of the so-called 'Information Scandal' and the publications regarding the Broederbond can be said to be one of the main themes of this film. Throughout the film the interaction between the main antagonist Gideon Scheepers, a Senator in parliament for the National Party, and his son, Philip Scheepers (Marko van der Colff) a reverend, can be seen to represent the relationship between the state and church. This places Philip, or the church, in a very difficult position as Philip wants to stay loyal to his father, or the state, but as the plot unfolds and the questionable tactics of the egotistic and control obsessed Senator becomes clear Philip is eventually left with no choice but to abandon his father. It is not only the crisis of the relationship between church and state that is represented in *Herfsland*. In his endeavours to destroy Mauritz and his family the Senator enlists the help of prominent members of the Afrikaner community ranging from bankers and attorneys to influential newspaper editors, reflecting a network of Afrikaners very similar to that of the Broederbond that was by then more exposed than ever. It is however not the existence of the network that is troubling but the corrupt, dishonest and manipulative activities they engage in that in no way serves the needs of the Afrikaner community they are supposed to serve. For example, through his connections to an Afrikaans newspaper based in Cape Town where Carien works, Senator Scheepers uses his influence first to get them to drop a story about his deceased daughter and later to relocate Carien from their offices in Cape Town to Johannesburg in an attempt to end her relationship with Mauritz. The message

is clear, those who were supposed to see to the well-being of the Afrikaner nation have been corrupted by self-interest and dishonesty.

The corrupt nature of Afrikaner leadership is portrayed as isolated from elements such as the *platteland*, that played a crucial role in the Afrikaner nationalist framework and the maintenance of cultural myths that legitimised Afrikaner claims to South Africa. This is very clear when looking at the placement of the *platteland* in *Herfsland* despite the critique aimed at Afrikaner community leaders. Most prominent in this regard is Mauritz and his two siblings. Upon his return to Worcester after the death of his wife, Mauritz is reunited with his brother Villies de Necker (Tobie Cronje) and sister Michelle de Necker (Trix Pienaar) who both live on what can be assumed to be their family farm. Villies farms while his sister is in charge of the administration of the farming business. Despite establishing his residence in the nearby town, Mauritz seems to spend a lot of time with his siblings on the farm. The De Neckers are portrayed as simple, salt of the earth people through their laid back manner and honesty. This is further portrayed through the Afrikaans they speak, using English words and expressions as part of their utilisation of language. This signals a very visible departure from the grand, pure Afrikaans spoken by the Senator and his family. As the onslaught from Senator Scheepers on Mauritz intensifies, especially after Mauritz and Carien become romantically involved, both Mauritz's brother and sister get involved. Mauritz and his siblings stand together against this threat, a stark contrast to Senator Scheepers' family which slowly disintegrates thanks to his ruthless abuse of power and influence. By placing the De Necker farming family, as protagonists, and their origin within the *platteland* setting of Worcester the values of honesty and integrity as embodied by this landscape are displayed. However within this reality where Afrikaner leadership cannot be trusted, the *platteland* and what it signifies is much more complex. In the wake of the leadership crisis Afrikaners were facing, the *platteland* in *Herfsland* stood as a gleaming monument of their honourable origins as constructed within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary. In this capacity as a reminder, the *platteland* also provides a possible avenue of salvation to a lost nation in what can be called a proverbial return to the land or the spirit of the *platteland*. This occurred during a time when public debates were centred on Afrikaner survival in a post-Vorster South Africa where some participants were making the case that survival depended on the intellectual and social life of Afrikaners and the ethics that underpin them.²⁰⁵ The *platteland* was seen as a space that could cultivate and reignite the ethics needed for the justified survival of Afrikaners. Even though

²⁰⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.537.

the corrupt nature of Afrikaner leadership is not limited to the city, the placement of the city as the centre of this corrupt network emphasises the position of the *platteland* through juxtapositioning.

Even though the corrupt network is only represented by white males one can argue that a critique of the patriarchal nature of Afrikaner national whiteness is not of concern here in the same way as was the case with *Weerskant die Nag*. Carien does not object to the patriarchal hierarchy per se. It is however the abuse of his patriarchal position and power that eventually forces her to become her foster father's enemy. Carien wants her foster brother Philip to be a part of her life, however, his allegiance to his father stands in the way. What is similar to *Weerskant die Nag* is the message that the status quo needs fixing, not changing. By the placement of the *platteland* it is clear that this is no attempt at a complete departure from an Afrikaner nationalist worldview, just an attempt to point out the issues that need to be addressed within this framework.

The racial stratification of labour as a result of the 'logic of race' within the Afrikaner nationalist framework is very obvious in *Herfsland*. The identity of Black people is derived from the construction of a white identity based on a number of assumptions about human agency and its relation to race.²⁰⁶ Thus by limiting the portrayal of Black characters to mainly that of labourers the occupational position and the agency associated with this position is incorporated into Black identity from the point of the white gaze. There is however one exception in this film with regards to the position of Coloureds. In 1977 the nationalist government accepted a plan to incorporate Coloureds and Asians into the parliamentary system.²⁰⁷ *Herfsland* is one of the many films from this period that started to reflect, even if just in minimal ways, this attempt at some form of political integration especially with regards to the Coloured community.²⁰⁸ In a scene where Senator Scheepers and his son are forced to walk back to town after their car was sabotaged on the De Necker's farm a Coloured man offers them a lift. On their way to town the Coloured man asks the two men what they do for a living. After the Senator tells the Coloured man that he is a Senator the Coloured inquires for which party to which the Senator replies "the National Party of course". The Coloured man immediately reacts by stopping the car and the audience sees the two white men leave the car and continue the journey by foot. This is interesting for two reasons. Firstly the most obvious is that as a Coloured man the driver

²⁰⁶ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.19.

²⁰⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.557.

²⁰⁸ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.16.

disapproves the manner in which the National Party has treated them despite the new political developments. Secondly the individuality of the character and his treatment of the two white men are of interest. In a sense this is a limited attempt at incorporating *E*coloureds into whiteness by extending political authority to those who did not have any claims to it previously. However there is also a flip side to this visual reading. Jan Scholtz as a film maker is exerting his own Afrikaner nationalist whiteness by giving the *E*coloured man a voice of camouflaged dissent in what is intended to be a comical scene. The director exposes his own preponderant position of power within the spectrum of power relations associated with Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.

Herfsland thus maintains a certain white identity while at the same time reflecting a serious crisis within Afrikaner leadership. Scholtz uses the *platteland* as a possible remedy for the ills of Afrikaner society by representing the protagonists as people of the land who embody the values embedded in this landscape and who successfully stand up against the corrupt leaders. The city is seen as an instrumental part of the problem whereas the *platteland* stays untouched in its position of significance within the imaginary of the Afrikaner nationalist framework that was well established by the end of the decade.

Both *Weerskant die Nag* and *Herfsland* were released in a context of great optimism in the film industry. Just the following year cinema attendance, especially with regards to locally produced films, skyrocketed.²⁰⁹ This further resulted in Satbel's announcement that they would be investing R7 million in the local film industry over a three year period.²¹⁰ The optimism was, however, short-lived. This is reflected in Jan Scholtz's most successful film of the late 1970s, *Diamante en die Dief* barely breaking even after its subsidy pay-out. This gives a limited indication of the success of *Herfsland*.²¹¹ Franz Marx's *Weerskant die Nag* on the other hand did garner some attention due to the controversial topic of marital rape that the film addressed and the fact that the screenplay was written by well-known Afrikaans writer of the time P.G. du Plessis. Both these films were produced at a time when even the old formulas that relied heavily upon traditional mythical structures and stereotypical characters started falling out of favour. This change in audience tastes coupled with a decrease in cinema attendance after the brief spike resulted in stagnation in film production for white audiences between 1979 and 1983.²¹² Film makers were, however, also working within a

²⁰⁹ SA Media, P. Breytenbach, 'SATV se kykers nou flieks toe', *Die Transvaler*, 19 July, 1978, p.5.

²¹⁰ SA Media, Unknown, 'R7 miljoen vir SA films', *Die Transvaler*, 26 January, 1978, p.8.

²¹¹ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.43.

²¹² K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.43.



mostly conservative environment where issues such as film screenings on Sundays sparked a national debate.²¹³

What must also be taken into consideration is the instability of apartheid South Africa as the decade drew to a close. Apartheid had lost its hegemonic character and emerged as purely instrumental resulting in a white South Africa that had little choice but to fall back on the abilities of its defence and police forces to protect the order.²¹⁴ The issue Afrikaners faced within this nationalist framework was not one as obsessed with the psychological rewards of belonging and the related prominence of cultural myths related to heritage, land and language that had to be maintained, but rather the material benefits attached to Afrikaner nationalism. This, to a certain extent, can explain in conjuncture with other elements the loss of appeal of the traditional and stereotyped representations on screen.

²¹³ SA Media, Unknown, "Diktator Kruger 'n bullebak" – man oor Sondagverbod', *Hoofstad*, 22 March, 1978, p.17.

²¹⁴ S. B. Greenberg, Ideological Struggle within the South African State, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman Group, 1987, p.393.

4. Chapter Four.

The 1980s was a decade of numerous contradictions. On the one hand, the anti-apartheid struggle solidified and assumed a new lease on life through the foundation of the United Democratic Front (UDF). And on the other hand, Afrikaner unity under the leadership of P W Botha fragmented and disintegrated, paving the way for the seismic shifts that occurred towards the end of the decade. It was also becoming obvious that the South African state had shifted away from Verwoerdian ideological orthodoxy. One of the most significant of these shifts was away from ideological principals of uncompromising racial separatism towards pragmatism through rational reform, which in itself established new political and ideological priorities.²¹⁵ These reforms became central to disunity within the NP which was enhanced by the movement towards constitutional reform that eventually resulted in the tricameral Parliament that included Coloureds and Indians for the first time. Early in 1982 Andries Treurnicht, leader of the right-wing within the NP, broke away together with 21 NP members of Parliament to form the Conservative Party (CP).²¹⁶ The inclusion of Coloureds and Indians in the same Parliament as whites proved to be too radical for the conservatives within the NP and resulted in the end of Afrikaner party political unity. The splintering of Afrikaner political unity rapidly deepened and by the election of 1987 one third of Afrikaners voted for right-wing parties, with the CP as the new official opposition in parliament.²¹⁷

The referendum that led to constitutional reform held in 1983 indicated that the majority of Afrikaners approved of the structural political changes proposed by the NP.²¹⁸ However, this should not be confused with a rejection of the racist ideology that was apartheid. This is evident in that many white South Africans resisted moves to scrap apartheid laws such as the Immorality Act and Mixed Marriages Act. The support for these laws reflect one of the many ways in which racist ideology had been internalised in white perceptions of their personal and sexual identities.²¹⁹ Being white still meant being socially and culturally distinct and white individuals still interpreted their world and identity

²¹⁵ D. Posel, The language of domination, 1978-1983, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman Group, 1987, p.419.

²¹⁶ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.558.

²¹⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.563.

²¹⁸ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.558-559.

²¹⁹ D. Posel, The language of domination, 1978-1983, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman Group, 1987, p.437.

according to this position given to them by Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.²²⁰ It became clear that reform under Prime Minister Botha would take the form of extending the functions and increasing the money delegated to the Black, Coloured and Asian bodies that represented these groups separately, whilst maintaining the central position of Afrikaners, and whites in general, in South African society.²²¹

4.2. *Broer Matie*

Broer Matie, directed by Jans Rautenbach and released in 1984, speaks to the new position of Coloureds as determined by the new political structure that emerged from constitutional reform. The film was released after a period that saw a stagnation in the production of films for white audiences between 1979 and 1983.²²² Based on the plot and the placement of the Coloured protagonist, Daniel 'Kieries' Kammies (Simon Bruinders), some critics at the time saw this Rautenbach film as propaganda for the new constitution.²²³ The film is set in 1961 shortly after South Africa became a republic and focuses on a *platteland* community in the Klein Karoo. The central plot line is concerned with the decision of the town's Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) council's decision to allow a Coloured preacher, Kieries, to conduct the funeral of a white farmer. The debate was sparked by the close ties between the white farmer, Broer Matie (Joe Steward), who gave Kieries as a fatherless child the opportunity to study and qualify himself as a preacher. The film jumps between scenes that are set in the few days that transpire from the time of Matie's death to his funeral. One of the focal points of the film is the church council's meeting on the morning of the funeral where a decision must be made whether or not to honour Matie's final wish and allow Kieries to preach to the white congregation. The church council consists of many typical Afrikaner characters; a headmaster, farmer, Broederbond, old South African Party member, a radical conservative, newly graduated teacher etc. It is very clear that the council is divided and a significant part of the film is dedicated to the voicing of the opinions of various members for and against granting Matie his final wish.

Through the scenes of the council meeting and various scenes set on the farm it can easily be believed that one of the central themes of *Broer Matie* is racism. However,

²²⁰ D. Posel, The language of domination, 1978-1983, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1987, p.439.

²²¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004 p.556.

²²² K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.43.

²²³ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.212-213.



Rautenbach went further by linking it specifically to the Cottesloe controversy of 1960 and racism in the church.²²⁴ The Cottesloe controversy refers to the tension between NP politicians and the AB on the one hand and the Cape DRC on the other after the World Council of Churches conference in Cottesloe, Johannesburg in December 1960. The tension stemmed from a declaration made at the conference that was accepted by the delegations of the two DRC branches present. The Cottesloe declaration included the following: that all racial groups who were permanently settled in South Africa have the right to share in the responsibilities, rewards and privileges associated with being part of South Africa's population; that each individual had the right to own land and to participate in government; that any policy that denied Black and Coloured people co-partnership in government was unjust and that there were no scriptural grounds for the prohibition of interracial marriages, to name a few.²²⁵ This resulted in Verwoerd himself, during his New Year's address of 1961, appealing to DR Churches to distance themselves from the decisions made by their delegates at the conference. He was supported in this regard by the AB whose executive committee sent out a circular condemning the Cottesloe declaration and declaring that it was not binding on any congregation until the relevant synods expressed their official position.²²⁶ It was partly as a result of the intervention of the AB executive committee which publicly voiced their support for the racial policy of apartheid, questioned by the Cottesloe declaration, that the situation turned in Verwoerd's favour. The AB executive committee decided to individually confront those AB members who attended the conference and presented them with the 'reality' of the current situation in an attempt to persuade them into to reject this declaration.²²⁷ This interventionist strategy was highly successful and resulted in the general rejection of the Cottesloe declaration by DRC bodies, from church councils to synods. This was enough to silence Afrikaner churches' critique of apartheid until the mid-1980s.²²⁸ It was these events which gave Rautenbach a rich historical background in which to frame *Broer Matie* and critique racism in the church.

Here it must be mentioned that from the early 1980s the PCB was more tolerant of criticism directed towards government policy as long as it was mainly by white film makers

²²⁴ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, 2012, p.210.

²²⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.478.

²²⁶ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.479.

²²⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.479.

²²⁸ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.479.



aimed at mostly white audiences.²²⁹ Even though set in 1961 the issue of racism in the church was extremely relevant in the early 1980s when the DRC opposed attempts by the government to scrap laws such as the Immorality and Mixed Marriage Acts. This opposition was based on the belief that the Lord created different ‘nations’ and that these ‘nations’ were thus meant to be kept separate as they were created.²³⁰ This rapidly changed, especially after the DRC’s Mission Church broke the silence and condemned apartheid as contradicting the teachings of Christianity only to be followed by the DRC itself officially distancing itself from apartheid in 1986.²³¹ This was a significant blow to the apartheid ideology that was dependent upon the ideological cohesion between religion/Christianity and Afrikaner nationalism in that Christian-nationalism helped disguise notions of racial superiority in terms of divine destiny.²³² Thus it can be said that perhaps, within this context, Rautenbach wanted to question the myth of the divine destiny of the Afrikaner nation in *Broer Matie*. Even though Rautenbach does to an extent expose some of the absurdities of apartheid in *Broer Matie* he leaves many of the structural elements and myths inherent to the Afrikaner nationalist framework that apartheid was dependent, on in place.

Some of the manifestations of whiteness are exposed in many different ways throughout the film. The most obvious scene in this regard is the conversation between Pietman (Paul Luckhoff), son of Matie, and Kieries in the church located in the Coloured village. Throughout the film the viewer is made aware that these two men cultivated a very close relationship growing up together on the farm, basically that of brothers despite their different skin colour. It is however after the reading of Matie’s will that the difficulties of maintaining this relationship into adulthood, within a context dictated by race, start manifesting. Pietman inherits basically everything, including all his father’s farms. He is however not allowed to sell these farms and is bound by his father’s will to either farm on them or forfeit the farms in which case they will be placed in a family trust for his children up to the third generation. This does not sit well with Pietman, for he has left the farm to pursue a career in the army in Cape Town where he has created his own life with no intention of farming. Kieries, despite his relations with Matie, only inherits a car and the old furniture in the attic. The outburst that follows from Pietman escalates to the point where, after Kieries tries to console and advise him, calling him brother, Pietman reminds Kieries that they are

²²⁹ K. Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, London: Routledge, 1989, p.24.

²³⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.575.

²³¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.576.

²³² S. Dubow, ‘Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Conceptualization of ‘Race’’, *The Journal for African History*, 1992, 33(2), p.215.

not brothers and never will be. Now that they are adults it seems they are supposed to occupy their proper place in society as determined by their race. The will itself is the tangible manifestation and symbol of the social norms imposed on their personal relationship by society and the system that is imposed on society. The tensions created by the will in itself relates to the issue of conformity. As young children it was acceptable for the two to cultivate a close bond, but as adults the responsible way for Pietman to behave was to put aside childish intimacy and behave according to 'his place' in society – as the superior. It is when Pietman wants to make his peace with Kieries that we encounter the scene in the [Ecoloured](#) village church.

The conversation almost immediately turns into a confrontation when Kieries doubts the authenticity of Pietman's apology, stating that "you Boers" are always so very sorry. Kieries goes on to ask Pietman whether the Afrikaners were the only ones the Lord gave intelligence to, revealing on the one hand how the identity of people who are not white is derived from the construction of white identity, whites always knowing better despite the fact that Kieries himself is an educated man.²³³ On the other hand, and even more revealing, it further exposes the myth of divine destiny as part of the Afrikaner nationalist framework. In other words, it speaks to divine destiny and the role of divine destiny determining the social and racial hierarchy which speaks to identity. Kieries further challenges Pietman by rhetorically asking him if he has any idea how it feels to be defined by frizzy hair and a flat nose, stereotypical physiological signifiers of blackness. Pietman replies by telling Kieries that he (Kieries) is just a human. The invisibility of whiteness as normality is immediately brought to the attention of the viewer with Kieries' reply. Kieries points out that while Pietman has the privilege of being human, nothing less and nothing more, Kieries as a [Ecoloured](#) man will always be something different than just human. Through this interaction Afrikaner nationalist whiteness as the point from which difference is measured and has come to represent humanness, normality and universality is exposed.²³⁴

The scenes that expose whiteness do, however, take place against a backdrop where the portrayal of [Ecoloured](#) farmworkers and villagers is conventional and conservative, illustrating pastoral paternalism within the landscape of the *platteland*.²³⁵ Matie's sister Hannie (Trix Pienaar) embodies the naked racism towards the [Ecoloureds](#) that does not

²³³ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.19.

²³⁴ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, 2007, p.34.

²³⁵ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.214.

supposedly exist in this *platteland* setting where there are historical bonds between these two racial groups. She makes it clear that only through blood can people be family, disqualifying Kieries and all the other Coloured workers on the farm who identify with the Viljoen family after decades of service. Hannie is from the city and thus the city, or the influence of the city, has rendered her insensitive to the close relationship between Coloureds and Afrikaners found in the *platteland*. It is clear that the racism embodied by Hannie in the film is seen as harsh and somewhat absurd, whereas the paternalistic racism that is exhibited throughout is seen as loving and humane, even if sometimes imperfect.

Rautenbach also points to shared experiences between certain sections of the Afrikaner community and Coloureds as a marginalised group. For instance the church council member who is the first to propose a motion that would allow Kieries as a Coloured preacher into the church to lead the funeral service is from the Afrikaner working class, made clear through his reference to his dirty hands and nails as a mechanic. He argues that when he arrived in the *platteland* town no one wanted to give him an opportunity because of his social standing except for Matie. It is clear from the position of this character with regards to the issue at hand, that as a man from the working class, he has also experienced marginalisation within the Afrikaner community to a limited extent. It is due to this shared experience of unequal marginality that he sees no reason why the council should not grant the request. Although limited, this stands in stark contrast with the logic of some of the other church council members who suspend these shared experiences through the claimed exclusivity of whiteness. This shared experience is however greatly limited when considering the importance of maintaining racial boundaries for the white working class in white supremacist societies. The whiteness of the Afrikaner working class embodied the possibility of upward social mobility while maintaining a hierarchical position, this despite their class origin.²³⁶

However, this can also be seen as part of an attempt by Rautenbach to further establish Coloureds as 'brown' Afrikaners. In other words it insinuates that just as working class Afrikaners once found themselves marginalised, so too have 'brown' Afrikaners and they should, just like the Afrikaner working class, be included. If this is the case it forms part of a general attempt by the film to propose a historically based unity between Coloureds and Afrikaners forged on the *platteland*, which manifests in a shared language, spiritual life and upbringing.²³⁷

²³⁶ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.52, 56.

²³⁷ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.212.



Despite these attempts at cosmetic assimilation of Ecoloureds into Afrikaners it is eventually clear that they will never just be Afrikaners, but always 'brown' Afrikaners. This is evident when Kieries is finally permitted to bury Matie. It becomes clear that through his education and elevated class he is allowed to participate but only with permission.²³⁸ Thus it can be understood that partial group acceptance has been 'bestowed' upon Kieries, limited in nature. As an educated, Afrikaans Ecoloured man subscribing to western petty bourgeois culture and his affiliation with the DRC, Kieries embodies one of the main features of Ecoloured identity in the previous century as identified by Mohamed Adhikari, namely assimilationism.²³⁹ Historically, this assimilationist approach is based on the late nineteenth-century genesis of Ecoloured identity that wanted Ecoloureds to be accepted into the dominant society and share in the benefits of citizenship through being partly descended from European colonists and sharing a language and, to some extent, a history.²⁴⁰ However, within the context of a white supremacist South Africa the assimilationist approach was out of step with the socio-political realities of apartheid South Africa.

The reality was that despite the links of language and history and his elevated position through education and class Kieries, just as the Ecoloured community at large, could not be assimilated into an Afrikaner dominated society due to the central importance of race. Thus Kieries is only partially an Afrikaner with limited access to the dominant society. Furthermore, this access is either granted or withheld at the whim of Afrikaners. Neither Kieries, nor any other 'educated, middle class' member of the Ecoloured community has the agency to determine the terms or occasion of access. His education, language and history grants him this access while his race forms the foundation of his othering through the binary notion of purity and impurity.²⁴¹ The logic being that people of mixed blood fell away from an original purity that stood central to ideas of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.²⁴² It is only thanks to Kieries' personal connection to a white man and the last will and testament of this white man that Kieries is seen as worthy to temporarily cross the racial divide. In other words it was not due to the links between Kieries and Afrikaners, or Ecoloured attempts at

²³⁸ E.J. Riley, *'From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989'*, 2012, p.216.

²³⁹ M. Adhikari, 'Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and Change in the Expression of Coloured Identity in White Supremacist South Africa', *Journal of Southern Studies*, 2006, 32(3), p.475.

²⁴⁰ M. Adhikari, 'Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and Change in the Expression of Coloured Identity in White Supremacist South Africa', *Journal of Southern Studies*, 2006, 32(3), p. 469,475, H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Bepark, 2004, p.340,341.

²⁴¹ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.88.

²⁴² M. Steyn, *"Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used To Be": White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, Albany: State University Press, 2001, p.32.

assimilation, that he was ‘bestowed’ with group acceptance but because of his personal proximity to a white man.

Through this perpetually limited acceptance of Coloureds it is clear that Afrikaner nationalist whiteness, which has historically functioned as a racial supremacist identity within self-identifying ‘white groups’, saw too intimate social interaction as a threat.²⁴³ Within the Afrikaner nationalist framework race and a proper sense of colour and place had to be maintained to ensure that the white man would remain master, rendering complete assimilation of Coloureds impossible.²⁴⁴ This political subtext was noted by film critics of the time, one stating that *Broer Matie* reflects the point of view that Coloureds no longer have to say “*Ja, Baas.*”²⁴⁵ but should rather say “*Dankie, Baas.*”²⁴⁶ for being included in the new dispensation.²⁴⁷

Pietman’s relationship with the *platteland* is mediated by nostalgia based on fond memories of his childhood years. He has his own life and future in Cape Town which does not include maintaining a close bond with either the land or his father’s lifestyle as a farmer. Thus he eventually decides not to return to the farm and become a farmer. What the farm symbolises changes after learning the stipulations of his father’s will. The farm and the expectations surrounding his relation to the farm now symbolises a trap and bondage to his heritage as an Afrikaner.²⁴⁸ The film ends with what signifies the final rejection of Pietman’s heritage and its bondage when he and his English girlfriend fly away, back to Cape Town, back to the life Pietman chose. Even though it could be agreed that through this ending Rautenbach does question the future of the Afrikaner farmer *Broer Matie* does not break with the traditional significance of the *platteland* and its links with Afrikaner nationalism. Even though Pietman himself has rejected his heritage it is still being conserved for his children through his father’s last will and testament that places the farm in a family trust for up to three generations. It is clear that even though the majority of Afrikaners have moved to the cities their link with the land and *platteland*, as foundational to their heritage as imagined by Afrikaner nationalists, is intergenerational and not limited to those who still live there. This

²⁴³ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.52.

²⁴⁴ H. Gilliomee, The Growth of Afrikaner Power, in H. Adam & H. Gilliomee (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.117.

²⁴⁵ Translates to “Yes, master.”

²⁴⁶ Translates to “Thank you, master.”

²⁴⁷ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.212-213.

²⁴⁸ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, [Unpublished Thesis Presented for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Historical Studies](#), University of Cape Town, 2012, p.221.

also further preserves the inter-generational possibility of an eventual return of the Afrikaner to its roots. Rautenbach, as in *Die Kandidaat*, maintains the prominent position and role of the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary by keeping it within reach for the urban Afrikaner and future generations. This link between Afrikaners and the land is not extended to Coloureds. Despite the fact that Matie raised Kieries like his own son and the close links Kieries had with the family and farm he cannot inherit the land because he is not white. The persistence of the exclusion of Coloureds is undeniable. They are not assimilated into Afrikaner nationalist whiteness because whiteness within the Afrikaner nationalist framework meant entitlement to the land.²⁴⁹ The links between Afrikaner heritage and the *platteland* as constructed within Afrikaner nationalist ideology became increasingly important as it still exercised powerful influence within a context in which for many, the belief in racial segregationist development was disappearing.²⁵⁰ The *platteland* maintained its significance with Afrikaner nationalist ideology as Afrikaners started depending less and less on 'biological' reasons to justify their white supremacist position within South Africa and more and more on their 'heritage' as portrayed within a nationalist framework.

The majority of the attention *Broer Matie* garnered from the press focused on the controversial topic of racism in the church. Some Coloured contributors to newspapers pointed out the bad and almost pathetic light in which *Broer Matie* portrays Coloureds. One such contributor, Mr. Eddie Bydell, wrote that the film just proved the exclusion that the Coloured community faced daily.²⁵¹ However, some press coverage focused on the valuable lessons for the Coloured community in the film, especially regarding the value of having a positive and open attitude when trying to resolve issues.²⁵² This message does seem to echo the sentiment of the film, that is, the apartheid notion of 'own affairs', made even more relevant with the issue of Coloured and Indian participation in their own Houses in parliament.²⁵³ The attention attracted by the somewhat controversial film did not translate into audience attendance. The film did so badly at the box office that Leon van Nierop made

²⁴⁹ M. Steyn, "Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used To Be": *White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001, p.35.

²⁵⁰ H. Gilliomee, The Growth of Afrikaner Power, in H. Adam & H. Gilliomee (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1979, p.120.

²⁵¹ SA Media, 'Klomp kwade gevoelens', *Rapport*, 8 July, 1984, p.5.

²⁵² SA Media, 'Rolprent 'n moet vir sy mense, sê bruin akteur', *Oosterling*, 13 July, 1984, p.4.

²⁵³ E.J. Riley, 'From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989', *Unpublished Thesis Presented for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Historical Studies*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.217.



the statement that basically no one saw the film, recalling being the only person in the cinema when watching it soon after release.²⁵⁴

Irrelevant of the performance of the film, being released the same year as the establishment of the tricameral Parliament, *Broer Matie* does to an extent echo the changed political landscape of integration, or rather, the facade thereof. Despite the inclusion of **E**coloureds and Indians in the Houses of parliament, white, and in this case Afrikaner nationalist, control was maintained.²⁵⁵ The façade of apartheid as separate but equal was supported by the inclusion of **E**coloureds and Indians into the highest level of government, but the reality was still one of white supremacy. Similarly *Broer Matie* plays on the similarities between the **E**coloured and Afrikaner communities as a justification of the new 'equal' status of **E**coloureds while maintaining to some extent the racial hierarchy that formed part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. This is clear in *Broer Matie* as Kieries still occupies a subjugated position. In other words Afrikaners and **E**coloureds were, paradoxically, 'intimately separate' and superficially equal within this changed political landscape.

4.3. The Boetie Films.

The façade of political integration and Afrikaner unity, moving into the mid-80s, did not only deteriorate but Afrikaner society as a whole was increasingly ingrained with self-doubt.²⁵⁶ Contributing to this sense of malaise was the increasing resentment among white South Africans towards the manpower and financial drain associated with the increased South African regional military commitment from the early 1980s.²⁵⁷ This section of the chapter analyses Van den Bergh's two *Boetie* films in this historical context. By the time the first *Boetie* film was released in 1984 the thematic landscape of the Border War film had experienced constant adaptation as the character of the war itself changed.²⁵⁸ By the 1980s the Border War genre had fragmented into two sub-genres which can be categorised as pro- and anti-establishment. Amongst the pro-establishment Border War films were two comedies directed by Regardt van den Bergh in 1984 and 1985 respectively, *Boetie Gaan Border Toe* (Little Brother Goes to the Border) and its sequel *Boetie op Manoeuvres* (Little Brother on

²⁵⁴ L. van Nierop, *Daar doer in die Fliek*, Pretoria: Protea, 2016, p.221.

²⁵⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.558.

²⁵⁶ M. Suriano & C. Lewis, 'Afrikaners is Plesierig! Voelvry Music, Anti-apartheid Identities and Rockey Street Nightclubs in Yeoville (Johannesburg), 1980'2-90's', *African Studies*, 2015, 74(3), p.410.

²⁵⁷ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', *KLEIO*, 2004, 36(1), p.39, 45.

²⁵⁸ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', 2004, 36(1) p.29.



Manoeuvres). These films were produced within the historical context of what the Nationalist Government referred to as a 'total strategy' in reaction to what it deemed to be a 'total onslaught' on the apartheid state. This political paradigm was developed during the latter part of the 1970s to muster support in the political, economic, diplomatic and military spheres in defence of apartheid South Africa.²⁵⁹ Entertainment, such as the Border War films, was one of the tools utilised through censorship and subsidies to function as propaganda to perpetuate the state's 'total strategy' against the 'total onslaught'. Popular Afrikaans music and radio programmes such as Springbok Rendezvous was part of the 'total strategy' through celebrating the role of the men in the army and to muster up women's support.²⁶⁰ Similarly to the ways in which popular music was used as propaganda to support the war, so too were films an integral part of the struggles of representation of the war that could be framed within a context of hegemonic and counter hegemonic struggle.²⁶¹ In other words film was used to socialise the public for militarisation or the 'total strategy' while also conditioning them to grasp the certain threat, the 'total onslaught'.²⁶² As part of this propaganda the geographical border, although real, was also imagined and constructed to represent an ideological space able to generate support for the nationalist government's agenda.²⁶³

Dylan Craig, in *Screening the Border War, 1971-1988*²⁶⁴ identifies three phases in the Border War filmic genre that correspond to three contemporaneous phases of the war itself, namely armed détente, integrated socio-military response and escalatory disengagement.²⁶⁵ This underlines the often deliberate influence of the government in the ideological fictionalisation of the war on film as an ongoing service to external politico-military aims and government backed ideology.²⁶⁶ By 1980 the media, including cinema, had become instrumental in bombarding the public with government ideology through disinformation, and

²⁵⁹ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.84.

²⁶⁰ D. Conway, "Somewhere on the border of credibility": the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.80.

²⁶¹ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.82.

²⁶² D. Conway, "Somewhere on the border of credibility": the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.35.

²⁶³ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', 2003, 29(1), p.84.

²⁶⁴ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', *KLEIO*, 2004, 36(1).

²⁶⁵ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', 2004, 36(1), p.29.

²⁶⁶ D. Craig, *The Viewer as Conscript: Dynamic struggles for ideological supremacy in the South African Border War, 1971-1988*. Unpublished minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree Masters in Arts in the Department of Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, 2003, p.29.



concealment through censorship and subsidy incentives.²⁶⁷ In the case of film one way in which government had an influence on the ideology encompassed by the films' content was through official military policy with regards to film production.

The growing resentment of white South Africans towards the war, dwindling enthusiasm amongst military conscripts and the rise of disciplinary problems amongst troops challenged the militarised nature of apartheid South Africa during the 1980s.²⁶⁸ This coupled with more rather than less troops needed in the Border War resulted in what can be referred to as a 'double subsidy'. The South African Defence Force (SADF) supported any film, such as the two Boetie films, that seemed likely to provide it with willing recruits.²⁶⁹ This subsidy took the form of financial aid but also through the provision of locations, props and soldiers as extras, to name a few additional forms of assistance provided by the SADF.²⁷⁰ In an environment where South African audiences were denied unrestricted reportage on the Border War, the state and the SADF realised the value of films directed at an information-starved and receptive audience in shaping the public imagination with respect to the war.²⁷¹

The notion of the border in the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary can be traced back to the symbolism embodied in the *Voorstreckers* and the Great Trek both as apparent products of a *grensboergemeenskap* or frontier farming community. It was during the rise of Afrikaner nationalism in the 1930-s that the *Voorstreckers* were elevated to the mythical position of pioneers to whom Afrikaners owed the existence of their nation, freedom and cultural identity.²⁷² Nowhere is the creation of the nationalist image of the Trek and *Voorstreckers* more evident than when looking at the Great Trek Centennial Celebration organised by the *Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuurvereniging* (ATKV) in 1938 in which thousands of Afrikaans-speaking white South Africans participated. This momentous event is a very clear example of

²⁶⁷ D. Craig, 'The Viewer as Conscript: Dynamic struggles for ideological supremacy in the South African Border War, 1971-1988', 2003, p.18, 23.

²⁶⁸ D. Conway, 'Somewhere on the border of credibility': the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.80.

²⁶⁹ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', *KLEIO*, 2004, 36(1), p.45.

²⁷⁰ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', 2004, 36(1), p.45.

²⁷¹ D. Craig, 'The Viewer as Conscript: Dynamic struggles for ideological supremacy in the South African Border War, 1971-1988', [Unpublished minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree Masters in Arts in the Department of Historical Studies](#), University of Cape Town, 2003, p.34-35.

²⁷² F.A. van Jaarsveld, 'n Afrikaner Perspektief op die Groot Tek: Simbool en Ritueel', *Historia*, 33(2), 1988, p.11, 15.

ideological construction for the sake of eliciting feelings of national self-consciousness and strengthening civil religion.²⁷³

Furthermore, Afrikaner nationalist historiography from the first part of the 20th century portrayed the *Voortrekkers* and their leaders, such as Andries Pretorius and Hendrik Potgieter, as racially pure and the first true Afrikaner nationalists; protectors of white Christian civilisation, republicanism and freedom from the threats of both liberal British Imperialism and African 'savage barbarism'.²⁷⁴ Within the Afrikaner nationalist framework these *Voortrekker* heroes, almost exclusively men, were a product of the frontier that served as a border between 'civilisation' and 'barbarism' and as they embarked on their Great Trek they themselves became the border signifying these binaries moving ever more into the interior. In conjunction with the process of the naturalisation of the nation, the Voortrekkers, as part of the Afrikaner narrative of descent, were not only offspring of the South African landscape but also the embodiment of a very specific ideological space, the border. Borders are sites of power and contestation over power, they restrict people by shutting some out and keeping others in.²⁷⁵ In other words, borders, and in this case the nationalist symbolism of the *Voortrekkers*, was intended to set out clear demarcations, whether geographical, political and/or metaphorical. Thus through glorifying the *Voortrekkers* as heroes of 'civilisation', Afrikaner nationalism justified Afrikaner imperialistic territorialism and ideological racial exclusion.

In the context of the Border War 'the border' referred to a relatively vague geographical as well as an ideological space.²⁷⁶ It became a cultural myth to which white society attached political and social meanings that in turn sustained and intensified South Africa's militarisation.²⁷⁷ Two ways in which this was achieved was through popular music and novels, a genre that became known as *grensliteratuur*, or border literature. The political and social meanings that these cultural products were imbued with were partial and contingent on the existence of a number of socially constructed discourses pertaining, for

²⁷³ J.A. Templin, 'The ideology of a chosen people: Afrikaner nationalism and the Ossewa Trek, 1938', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1999, 5(3), p.401.

²⁷⁴ F.A. van Jaarsveld, 'n Afrikaner Perspektief op die Groot Trek: Simbool en Ritueel', *Historia*, 33(2), 1988, p.19, 23.

²⁷⁵ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.80.

²⁷⁶ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', 2003, 29(1), p.84.

²⁷⁷ D. Conway, 'Somewhere on the border of credibility': the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.75.



example, to ideas of gender and race.²⁷⁸ The *grensvegter*²⁷⁹, for example, became a symbol and ultimate marker of hegemonic masculinity for white men.²⁸⁰ The iconic image of the South African *grensvegter* resonated throughout white South Africa and encouraged many men and their families to relish the prospect of sharing in an esteemed masculine endeavour where conscripts would be transformed from boys into men. These *grensvegters* and their presence on ‘the border’ symbolised the maintenance and the continued existence of Christianity and civilisation. The ‘border’ was a space in which national identity could be affirmed and defending this border symbolised the maintenance of the white status quo.²⁸¹

The relative ease with which white society bought into these discourses surrounding ‘the border’ during the Border War years should come as no surprise when looking at the links between ‘the border’ of the *Voortrekkers* and that of the war. The militarisation that formed part and parcel of the notion of ‘the border’ was reinforced by the apartheid government’s Christian National Education that strongly featured the nationalist version of violent settler expeditions such as the Great Trek and martial *Voortrekker* heroes such as Andries Pretorius.²⁸² With the *Voortrekkers*’ prominent position in national education it is easy to link the relation, within the Afrikaner nationalist framework, between the heroic *Voortrekkers* as vanguards of Christianity and civilisation and the *grensvegter* who was called up to defend Christianity and civilisation in the face of a ‘total onslaught’. The apartheid state was also attuned to the broader cold war context and cunningly deployed the discourse of ‘total onslaught’ and ‘total strategy’ beyond the mere defence of the apartheid state. The ‘total onslaught’ came not only from the anti-apartheid movements which had found refuge in neighbouring countries, but also from a wave of socialist- and communist-aligned newly independent African states. Within this global context, the defence of Christian, white, capitalist South Africa was also a defence of Western civilisation and Christian values against Communism, anarchy and atheism.

²⁷⁸ D. Conway, ‘Somewhere on the border of credibility’: the cultural construction and contestation of ‘the border’ in white South African society.’, 2008, p.75.

²⁷⁹ Afrikaans for border fighter.

²⁸⁰ D. Conway, ‘Somewhere on the border of credibility’: the cultural construction and contestation of ‘the border’ in white South African society.’, in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa’s Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.78.

²⁸¹ D. Conway, ‘Somewhere on the border of credibility’: the cultural construction and contestation of ‘the border’ in white South African society.’, 2008, p.77.

²⁸² D. Craig, ‘*The Viewer as Conscript: Dynamic struggles for ideological supremacy in the South African Border War, 1971-1988*’. Unpublished minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree Masters in Arts in the Department of Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, 2003, p.8.

By the early 1980s ‘the border’ had become a commonly accepted social myth in white South African society.²⁸³ Due to the mythical and vague nature of ‘the border’, ‘the border’ was wherever the *grensvegter* was. Thus the *grensvegter*, just as the *Voortrekker*, became the embodiment of ‘the border’. Both of Van Den Bergh’s *Boetie* films which will now be analysed formed part of a canon of work that contributed to this notion of ‘the border’ to which the focus will now shift.

In the first part of the first *Boetie* film, *Boetie* (Arnold Vosloo) is introduced as a spoiled brat through close-up shots of his expensive sports car with its personalised number plate, champagne and an expensive watch. In the opening sequence *Boetie* and one of his ‘girls’ are on the open road where they encounter a truck-load of soldiers. The soldiers initiate interaction by holding up a sign asking ‘*Waar is die jol?*’ (Where is the party?) *Boetie* reacts by popping in an audio cassette while his ‘girl’ starts drinking champagne. As the music is playing with the repetitive chorus stating “*He’s a good time*” it is clear that *Boetie* is the *jol*, and enjoying his care-free life of wealth and leisure. It soon becomes apparent that *Boetie* has been ‘dodging’ compulsory conscription for five years and that he has no intention of heeding the call of the SADF. This however changes when his stepfather, Mr. Moerdyk, a National Party member of parliament, offers him money to join the army and complete his compulsory two-year conscription. Mr Moerdyk’s financial incentive to *Boetie* is motivated by his campaign in a by-election and the hope of countering his political rival whose sons are themselves evading conscription. When *Boetie* confronts his stepfather with regards to this plan Mr. Moerdyk offers him R50 000 to join the army and R100 000 if he ends up going to ‘the border’. *Boetie*, with the help of his mother, coerces his stepfather into giving the full R100 000 irrespective of whether he goes to ‘the border’ or not. What is important here is that it is clear that Mr. Moerdyk, as a member of parliament, is fully aware that *Boetie* as a *grensvegter* is politically worth much more than just a regular soldier due to the symbolism attached to physically fighting on ‘the border’. Just before leaving for the army it is Mr. Moerdyk who reminds *Boetie* of his great-great grandfather who fought in six Xhosa wars on the frontier²⁸⁴, thus providing *Boetie* with an illusion of continuity with their collective Afrikaner history.

²⁸³ D. Conway, “Somewhere on the border of credibility: the cultural construction and contestation of ‘the border’ in white South African society.”, in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa’s Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.90.

²⁸⁴ The Xhosa Wars occurred between 1779 and 1879 on the Eastern frontier of the then Cape Colony.

On his way to the army Boetie meets Dumpies Ball (Frank Dankurt) an English-speaking white South African who has also been evading conscription but has decided to join the army to honour his wife and unborn baby. It is clear that Dumpies is from a working class background, far removed from the life of luxury that Boetie is accustomed to. The friendship between Boetie and Dumpies portrayed throughout the film distracts the viewer from the reality faced by most English-speaking soldiers who found themselves culturally and linguistically marginalised in the Afrikaner-dominated SADF.²⁸⁵

The majority of the film takes place at the army base, Voortrekker Heights²⁸⁶ where Boetie and his unit are to be trained as soldiers. From the first scenes at the army base the contrast between new conscripts and trained soldiers is visible, juxtaposing the undisciplined nature of civilian life with the conformed nature and discipline of the life of a soldier. It is clear that conscription in any society is a disciplinary mechanism that aims to engender conformity and obedience.²⁸⁷ The time Boetie and his unit spend at Voortrekker Heights is filled with mischief and camaraderie. In a conversation between the new friends, Boetie confesses to Dumpies that he is starting to like the army, the reason being that the army has stripped him of his materialistic image and because of this people are getting to know him for who he is and not what he owns or where he comes from. Boetie has thus uncritically embraced this conformity of the army as a stimulus for personal growth.

Corporal Botes (Eric Nobbs) is the man in charge of Boetie's unit that consists of a bunch of misfits. Corporal Botes has been reassigned to the base after serving at 'the border' where he ran into what is referred to as 'some trouble'. It becomes clear that Corporal Botes is what was referred to as *bosbefok* or bush fucked, a common term used at the time for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Corporal Botes' PTSD is used as the comical counterbalance to the trauma experienced by *grensvegters*. The implications thereof are that 'the border' was far removed from the heroism associated with this distant place.²⁸⁸

Before finally embarking on his mission to 'the border' with his unit, Boetie returns home for a short visit. While spending time with his new sweetheart Elize (Janie du Plessis)

²⁸⁵ C. Doherty, 'Trauma and the Conscript Memoirs of the South African 'Border War'' *English in Africa*, 2015, 42(2), p.31.

²⁸⁶ Now known as Thaba Tshwane.

²⁸⁷ D. Conway, "Somewhere on the border of credibility": the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.80.

²⁸⁸ D. Conway, "Somewhere on the border of credibility": the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.76.

Boetie denounces his riches by tearing up the check for R100 000 his stepfather gave him and makes it clear that he is now a changed man, a new Boetie who does not see any value in material things or one-night stands. It is clear that Boetie now embodies the potential benefits of military service such as comradeship and personal growth.²⁸⁹ The political issues which led to his enlistment are portrayed as being forgotten and even ridiculed; communicating that military service is about more than the politics of the day.

Despite the ideological and geo-political importance of the border, only the last few segments of the film are situated at 'the border'. Boetie and his unit are only responsible for administrative tasks and delivering supplies for which they are ridiculed by the experienced *grensvegters* present. During a supply run the unit's military vehicle is hit by a landmine and the unexperienced troops find themselves in a conflict situation. In the skirmish that follows Corporal Botes is shot and Boetie immediately takes control of the situation. Boetie and his unit disappear into the unknown border to fight the enemy whom the audience never sees. Boetie and his unit emerge from the bush and find that Corporal Botes is alive and the film ends. Boetie has completed the transition from boyhood to manhood through military conscription as a rite of passage. He is a *grensvegter* now, a hero, a protector of Christianity and civilisation.

However, it is important to point out the contradiction here that the same border that made Boetie a hero is the same one that made Corporal Botes *bosbefok*. The comical nature of Corporal Botes is eventually overshadowed by his bravery and his paternalism towards the young soldiers. It communicates the idea that PTSD, even though real, is not as crippling as some would believe. In other words being *bosbefok* does not completely immobilise those who suffer from PTSD even within the context of the military. Despite this sanitising of PTSD Boetie is still portrayed as not being affected by the trauma experienced in combat. The fact that Boetie has seemingly overcome both the physical and psychological dangers of war elevates his position as hero.

Boetie op Manoeuvres on the other hand is mainly set somewhere on the *platteland* where military units would be performing a series of military exercises. One of the units present is an elite Reconnaissance Commando unit of the SADF. Between the mischief and comic misfortunes of Boetie and his unit they are undermined and challenged by the members of this elite Reconnaissance Commando unit in a series of war games.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', *KLEIO*, 2004, 36(1), p.38.

²⁹⁰ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', 2004, 36(1), p.38.

Boetie and his unit initially do not seem like a match for the Reconnaissance Commando which reminds the audience of a Rambo-like, *Apocalypse Now* insane group of men. It is clear that this specific unit has gone rogue, as displayed through their complete disregard for the rules, procedures and conduct of the military. Once again it can be assumed that their time on 'the border' has turned them into these violent and irrational soldiers that Boetie's unit now faces. Boetie and his unit are the target of the ridiculing mischief of the rogue unit which makes Boetie's unit look weak and disrespected. After concocting a plan Boetie and his unit have an opportunity to regain their honour and reclaim the hero status they gained on 'the border', but this time on the *platteland*. With the *platteland* as backdrop in what turns out to be a fight without guns, the protagonists outsmart the antagonists and save the day. Boetie and his girlfriend, who is one of the journalists, drive away into the sunset now that Boetie has once again proved his manhood.

Throughout the film the same themes as seen in the first *Boetie* film are present, those of personal growth and comradeship. The presence of three female journalists writing on the endeavours of the army and the ways in which they assist Boetie and his unit points to the gendered nature of the militarisation of South African society. In a range of ways, stretching from incidents with flowers to beautify the women's tent to questions of bravery, the masculine nature of the army and the *platteland* is portrayed. Historically, military institutions have exploited gender divisions to the extent that gendering and militarisation are inseparable.²⁹¹ Cultural discourses of white masculinity and femininity were therefore militarised in an effort to make conscription appear as an essential facet of every white man's life-course and to make women believe it is their duty to support their men as soldiers.²⁹² In other words, these women, as mothers, sweethearts and friends were encouraged to actively identify with and support 'their men'.²⁹³

Once again this Afrikaans-language film feeds into the naturalist tradition and its assumption concerning character traits and character-building.²⁹⁴ It thus seems as if the *platteland* and 'the border' were two sides of the same coin, with both being constructed as

²⁹¹ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.88.

²⁹² D. Conway, "Somewhere on the border of credibility": the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.77.

²⁹³ D. Conway, "Somewhere on the border of credibility": the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', 2008, p.79.

²⁹⁴ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.85, 100.

places of character building and growth. Through these films Afrikaner nationalism used and continued to use ideologised landscapes to mediate the construction of nationhood and the accompanying position of whiteness as power and privilege.²⁹⁵

Throughout both films only one non-white character truly features. James (William Abdul), is the Coloured butler working in Boetie's family home. The intimate friendship between Boetie and James is very obvious throughout both of the films. Nowhere is this more apparent than when Boetie's mother, when speaking to James about Boetie, refers to Boetie as James' only son on the border. James' colouredness raises him a degree above blackness and therefore more comprehensible. James becomes that much more comprehensible because of the clothes he wears and the manner in which he comports himself, things that are easily recognised and comprehended by whites. This further links the political position of Coloureds in the 1980s as reflected in *Broer Matie*. James, just as Kieries, is not only elevated above blackness due to similarities with Afrikaners but also elevated above the personal boundaries of Coloureds due to an intimate relationship with a white man. This intimacy is still limited, once again subscribing to the notion of 'intimately separate' by the obvious lower social position that James occupies in the social hierarchy as a servant.

The almost complete lack of any Black characters in the *Boetie* films indicates that blackness has been so othered that it cannot be adequately rendered or comprehended. This also then explains why the enemy on 'the border' is never seen in the first film. This lack of Black characters can also be seen as part of the idea that this was a white man's war against the always present threat of blackness. The simplistic nature of the representations of the protagonists and antagonists as seen in these films are indicative of a society which confronts reality and the complexities of life through a simplistic reduction to binary opposites: good/white vs bad/black. As silence about whiteness implicitly serves to maintain the status quo of power relations between Black people and white people it can be said that the *Boetie* films endorse whiteness as part of the Afrikaner nationalist ideological framework.²⁹⁶ However, the character of James as a Coloured man is no coincidence when considering that by the time of production Coloureds and Indians gained some political power in a new constitution in an attempt by the government to gain additional support amidst rising local pressure.

²⁹⁵ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.3.

²⁹⁶ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.36.

Van den Bergh's films were part of the propaganda aimed at convincing young men and white South Africa in general to support the war amidst mounting disapproval. One manifestation of this mounting disapproval was the establishment of the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) in 1983.²⁹⁷ As part of its innovative and creative means of protest, for example, the ECC effectively gained the support of many musicians who supported the call to end conscription in the wake of the Border war as a political and cultural issue.²⁹⁸ With an increasingly strengthened profile it was partly due to the success of movements such as the ECC that by the 1980s potential conscripts could not be swayed by patriotic appeals as in previous Border War films. This resulted in a turn towards feel-good comedies such as the *Boetie* films which fared better with audiences.²⁹⁹ That being said, each film uses ideological spaces with its roots in the imaginary of Afrikaner nationalist history. Both 'the border' and the *platteland* as spaces intersect within the Afrikaner nationalist framework as both had very specific meanings linked to personal growth, heroism and cultural identity. Through the symbolic place of the *Voortrekkers* the idea of 'the border' and the values and meaning attributed to it was nothing new to the many Afrikaners who found themselves in the army. Similarly the *platteland* was by this time already part of the cultural memory of Afrikaners through its symbolism in the Afrikaner nationalist framework which saw the *platteland* as the 'ancestral' homeland and origin of Afrikaners. The main difference was that in this instance the *platteland* was, by the second *Boetie* film, militarised together with the rest of Afrikanerdom whereas the symbol of 'the border' was used as part of the militarisation of Afrikanerdom from the 1970s onward. Thus it is clear that both the *platteland* and 'the border' directly or indirectly speak to the origin of the Afrikaner which makes their utilisation very powerful within the South African context of the time.

However, through the characters of Corporal Botes and the Reconnaissance Commando the positive nature of these spaces can be contested, especially the symbolic meaning of 'the border'. By being *bosbefok* these characters showed some signs of what the reality, specifically the impact, of fighting on 'the border' was. Instead of creating heroes, 'the border' had a dark side that negatively influenced soldiers who experienced trauma during the war. One can even go as far as to say that the presence of PTSD in these films symbolised the very real dangers of the war, enhancing the status of the *grensvegter* as a hero

²⁹⁷ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.80.

²⁹⁸ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.81.

²⁹⁹ D. Craig, 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', *KLEIO*, 2004, 36(1), p.45.

precisely because he was able to withstand PTSD. The 'real' *grensvegter*, such as Boetie, did not succumb to PTSD as did weaker men such as Corporal Botes. Boetie was therefore the prototypical Afrikaner man, able to transcend the allure of materialism and walk through fire to emerge a full-fledged man.

Despite these signs of caution, active service on 'the border' provided the ultimate symbol of militarised masculinity in white culture and further helped create and sustain militarised gender identities as part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. It can be said that the *platteland* and 'the border' served as ideological spaces where white men as men became heroic *grensvegters* fighting to protect the very principles the *Voortrekkers* stood for, protecting the white Afrikaner nation as the vanguard of Christianity and civilisation against any and every threat.

The symbolic status and importance of the *grensvegter* is amplified when placed within the international context of the 1980s and the Cold War. Internationally concern caused by what the West saw as Soviet expansionism guaranteed some support for the nationalist government in South Africa which sold itself as being positioned to counter this expansionism in Southern Africa.³⁰⁰ Within the metanarrative of the Border War the Cold War was the reason for this conflict as the nationalist government framed the war as crucial for the maintenance of the ideological border between Christian values apparently inherent to Afrikaner nationalism and the ungodly communist atheism.³⁰¹ The presence of some 25 000 Cuban troops and a significant number of Soviet military personnel in Angola by 1983 confirmed for many the reality of this communist threat.³⁰² This is reflected in that in 1982 79.9% of white South Africans questioned in a survey felt the threat of communism was not over-exaggerated by the government.³⁰³ It was more complicated than just the SADF being portrayed as defending Christianity and freedom against the southwards march of communism.³⁰⁴ The ANC was supported by the Soviet Union and had good relations with Cuba which made the threats associated with communism not just external but also internal.

³⁰⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Bepark, 2004, p.548-549.

³⁰¹ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.79.

³⁰² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Bepark, 2004, p.549.

³⁰³ D. Conway, 'Somewhere on the border of credibility': the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.80.

³⁰³ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.76.

³⁰⁴ M. Drewett, 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.85.

This yet again relates to the notion of the *grensvogter* embodying ‘the border’ in the fight against not only the southward momentum of communism but also internal threats such as the ANC. Thus ‘the border’ and the associated heroism of Boetie and all those like him extended into townships as the turbulent 1980s unfolded.

During the course of the first half of the 1980s the armed struggle against the apartheid state intensified. This new surge in resistance included, but was not limited to, the range of acts of sabotage that were carried out, such as the attacks on the Koeberg nuclear reactor in 1982 and the car bomb in 1983 that exploded in front of the air force headquarters in Pretoria.³⁰⁵ Domestic unrest grew and between 1984 and 1986 the protests were much larger and more widespread than before and included students, teachers, journalists, women’s groups and workers.³⁰⁶ This led to a declaration of a state of emergency in 1986 that would last until 1990.³⁰⁷ The repression that was unleashed under the Botha administration in 1986, in the context of an already greatly militarised society, showed that the regime could militarily hang on to power.³⁰⁸ By June 1986 over 26 000 people had been detained without trial.³⁰⁹ This new age of crisis that was faced by the Afrikaner nationalist government was reflected in the nature of the discussions that were taking place within the AB, of whether apartheid could guarantee the survival of Afrikaners.³¹⁰ The majority of the Afrikaner elite started realising that the idea of apartheid had become obsolete but the apartheid ideology still enjoyed noteworthy support as evident in the votes garnered by the CP in the 1988 election.³¹¹ The unity Afrikaner nationalists continuously tried to cultivate and maintain was eroding not merely because of political pressure. By the mid to late 1980s a massive Afrikaner middle class and a strong and confident business class had emerged that resulted in a shift away from strict ethnic and nationalist identities.³¹² The new consumerist, individualising patterns of self-identity of the Afrikaners of the late 1980s made the Afrikaner more and more interest-driven and comparatively less and less ideologically driven.³¹³

³⁰⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.567.

³⁰⁶ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.567.

³⁰⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.571.

³⁰⁸ J. Hyslop, ‘Why did Apartheid’s supporters capitulate? ‘Whiteness’, class and consumption in urban South Africa, 1985-1995’, *Society in Transition*, 2000, 31(1), p.37.

³⁰⁹ A. Callinicos, ‘South Africa: The End of Apartheid and After’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1994, 29(36), p.2357.

³¹⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.576.

³¹¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.579.

³¹² J. Hyslop, ‘Why did Apartheid’s supporters capitulate? ‘Whiteness’, class and consumption in urban South Africa, 1985-1995’, *Society in Transition*, 2000, 31(1), p.38.

³¹³ J. Hyslop, ‘Why did Apartheid’s supporters capitulate? ‘Whiteness’, class and consumption in urban South Africa, 1985-1995’, 2000, 31(1), p.40.



4.4. *Fiela se Kind*

The changes within the Afrikaner community intensified and new, more radical voices emerged, such as the independent Afrikaans-language publication *Die Vrye Weekblad* in 1986. Initiatives such as the meeting between mainly Afrikaner intelligentsia and some of the leaders of the banned African National Congress in Dakar in Senegal in 1987 and the *Voëlvry* music tour in 1989 were further evidence of the slow erosion of support for the apartheid ideology and state.³¹⁴ Many people interpreted Katinka Heyns' film *Fiela se Kind*, released in 1988, as yet another manifestation of these new Afrikaner voices. This could be said when looking at the strong [Coloured](#) heroine and frank exposure of historical injustices that form a central part of the plot. The film does also, however, portray a much idealised view of the colonial past with spectacular landscapes in a high production-value film.³¹⁵ Heyns herself, when asked about the political elements within her film, was adamant that this film was not deliberately political and that the narrative contained in the film was mainly indigenous.³¹⁶ This seems to echo the critique of the idealist view of colonialism that informed this film. The result of such an idealist view of colonialism blurred the link between the inhumane colonial past and that which is seen or portrayed as colonial.

The basic outline of the plot and setting of *Fiela se Kind* follows the story of a white orphaned boy Benjamin Komoetie/Lucas van Rooyen (Dawid Minnaar)³¹⁷ who is adopted by a [Coloured](#) family farming in the Lange Kloof in the Karoo after he was left on their doorstep. After being spotted by government officials, the white boy is eventually taken to Knysna where a white family from Kom-se-Bos identifies him as their son who disappeared around the same time as the white boy's appearance at the house of the Komoeties. The boy is then raised as a Van Rooyen in the Knysna forests with his supposed family. As a grown man he moves away from the forest and ends up falling in love with his white sister, Nina van Rooyen (Marchelle Verwey)³¹⁸ which forces him to finally confront his Van Rooyen mother to determine whether he was truly their lost son or not. After his Van Rooyen mother

³¹⁴ A. Grundling, "'Rocking the Boat" in South Africa? Voëlvry Music and Afrikaans Anti-Apartheid Social Protest in the 1980's', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 2004, 37(3), p.484-485.

³¹⁵ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.225.

³¹⁶ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, 2012, p.227.

³¹⁷ The younger version of this character is played by Jan Ellis.

³¹⁸ The younger version of the character is played by Annie Malan.



confesses that he is not their son, he and his white 'sister' move back to his Komoetie family in the Lange Kloof where he claims his identity as Benjamin Komoetie.

Fiela se Kind, even more than *Broer Matie*, attempts a degree of assimilation of Ecoloureds into Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. The historical setting of the late 19th century enhances notions similar to those found in *Broer Matie* which referred to the historically based unity between Ecoloureds and Afrikaners forged on the *platteland*. It is this historically based unity which resulted in a shared language, spiritual life and upbringing before the segregationist laws of apartheid separated these 'Afrikaners' from one another based on their race.³¹⁹ The injustices of the past are presented to the viewer most strikingly through the character of Fiela Komoetie (Shaleen Surtie-Richards). Fiela, as a Ecoloured woman, occupies the position of the mythic *volksmoeder* and embodies the values that have been traditionally ascribed to white, mostly male characters.³²⁰ Fiela's family and their farmstead, situated in what is today known as the rural Eastern Cape, represent an idealised view of family, moral order and nature just as it came to be evident within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary.³²¹ Fiela embodies traits and characteristics, such as endearing motherhood, honesty and integrity, which were highly valued within the Afrikaner nationalist framework. However because she is Ecoloured she experiences discrimination and her own exclusion from whiteness in full view of the viewer. Throughout the film, whether by colonial government officials or by the Van Rooyens living in the Knysna forest, Fiela is forced to humiliate herself in her attempts to reason with white people. In one such scene when speaking to herself before she addresses a government official who symbolises white authority Fiela reminds herself that she needs to bend the knee and be so humble that she could 'slither like a snake'. The helplessness Fiela experiences when confronting the representative of the colonial government's authority in Knysna about the whereabouts of her white son, Benjamin, speaks to the structural elements of whiteness that bear a form of terror on a given group.³²² The viewer is thus made aware of the injustice of structural whiteness through the fact that Fiela and her family prescribe to all the traditional ideas of origin and

³¹⁹ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.212.

³²⁰ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, 2012, p.226.

³²¹ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, 2012, p.227.

³²² S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.18.



values embedded in the Afrikaner nationalist framework through the *platteland* but are themselves not white and thus not treated accordingly by white authority.

Through continuously revealing the physical punishment Benjamin experienced as a boy who was struggling to adapt to his new family, whiteness is further exposed. In these scenes the viewer is confronted by the violence associated with whiteness in coercing individuals into what is perceived as their 'proper' place. This is most evident in the character of Elias van Rooyen (Andre Rossouw) who is identified as lazy, dirty and brutal. He physically abuses Benjamin as young boy when Benjamin openly confesses that he misses his Komoetie family. Elias even proclaims at one point that he will hit the €coloured out of Benjamin. This is echoed throughout the first part of the film when Benjamin experiences the trauma of reclassification, going back to where he 'belongs'. The multiple scenes in which Benjamin is reprimanded and threatened with violence for calling white males *baas*³²³ does not only speak to the force involved in maintaining whiteness but also the effect of whiteness as a set of associations that cross-cut other sources of identity, such as language, to establish a contingent hierarchy.³²⁴ The juxta-positioning of the Van Rooyens as uneducated, dirty and impure and the Komoeties as educated, clean and pure lays bare the flawed characteristics and values that are usually part of the Othering process when looking at whiteness.³²⁵

I would argue that this film does, like no other film examined in the previous chapters, expose whiteness in many of its multi-faceted manifestations. I would however also argue that the portrayal of a €coloured experience or perspective for the sake of exposing the marginalisation of €coloured people in South Africa was not the only motivation for this film, or the reason for its immense popularity. By the end of the 1980s apartheid was crumbling, the NP had lost almost half of Afrikaner support and many Afrikaners faced what they saw as an uncertain future. Many saw apartheid as destroying the Afrikaans-language, one of the fundamental cornerstones of Afrikaner nationalism and cultural identity.³²⁶ Heyns herself was concerned for the survival of the language and even Afrikaans-language films.³²⁷ It is within this context that *Fiela se Kind* can be seen as an attempt by Afrikaners to recruit €coloureds as their fellow brethren, in some ways a *Broer Matie*. This was an endeavour that was easier said than done. By the time the new constitution of 1983 was adopted

³²³ Afrikaans for master.

³²⁴ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.64.

³²⁵ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, 2007, p.88.

³²⁶ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.578.

³²⁷ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.230.

'Colourfulness' increasingly came to be viewed as an artificial racial category imposed by the nationalist government as part of a divide and rule strategy.³²⁸ By the end of the decade partly thanks to the mass, non-racial, democratic movement that burgeoned under the leadership of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the controversy over participation of some Coloured leaders in the tricameral parliament, Coloured rejectionist sentiment grew.³²⁹ Within this political context attempts by *Fiela se Kind* and its racial themes to relate to the issues of Coloured identity and origins seem obvious.³³⁰

The subtext of Heyns' film reveals something more curious, especially when considering the placement of land through its manifestation as a *platteland* landscape and its relation to Afrikaner nationalist ideology. In one of the first scenes in the film *Fiela* and her family's cross-generational links to the land is established when she tells the white government officials that she was born on the farm that belonged to her father before she inherited it. Through this familial and historical connection with the land the foundation needed has been laid to legitimise the values of integrity and honesty found in *Fiela*. These values associated with the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary are continuously displayed by *Fiela*'s character throughout the film. This historical and familial link with the land also emphasises these values as part of their heritage and their own lived reality. Once again the portrayal of the Van Rooyen family in *Kom-se-Bos* in the forests of Knysna exhibits the complete opposite. Not only are the values of the Van Rooyens, especially Elias, questionable but there is also a form of antagonism between Elias and his natural surroundings, perfectly embodied by his encounters and near death experiences in trying to kill some of the forest elephants.³³¹ It is clear that Afrikaners are the ones who have lost their true link with the *platteland* for they do not anymore embody those values so fundamental to their identity and heritage inscribed by the *platteland*. In other words they have lost their way. It is the character of Benjamin as a grown man that addresses this identity crisis through his personal linkages with the *platteland* via his identity as a *Komoetie* which is intertwined with his white identity derived from unknown parentage. Benjamin represents

³²⁸ M. Adhikari, 'God Made the White Man, God Made the Black Man...': Popular Racial Stereotyping of Coloured People in Apartheid South Africa', *South African Historical Journal*, 2006, 55(1), p.147.

³²⁹ M. Adhikari, 'God Made the White Man, God Made the Black Man...': Popular Racial Stereotyping of Coloured People in Apartheid South Africa', 2006, 55(1), p.147.

³³⁰ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.231.

³³¹ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.226.



the perfect blend of white and **E**coloured which needed to inherit the land and all its earnings and values.

After moving away from his Van Rooyen family to the town of Knysna Benjamin has his first encounter with the ocean and from the get go he is attracted to it. It eventually becomes very obvious that Benjamin has a 'natural' link to the ocean and that he most probably was the son of a sailor whose mother abandoned him at the door of the Komoeties. This belief is confirmed when his Van Rooyen mother finally confesses that he was never Lucas van Rooyen. However Benjamin does not become a seaman, he returns home to the Lange Kloof where Fiela has bought him a farm. Not only is his association with his **E**coloured family stronger than his genetic links with the ocean, but so is his heritage as a Komoetie that binds him to the land. Thus I would agree with Riley as stated in her doctoral thesis that; "...*Fiela se Kind* links the idealised landscape with the coloured figure, making the case for a multiracial Afrikaner family through shared identity, values and language, rather than biology or bloodline."³³²

I would however go even further and state that by placing the white protagonist male character of Benjamin within the Komoetie family and within the landscape of the *platteland* this film advocates for the Afrikaner to embrace his **E**coloured heritage. This is done through utilising the symbolic power and significance inherent to the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary and ideology. In a fast changing political landscape, such as that of the late 1980s, many Afrikaners experienced uncertainty concerning the continued existence of the agency of their whiteness as part of the identity forged by Afrikaner nationalist ideology. Through linking themselves to **E**coloureds, Fiela herself being seen as a prototypical Afrikaner, Afrikaners wanted to re-establish their endemism in two interdependent ways. The first relates to race and the indigenising of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. Through embracing his **E**coloured heritage within a context of shared values, identity and language, Benjamin as a white man challenges the notion of the 'naturalness' of racial purity associated with Afrikaner nationalist whiteness, almost rendering his whiteness a little less white.³³³ When considering the fact that this film was made and written by Afrikaners, the extent to which *Fiela se Kind* can portray authentic lived **E**coloured experiences is obviously limiting and not the sole purpose of this cinematic endeavour.

³³² E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, 2012, p.232.

³³³ M. Steyn, *"Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used To Be": White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001, p.26.

The second way in which Afrikaners attempt re-establishing their endemism in this film is concerned with the very intersections of land and whiteness. Through leaving the symbolic position of the *platteland* unaltered, the link between land and whiteness, although somewhat altered, remains in place. This is evident in Benjamin's return to the land to farm, not as Lucas van Rooyen but as Benjamin Komoetie, confirming the continued Afrikaner nationalist link between the *platteland* and this 'rehabilitated' more 'indigenous' whiteness embodied in Benjamin. The link between the *platteland* and whiteness, even with its altered meaning, was necessary to legitimise white entitlement to land in a settler colonial society. Entitlement to land and territoriality was an irreducible part of Afrikaner nationalist ideology as a form of settler colonialism.³³⁴ *Fiela se Kind* was a more radical attempt than *Broer Matie* five years earlier, within a much more uncertain environment, to redefine Afrikaner identity through historical links with the *E*coloured population. Even more fascinating is that when looking at *Katrina* from the late 1960s discussed in an earlier chapter it is clear that in *Katrina*, Katrina would rather kill herself than embrace the 'impure' nature of her race as a *E*coloured where in *Fiela se Kind* Benjamin embraces his *E*coloured heritage, acknowledging his own if even only historical racial 'impurity'. In the 1960s *E*coloureds were, as pointed out, victims of increasingly aggressive segregationist laws stripping them of their limited political rights and participation. Whereas in the early 1980s with the introduction of the tricameral parliament *E*coloureds were, even though in a limited sense, reintroduced to government participation. This translated into a context where *E*coloureds as 'brown' Afrikaners had a place within the Afrikaner nationalist framework.

As a result of the fast changing political reality of South Africa, Katinka Heyns could get away with these 'radical' attempts at redefinition with little government interference. South Africa was experiencing a "Pretorian spring of freedom" as the late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed processes of transition that created more space for critique against not only the nationalist government, but also Afrikaner nationalist identity.³³⁵ Some Afrikaners were, however, not ready or accepting of these attempts to alter the staunch Afrikaner nationalist identity cultivated on cinema screens over decades, with the portrayal of the Afrikaner Van Rooyen family being unacceptable for some.³³⁶ Despite some critique from letter writers the majority of reviews in newspapers raved about not only the quality of the film, but also the

³³⁴ P. Wolfe, 'Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2006, 8(4), p.388.

³³⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.594.

³³⁶ SA Media, I. Stone, 'Weet nie wat is Fiela se boodskap nie', *Die Burger*, 13 June, 1988, p.6.



relevance of this film in a time when portrayals of Afrikaans as a multiracial language, accompanied by multiracial narratives, were still relatively scarce.³³⁷ This fresh approach and the fact that the film was based on the best-selling novel of the same name by Dalene Matthee made the film incredibly popular, earning more than R2, 8 million at the box office and multiple nominations for awards.³³⁸ The popularity of the film should come as no surprise as the use of the *platteland*, by then an undeniably familiar and significant signifier, in a multiracial narrative exposed Afrikaners to what could be seen as a possible future reality. However this was done within a context and embedded with values Afrikaners could identify with as they have been conditioned to associate with these values and signifiers by Afrikaner nationalist ideology and its imaginary.

³³⁸ SA Media, 'Fiela-prent het meer ingebrng as R2,8 milj.', *Beeld*, 17 May, 1988, p.3. SA Media, 'Fiela kry tien nominasies', *Die Transvaler*, 26 July, 1988, p.20.

5. Chapter Five.

With the end of the turbulent 1980s approaching F.W. de Klerk replaced P.W. Botha as the president of the republic on the 20th of September 1989. Within months the South African landscape would be greatly transformed. The cracks that started to show by the beginning of the decade multiplied and intensified in the second half of the 1980s and were undeniable as the decade drew to a close with certain neighbourhoods and universities already in the process of desegregation.³³⁹ On the 2nd of February 1990 De Klerk announced the unbanning of liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) and the release of Nelson Mandela from prison. The beginning of the end of official apartheid saw the dawn of official negotiations for a new political dispensation.³⁴⁰ Amidst this rapidly changing political landscape of the early 1990s that which was left of Afrikaner unity, traditionally mobilised through the nationalist ideology of the National Party (NP), became even more fragmented. The developing political situation also resulted in the NP leadership moving away from the strict ethnic and racial definitions upon which it was founded and upon which its membership was based, and decided to officially become a multiracial party in 1990.³⁴¹

This undoubtedly increased the support for parties such as the official opposition in parliament, the Conservative Party (CP), which already garnered almost half of the Afrikaner vote by 1989.³⁴² The fact that parties such as the CP subscribed to the strict definitions of an Afrikaner nationalist ideology, including particular notions of race, informed their main objective: to secure self-determination for Afrikaners, particularly concerning their language and culture.³⁴³ With the NP as governing party officially moving away from an exclusive white membership, the link between white and right as stated in apartheid South Africa lost its NP sanctioned legitimacy.³⁴⁴ With this crucial assumption of whiteness being undermined by the governing party many Afrikaners found themselves in uncertain territory. Whiteness as part of Afrikaner nationalism, used to serve as an entry point, buttressed by legislation, into power and privilege as part of the reproduction of white supremacy enforced by the state.³⁴⁵ However, future Afrikaner ownership of the state under the leadership of the NP no

³³⁹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.593.

³⁴⁰ J.P. Brits, 'Thabo Mbeki and the Afrikaners, 1986-2004', *Historia*, 2008, 53(2), p.45.

³⁴¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.596.

³⁴² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.563.

³⁴³ J.P. Brits, 'Thabo Mbeki and the Afrikaners, 1986-2004', *Historia*, 2008, 53(2), p.46.

³⁴⁴ N. Falkof, 'A "Bloody Epidemic": Whiteness and Family Murder in Late Apartheid South Africa', *Safundi: Journal of South African and American Studies*, 2013, 14(3), p.313.

³⁴⁵ N. Falkof, 'A "Bloody Epidemic": Whiteness and Family Murder in Late Apartheid South Africa', p.313.

longer seemed guaranteed and led those Afrikaners who subscribed to uncompromised Afrikaner nationalist ideology to find a political voice elsewhere. This paved the way for further political fragmentation of Afrikaner unity along this trajectory to the extent that by 1993 the number of extremist far-right Afrikaner groups had grown to more than 200.³⁴⁶

The shifts occurring within Afrikaner society were not only due to what was happening on the political landscape. The increased militarisation of South Africa during the 1980s and the impact of increased material wealth of a significant number of Afrikaners also had an impact on Afrikaner nationalism and the unity that was crucial to a nationalist endeavour. During the latter part of the 1980s many of the army conscripts were sent into townships as part of the government's reactions to black unrest in certain areas. The deployment of some of the conscripts to the townships exposed them to the manufactured reality that whites ruled by right rather than by violence and in so doing contradicted certain myths that formed part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.³⁴⁷ This is amplified by the national leader of the ECC, Alistair Teeling-Smith, when he said: "Potential conscripts never had much problem with the idea of going to the border to fight the unknown enemy. But now they are fighting in townships where their maids and gardeners live, and for many it has become a personal and emotional issue..."³⁴⁸ This does not mean that all of these conscripts were influenced in the same way by their experience in the townships, but during this time many white men were exposed to the realities outside of 'white' South Africa, exposure that the government always tried to limit or control in a variety of ways, including by means of cinematic propaganda.

It also became increasingly difficult to mobilise Afrikaners effectively for the defence of the racial order when considering the impact of the economic upward mobility they experienced as a group in the preceding decades. The economic upward mobility of many Afrikaners played its part in a significant shift in subjectivity.³⁴⁹ This new subjectivity was associated with the era of late-modernity and the rise of consumerism and related to wider global changes in self-identity.³⁵⁰ Within this context subjective identities were reformulated

³⁴⁶ J.P. Brits, 'Thabo Mbeki and the Afrikaners, 1986-2004', *Historia*, 2008, 53(2), p.46.

³⁴⁷ N. Falkof, 'A "Bloody Epidemic": Whiteness and Family Murder in Late Apartheid South Africa', *Safundi: Journal of South African and American Studies*, 2013, 14(3), p.321.

³⁴⁸ D. Conway, 'Somewhere on the border of credibility: the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.', in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008, p.86.

³⁴⁹ J. Hyslop, 'Shopping during a Revolution: Entrepreneurs, Retailers and "White" Identity in the Democratic Transition', *Historia*, 2005, 50(1), p.175.

³⁵⁰ J. Hyslop, 'Shopping during a Revolution: Entrepreneurs, Retailers and "White" Identity in the Democratic Transition', p.175.



and focused more on 'lifestyle', acquired through participation in consumer culture, rather than on elements such as race, culture and nation that was central to Afrikaner nationalist identity. By 1990 all these social, economic and political realities created a situation where Afrikaner society as a whole was tainted by a profound sense of self-doubt and uneasiness, with different groups within the once unified *volk* convinced of conflicting solutions.³⁵¹

The local film industry was also facing uncertain times which had an immense impact on the production of Afrikaans-language films. After the success of *Fiela se Kind* in 1988 it seemed as if Afrikaans-language cinema faced a very uncertain future. In the wake of increasing global pressure and the resulting sanctions, the NP government found itself under increasing financial pressure.³⁵² These financial pressures and the drastic cuts in government spending created huge problems within the state film subsidy system that Afrikaans-language films depended on for survival.³⁵³ During the first months of 1990 the minister of Home Affairs, Eugene Louw, announced a revitalisation of the film subsidy scheme. Within this distinctly new political climate the minister made it clear that the aim of the subsidy was to motivate local filmmakers through financial assistance regardless of their race and 'grouping'.³⁵⁴ Financial support for specifically Afrikaans-language films also started to flow from the private sector with M-Net, an independent South African pay channel, making headlines in 1990 for their announcement to fund four Afrikaans-language films throughout the following year.³⁵⁵

During this same period independent Afrikaans-language media such as the *Vrye Weekblad* openly criticised the NP government's involvement in the local film industry. They criticised the NP for utilising the local film industry to promote and sustain the image of an 'ideal South Africa' consisting of neat, beautiful and wealthy white couples with very little 'real' issues.³⁵⁶ This can be seen as part of what Hermann Giliomee refers to as a 'Pretorian spring of freedom' experienced from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s in which dependent and independent media operated within a context where no single political party dominated the political landscape and even the national broadcaster aired strong critique of the nationalist government.³⁵⁷ It became more and more evident that Afrikaner nationalism as constructed

³⁵¹ M. Suriano & C. Lewis, 'Afrikaners is Plesierig! Voelvry Music, Anti-apartheid Identities and Rockey Street Nightclubs in Yeoville (Johannesburg), 1980'2-90's', *African Studies*, 2015, 74(3), p.411.

³⁵² SA Media, 'Hollyveld: waar is ons 'technicolour sunset'?', *VryeWeekblad*, 16 March, 1990, p.11.

³⁵³ SA Media, L. Coetzee, 'M-Net help fliëks red...', *Rapport*, 4 February, 1990, p.23.

³⁵⁴ SA Media, 'Rolprente se aasvoels so verdryf.', *Beeld*, 22 February, 1990, p.3.

³⁵⁵ SA Media, L. Coetzee, 'M-Net help fliëks red...', *Rapport*, 4 February, 1990, p.23.

³⁵⁶ SA Media, 'Hollyveld: waar is ons 'technicolour sunset'?', *VryeWeekblad*, 16 March, 1990, p.11.

³⁵⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.594.

by the NP was to some extent disintegrating and was not something most Afrikaners found relevant as was the case in the 1960s with a very self-aware and self-determined *volk*. On the contrary, apartheid as the vehicle through which Afrikaner nationalist objectives were to be achieved had become an embarrassment for the Afrikaner-middleclass of the 1990s.³⁵⁸

5.1. *Agter Elke Man*

The year 1990 saw the release of two Afrikaans-language films, the first since *Fiela se Kind* in 1988, one of which was *Agter Elke Man* (Behind Every Man) directed by Franz Marx. The film was released as the final chapter of an extremely popular Afrikaans-language television series of the same name and was aired by the national broadcaster from 1985 to 1988.³⁵⁹ Adapting television series for film was by 1990 a familiar trend in Afrikaans-language cinema with films such as *Nommer Asseblief?* (Number Please?) and *Vyfster* (Five Star) released during the 1980s also based on existing television series.

The film *Agter Elke Man* starts off where the series of the same name ended following the life of the main male protagonist Bruce Beyers (Steve Hofmeyer) as he is about to be released from prison for crimes he allegedly committed during the second and final season of the television series. This research, however, focusses only on the feature film. The audience is re-introduced to Bruce on the eve of his early release from prison for crimes the film never directly addresses. Before his release he meets the new social worker assigned to his case, Elna le Roux (Ilse Roos) who is also the female lead. She informs him that arrangements have been made for him to join his family on the farm where he can start afresh after his release. When the time comes Bruce is picked up from prison by Elna and reunited with his brother (Johan Scholtz) who offers to take him home, to the farm. Bruce, however, has other plans and tells his brother that he has some affairs to attend to before he can leave his old life behind and return to the farm. Bruce is then dropped off in a working class neighbourhood in Johannesburg, familiar to those who followed the franchise, looking for Doreen van Langhans (Kim de Beer) whom he had dated when he was sentenced to jail and who eventually stopped visiting him in prison. It is apparent that Bruce has a history in the neighbourhood prior to his prison sentence and the reaction of the residents makes it clear that he is not welcome as he is seen as a trouble maker.

³⁵⁸ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.596.

³⁵⁹ C. Broodryk, 'Ons sal antwoord op jou roepstem: Steve Hofmeyr and Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid Afrikaans cinema', *Communicare*, 2016, 35(10), p.68.



Bruce soon realises that Doreen has moved on and approaches Elna to help him find a job as part of his plan to get his life back on track. As he has nowhere to go he ends up back in the working class neighbourhood knocking on the door of Stienie Steyn (Dulcie van den Bergh). Stienie, a central character in the television series, knows Bruce very well as he has previously lived with her and had been married to her now wealthy and successful daughter Leana Jooste (Cyrilene Slabbert). He promises Stienie that he has been rehabilitated and that he is a changed man. She sympathises with him and allows him to stay at her place as long as he has a job, can contribute and stays out of trouble. However, it becomes clear that Bruce is intent on taking revenge on the man responsible for getting him in jail, Steve Anderson (Deon van Zyl) who is engaged to his ex-wife Leana.

Bruce accompanies Elna to a gathering of ex-convicts and runs into an old friend from jail, Joyboy du Toit (Tertius Meintjies). Joyboy eventually tries to get Bruce involved in organised crime that ends up with Bruce losing his job. In a move of desperation Bruce approaches his ex-wife Leana for a loan so that he can pay the bribe needed to get him out of trouble to which she eventually agrees. In a turn of events Joyboy himself gets Bruce off the hook by killing the leader of the crime syndicate Reinders (Lieb Bester). Bruce returns to Elna with whom a somewhat romantic relationship had started to evolve and after spending the night at her place he finds a gun in her wardrobe that he takes. Elna has realised that he is intent on taking revenge and pleads with Bruce not to do anything that can get him into trouble yet again. Bruce, however, is hell bent on taking revenge and sets off to the newly built house of Steve and Leana as Steve has just arrived from an extensive business trip overseas. With Elna's gun in hand Bruce confronts Steve but eventually leaves without harming him. Bruce had apparently just been there to return Leana's money. The film ends with Bruce returning to Elna and the start of what the audience can assume to be a new beginning.

The very first frame of the film is an industrial landscape and is followed by the opening scene that is set in a prison and sets the backdrop for the entire film. It is clear that the city is an ugly and brutal place, in itself almost a jail. It is clear that just as with the tradition found in the *plaasroman*, the city in *Agter Elke Man* is projected in a negative manner that is communicated in the first moments of the film.³⁶⁰ The placement of Bruce as a young man from the *platteland*, not only in the city, but also as a convicted criminal confirms the corrupting influence of the city. During Bruce's interaction with his brother after his

³⁶⁰ H.P. van Coller, 'Die representasie van plaas, dorp en stad in die Afrikaanse prosa', *Stilet*, 2008, 18(1), p.94.



release from prison the differences between them speak volumes about the apparent different influences between the *platteland* and the city. A striking sign that Bruce has been alienated from his *platteland* roots is the difference in the language Bruce uses compared to his brother. While his brother speaks a 'pure', more 'standard' Afrikaans, Bruce mixes a lot of English words into his spoken Afrikaans as seen in the language of the other inhabitants of the neighbourhood he lives in, thus also making this kind of 'impure' Afrikaans a signifier of class. The contrasts between Bruce and his brother are further emphasised by the presence of his brother's seemingly perfect little family and the news that they have bought their own farm that they will soon be moving to. It is clear that Bruce rejects this utopian image of an ideal life on the *platteland* and at least for the time being, keeping his revenge in mind, wants to stay in the city. It is not only through Bruce's personal experiences that the city is vilified.

Throughout various scenes the city is portrayed as a space characterised by white working class suffering, organised crime and a snobbish Afrikaner wealth all interwoven to create a kind of dystopia. Stienie's friend and neighbour across the street Sarie van Langhans (Annelize van der Ryst), is the most obvious signifier of the suffering of the white working class in the city. With an absent alcoholic husband she is a victim of domestic violence and constantly trying to prevent the repossession of her belongings to compensate for what one can assume is unpaid debt. Stienie, although not nearly in such a desperate situation as Sarie, also displays some elements of the white working class such as the notion that they have been 'left behind' and are out of place when compared to those Afrikaners who flourish in the city. This is especially obvious when in the company of her super-rich and jet-setting daughter Leana. In one particular scene where Sarie and Stienie attend the South African woman of the year award ceremony, an award for which Leana has been nominated as the founder of an industrial chemical conglomerate, Leana's embarrassment for her mother is obvious when she tells her mother that she does not belong before rushing off.

This must be seen as part of the split in Afrikaner unity originating from the emergence of the Conservative Party which was broadly supported by the white Afrikaans-speaking working class workers from the early 1980s who were dependent on the colour-bar through which their whiteness protected their jobs.³⁶¹ By 1990 the position of the white working class was still an issue of great concern to right-wing Afrikaner elements who were convinced that whites were deliberately being impoverished for the sake of **blacks** as part of

³⁶¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.562.

the political transformation.³⁶² Leana also embodies, in much the same way as Paula Neethling in Rautenbach's *Die Kandidaat*, the urban Afrikaner as cold and distant. In this regard Marx seems to alter the old classic Western pastoral myth somewhat so that it is not only the urban environment per se, but also the materialism associated with the new urban Afrikaner elite that is corrupting the traditional values of the Afrikaner.³⁶³ Within this dynamic the antagonism of rich white Afrikaners towards poor white Afrikaners is portrayed as evidence of the internal disintegration of Afrikaner unity.³⁶⁴

This divide is further emphasized by juxtaposing the realities of Leana and her fiancé's world and that of Stenie, Sarie and Bruce. While Sarie struggles to survive, Leana's fiancé is travelling between cities such as London and New York expanding their business empire. Leana drives a modern German car and speaks flawless Afrikaans while her own mother smokes cigarettes non-stop and speaks the same 'hybrid' Afrikaans as the rest of the working class neighbourhood.

However, the presence of what seems to be an elaborate crime syndicate within Johannesburg under the leadership of Reinders, who himself seems to be living a luxurious life, further plays into the symbolic position of the city in the established Afrikaner imaginary of the time. The involvement of Afrikaners in drug trafficking, police corruption and murder within the context of Johannesburg contributes to the perception of the city as a demonised place.³⁶⁵ Thus Reinders and his associates, including Joyboy, have fallen victim to the city in the same way as many of the characters portrayed on screen before them. This is much the same with Africans with regards to B-Scheme films which represented the city as exercising a corrupting influence on Africans which is why they had to remain in their 'tribal' areas in order to maintain a pristine African culture.³⁶⁶ However within the context of white South Africa and the Afrikaner nationalist framework the city is seen as an evil necessity for whites as the supposed occupants of the city within the reality of the an industrialised 20th century society. But then what about the *platteland*? Does this absence of the *platteland* imply that all Afrikaners have now been corrupted by the urban landscape? What then about the traditional

³⁶² SA Media, 'Vervaardigingssektor: Blanke werkers verloor R2,2 miljard', *Die Afrikaner*, 24 January, 1990, p.6.

³⁶³ E.J. Riley, 'From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989', [Unpublished Thesis Presented for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Historical Studies](#), University of Cape Town, 2012, p.169.

³⁶⁴ T. Willoughby-Herard, 'South Africa's Poor Whites and Whiteness Studies: Afrikaner Ethnicity, Scientific racism, and White Misery', *New Political Science*, 2007, 29(4), p.485.

³⁶⁵ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.22.

³⁶⁶ G. Paleker, 'Creating a 'black film industry': State intervention and films for African audiences in South Africa, 1956-1990', University of Cape Town, 2009, p.125.

intersections with whiteness? Have the Afrikaner and Afrikaner nationalism been completely reimagined in *Agter Elke Man*?

When considering the political and historical context in which the film was released Bruce's refusal to return to his family on the *platteland* can be interpreted as a rejection of his roots. The anxieties of the 1980s, the increase in what was referred to as terrorist activities in many parts of the *platteland*, including internal unrest, had gradually turned the farm and subsequently the *platteland* into an area of potential conflict.³⁶⁷ Thanks to the uncertain realities faced by Afrikaner nationalism, intensifying in the 1990s, the farm was no longer undoubtedly a shrine for Afrikaner nationalist group values.³⁶⁸ This does not mean, however, that some of the characteristics related to and previously interwoven with the symbolism of the *platteland* have been discarded or completely reimagined. Neither does it imply that there is no place for Afrikaners and their inherited values, as constructed within Afrikaner nationalism, in the city.

In this regard it is specifically the characters of Stienie and Elna who exhibit certain elements associated with the traditional role of women as part of the Afrikaner nationalist framework. The more iconic of these two characters is Stienie who is affectionately known as Auntie Stienie. This familial title and the fact that she is the only person out of Bruce's past who has shown him compassion places her firmly within the *volksmoeder* character type. Her further attempts to help Sarie are not isolated acts, with her daughter, Leana, complaining about her mother's tendency to financially help every person on the street of her working class neighbourhood. It is clear that Stienie, despite her outwardly no nonsense attitude, has taken on the role of *volksmoeder* in her working class environment. It is not only in a financial capacity the she fulfil this role. When Joyboy comes knocking looking for Bruce while he is at work it is Stienie who immediately distrusts him and warns him to stay away from Bruce who has now been 'rehabilitated'. Just before Bruce is finally reunited with Elna he says his goodbyes to Stienie who in her apparent wisdom as *volksmoeder* tells him that he should escape this working class world, because once you get stuck in 'this place' you will never escape.

Elna on the other hand is portrayed as a young professional middle-class Afrikaner woman and although independent, falls victim to the charm of Bruce Beyers. At the end of the day it is thanks to Elna's plea, together with the systematic blossoming of their romance,

³⁶⁷ R. Greig, 'An Approach to Afrikaans Film', *Critical Arts*, 2008, 1(1), p.19.

³⁶⁸ R. Greig, 'An Approach to Afrikaans Film', p.19.

which convinced Bruce not to go through with his planned revenge on Steve. Elna has shown Bruce that he can be himself without being held hostage by his past and escape the dangerous sinkholes symbolised by the city and experienced by urban working class Afrikaners. Bruce returns to her echoing the lyrics of the title song of the same name that states “Daar’s ‘n vrou wat weet wat aangaan agter elke man” (Behind each man, there is a woman who knows what’s going on”)³⁶⁹. This apparent position of a woman, behind a man, clearly reflects the patriarchal nature of the family structure as found on the *platteland* where women occupied the symbolic space of wife and mother supporting their men within the framework of Afrikaner nationalism.³⁷⁰ Elna as ‘wife’ and Stienie as ‘mother’ and their role in the eventual rehabilitation of Bruce further links with the nationalist view of Afrikaner women. These Afrikaner women are the force behind the rehabilitation of Bruce, indirectly creating a respectable Afrikaner in the city and a space for the traditional values of the Afrikaner in the city as opposed to the values believed to be inherent to it. One can say that Afrikaner women become the surrogates of *platteland* values. This is thanks to the nationalist notion that the moral life of the nation is controlled by its women as they are the conscience of their nation as well as the measure of their values.³⁷¹ This role and moral high ground is inaccessible to Leana due to the corrupting effect of her wealth and materialism. Within the given social, economic and political shifts that affected Afrikaners it can be said that *Agter Elke Man* emphasises the importance of bringing the *platteland* to the urban Afrikaner or to at least re-create the values and meanings of the *platteland* in urban spaces.

In *Agter Elke Man* Franz Marx thus creates a space for the urban Afrikaner that does not necessitate them abandoning the values included in the Afrikaner nationalist framework in the wake of an apparently reformulated *platteland*. The symbolic *platteland* has been made accessible to urban Afrikaners through characters such as Elna and Stienie. He does this while sustaining the cautious approach to the urban landscape inherent in the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary thanks to the placement of the super wealthy and criminals within the city inherent to the city landscape.

The same developments that had an influence on the traditional symbolic position of the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist framework also had an effect on the portrayal of whiteness in *Agter Elke Man*. With the political landscape rapidly transforming the

³⁶⁹ Own translation.

³⁷⁰ M. Jolly, ‘Motherlands? Some Notes on Women and Nationalism in India and Africa’, 1994, p.53, 54.

³⁷¹ N. Devarenne, ‘Nationalism and the Farm novel in South Africa, 1883-2004’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 2009, 35(3), p.640.

meaning attached to race itself was influenced by the changing position of race within officially legislated governing ideology.³⁷² The placement of specifically wealthy, almost super Afrikaners such as Leana and her fiancé Steve as the antagonists in *Agter Elke Man* can be seen as part of an attempt to reposition Afrikaner whiteness. This is done by attributing the inherently discriminating power relations invoked by whiteness and its representation as domination and control to class. Through vilifying Leana and Steve as cold and calculated and Elna and Stienie as warm, caring and honest this shift from race to class is apparent. Through focusing on an elite class whose benefits from apartheid were most visible in the form of material gain, like Leana and Steve's luxurious new house in Sandton, *Agter Elke Man* attempts to turn whiteness invisible. Whiteness within the South African context must be seen as always constellated around discourses of resistance in the wake of constant threat.³⁷³ It is because of the perceived threat to whiteness in this time of transformation that a class is vilified in an attempt to mask elements of whiteness. This does not, however, mean that class masks or attempts to mask whiteness in its entirety in this film.

In a scene where Stienie and Sarie are looking for an outfit for the woman of the year function in an Indian-owned shop, Stienie, after being called madam by an Indian shop assistant, comments that the lady attending to them is of the 'old kind'. This limited on-screen interracial interaction exposes the fact that the Afrikaner working class also formed part of and benefitted from the power relations inherent to whiteness even if only in terms of their social position, this despite their class. The nostalgic manner in which this is exposed is problematic. Through witnessing, in various scenes, the humiliating manner in which the Afrikaner working class is treated by the rest of Afrikaner society it is almost as if Stienie is reminiscing about a time when their race at least guaranteed some form of 'respectability' when she refers to the Indian as the 'old kind'. This unjustifiably divorces her whiteness from the arbitrary use of power it depended on for her to be addressed as madam despite her working class position within Afrikaner society.³⁷⁴

The irony of this interplay between social classes in *Agter Elke Man* and the values attributed to each class is that it reinforced ideas of whiteness that formed an intimate part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness as it manifested before and during the improving economic position of many Afrikaners in the 1960s and 1970s. Leana, as mentioned, and like Paula in

³⁷² S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.1.

³⁷³ M. Steyn, "Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used To Be": *White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001, p.25.

³⁷⁴ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.18.

Die Kandidaat, is vilified partly due to her wealth and materialism for it is seen as cultivating unAfrikaner values.³⁷⁵ Capitalism and the materialist consumption had for many years been identified by Afrikaner nationalists as a potential threat to the nationalist movement and white authority. In 1975, for example, the Afrikaner Broederbond's executive committee stated that the Afrikaner business community values growth and material gain as a higher priority than Afrikaner freedom and sovereignty.³⁷⁶

This, while the working class was seen by the Afrikaner nationalists as a crucial part of their nationalist movement. This is evident in the creation of nationalist unions such as the *Mynwerkersunie* (Mine Workers Union) during the rise of Afrikaner nationalism in the 1930-s.³⁷⁷ The symbolic role of working class Afrikaner men became part of the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary as custodians of the Afrikaner culture and life. The establishment of the *Afrikaanse Taal-en Kultuurvereniging* (ATKV)³⁷⁸ in 1930 was the product of the work of Afrikaner nationalists amongst men working at the railways and grew to become a powerful force in maintaining Afrikaner nationalist values and ideas. The congratulatory letter from a highly placed government official, on the 40th anniversary edition of *Die Taalgenoot*, the official mouthpiece magazine of the ATKV, clearly demonstrates the importance of the narrative of the working class as part of the nation within Afrikaner nationalism. The official refers to the cardinal role and place of the railway community in promoting and protecting the values and culture of the Afrikaner through the ATKV, as it is from these working class Afrikaners that the organisation was born.³⁷⁹ This exhibits the place of the working class as part of the Afrikaner nationalist narrative and shows that the values that are in some way bestowed upon them in *Agter Elke Man* are both nostalgic and nationalist.

By portraying the working class as victims of a certain perceived reality in *Agter Elke Man*, Marx also echoes headlines from right leaning newspapers such as *Die Afrikaner* that lament the vulnerability of the white working class in a shifting political landscape.³⁸⁰ The urban reality for, and position of, many of the nine million black people living in cities in the early 1990s was far more vulnerable than that of the white working class.³⁸¹ This removal

³⁷⁵ D. Welsh, 'Urbanisation and Solidarity of Afrikaner Nationalism', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1969, 7(2), p.267.

³⁷⁶ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.497.

³⁷⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.378-379.

³⁷⁸ Afrikaans Language and Cultural Association

³⁷⁹ Personal Collection, B.J. Schoeman, 'Boodskappe en Gelukwense: Van die Minister van Vervoer', *Die Taalgenoot*, November 1971, p.5.

³⁸⁰ 'Vervaardigingsektor: Blanke werkers verloor R2,2 miljard', *Die Afrikaner*, 24 January, 1990, p.6.

³⁸¹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.540.

from reality was picked up on by reviewers in English-language newspapers that criticised the film for being out of touch with reality, with the *Business Day* stating that it reflects an 'ordered, old-fashioned world'.³⁸² Even though many of the Afrikaans reviews also see the film as somewhat dull it is interestingly the character portrayed by Dulcie van den Bergh, the working class *volksmoeder* Stienie, which without fail received praise.³⁸³ It is clear that *Agter Elke Man* as a film incorporated elements of the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary usually paired with the *platteland* in the setting of the city. This can be seen as an attempt to sustain some of the symbols and values associated with Afrikaner nationalism in a time when the idealised life on the *platteland* seemed lost in the wake of the crumbling of Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid.

When looking at *Agter Elke Man* it becomes clear that Afrikaner identity during the early 1990s was an identity in flux. The negotiations ushered in a time when Afrikaners faced increasing uncertainties as the 1990s progressed and this resulted in a further drop in support for the NP, the traditional custodian of Afrikaner nationalism.³⁸⁴ The uncertainty faced by the NP is reflected, for example, in the public discussions concerned with the image of the NP as a symbol of apartheid and its links to identity. From an article concerned with the possible name change of the NP published in the *Insig* of August 1990 it is clear that even within the Afrikaner community the reimagining of the NP as a mainly Afrikaner party was one of uncertainty, hinged on the outcome of the negotiations. Although the article reflects divisions in the ranks on the changing of the party name, one thing remains clear, that change was unavoidable given the negotiations towards a new racially inclusive constitution.³⁸⁵

As negotiations continued into the new decade Afrikaner anxiety was a definite part of the general mood many Afrikaners experienced. Afrikaans-language magazines reflect this uncertain reality featuring articles with headlines such as *Afrikaners: SA se bedreide spesie*³⁸⁶ (Afrikaners: SA's endangered species) and *Die stress van die nuwe SA*³⁸⁷ (The stress of the new SA). These type of articles consider the safety of the individual, economic prosperity, ethnic tension and the quality of education as having an uncertain future in South Africa.³⁸⁸

³⁸² SA Media, P. Altbeker, 'Plumbing the shallows of domestic drama', *Business Day*, 4 October, 1990, p.8.

³⁸³ SA Media, P. Breytenbach, 'Spelers maak Agter Elke Man 'n wenner', *Die Transvaler*, 28 September, 1990.

SA Media, R. Norval, 'Bruce, Stienie skitter ook op 'groot skerm'', *Oosterlig*, 1 October, 1990, p.4. SA Media.,

'Tref ook as rolprent', *Die Volksblad*, 1 October, 1990, p.7.

³⁸⁴ M. Suriano & C. Lewis, 'Afrikaners is Plesierig! Voelvry Music, Anti-apartheid Identities and Rockey Street Nightclubs in Yeoville (Johannesburg), 1980'2-90's', *African Studies*, 2015, 74(3), p.422.

³⁸⁵ Personal Collection, A. Rossouw, 'Nuwe NP, nuwe naam?', *Insig*, August 1990, p.13.

³⁸⁶ *Insig*, August 1990.

³⁸⁷ *De Kat*, August 1990.

³⁸⁸ Personal Collection, D. de Kieffer, 'Lees die – en lê vannag wakker', *Insig*, April 1991, p.13.

Uncertainty concerning Afrikaner identity, culture and symbols and what these could look like in a new South Africa were central to these discussions.³⁸⁹ Amongst these symbols of Afrikaner nationalism the Afrikaans language seemed to take centre stage within this dialogue of identity with the *Taalgenoot* dedicating an entire issue in August of 1991 on Afrikaans as the language of the future. This edition of the *Taalgenoot* addressed the notion of Afrikaans as part of Afrikaner nationalism by portraying the language as widely used, loved and multi-racial.³⁹⁰ However, nowhere is it made clear how the Afrikaans language formed part of the structural parameters that kept Afrikaner whiteness in a position of power and privilege in a time when the majority of Afrikaans speakers were still whites.³⁹¹

The generally negative predictions and reflections of the political change and the eventual outcome of said change does play into the traditional imperialist, but also Afrikaner nationalist, notion of ‘black barbarism’ and the threat it encapsulates.³⁹² The reality was that by 1991 only 15% of white South Africans believed that their lives would improve in a new political dispensation.³⁹³ Somewhat inconsistent with the convictions seemingly reflected in this survey, the outcome of the March 17th 1992 referendum was 69% in favour of ongoing negotiations towards transformation and a new constitution.³⁹⁴ Even though it can be said that for many Afrikaners the referendum had some elements of ambiguity it can be accepted that everyone who voted yes at least accepted the end of apartheid and exclusive white power.³⁹⁵ The NP now had the mandate from the voting whites they needed to continue with the negotiations.

5.2 *Die Storie van Klara Viljee*

It was during these first months of 1992 that *Die Storie van Klara Viljee* (The Story of Klara Viljee) directed by Katinka Heyns was released to mostly positive reviews. The film is set in the fishing village of Arniston on the south coast of the Western Cape. With wide camera angles of the beach, ocean and village, the landscape is portrayed as picturesque and idyllic. The entire film plays itself out in this somewhat rustic *platteland* landscape in which

³⁸⁹ Personal Collection, C. van Rensburg, ‘O, om Boer te wees...’, *Insig*, August 1990, p.22.

³⁹⁰ Personal Collection, ‘Wonderwerk van tale’, *Taalgenoot*, August 1991, p.11.

³⁹¹ S. Garner, *Whiteness an Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p.18.

³⁹² S. Dubow, Race, civilization and culture: the elaboration of segregationist discourse in the inter-war years, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman Group, 1987, p.110.

³⁹³ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.591.

³⁹⁴ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.591.

³⁹⁵ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, 2004, p.591.

the landscape itself plays a major role in the story's development which will be discussed later on in this chapter.

The story revolves around the inhabitants of the town and the impact it has on the community when a high school girl, Engela Nel (Michelle Scott), accuses the local teacher, Dawid Aucamp (Regardt van den Bergh), of getting her pregnant. Dawid's reputation is tarnished in the community even though he is never officially found guilty of getting the girl pregnant. Pietman Willemse (Gavin van den Berg), who was the actual father of the unborn baby and Klara's (Anna-Mart van der Merwe) boyfriend, disappears on the ocean not long after Engela's pregnancy is announced and is presumed to be dead. The entire town was aware of Pietman's infidelity but never told Klara, who was visibly smitten. This leads Klara to mourn to such an extent that she eventually builds herself a house on family land behind a dune so that she will never again need to see the ocean that has taken the life of both her father and now her beloved Pietman. It is clear that the fate of the small fishing village is linked to that of Klara for they never told her of Pietman's unfaithfulness and are thus complicit in her unhappiness and dependent on her wellbeing for their redemption. This guilt experienced by the community contributes to Klara slowly drifting from the rest of the community who think she has lost the plot as she becomes more and more of a hermit. After living behind the dune for about five years it is thanks to the intervention of Soois de Swardt (Hennie Oosthuizen), who takes pity on Klara and eventually develops feelings for her, that Engela tells Klara about the affair between her and Pietman, that the child is actually his, that he never drowned in the ocean but ran away to work in Cape Town and is now working at the city's harbour.

Upon this revelation Klara walks into the ocean, reconnecting with that which she associated with her loss and almost allowing the water to wash off all the sadness that has consumed her life. It is after she has learned the truth that Klara starts to take back her life; she acquires a donkey and a dam scraper with which she starts the painful and tedious labour of removing the dune that has kept her from laying eyes on the ocean. She sees the removal of the dune, little by little, as the weight of her experience being lifted off her shoulders, and therefore her task alone. New life is starting to stir in the village as Klara and her labour on the dune is making people in the village realise that they need to take responsibility for their own fate. Towards the end of the film people from the village help Klara with her dune and the entire town joins in the celebration of the dunes removal on Klara's birthday. A romance has blossomed between Klara and Dawid and the closing scene is of the two of them dancing

on the beach with wide shots of the coastal landscape; not only Klara but the community has been brought back to life.

The nostalgia invoked by the film is not only created by the cinematography and the period of the 1950s it is set in, but also by the place the *platteland* occupies in the story. After the audience is introduced to Klara and her life behind the dune in the first few scenes it becomes clear that all is not as it seems in this rural community. The narrator, Dawid Aucamp, informs the audience that life is not like a traditional story with a beginning, a middle and an ending and that Klara's story begins long before the audience's introduction to her. During the first part of the film which retraces the events that resulted in Klara's insolation from the community and antagonism towards the ocean it becomes clear that all is not as it seems in what one would expect in a stereotypical Afrikaner nationalist *platteland* community. As the events unfold starting with the revelation of Engela's pregnancy and followed by displays of secrecy, dishonesty and infidelity it is clear that the community does not truly embody the values traditionally associated with and supposedly cultivated by the *platteland*.³⁹⁶ It is a community in crisis and Klara's antagonism towards the ocean, which the village depends on as a fishing village, becomes the symbol of this crisis. The dune that separates Klara from the ocean can be seen as not only symbolising that which is keeping Klara from her own emotional liberation, but also the fact that the community is out of touch with and removed from their own environment. The dune 'removes' the ocean from sight, which is a central feature of this specific *platteland* landscape, as a way of communicating the entire community's disconnect with the *platteland* and its inherent values.

After Klara is made aware of Pietman's infidelity and his cowardly escape from responsibility through his disappearance, she reconciles herself with the ocean and as she submerges herself in the water it is as if each wave brings some relief. It is simple, Klara needs to remove the dune that is blocking her view of the ocean and reconnect with the landscape. Both Soois and Dawid start realising that the entire town had fallen into disarray for they had allowed Klara to be fooled by Pietman and were partly liable for Klara's misery. Klara, however, takes responsibility for her own fate. It is only when Klara painstakingly starts to remove the dune with the help of a donkey that the rest of the community starts confronting the obstacles that have kept them from happiness and have eaten away at their

³⁹⁶ E. Delmond, 'Laubser, land and labour: image-making and Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s and early 1930s', *De Arte*, 64, 2000, p.10.



community. Klara, as directly interacting with the landscape through bodily practices, acts as the umbilical cord that reconnects the community with their landscape.³⁹⁷

It takes Klara a year to remove the dune as she works day in and day out. During this process the town slowly starts to reawaken and eventually starts making changes to their lives proactively. For example Soois fixes up his watermill after it had fallen into disrepair for years enabling him to provide the town with flour in his shop. Rose van Tonder (Trix Pienaar) on the other hand starts actively pursuing her love interest as the town starts its transformation. The first sign that this *platteland* community is collectively regaining their moral compass is when Soois, Rose, Dawid and a few other town inhabitants confront Engela's father, Doors Nel (Andre Rossouw). This confrontation is prompted after these characters learn the truth about the child's father and Pietman's 'death'. Doors had knowingly supported his daughter's lies which destroyed Dawid's reputation as a teacher and obscured the truth about Pietman, this while the town had knowingly been allowing Doors to abuse his wife. This confrontation signifies that the town and its members are regaining their respectability through returning to the values of truth and honesty that is supposedly cultivated by the landscape. As the dune shrinks the community increasingly starts to resemble the close-knit and ordered Afrikaner nationalist image of a *dorp* while enforcing the values associated with this space.³⁹⁸

It is when Pietman finally returns in search of his daughter that the village finally has an opportunity to once and for all redeem themselves for the part they played in Klara's unhappiness. The entire community stands up to Pietman from a claimed position of moral high ground in which they have the child's best interest at heart. Pietman leaves and the village has finally redeemed themselves by doing what is right. Towards the end of the film Klara allows the community to help her remove the last remnants of the dune. They are a community again and have regained their moral compass. They are once again aligned with the values their landscape embodies and are thus prospering. The laughter of children that permeates the background of many of the scenes during the film is finally extended to the adults as it echoes from Klara's birthday celebrations on the beach where the dune used to stand. By placing the *platteland* as such a prominent feature of the plot and character development Heyns, just as many Afrikaner directors before her, feeds into the naturalist

³⁹⁷ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.82.

³⁹⁸ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.51.

tradition wherein the *platteland* as place not only becomes a signifier of character but also a potential character-building force.³⁹⁹ Thus the people of the community had merely lost their way and Klara, as a victim of their corruption and dishonesty, had, thanks to her interaction with the landscape, brought them back from their moral decay.

Notions of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness in this film also intersect with the notions of the *platteland* in more conventional ways than expected. Throughout the film *Ecoloureds* can be seen as part of the backdrop but never directly part of the plot, with the exception of Das Pieterse (Goliath Davids) who has worked for Klara's family for years. The placement of Das as loyal to Klara and the casual presence of *Ecoloureds* as part of the landscape feeds into the widely held white conviction of a special relationship between whites and *Ecoloureds* and perpetuates the master-servant structure that forms part of the power relations of whiteness.⁴⁰⁰ Even though there is one scene in which Das hints towards the fact that not all whites treat him the same way, the unnoticed presence of *Ecoloureds* on screen can easily be understood as part of the mythology of the 'multiracial character' of the Cape in which the two racial communities live separate but equal lives.⁴⁰¹ This is interestingly similar to Rautenbach's placement of *Ecoloureds* in some of his earlier films. This romanticised portrayal of the historical relationship between *Ecoloureds* and Afrikaners on the *platteland* undoubtedly distracts from the harsh reality of the power relations and the resulting hierarchy that was part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness and supremacy.

There are however certain elements that formed part of the notion of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness that seems to be challenged by Heyns' film. Within the context of what seemed to be a symptom of late apartheid, family murders raised serious questions within white South African society. Some started to question the role of patriarchy in Afrikaner culture, and the manner in which men were conditioned into their performance of masculinity as defined by Afrikaner nationalism, as possible causes for these crimes.⁴⁰² It is partly due to the attention the societal issue of family murders received that the review by Darryl Accone in *The Star* newspaper hails *Die Storie van Klara Viljee* as a powerful feminist film.⁴⁰³ The

³⁹⁹ J. Foster, *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008, p.85, 100.

⁴⁰⁰ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, University of Cape Town, 2012, p.177.

⁴⁰¹ E.J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mother City: Landscapes, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989*, 2012, p.177.

⁴⁰² N. Falkof, 'A "Bloody Epidemic": Whiteness and Family Murder in Late Apartheid South Africa', *Safundi: Journal of South African and American Studies*, 2013, 14(3), p.310.

⁴⁰³ SA Media, D. Accone, 'Feminist film of the highest pedigree', *The Star*, 5 February, 1992, p.9.



powerful characters of Klara and Trynie Nel (Sandra Kotze), abused by her husband Doors and the first to join Klara in removing the dune, is hailed as a counter narrative to the stereotypical idea of the authoritative patriarchal nature of Afrikaner culture and nationalism. I would however argue that even though these women take charge of their own lives and fate within what can be seen as a world dominated by males, Klara specifically still embodies many of the typical elements of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. Although Klara is not portrayed as the typical *volksmoeder*, she is, through her indirect yet active role, eventually responsible for the values and morals of the community. This, yet again, plays into the nationalist idea that women are the measure of a nation's values.⁴⁰⁴

Unlike many other Afrikaans-language films, *Die Storie van Klara Viljee*, received mainly good reviews from both Afrikaans- and English-language newspapers. It is however a review from *The Argus* that does point to a few clichés in the form of bare feet Afrikaners.⁴⁰⁵ What is rather fascinating is the elaborate review published by *Die Patriot* newspaper which praises the film for its old-world *platteland* setting and a film that is not only about community but also about the Afrikaners as a group.⁴⁰⁶ It is clear that the idea of the *platteland* as a faith restoring landscape ingrained with universal principles as part of the Afrikaner nationalist imaginary was still something that resonated with some Afrikaner filmgoers. What exactly would remain part of the general idea and concept of Afrikaner identity as constructed by the nationalists through the decades was actually unknown at that stage. It can however be said that by the end of 1992 Afrikaner nationalism seemed to be close to complete disintegration.⁴⁰⁷ The few films made in the remaining years of the NP government's rule were limited to comedies, probably in a bid to stay within safer parameters during a time of flux and unpredictability.

⁴⁰⁴ N. Devarenne, 'Nationalism and the Farm novel in South Africa, 1883-2004', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 2009, 35(3), p.64.

⁴⁰⁵ SA Media, T. Seal, 'Good, but still shy about being South African', *The Argus*, 21 January 1992, p.11.

⁴⁰⁶ SA Media, S. Reynders, 'Klara Viljee is 'n deur braak', *Die Patriot*, 14 February, 1992, p.15.

⁴⁰⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners*, Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004, p.626.



6. Conclusion

Analyses of the films that have been the focus of this research make it evident that, by 1994, the symbolic centrality of the *platteland* as it was found within the Afrikaner nationalist framework had changed. Due to the repetitive and specific proximity of the nation to the *platteland* within the ideology of the Afrikaner nationalist movement, the *platteland* as landscape had cultural currency which was utilised by Afrikaans filmmakers. The ways in which the *platteland* was utilised to inform the ideas and values associated with Afrikaner nationalist identity was multi-layered and complex.

For example, with the exception of Rautenbach's *Jannie Totsiens*, the films analysed from the 1960s and 1970s all exhibit the western pastoral myth in which the city was seen as a modern and urban site of moral decay and cultural compromise. The *platteland* on the other hand, as portrayed in these films, continued to reflect, in one way or another, the mythological traditional agrarian origins of the Afrikaner and the values associated with it. In this regard these films continued to portray the myths perpetuated in the *plaasroman*. In other words these films maintained the place of the *platteland* within Afrikaner nationalist identity in the same way as the *plaasroman* established and maintained this link between the land and the nation in the 1930s.

The position of the *platteland* within this binary of good and evil in *Die Kandidaat*, *Katrina*, *Dit Was More en Dit Was Aand*, *Weerskant Die Nag* and *Herfsland* fed into the naturalist tradition. In these films the *platteland* was utilised in the naturalist tradition in that it was seen as a signifier of character embedded with certain values and also with a potential character-building force. These directors, in one way or another, used the *platteland* as the means through which they re-instilled and/or justified the values of truth, honesty and integrity found in the Afrikaner protagonists. It was crucial for Afrikaner nationalist ideology, as a form of settler colonialism, to associate with these values as apparent values of the land. The reason being that firstly, these values formed part of the process through which the land was sanitised of the violence through which it was acquired. Secondly, these shared values were proof of the links between the *platteland* and Afrikaners. These links were needed to legitimise white entitlement to land as well as the Afrikaner nationalist mythology that defined Afrikaners as 'natives' of the land; this further feeding into the Afrikaner nationalist narrative of descent and entitlement to land as part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness.

This position of the *platteland* as a culturally symbolic landscape is amplified by characters such as Petrus Verwey in *Dit Was More en Dit Was Aand*, Jurgun van Vreden in

Weerskant die Nag and the De Neckers in *Herfsland*. As farmers these Afrikaners took part in the ritualistic encounter between ‘man’ and land as the event of identity formation. This ontological event between the land and ‘man’ informed the Afrikaner nationalist creation of the *boerenasie*. This event was further historically reinforced by the mythical position of the *Voortrekkers* as products of a frontier farming community. This served as proof of the Afrikaners historical continuity with the heroic pioneers of the Afrikaner nation as found within the mythology of the Afrikaner nationalist movement.

So powerful is the symbolic position of the *platteland* within the South African context that in *Katrina* Rautenbach extends the role of the *platteland* to the *E*coloured community. Probably due to the continued debate concerning the cultural proximity of *E*coloureds to Afrikaners, Rautenbach saw it fit to extend the blueprint of origin and decent, used by Afrikaner nationalists, to *E*coloureds. As a nation dictated by racial segregationist legislation and probably due to their perceived links to Afrikaners, *E*coloureds could now utilise the *platteland* in creating their own nation with all the myths it required. Paradoxically it is Rautenbach’s third film that provides the only counter-narrative to this symbolic position of the *platteland* as distinct from the films analysed from the 1960s and 1970s. In *Jannie Totsiens* the portrayal of the *platteland* as a cage formed part of the critique Rautenbach aimed at apartheid South Africa as a product of Afrikaner nationalism. It was also a definite departure from the traditional symbolism of the *platteland* at the time.

The *platteland* as cultural landscape was also used in some of these films to inform and maintain very specific gender roles that formed part of the Afrikaner nationalist framework and which Afrikaner nationalist whiteness subscribed to. The gender roles associated with the *platteland* established a patriarchal framework in which women’s roles were secondary to those of men. Men as head of the family structure embodied the agency of the nation. Women on the other hand occupied the symbolic supportive position of *boervrou* and *volksmoeder*, being responsible not only for the constant regeneration of the nation’s culture but also the biological reproduction of the nation. It must be pointed out that in both *Weerskant Die Nag* and *Herfsland*, which exposes the dark side of this patriarchy, the critique is against elements of ‘unchecked’ patriarchy and not patriarchy per se.

It is important to take note of a shifting relevance with regards to the role of the symbolism of the *platteland* within the Afrikaner nationalist framework and all it entailed. During the 1970s Afrikaner culture was being diluted by urbanised life which in turn posed a challenge to the prominent place of the *platteland* in the Afrikaner imaginary. However, within a new official narrative of Afrikaners as a distinctly African nation the myth of the

traditional Afrikaner with his historical roots in the *platteland* played a central part. It was thus now the historical position of the *platteland* that had more symbolic importance than the *platteland* as a contemporaneous and lived 'reality'. In other words the *platteland* was sustained as a symbol within Afrikaner nationalism precisely because increasing Afrikaner urbanisation.

This shift is apparent when considering that the continued use of the *platteland* as a contemporary 'reality' rather than a historically relevant landscape did not seem to resonate with Afrikaners. The bad box office performance of films such as *Dit Was More en Dit Was Aand* and the ensuing crisis in the film industry by the end of the decade supports this notion.

Despite this shift, entitlement to land, which formed part of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness and was reinforced by notions of the *platteland* as the Afrikaner's ancestral origin, was left unquestioned and left invisible in the films analysed from the 1960s and 1970s. What is interesting, however, is the fact that in the three Rautenbach films from this time one element of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness is constantly exposed. Whiteness as domination of the structure of racial power relations, through its exclusive ownership of defining, decision making, coercion and the terror that accompanies it, is exposed. In *Katrina* Rautenbach goes as far as exposing the position of normality ascribed to whites as established through the dominance of whiteness as well as the privilege that accompanies it. This is not at all the case in the last three films analysed from the 1970s within which the *platteland* landscapes reinforce whiteness as dominance and control. This silence maintained the status quo of power relations between Black and white people through its portrayal of the pastoral paternalism of whiteness and the accompanying stratification of race through labour, as natural. Through the paternalistic power relations displayed in these films it is clear that Blacks are limited to their role as labourers on the *platteland*. These pastoral settings of the *platteland* and the accompanying place of whiteness within these settings display an intimate relation between land and whiteness. This level of intersection between land and whiteness and the symbolism through which it is communicated in these films reminds one of the ideological doctrines of the *plaasroman* of the 1930s.

These almost textbook Afrikaner nationalist representations of a white *platteland* as envisioned by Afrikaner nationalists could not be maintained as the shifts that started in the 1970s intensified. As the 1980s came around Afrikaners were more concerned with maintaining the material benefits attached to Afrikaner nationalism than with a strictly ideological doctrine.

By the time of the release of *Broer Matie* in 1984 the shift from the *platteland* as a symbol that directly informed ideas of Afrikaner nationalist identity in a contemporary context to a symbol more rooted in history and Afrikaner heritage is clear. Rautenbach uses the historical value of the notion of a *boerenasië* and its links to the *platteland* through placing the narrative of *Broer Matie* in the context of South Africa in the early 1960s when the land still stood central to Afrikaner nationalist identity. Once again we see that Rautenbach exposes some of the absurdities of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness, such as the invisibility of whiteness as normality and dominance. Interestingly he does this by exposing the blatant racism that he links to the city environment while at the same time reinforcing the domination of whiteness through pastoral paternalism as part of the *platteland* landscape. This racial hierarchy that formed part of Afrikaner nationalist ideas of whiteness and identity with its connection to land is further reinforced in *Broer Matie* by the exclusive entitlement to land by whites. This is evident in the position of Kieries as a *coloured* being never completely equal but always separate from whites.

With the historical placement of the narrative, Rautenbach situates the *platteland* in both the western pastoral and naturalist tradition. It is clear that the *platteland* has now become mainly part of the canon of Afrikaner heritage as imagined within Afrikaner nationalism. Thus the *platteland* and the values that it symbolised were now a historical source of comfort and spiritual regeneration for Afrikaners. They could seek guidance and inspiration from this heritage to solve the ills of their contemporary society. In other words even in its somewhat altered position the *platteland* still formed part of the structural elements and myths inherent to the Afrikaner nationalist framework.

Progressing into the 1980s the *platteland* in the context of an increasingly militarised South Africa was further utilised by filmmakers through linking the values embedded in this landscape with another ideological space, 'the border'. The *platteland* was yet again used to inform ideas of identity within the contemporary context of the 1980s.

In the Boetie films both 'the border' and the *platteland* are used as symbolic spaces as identified in the naturalist tradition. Both 'the border' and the *platteland*, through its links with the symbolism of the *Voortrekkers*, justify white entitlement to the land and the protection of this privilege. It seems that the *platteland*, even as an historical reference, still maintained a significant level of importance when considering how it intersects with 'the border'. In other words the cultural value of the *platteland* as an ideological space linked to personal growth, heroism and cultural identity and the historical notion of the border within the spirit of the *Voortrekkers* was extended to 'the border' in the context of the 1980s.

Another manner in which ‘the border’ echoes the symbolic position of the *platteland* is through the gender roles it propagates. The *grensvegter* became a symbol of hegemonic masculinity in the same way as the farmer and *Voortrekker* before him. Women, in their roles as wives and mothers, in their capacity as *boervrou* and *volksmoeder*, were instructed to play a supportive role. This reinforced gender divisions and the gender hierarchy found in the historical setting of the *platteland*. It seems that within this context of the Boetie films, as also seen in the majority of films from the 1970s, the silence surrounding whiteness for the sake of maintaining the unequal racial power relations continues. The limited role of the only non-white character and the silence surrounding Afrikaner nationalist whiteness made it clear that this was not only a white man’s land but also a white man’s war.

The symbolic position of the *platteland* within the context of a militarised South Africa could not be maintained as shifts, which originated in the 1970s, within the Afrikaner community intensified even further. The massive Afrikaner middle class moved away from strict ethnic and nationalist identities amidst the disintegrating of Afrikaner unity. This resulted in a more limited utilisation of the *platteland* as a contemporary landscape in the films analysed from the late 1980s and early 1990s. As a landscape the *platteland*’s value now lay even more in its value as heritage. The *platteland* as an historical space in both *Fiela se Kind* and *Die Storie van Klara Viljee* served this new purpose of the *platteland* as a site of heritage and of Afrikaner origin. Thus, while Afrikaners of the 1980s and 1990s may have become wealthy, urban sophisticates, their origin and heritage was the *platteland*. As both origin and heritage, the *platteland* was imbued with a regenerative force. Urban, wealthy Afrikaners could therefore continually turn to this origin and heritage to renew their identity, culture and values which urban modernity and material consumption threatened to erode.

Within this period when Afrikaner identity was in a state of flux the value of the *platteland* lay in its position as a historical source of inspiration. In other words through reminding Afrikaners of their ancestral homeland, the values embedded in this space and its links to the Coloured community the *platteland* served as a historical reference point that could equip Afrikaners with what they needed to survive in a changed political reality. Also, through portraying the historical *platteland* within the naturalist tradition these films create an opportunity for modern and urban Afrikaners of the turbulent 1980s and 1990s to re-embrace the traditional values associated with this space. Within a context of urbanised Afrikaners this historical portrayal of the *platteland* had more legitimacy through being historically situated rather than a contemporary setting.



In *Agter Elke Man* Bruce Beyers' rejection of his roots in the *platteland* speaks to this new dominant urban setting and reality where the farm was no longer a shrine for Afrikaner nationalist group values, marginalising the *platteland* as a historical setting. However, some of the values and characteristics historically interwoven with the symbolism of the *platteland* is extended to the urban space through using specifically the gendered symbolism of Afrikaner women as wife and mother. The *boervrou* and *volksmoeder* as products of the values and symbolism of the *platteland* is transplanted into the city landscape. This made the symbolic *platteland* accessible to the urban, through the *boervrou* and *volksmoeder* as extensions of the *platteland*. It made it possible for them to create a space for the traditional values of the Afrikaner in the city. It must also be pointed out that the dystopian image of the city in *Agter Elke Man* and its apparent corrupting influence further romanticised the *platteland* and its place in Afrikaner nationalist history even in its absence on screen. Through the portrayal of the city as evil the historical and traditional values of the *platteland* are emphasised.

The symbolic role of the city as landscape also plays into an attempt by this film to reformulate whiteness as defined by Afrikaner nationalism within the uncertain context of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The city, as the ruthless bastion of materialist consumption and capitalism and the elite class of Afrikaners, which are apparently a product of this environment, is blamed for the discriminating power relations evoked by whiteness. Class antagonism rather than white supremacy is thus problematized within this context of fragmenting Afrikaner unity. The irony here lies in the fact that the Afrikaner working class was central to the development of the Afrikaner nationalist movement. As part of the Afrikaner nationalist framework the Afrikaner working class also enjoyed the privileges of Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. The patronising and nostalgic references in the film to the agency whiteness historically enjoyed by the Afrikaner working class exposes this irony.

Fiela se Kind also attempts to reformulate Afrikaner nationalist notions of whiteness within the changing political context of the time in two ways. Firstly through exposing the multi-faceted manifestations of whiteness as dominance and terror. And secondly through attempts to assimilate Coloureds into Afrikaner nationalist whiteness. This assimilation is attempted through the historical setting of the *platteland*. In this regard Coloureds, like Afrikaners, were now portrayed as part of the same narrative of origin based on the symbolic position of the *platteland*. Thanks to the white conviction of a special relationship between whites and Coloureds the myth of the land that was traditionally exclusive to the white nation was now extended to the Coloured 'Afrikaans' nation. It is through the powerful

intersections of land and whiteness as found in the history of Afrikaner nationalism that this assimilation attempted to create a new, altered whiteness which could maintain its links with the land. This is however not the case with *Die Storie van Klara Viljee* in which the historical master-servant structure is made invisible through portraying Coloureds as a casual part of the *platteland* landscape.

It must be said that from *Die Kandidaat* through to *Die Storie van Klara Viljee* there is a remarkable absence of Coloured, Black and Asian characters. In the light of this fact one statement can be universally made with regards to whiteness: Through these films Afrikaner nationalist whiteness is brought into the racially concrete through rich images that fill the cultural world with extraordinary visions of the power and beauty of being white.⁴⁰⁸

It is thus clear that the symbolic importance of the *platteland* shifted from the 1960s to the 1990s. This was from an initial source of contemporary identity formulation to a historical source of heritage that justified specific values, ideas and notions of gender. Even within the changing political realities of the period analysed, the *platteland* was maintained as an ideological space that served as a connection between the Afrikaner and the land, emphasising the idolised pact between nation and nature. This, despite the seismic shifts which characterised South Africa during this period.

By the end of the Afrikaner nationalist republic the *platteland* was thus historicised within the Afrikaner nationalist framework making it accessible to the majority of Afrikaners who were urbanised by the second half of the 20th century. The films analysed from the 1960s and 1970s were part of, or in the case of the 1970s attempted to be part of, the process of historicising the *platteland* in ways similar to the *plaasroman* from the first part of the century. However, by the end of the 1970s as the National Party was attempting to redefine Afrikaner identity as African, the *platteland* as an ethno-symbolic resource was firmly established thanks to the manner in which it was portrayed in cultural artefacts such as novels, films and paintings.⁴⁰⁹ Thus by the 1980s the *platteland* was a tool ready to be utilised as an historicised landscape as seen in *Broer Matie*, *Fiela se Kind* and *Die Storie van Klara Viljee* which continued to inform notions of Afrikaner nationalist identity within a context of increasingly consumerist, individualising patterns of self-identity. These shifts in identity formation together with an increasingly uncomfortable political situation in South Africa, consciously or unconsciously, necessitated the repositioning of the *platteland* within the

⁴⁰⁸ D. Bernardi, *The Persistence of Whiteness: race and contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, London: Routledge, 2008, p.93.

⁴⁰⁹ A. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1999, p.253.

Afrikaner nationalist imaginary. The altered position of the *platteland* enabled the *platteland* to continue to depict the Afrikaners and their development as a naturalised part of the natural order.⁴¹⁰ These shifts made it possible that from the establishment of the republic to the official end of Afrikaner nationalism and even beyond, the Afrikaner nationalist framework used landscape to mediate the construction of nationhood and the accompanying position of whiteness as power and privilege. This also continued to feed into the ideas of Afrikaner civil religion and manifest destiny linking land, religion and destiny through notions of the Promised lands.

With the exception yet again of Rautenbach's *Jannie Totsiens*, all the films analysed in this study achieved a sense of continuity and purpose by seamlessly linking the present to the mythological past.⁴¹¹ This ideological innovation to which the *platteland* was central was naturalised as the past confirmed the special authority of the *platteland*, even as purely a historical space, in the present.⁴¹² Portraying the *platteland* as mainly an 'Afrikaner space' perpetuated the idea of this as an ethnic space as part of the mythology of grand apartheid.⁴¹³ While this was true with regards to political and state power, it was never true in terms of the actual constitution of labour, demography and social make-up.⁴¹⁴ To varying degrees, the *platteland*, in these films reflect on the *platteland* as a historical space wherein tradition and history stand central. But this space is also a patriarchal space in which masculine values dominate and an almost feudal space which is hierarchically structured around class and race as pointed out by H.P. van Coller.⁴¹⁵ Even though these films do reflect the ruling Afrikaner nationalist ideology they also reflect a broad cultural tradition in western narrative art.⁴¹⁶ For example, the insider-outsider conflict between those from the city and those from the *platteland* is not peculiar to Afrikaans-language films and is found in modern English and American fiction.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁰ A. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1999, p.151.

⁴¹¹ S. Dubow, 'Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Conceptualization of 'Race'', *The Journal for African History*, 1992, 33(2), p.225.

⁴¹² S. Dubow, 'Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Conceptualization of 'Race'', *The Journal for African History*, 1992, 33(2), p.225.

⁴¹³ T. Willoughby-Herard, 'South Africa's Poor Whites and Whiteness Studies: Afrikaner Ethnicity, Scientific racism, and White Misery', *New Political Science*, 2007, 29(4), p.483.

⁴¹⁴ T. Willoughby-Herard, 'South Africa's Poor Whites and Whiteness Studies: Afrikaner Ethnicity, Scientific racism, and White Misery', *New Political Science*, 2007, 29(4), p.483.

⁴¹⁵ H.P. van Coller, 'Die representasie van plaas, dorp en stad in die Afrikaanse prosa', *Stilet*, 2008, p.98.

⁴¹⁶ R. Greig, 'An Approach to Afrikaans Film', *Critical Arts*, 2008, p.22.

⁴¹⁷ R. Greig, 'An Approach to Afrikaans Film', *Critical Arts*, 2008, p.16.

However, by the end of official apartheid in 1994 the *platteland* had temporarily lost some of its cultural currency amongst many Afrikaners. This can be ascribed to the central role of the *platteland* in the myths perpetuated by apartheid within an environment where apartheid had become an embarrassment for middleclass Afrikaners. This did not translate into the disappearance of Afrikaner nationalism post-1994 or the intersections between land and whiteness within this nationalism.

Afrikaner nationalism continues to be a part of the South African environment, disguised as a non-nationalist civil-society network of organisations and initiatives.⁴¹⁸ This neo-nationalist nationalism focuses greatly on the Afrikaans-language, with language playing a crucial role in the philosophical, social and psychological components of the Afrikaner nationalist movement, sentiment and ideology.⁴¹⁹ In the post-apartheid context, Afrikaans became the main symbol of being an Afrikaner socially and culturally.⁴²⁰ Afrikaner identity is now enacted through the consumption of Afrikaner/Afrikaans spaces and culture.⁴²¹ Afrikaans-language films, as cultural products, thus became part of this identity which was enabled through consumption.

The Afrikaners, as a social group after 1994, still possessed a clearly articulated shared value system and markers of Afrikaner identity still included the presence of the Afrikaans language and the desire for and love of the land.⁴²² With the significant increase of Afrikaans-language films produced since the turn of the millennium, many of these films once again use the *platteland* as a very powerful symbol in much the same way as Afrikaner nationalism in the early years of apartheid and the nationalist republic. Films such as *Die Ongelooflike Avonture van Hanna Hoekom* (2010), *Platteland* (2011), *Klein Karoo* (2013) and *Leading Lady* (2014) once again employ the symbolism of the *platteland* to link specific values, ideas and notions of gender to Afrikaner identity.

Within a contemporary context where there are still huge disparities with regards to land ownership and which continue to be heavily skewed across racial lines, these films once again echo the very sentiments that embedded Afrikaner nationalist entitlement to land.

⁴¹⁸ Y. Alsheh & F. Elliker, 'The Art of Becoming a Minority: Afrikaner Re-politicisation and Afrikaans Political Ethnicity', *African Studies*, 2015, 74(3), p.429.

⁴¹⁹ M. Kriel, 'Fools, philologists and philosophers: Afrikaans and the politics of cultural nationalism', *Politikon*, 2006, 33(1), p.51.

⁴²⁰ C.S. de Waal, 'Creolisation and Purity: Afrikaans Language Politics in Post-Apartheid Times', *African Studies*, 2012, 71(3), p.450.

⁴²¹ C. van der Westhuizen, 'Afrikaners in post-apartheid South Africa: Inward migration and enclave nationalism', *HTS Teologiese Studies*, 2016, 72(1), p.1.

⁴²² C. Broodryk, 'Ons sal antwoord op jou roepstem: Steve Hofmeyr and Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid Afrikaans cinema', *Communicare*, 2016, 35(10), p.64.



Increasing calls for land redistribution and the questioning of the Africaness of Afrikaners has made it crucial for some Afrikaner organisations, such as Afriforum, to reassert their links to the land. For Afrikaner organisations such as these the *platteland* and its embedded notions of land entitlement, history, gender, civil religion, whiteness and manifest destiny together with its renewing capacity reinforces the durability of the Afrikaner nationalist myth of origin but also forms one of the foundations of their perceived contemporary political struggles.⁴²³

This idea of the Afrikaners, as an embattled minority, who need to reclaim their rightful place as part of the South African landscape seems as relevant today as it was during the height of Afrikaner nationalism. This is echoed by a significant section of the Afrikaner community when considering the large scale support for Afriforum. Afriforum, as the biggest Afrikaner civic-organisation with a membership of over 200 000, garners support as the vanguard of the perceived rights of Afrikaners, their culture and language.⁴²⁴

As the terrain for current and future struggle is marked by the relations of production, property and power inherited from apartheid, together with the massive unemployment, poverty and insecurity generated amongst the majority of Black South Africans, land and the symbolism of land will stay relevant and contested.⁴²⁵ This is clear through certain narratives in recent Afrikaans-language films that seem to re-establish the *platteland* as a powerful symbol in the neo-nationalist Afrikaner nationalism of the 21st century.

⁴²³ A. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1999, p.267.

⁴²⁴ E. Fairbanks, *The Last White Africans*, 16/01/2017, < <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/16/the-last-white-africans/>>. Access: 01/04/2017.

⁴²⁵ H. Bernstein, 'How White Agriculture (Re)Positioned Itself for a 'New South Africa'', *Critical Sociology*, 1996, 22(3), p.10.



7. Bibliography

Archives/On-line Archives

National Archives of South Africa, Pretoria, Pienaar, S., 'Hierdie films gaan opslae maak', *Beeld*, 21 March 1968, Source PR, Vol. 2/69, Ref. Nr. 2/1/3/3.

SA Media, Acccone, D., 'Feminist film of the highest pedigree', *The Star*, 5 February, 1992, p.9.

SA Media, Altbeker, P., 'Plumbing the shallows of domestic drama', *Business Day*, 4 October, 1990, p.8.

SA Media, Breytenbach, P., 'SATV se kykers nou flieks toe', *Die Transvaler*, 19 July, 1978, p.5.

SA Media, Breytenbach, P., 'Spelers maak Agter Elke Man 'n wenner', *Die Transvaler*, 28 September, 1990.

SA Media, Coetzee, L., 'M-Net help flieks red...', *Rapport*, 4 February, 1990, p.23.

SA Media, Norval, R., 'Bruce, Stenie skitter ook op groot skerm', *Oosterlig*, 1 October, 1990, p.4.

SA Media, Reynders, S., 'Klara Viljee is 'n deur braak', *Die Patriot*, 14 February, 1992, p.15.

SA Media, Seal, T., 'Good, but still shy about being South African', *The Argus*, 21 January 1992, p.11.

SA Media, Stone, I., 'Weet nie wat is Fiela se boodskap nie', *Die Burger*, 13 June, 1988, p.6.

SA Media, Unknown, "'Diktator Kruger 'n bullebak' – man oor Sondagverbod', *Hoofstad*, 22 March, 1978, p.17.

SA Media, Unknown, 'Fiela-prent het meer ingebring as R2,8 milj.', *Beeld*, 17 May, 1988, p.3.

SA Media, Unknown, 'Fiela kry tien nominasies', *Die Transvaler*, 26 July, 1988, p.20.

SA Media, Unknown, 'Hollyveld: waar is ons 'technicolour sunset'?', *VryWeekblad*, 16 March, 1990, p.11.

SA Media, Unknown, 'Klomp kwade gevoelens', *Rapport*, 8 July, 1984, p.5.

SA Media, Unknown, 'Rolprent 'n moet vir sy mense, sê bruin akteur', *Oosterling*, 13 July, 1984, p.4.

SA Media, Unknown, 'Rolprente se aasvoels so verdryf.', *Beeld*, 22 February, 1990, p. 3.

SA Media, Unknown, 'R7 miljoen vir SA films', *Die Transvaler*, 26 January, 1978, p.8.

SA Media, Unknown, 'Tref ook as rolprent', *Die Volksblad*, 1 October, 1990, p.7.



SA Media, Unkown, 'Vervaardigingsektor: Blanke werkers verloor R2,2 miljard', *Die Afrikaner*, 24 January, 1990, p.6.

Books/Chapters in Books

Adam, H., 'Ethnic Mobilization and the Politics of Patronage', in H. Adam & H. Gilliomee (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1979).

[Baderoon, G., *Regrading Muslims: From slavery to post-apartheid*, \(Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2014\).](#)

Bernardi, D. (Ed.) *The Persistence of Whiteness: race and contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, (London: Routledge, 2008).

Botha, M. & Steinmar, D., *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur*, (Parklands: genugtig! Uitgewers, 2006).

Brink, A., 'Die konteks van sestig: Herkoms en situasie' in J. Polley (Eds), *Verlag van die simposium oor die sestigers*, (University of Cape Town, 1973).

Conway, D., "'Somewhere on the border of credibility': the cultural construction and contestation of 'the border' in white South African society.", in G. Baines & P. Vale (eds.) *Beyond the Border War: New perspectives on Southern Africa's Late-Cold War Conflicts*, Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008.

Dubow, S., Race, civilization and culture: the elaboration of segregationist discourse in the inter-war years, in S. Marks & S. Trapido, (Ed) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, (London: Longman Group, 1987).

Foster, J., *Washed with sun: landscape and the making of white South Africa*, (Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008)

Garner, S., *Whiteness an introduction*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2007).

Giliomee, H., *Die Afrikaners*, (Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 2004).

Giliomee, H., 'The Growth of Afrikaner Power', in H. Adam & H. Gilliomee (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1979).

Greenberg, S., 'Ideological struggles within the South African state' in S. Marks and S. Trapido (Eds.), *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, (London: Longman Group, 1987).

Harper, G. & J. Rayner, J., (Ed) *Cinema and Landscape: Film, Nation and Cultural Geography*, (Bristol: Intellect Ltd, 2010).

Hofmeyer, I., 'Building a nation from words: Afrikaans language, literature and ethnic identity, 1902 – 1924' in S. Marks and S. Trapido (Eds.), *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, (London: Longman Group, 1987).

- Maingard, J., *South African National Cinema*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2008).
- Miller, T. & Stam, R. (Ed.), *A Companion to Film Theory*, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 1999).
- Posel, D., 'The language of domination, 1978 - 1983' in S. Marks and S. Trapido (Eds.), *The Politics of race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, 1st edition, (London: Longman Group, 1987).
- Smith, A., *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1999)
- Steyn, M., "*Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used To Be*": *White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001).
- Tomaselli, K., *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989).
- Van Nierop, L., *Daar doer in die Fliek*, (Pretoria: Protea, 2016).

Journal Articles

- Adhikari, M., 'God Made the White Man, God Made the Black Man... ': Popular Racial Stereotyping of Coloured People in Apartheid South Africa', 2006, 55(1), p.142-164.
- Adhikari, M., 'Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and Change in the Expression of Coloured Identity in White Supremacist South Africa', *Journal of Southern Studies*, 2006, 32(3), p.467-487.
- Alsheh, Y. & Elliker, F., 'The Art of Becoming a Minority: Afrikaner Re-politicisation and Afrikaans Political Ethnicity', *African Studies*, 2015, 74(3), p.429-448.
- Beningfield, J., 'Native lands: language, nation and landscape in the Taal Monument, Paarl, South Africa', *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, 2004, 10(4), pp.509-525.
- Bernstein, H., 'How White Agriculture (Re)Positioned Itself for a 'New South Africa'', *Critical Sociology*, 1996, 22(3), p.9-36.
- Brits, J.P., 'Thabo Mbeki and the Afrikaners, 1986-2004', *Historia*, 2008, 53(2), p.33-96.
- Broodryk, C., 'Ons sal antwoord op jou roepstem: Steve Hofmeyr and Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid Afrikaans cinema', *Communicare*, 2016, 35(10), p.59-76.
- Callinicos, A., 'South Africa: The End of Apartheid and After', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1994, 29(36), p.2355-2363.
- Craig, D., 'Screening the Border War, 1971-88', *KLEIO*, 2004, 36(1), p.28-46.
- Delmond, E., 'Laubser, land and labour: image-making and Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s and early 1930s', *De Arte*, 2000, 64: pp. 5-34.
- Devarenne, N., 'Nationalism and the farm Novel in South Africa, 1883-2004', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 2009, 35(3): pp. 627-642.

- De Waal, C.S., 'Creolisation and Purity: Afrikaans Language Politics in Post-Apartheid Times', *African Studies*, 2012, 71(3), p.446-463.
- Doherty, C., 'Trauma and the Conscript Memoirs of the South African 'Border War'' *English in Africa*, 2015, 42(2), p.25-56.
- Drewett, M., 'Battling over Borders: Narratives of Resistance to the South African Border War Voiced through Popular Music', *Social Dynamics*, 2003, 29(1), p.78-98.
- Dubow, S., 'Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Conceptualization of 'Race'', *The Journal of African History*, 1992, 33(2), pp. 209-237.
- Du Pisani, K., 'Shifting sexual morality? Changing views on homosexuality in Afrikaner society during the 1960's', *Historia*, 2012, 57(2), p.182-221.
- Eley, G., 'Finding the People's War: Film, British Collective Memory and World War II', *The American Historical Review*, 106(3), June 2001, pp. 818-838.
- Erasmus, Y. & Ellisson, T.H., 'What can we learn about the meaning of race from the classification of population groups during apartheid?', *South African Journal of Science*, 2008, 104(November/December), p.450-452.
- Falkof, N., 'A "Bloody Epidemic": Whiteness and Family Murder in Late Apartheid South Africa', *Safundi: Journal of South African and American Studies*, 2013, 14(3), p.307-325.
- Greig, R., 'An Approach to Afrikaans Film', *Critical Arts*, 2008, 1(1), p.14-23.
- Griffiths, D. & Prozesky, M.L.C., 'The Politics of Dwelling: Being White/Being South African', *Africa Today*, 56(4), 2010, p.22-41.
- Grundling, A., "'Rocking the Boat" in South Africa? Voëlvry Music and Afrikaans Anti-Apartheid Social Protest in the 1980's', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 2004, 37(3), p.483-514.
- Hees, E., 'Foregrounding the Background: Landscape and Ideology in South African Films', *South African Film and Television*, 1996, 10(2): pp. 63-84.
- Hyslop, J., 'Shopping during a Revolution: Entrepreneurs, Retailers and "White" Identity in the Democratic Transition', *Historia*, 2005, 50(1), p.173-190.
- Hyslop, J., "'Why did Apartheid's supporters capitulate? 'Whiteness', class and consumption in urban South Africa, 1985-1995', *Society in Transition*, 2000, 31(1), p.36-44.
- Jolly, M., 'Motherlands? Some Notes on Women and Nationalism in India and Africa', *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 5(1&2), 1994, p.41-59.
- Kahn, R., "'Oop vir misinterpretasie': South African journalism's take-up and representation of the music of Fokofpolisiekar', *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 2011, 32(3), p.19-33.
- Kriel, M., 'Fools, philologists and philosophers: Afrikaans and the politics of cultural nationalism', *Politikon*, 2006, 33(1), p.45-70.
- Lemon, A., 'The Rise and Fall of Afrikaner Ethnic Political Mobilisation 1943-1999', *South African Geographical Journal*, 2003, 85(2), p.144-151.

- Posel, D., 'Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa', *African Studies Review*, 2001, 44(2), p.87-113.
- Pronay, N., 'The 'Moving Picture' and Historical Research', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 18:3, Historians and the Movies: The State of the Art, Part 1, (July 1983), pp. 365-395.
- Suriano, M. & Lewis, C., 'Afrikaners is Plesierig! Voelvry Music, Anti-apartheid Identities and Rockey Street Nightclubs in Yeoville (Johannesburg), 1980'2-90's', *African Studies*, 2015, 74(3), p.404-428.
- Templin, J.A. 'The ideology of a chosen people: Afrikaner nationalism and the Ossewa Trek, 1938', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1999, 5(3), p.397-417.
- Van Coller, H.P., 'Die representasie van plaas, dorp en stad in die Afrikaanse prosa', *Stilet*, 2008, 18(1), p.90-121.
- Van der Westhuizen, C., 'Afrikaners in post-apartheid South Africa: Inward migration and enclave nationalism', *HTS Teologiese Studies*, 2016, 72(1), p.1-9.
- Van Jaarsveld, F.A., 'n Afrikaner Perspektief op die Groot Tek: Simbool en Ritueel', *Historia*, 33(2), p.11-26.
- Viljoen, L., 'Nationalism, gender and sexuality in the autobiographical writing of two Afrikaner women', *Social Dynamics*, 2008, 34(2), p.186-202.
- Welsh, D., 'Urbanisation and the Solidarity of Afrikaner Nationalism', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1969, 7(2), 265-276.
- Wenzel, J., 'The Pastoral Promise and the Political Imperative: The Plaasroman Tradition in an era of Land Reform', *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, 2000, 46(1): pp. 90-113.
- Willoughby-Herard, T., 'South Africa's Poor Whites and Whiteness Studies: Afrikaner Ethnicity, Scientific racism, and White Misery', *New Political Science*, 2007, 29(4), p.479-500.
- Wolfe, P., 'Settler Colonialism and the elimination of the native', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2006, 8(4), p.387-409.

Personal Collection

- De Kieffer, D., 'Lees die – en lê vannag wakker', *Insig*, April 1991, p13.
- Rossouw, A., 'Nuwe NP, nuwe naam?', *Insig*, August 1990, p.13.
- Schoeman, B.J., 'Boodskappe en Gelukwense: Van die Minister van Vervoer', *Die Taalgenoot*, November 1971, p.5.
- Unknown, 'Wonderwerk van tale', *Taalgenoot*, August 1991, p.11.
- Van Rensburg, C., 'O, om Boer te wees...', *Insig*, August 1990, p.22.



Unpublished Works

Clynick, T., *A Boerevolk for a Boerestand?: Broedertwis and Two Manuscripts of Platteland and Modernity, c.1959*, a paper presented at the University of the Witwatersrand, Institute for Advanced Social Research, 1994.

Craig, D., *'The Viewer as Conscript: Dynamic struggles for ideological supremacy in the South African Border War, 1971-1988'*, Unpublished minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree Masters in Arts in the Department of Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, 2003.

O'Meara, D., *'Thinking Theoretically? Afrikaner Nationalism and the Comparative Theory of the Politics of Identity: A Tribute to Harold Wolpe'*, (Paper presented to the Inaugural Conference of the Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust, University of the Western Cape, 1997).

Paleker, G., *'Creating a 'black film industry': State intervention and films for African audiences in South Africa, 1956-1990'*, (Unpublished Thesis Presented for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, 2009.)

Riley, E.J., *'From Matieland to Mother City: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989'*, (Unpublished Thesis Presented for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, 2012).

Website/s

Fairbanks, E., *The Last White Africans*, 16/01/2017, <
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/16/the-last-white-africans/>>. Accessed: 01/04/2017.

8. Filmography

Agter Elke Man (Behind Every Man), F. Marx (Director) & F. Botha, F. Marx, A. Venter (Producers). South Africa: FML, Leisureco, 1990.

Boetie gaan Border Toe (Brother Goes to the Border), R. van den Bergh (Director) & P. Pieterse (Producer). South Africa: Philo Pieterse Productions, 1984.

Boetie op Manoevres (Brother on Manoevres), R. van den Bergh (Director) & P. Pieterse (Producer). South Africa: Satbel Films, Philo Pieterse Productions, 1985.

Broer Matie (Brother Matie), J. Rautenbach (Director & Producer). South Africa: Satbel Films, 1984.

Diamant en die Dief (Diamond and the Thief), Jan Scholtz (Director) & Andre Scholtz (Producer). South Africa: Scholtz Films, 1978.

Die Kandidaat (The Candidate), J. Rautenbach (Director) & E. Nofal (Producer). South Africa: Emil Nofal Films, 1968.

Die Ongelooflike Avonture van Hanna Hoekom (The incredible adventures of Hanna Hoekom), R. van den Bergh (Director) & G. Kuhn (Producer). South Africa: kykNET, Spookasem Films, 2010.

Die Storie van Klara Viljee (The Story of Klara Viljee), K. Heyns (Director) & E. Bold (Producer). South Africa: Sonneblom Films, 1992.

Dit was Aand en dit was More (It was Night and it was Morning), F. Marx (Director) & A. Venter, M. Venter (Producers). South Africa: Brigadier Films, 1977.

Fiela se Kind (Fielas Child), K. Heyns (Director) & E. Bold (Producer). South Africa: Sonneblom Films, Starcorp International Pictures, 1988.

Herfsland (Autum Land), J. Scholtz (Director) & A. Scholtz (Producer). South Africa: Scholtz Films, 1979.

Jannie Totsiens (Goodbye Jannie), J. Rautenbach (Director & Producer). South Africa: Sewentig, 1970.

Katrina (Katrina), J. Rautenbach (Director) & E. Nofal (Producer). South Africa: Emil Nofal Films, 1969.

Klein Karoo, R. van den Bergh (Director) & T. Theron, C. van den Berg, J. van der Walt (Producers). South Africa: Kaapland Films, 2013.

Leading Lady, H. Pretorius (Director) & L. Greeff, H. Pretorius (Producers). South Africa: Dark Matter Studios, 2014.

Nommer Asseblief? (Number Please?), H. Hugo (Director) & A. Venter, M. Venter (Producers). South Africa: Brigadiers Films, 1981.

Platteland (Countryside), S. Else (Director) & S. Else, P. Pieterse (Producers). South Africa: Philo Films, Mozi Films, Breakwood Trading, 2011.

Vyfster: Die Slot (Five Star: The Conclusion), S. Odendaal, G. Ballot (Directors), South Africa, 1986.

Weerskant die Nag (Both Sides of the Night), F. Marx (Director) & A. Venter (Producer). South Africa: Brigadier Films, 1979.