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The *Tokoloshe* and Cultural Identity in post-Apartheid South Africa

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

2018

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The Tokoloshe and Cultural Identity in post-Apartheid South Africa

Abstract

The *Tokoloshe* is an enigmatic and constantly-evolving supernatural phenomenon rooted in traditional belief and prevalent in the everyday lives of many South Africans. This study provides a detailed, composite understanding of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon. It also considers, by means of contextual analysis, what representations of the *Tokoloshe* suggest about shifts in cultural identity in contemporary South Africa by referring to five products from Zef Culture and Speculative Fiction: *Die Antwoord*'s song and music video, 'Evil Boy'; Jack Parow's song and music video, 'Hosh Tokolosh'; Diane Awerbuck's short story, 'Leatherman'; Andrew Salomon's novel, *Tokoloshe Song*; and Charlie Human's novel, *Apocalypse Now Now*. It does so by examining the socio-historic contexts of the works, characterisations, representations of landscape and environment, and portrayals of social issues such as violence, prejudice, morality and tradition. In each of the works, South Africa's past is pervasive, and the present is characterised by moral, social and physical decay in worlds where violence, including sexual violence, and racism/xenophobia thrive. These worlds are distinguished by their cultural hybridity, heterogeneity, linguistic mixing and cultural borrowing, and the artists use their works to explore what it means to be white or Afrikaans, to be female and sexual, to come of age, or to be free from persecution; all within a post-Apartheid context. This study recognises how the formation of, and shifts in, cultural identity in the post-Apartheid present are significantly influenced by South Africa's Apartheid past; that the transformation and identity (re)formation processes are particularly traumatic; and that the formation of South Africans' respective hybrid cultural identities is informed by their national, Pan African and global contexts.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents, who instilled in me the value of education; to my wife and sons, for their patience and support during the many years of this project; and finally, to Ivy Xoki, who was the first to teach me that cultural difference is not an obstacle to human understanding.

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List of abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
COPE	Congress of the People
DA	Democratic Alliance
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
HRPU	Harmful Religious Practices Unit
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
MK	Umkhonto weSizwe
ORCU	Occult-related Crime Unit
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress of Azania
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAPRA	South African Pagan Rights Alliance
SAPS	South African Police Service
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TSC	Tokolos Stencil Collective
ZCC	Zion Christian Church

Introduction

For centuries, people navigating their way across southern Africa have encountered and then engaged with others, and in each set of these interactions between those peoples an instance of cultural evolution has occurred: by means of exchange or borrowing of language and vocabulary, of knowledge and understanding of the land, of methods of subsistence and more. It is possible to observe and monitor the transaction and evolution of one singular phenomenon across several of these interactions, namely the sharing of the *Tokoloshe*. As such, the *Tokoloshe* is a marker for cultural exchange and subsequent shifts in cultural identity in southern Africa over several hundred years. The references to the *Tokoloshe* in historical and anthropological records make it possible to identify the transfer of this phenomenon within the strands of cultural identity in South Africa as they have been perceived historically and to chart the divergent, convergent and transformational journeys of those strands into new or evolved forms of cultural identity in the present.

The dismantling of Apartheid and the democratisation of South Africa, with its various processes of racial integration and its post-Apartheid programme of nation-building, as well as the prevalence of highly accessible new media within an increasingly globalized world, have provided a unique socio-historic context that has forcibly sparked another such set of transactions. It is the intention of this study to investigate and explore any potential shifts in white cultural identity that may occur as a consequence of those transactions. This is considered with particular reference to: what it means to be white or Afrikaans, to be female and sexual, to come of age, or to be free from persecution; all within a post-Apartheid context. This investigation argues that the formation of, and shifts in, white cultural identity in the post-Apartheid present are significantly and inescapably influenced by South Africa's Apartheid past, informed as it was by colonialism and policies of racism. Furthermore, the transformation and identity (re)formation processes are particularly traumatic. The early years of South Africa's democratic transformation were accompanied by the unfolding ideology of a 'Rainbow Nation' and the underlying tenets of reconciliation and forgiveness, as espoused by Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela; today, critics argue the rainbow has 'unravelled' and that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission failed. The violence and xenophobia that regularly provide headlines in South Africa's news are present and real reminders of the continuing traumas of that transformational process. The analysis in this work suggests that those

catastrophic experiences are painful but key elements in the process of transformation. This thesis also argues that the formation of white South Africans' evolving hybrid cultural identities is informed by their national, Pan African and global contexts. Migration, globalisation and the advent of new media have all helped create an environment in which the sampling of identities and the appropriation of culture from across southern Africa, Africa and the rest of the world, are within the grasp of almost every citizen, not least of whom are those white South Africans for whom the frameworks and signifiers of the past dispensation are no longer valid.

To explore shifts in white cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, I am using the selfsame marker that Abel Coetzee used 80+ years ago: the *Tokoloshe*. The *Tokoloshe* is a troublesome southern African supernatural creature rooted in traditional belief, acknowledged in the day-to-day rituals and practices of contemporary South Africans, indicative of the customs associated with witchcraft, policed and governed by law, regulated and nourished by the traditional healing industry and exploited in the mediums of popular culture. It has its origins among the San people of south-western Africa, and has been disseminated across southern Africa through the interactions of ethnicities over the past two centuries – albeit in different forms and with varying values according to the interactions and cultural interpretations of each group. The *Tokoloshe* has since become a recognizable figure in the collective belief systems of the peoples of South Africa, with shared representations in literature, on stage and screen, in the charts and in the popular press.

The enigmatic and inconstant shape, form and behaviour of this sprite parallel its representation, perception and reception in southern African traditional and contemporary society. Fundamentally, the *Tokoloshe* has been re-invented and re-defined by the people of southern Africa over several centuries. Its features, characteristics and behaviour continuously evolve across southern African cultures and languages through complex processes of cultural borrowing and acculturation to accommodate the specifics of each group by whom it has been appropriated, and taking on several of the distinct characteristics of other symbols of belief in southern Africa as it does so. It is the literal, metaphoric, rhetorical and symbolic ‘shape-shifting’ capacity of the multivalent and adaptable *Tokoloshe* itself that facilitates a reading of the intracacies of identity (re)formation in post-Apartheid South Africa. Seven instances of such historic appropriation in episodes of socio-cultural/spatial-

temporal transitions are accounted for in this work, and in the analyses at least one further/recent count is argued, namely within the identity (re)formation processes of white South Africans in the 21st century. This instance is articulated through detailed contextual analysis with reference to five products of popular culture by white South African artists in which the *Tokoloshe* has been commandeered for their own purposes: in the works of the Zef musicians/songwriters (*Die Antwoord*'s 'Evil Boy', Jack Parow's 'Hosh Tokolosh') identity (re)formation is expressed as an engineered, antithetical agenda; in the writing of Diane Awerbuck ('Leatherman') it lies in the failed attempts to shed Apartheid-era female identity; in Andrew Salomon's world (*Tokoloshe Song*) it is the continued misfortunes of the disenfranchised 'other'; and in Charlie Human's novel (*Apocalypse Now Now*) it is the evolutionary/transitional nature of democratic/post-Apartheid South African society.

In this study, I aim also to deliver a single and inclusive piece on the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon via a journey of excavating, tracking, exploring and reviewing. The purpose of this study is to provide and demonstrate a comprehensive description and understanding of the *Tokoloshe* by considering portrayals of the phenomenon in traditional and popular culture in southern Africa, particularly in literature, in music, in theatre and in film/television; an investigation of the *Tokoloshe*'s role in crime in southern Africa; and an evaluation of medical and psychological views.

It has been necessary to establish a few concepts within a critical framework, the first of which is cultural identity itself. As I am arguing that cultural identity in South Africa has shifted, it has been necessary to establish what is meant by 'cultural identity' in the context of my work, what cultural identity may have been in the past in South Africa, and what it is perceived to be now. Similarly, as I am arguing that evidence of this evolution may be found in the products of popular culture in South Africa then it has also been necessary to delineate exactly what 'popular culture' means in the context of my work.

Chapter outline

Chapter 1 – Methodology

In my first chapter, I try to clarify the manner in which I have undertaken this work: by outlining the principal ideas and enquiries that are investigated in this dissertation, by locating this study alongside others, and by recognising the work's scope. The cross-disciplinary slant that typifies this work is explained, as is its particular socio-historic (post-Apartheid) context, (with particular regard to the impacts of globalisation, paradoxical temporality, and exceptionalism and transculturation on post-Apartheid critical thinking). In this chapter, I also review the literature engaged with in this study, including that which is subject-specific, historical references, contributions by anthropologists writing in the 20th century, and the issue of limited materials by indigenous writers. The process and details of my fieldwork experience are also included, as is a brief comment on the nature of the analysis that concludes this work.

Chapter 2 - Popular culture and cultural identity in South Africa

The function of this second chapter is to examine the notions of 'popular culture' and 'cultural identity' within South Africa's given context so as to determine a meaningful reference point for my analysis. This is done first by extracting understandings of popular culture from within a wider African and more focussed South African context, and then by exploring ideas of cultural identity in Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa, particularly under the presidencies of Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma.

Chapter 3 – The *Tokoloshe*

This chapter articulates a compound interpretation of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon, by examining the broad, though sometimes sparse, collection of available resources, including the contributions made by the two groups of informants I interviewed during my fieldwork in South Africa. The following is a precis of the current information about the *Tokoloshe* I have been able to unearth and to investigate. As the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon is largely a social one, experienced in the day-to-day lives of regular citizens, the function of this section is also to provide a brief overview of the social dimensions of the *Tokoloshe*, detailing particularly the intersections of the phenomenon with traditional beliefs, the traditional healing industry, crime and law. In particular, the following is presented: various appellations for the *Tokoloshe*; attempts at defining the *Tokoloshe* (including its appearance,

habitat, diet, its mischievous nature, its role as a children's playmate, and its manifestation as Pinky Pinky); its origins; the role it plays within the cosmology of traditional belief in South Africa (particularly as a witch's familiar and its role in witchcraft). I also consider the nature of violent and sexual encounters with a *Tokoloshe*, and several conceivable explanations of and for those encounters (including sleep paralysis, cultural invitation, and nocturnal sexual arousal and orgasm) and the role the *Tokoloshe* plays in sexual violence and murder in South Africa. This chapter also explores how one may be protected from the *Tokoloshe* (including the use of certain medicines and charms, rituals and particular behaviours, and the services of specialist practitioners); how *Tokoloshe*-inspired or *Tokoloshe* associated crime is policed and prosecuted in South Africa; and finally how the *Tokoloshe* is represented in popular culture and politics in South Africa.

Chapter 4 – The *Tokoloshe* and Zef culture

In this chapter, I explore two products of popular music (drawing on references not only to the lyrics but also to the accompanying videos) in which the *Tokoloshe* is a primary element or character. The work of *Die Antwoord*, Jack Parow and Karen Ferreira in particular are significant examples of just how Afrikaners are redefining themselves in 21st century South Africa through the products of popular culture, and their *Tokoloshe* songs, all of which have had significant success in the charts, reflect not only their independent cultural evolutions (as Afrikaners), but also the wider evolution of South African cultural identity implicit in the reception of their work by the broader South African (and global) communities. This chapter, then, explores the representation of the *Tokoloshe* in two pieces of Zef music (*Die Antwoord*'s 'Evil Boy' and Jack Parow's 'Hosh Tokolosh'), and ponders what those representations suggest about changes in cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, particularly within Afrikaans culture. In this chapter, I explore the relationship of popular culture with cultural identity, with specific reference to popular music in South Africa. I then present a concise discussion of shifts in Afrikaans cultural identity, before explaining Zef culture and the roles played by South African music artists *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow in popularizing Zef culture and in making it accessible in mainstream popular culture in South Africa and abroad. I give a detailed contextual analysis of the two songs, 'Evil Boy' and 'Hosh Tokolosh', considering in particular how the *Tokoloshe* is portrayed in those songs,

and what that portrayal suggests about changes in identity in South Africa in the 21st century.

Chapter 5 – The *Tokoloshe* and speculative fiction

In the last ten years, speculative fiction has emerged as a popular vehicle for South African authors to examine the issues of post-Apartheid South Africa in novel and original dystopian contexts. The *Tokoloshe* features in several of these works, and they have subsequently been identified for consideration in this study. In this chapter, I consider the representation of the *Tokoloshe* in three works of speculative fiction: Diane Awerbuck's short story, 'Leatherman'; Andrew Salomon's novel, *Tokoloshe Song*; and Charlie Human's novel, *Apocalypse Now Now*. Each of these works is a fertile, representational analysis of post-Apartheid society and identity in South Africa: the writers set their tales in a parallel South Africa where the supernatural and the natural co-exist. The exchanges between the two are used by Salomon, Awerbuck and Human to analyse important shared issues of contemporary South African society. The presence of the *Tokoloshe* in each of these works aids an examination of themes of identity, cultural appropriation and sexual morality in modern South African society. South Africa's problematic past is ever-present in these stories, and the authors raise important questions and concerns about the country's future. In the chapter, I present a comprehensive contextual analysis of these three works of speculative fiction, with reference to the manner in which the *Tokoloshe* is presented by these authors, and what those representations convey regarding identity in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Chapter 1 – Methodology

It has been essential to tack this venture to a fail-safe, logical and robust process. This chapter attempts to clarify that process, first by defining the argument this thesis investigates: by articulating the principal focus that frames the project, as well as by positioning this work alongside other established investigative pursuits; and by denoting the scope of the work. Next, this chapter considers the cross-disciplinary approach that characterises this study, as well as its post-Apartheid context with attention to the impact of globalisation, paradoxical temporality, and exceptionalism and transculturation on post-Apartheid critical thinking. Consideration is also given to the literature accessed for this study, with a focus on subject-specific dedicated works, earliest references, 20th century anthropological contributions, and the problem of representation of indigenous source materials. Finally, this chapter details my fieldwork experience and the contextual analysis that followed.

1.1 Defining the argument

The following attempts to articulate the initial ideas that spurred on this study, as well as the position the research occupies in broader academic endeavour. The scope of the work is also set out below.

1.1.1 Stating the problem

As a South African-born arts’ scholar, I became interested in exploring the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon as it is represented in literature in South Africa, and as it intersects within the structures of civic society. I am particularly fascinated by the work of some authors and artists in contemporary post-Apartheid South Africa, in which the *Tokoloshe* is applied as a device to question or explore identity of South Africans in the post-Apartheid milieu. Through engaging with the collection of source material, it is my intention to distil the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon into a singular understanding, and then to explore how select writers, song-writers and film-makers use the *Tokoloshe* as a medium to question post-Apartheid identity. In order to formulate an understanding of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon, it is necessary to consider its historic trajectory across southern Africa, to establish its several understandings within and across the peoples of southern Africa. In my literature review (see 1.4) and in my work on the features and origins of the *Tokoloshe* (3.3 & 3.4), I explore the evolution of the phenomenon over time, and highlight certain unique and common traits. Considering the prevalence of certain convergent beliefs across time in South

Africa, it is possible to employ the *Tokoloshe* as a device to evaluate shifts in identity in South Africa.

The principal focus for this study, then, is on selected white authors and artists, all working in post-Apartheid South Africa, who challenge or question white, (predominantly) English-speaking South Africans' sense of identity in their work by using representations of the *Tokoloshe* to do so. To investigate this further, it has been necessary to detail the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon through extensive reading, primarily of secondary sources on the subject (in the form of novels, plays, poetry and songs, and in professional journals of law, psychology and medicine). Another avenue of investigation has been fieldwork, primarily targeted interviews with specialists (practicing traditional healers) and representative, young South Africans (to establish their current understandings of the phenomenon). The concluding understandings of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon are essentially the product of a series of excavations and constructions, piecing together its origins and meanings from a broad range of source materials. To complement this work, it has been necessary to identify where the *Tokoloshe* is represented in products of popular culture; to define popular culture and cultural identity; and to initiate an analysis of several of those representations, using an erudite framework informed by cross-disciplinarity and post-Apartheid critical thinking.

1.1.2 Positioning the research

In locating this project within the wider library of academic research, it is necessary to consider the work as research in two distinct areas: as research on the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon; and as research on cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa. At the out-set it was my purpose to identify and establish a comprehensive understanding of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon. Presently, only one work exists that demonstrates a fairly broad understanding of the *Tokoloshe* (see further comment on Tucker's work below in 1.4.1). While there are several other resources that capture elements of the phenomenon, they do so in a fragmentary fashion. This study is the first extensive examination of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon, and includes current perspectives on the phenomenon from practising specialists presently living in South Africa, as well as young South Africans who have grown up in democratised South Africa. Furthermore, in the process of implementing this investigation, no previous works have been identified in which explicit representations of the *Tokoloshe* in products of popular culture have been analysed; the only works that come close to

doing so are Lenta's (2004) analysis of Gavin Hood's 1999 film, *A Reasonable Man*, and Scott's article on *Die Antwoord* and 'whiteness' (2012). In Moreilon & Muller's (2016) analysis of Human's *Apocalypse Now Now*, they dedicate part of their analysis to several of the magical creatures that populate the novel's character list, but they do not explore the role or value of the two *Tokoloshe* characters. As such, this study is the first detailed investigation of representations of the *Tokoloshe* in fiction, song or music video. A growing body of academic literature has been produced in the past decade exploring cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, and in this regard my work is an additional contribution to that genre, particularly to the collection of analytical works that look to products of popular culture for their inspiration.

1.1.3 Scope

In order to facilitate a meaningful analysis of cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, this project looks exclusively to products of popular culture produced in post-Apartheid South Africa that each features the *Tokoloshe* as a principal character, theme or symbol only. In my preliminary research, I identified a large collection of eligible popular culture products for this study, including poems, novels, plays, films, television shows, and songs (see Appendix A), representing a variety of genres, and the majority of which are in English. Given that more than one hundred products were identified, it was necessary to select particular texts for the focussed analysis.

The subsequently selected products take the form of songs, music videos, novels and a short story, and the first criterion for selecting relevant products was the significant presence of the *Tokoloshe* in those works. This study focuses on five products from just two genres only, namely 'Zef' culture and speculative fiction. The availability/accessibility of the works, their density (i.e. the loaded potential of the products themselves) and their capacity for new/original exploration were the primary factors in their selection. I had initially intended to include additionally an analysis of examples from trauma fiction (particularly Rachel Zadok's *Gem Squash Tokoloshe*), horror (the film *Blood Tokoloshe*) and didactic children's literature (Scholtz's play, *Tokoloshe*), but the exploration of cultural identity in Zef culture and speculative fiction proved to be a significantly rich and fascinating endeavour, and I committed myself to these areas of investigation only.

The post-Apartheid time-frame for this study limits the range of potential products to only those produced after the democratic elections of 1994. The five

products explored in this work were all produced in last decade: ‘Evil Boy’ in 2010; ‘Hosh Tokolosh’ in 2011; *Apocalypse Now Now* in 2013; *Tokoloshe Song* in 2014; and ‘Leatherman’ in 2015.

The works that are included in this investigation feature material by white South African artists working predominantly in English. The novels and short story are all in English, while *Die Antwoord*’s ‘Evil Boy’ is mostly in English with additional lyrics in Afrikaans and Xhosa, and Tyler’s ‘Hosh Tokolosh’ is mostly in Afrikaans with smatterings of English (see Appendix B). The analyses in this work do not consider musical or literary representations of the *Tokoloshe* in South African languages other than English or Afrikaans (albeit the Afrikaans material is essentially limited to Tyler’s ‘Hosh Tokolosh’).

Each of the products is also a specific example from South African popular culture. They are counter/subversive responses to South Africa’s socio-historic setting, employing the dynamic, hybrid and diverse rhetorics, imagery and interrogations of contemporary South African popular culture in their explorations of South African society. This is explored further in the body of this study, particularly in my exploration of popular culture in South Africa, of popular music and speculative fiction in South Africa, of the several artists included in this study, and in the analyses that follow.

1.2 A cross-disciplinary approach

In the early stages of my preliminary research it became apparent that only two monographs focussing on the *Tokoloshe* (one by Coetzee and the other by Tucker) have been published. A large number of works of fiction have been written about the *Tokoloshe*, but only Coetzee and Tucker’s works come close to exploring the phenomenon *per se*. In order to pursue this subject effectively it has been necessary, therefore, to consider a wider range of source materials from a variety of locations in which the *Tokoloshe* features as subject. These materials have covered a selection of topics that include witchcraft; violence and crime in South Africa; film and television; literature (fiction and non-fiction); law in South Africa; the traditional healing industry (with parallel connections to both South Africa’s economy and ecology); parapsychology and pseudoscience; linguistics; culture and cultural identity; and neuroscience. It has been essential to consider and explore these materials from across a wide network of academic disciplines, drawing on data that has been collected through the analysis of documents, pictures and other materials,

through interviews (structured and unstructured) and group discussions and fieldwork, to form a composite understanding of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon.

Essentially cross-disciplinarity refers broadly to any kind of mixing of disciplines, where critical exploration is largely dependent on analysis and methods from several fields of study (cf. Sumner & Tribe, 2008: 753); in real terms, a researcher may confront a practical problem or a theoretical issue where, in order to resolve the problem or issue satisfactorily, the researcher needs to draw on knowledge and data resources from diverse fields beyond his own (Grigg, 1999: 6-7).

In my research, the central issue is cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa. In order to access a meaningful exploration of that, I am utilising the medium of South African traditional belief, in this case the particular belief of the *Tokoloshe*. In order to consider effectively the role the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon plays in South African society, it is necessary to draw on source materials located in disciplines that include religious studies, literature and new media, law, anthropology and ecology (among others). Where cross-disciplinary work involves subject areas with a comparable basic premise it is probable the work will be less complicated than where there are vastly dissimilar core understandings. It is worth noting that diverse subject areas have distinctive methods for exploring key problems. They demonstrate unique vocabularies, systems and fundamental expectations, the result of which may be researcher insecurity resulting from reading outside one's home discipline (cf. Sumner & Tribe, 2008: 754).

My case for a cross-disciplinary approach is as follows. Post-Apartheid South African society is complex, and the need to understand the elements and forces within this society requires exploration from the viewpoint of multiple disciplines. There is also an urgent need to solve societal problems, such as exceedingly high physical and sexual violent crime rates in South Africa, in a world that is subject to many forces (historical, political and economical). The complexity presented in each of these problems requires an interdisciplinary approach that can span knowledge resources (cf. Trewella, 2009).

The *Tokoloshe* phenomenon, in particular, straddles increasingly complicated societal problems (such as murder, sexual violence and witchcraft) that cannot be solved within the boundaries of a single discipline (cf. Grigg, 1999: 7-8). Furthermore, cross-disciplinary research is relevant to my work in that it facilitates a way to explain a phenomenon that has been identified within one field (i.e. traditional

belief) but that cannot be explained within it. In fact, attempts to provide explanation are rooted in fields as diverse as oral literary traditions, neuroscience and parapsychology. Cross-disciplinary investigation also attempts to explain the origin of a phenomenon that traditionally would fall within the domain of one discipline (in this case, religious studies), but where the theorised origins of that phenomenon lead into the domain of another discipline (i.e. anthropology and psychology) (cf. Grigg, 1999: 7).

While this research is anchored to a particular milieu, the essence of what it considers connects with trans-global post-colonial issues of human development. It engages in a range of fields as diverse as traditional religious belief and neuroscience with the common purpose of unpacking a heavily freighted and frequently variable phenomenon. In this context, religious faith subsequently provides avenues for academic enlightenment alongside traditional academic disciplines, facilitating an attempt to understand a significant and unfolding social event, i.e. that of cultural identity formation within the post-Apartheid context. As the complexities of post-Apartheid society and identity development within that society in South Africa cannot simply be explained away singularly, a broad and transdisciplinary investigation promotes an engagement with several diverse tools (methods, resources) that collectively help shape a detailed and composite understanding of the issues (cf. McGregor, 2004). The *Tokoloshe* is a complicated signifier in South Africa, forged through and alongside centuries of social and cultural evolution, and in order to get to grips with that signifier it is necessary to view it from multiple perspectives.

1.3 Post-Apartheid critical thinking

A key element in this work is its post-Apartheid context. To fully appreciate the value of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon, in its historical contexts as well as in its contemporary manifestations in popular culture, it is necessary to demarcate some parameters for critical thinking. To do so, it is important to consider: the limitations and bias of critical thinking in post-Apartheid South Africa; the impact of globalisation on post-Apartheid South Africa; double (or paradoxical) temporality in post-Apartheid South Africa; and South African perceptions of exceptionality.

1.3.1 Redefining critical thinking

Vale & Jacklin (2009: 23; cf. Nuttall, 2012; Nuttall, 2006: 267-274; Bystrom & Nuttall, 2013: 327) argue that in order to examine the fundamental components of post-Apartheid society in South Africa it is necessary to explore new and critical

ways of thinking, as critical thinking and theory have re-aligned significantly in post-Apartheid South Africa. Vale and Jacklin suggest that the critical social thinking that was at the core of debate in the latter three decades of the twentieth century in South Africa ended sharply with the end of Apartheid, fundamentally as a result of historic political focal points shifting to new political concerns (Vale & Jacklin, 2009: 1; cf. Nuttall, 2006: 264-267).

Vale and Jacklin propose that the first decade or so of post-Apartheid South Africa is characterised by a period of diminished interrogative endeavour and a decline in the prevalence and popularity of academic critique (Vale & Jacklin, 2009: 2). In their critical reflections on post-Apartheid South Africa, they identify the need to use all the strategies of critical thinking (critical, conceptual and methodological) to a merciless analysis of the present dispensation. They also advocate drawing on cross-disciplinary approaches to interrogate the nature of the ‘political, cultural and economic processes associated with globalisation, the construction of public life and civil society, the relation of technology to social relations and the nature of social practice’ (Vale & Jacklin, 2009: 13; cf. Nuttall, 2006: 268-269). Vale & Jacklin identify the need to place the strands of the ‘post-colonial’ within arguments on South African historiography, and to examine the intricate connections between the issues of race and class in South Africa (Vale & Jacklin, 2009: 23; cf. Nuttall, 2006: 271-272).

1.3.2 Globalisation

It is necessary also to consider the impact of globalisation on critical thinking in post-Apartheid South Africa, where globalisation is seen by many (according to Zegeye, Dedering, Harris and Lauderdale) as little more than an extension of colonialism. Dedering suggests that globalisation is perceived by intellectuals in southern Africa as ‘nothing more but another stage in the history of the imperialist conquest of the continent’ after the earlier periods of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism (Dedering, 2005: 11). Economic expansion in Africa since the 1980s has been characterised by imposed privatisation, deregulation and denationalisation of economies of countries, i.e. imperialism without explicit colonies, under the guise or camouflage of ‘neoliberal ideology at a time of collapsing state socialisms and demise of revolutionary nationalist regimes’ (Harris & Lauderdale, 2005: 158, 161-2).

Zegeye (2005) identifies globalisation as a significant obstruction in post-Apartheid South Africa against progress towards equality. Zegeye argues that South Africa does not have the economic and policy-making capacity to facilitate the

changes needed in society and in politics at a local level while simultaneously enacting the economic programmes required by globalisation to connect effectively with global economy (Zegeye, 2005: 1). Zegeye suggests further that in post-Apartheid South Africa, the application by the government of the principle of promoting greater equality, where the lines between ‘gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and class’ have been ignored and have become flexible, is prevented by the characteristics and demands of globalisation (Zegeye, 2005: 3).

The impact of globalisation on post-Apartheid South Africa is made evident in the examination of three of the works analysed in this study, namely ‘Evil Boy’, ‘Hosh Tokolosh’ and Human’s novel, *Apocalypse Now Now*.

1.3.3 Double/paradoxical temporality

The third element that requires consideration in post-Apartheid critical thinking is the concept of double or paradoxical temporality. Hook (2013) explores how post-Apartheid South Africa is characterised by the ‘symptomatic’ social contradictions of an unequal society; where the commonplace experience is typified by ‘historical dissonance’, i.e. by an unceasing ‘juxtaposition of forward- and backward-looking temporalities’ - essentially an awareness of the past while trying to move forward into the future (Hook, 2013: 4-5). Nuttall explains this as ‘entanglement’ (cf. Bystrom & Nuttall, 2013: 325; Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 80-81).¹ Critical thinking in post-Apartheid South Africa, then, is repeatedly pulled in different directions between the ‘hope of transcending the apartheid past’ and the ‘prospect of what a genuinely post-apartheid society may be’ (Hook, 2013: 6). This is one of the principal issues explored in this study.

1.3.4 Exceptionalism and transculturation

The fourth consideration relating to critical thinking in post-Apartheid South Africa is the tendency towards exceptionalism. Dederling (2005) proposes that, in post-Apartheid South Africa, intellectualism has been handicapped by the preceding

¹ Nuttall’s work explores ways of understanding the multiple conscious and unconscious entanglements between South Africans in post-Apartheid South Africa (Nuttall, 2006: 268-269; O’Brien, 2013: 58). Nuttall defines entanglement (quoted in Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 80; O’Brien, 2013: 58) as: “a condition of being twisted together, or entwined, involved with; it speaks of an intimacy gained, even if it was resisted, or ignored or uninvited. It is a term which may gesture towards a relationship or set of social relationships that is complicated, ensnaring, in a tangle, but which also implies a human foldedness.” Nuttall identifies six different types of entanglement: historical entanglement; the time of entanglement; ideas of the seam, and of complicity; entanglement of people and things; implications of the DNA signature; and racial entanglement (Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 81).

period of institutionalised racism and oppression under Apartheid, and academics, theoreticians and other intellectuals subsequently struggle to relate to the rest of southern Africa and the continent as a whole. This sense of exceptionalism is characterised by perceptions of political, cultural and economic independence from the rest of Africa (Dedering, 2005: 13; cf. Nuttall, 2012: 23). Contrastingly, Attwell (cited in Steenkamp, 2011: 33-34) actively urges for a ‘South African exceptionalism’ in light of the country’s ‘textured postcoloniality’, i.e. the novel blend in South Africa of indigenous, migrant and settler communities attempting to navigate a democratised world through ‘transculturation’ (a system of multiple processes including discourses informed by complex relationships, destruction of existing cultural artefacts and renegotiated cultural reconstruction, and two-way dialogue).

In my analysis, I attempt to read through the contributions of resources, including those of the producers of the five primary texts analysed in this work, where they are influenced by this prism of ‘exceptionalism’, and to highlight instances that suggest transculturation is occurring.

1.4 Literature review

The following is a survey of the literature examined in this project for the purposes of seeking clarity on the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon. My explorations on cultural identity, popular culture, Zef culture and speculative fiction each required extensive reading in order to establish and formulate meaningful and detailed analyses. An examination of the resources for these has been integrated into the introductory and explanatory sections of the relevant chapters that follow. My approach to researching the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon has been to conduct an extensive literature review, seeking out any and all references to the *Tokoloshe* in works published by academics, social commentators, journalists, authors, bloggers, and travel writers.

1.4.1 Monographs

To date only two published works have focussed exclusively on the *Tokoloshe*: Coetzee’s *Tokkelossie: ’n bydrae tot die Afrikaanse Volkskunde en Taalkunde [Tokoloshe: a contribution to Afrikaans folklore and literature]* (1941) and Tucker’s *Terror of the Tokoloshe* (2013).

Coetzee’s work is enlightening and fascinating, and captures and details the understanding of the *Tokoloshe* by Afrikaners across South Africa, identifying clearly

where, geographically, familiarity with the phenomenon sits, and providing a comprehensive array of descriptions, names and synonyms of and for the *Tokoloshe*. However, Coetzee's work is specifically limited to the perspective of Afrikaners only (his investigation omits the regions of kwaZulu-Natal, Lesotho and Swaziland for this reason), is impacted on by his own Afrikaner Christian nationalist tendencies, and itself was written under a particular cultural/political commission by the then Minister of Education; Coetzee's understanding of the traditional/indigenous view of the *Tokoloshe* is chiefly limited to one primary source only: Laubscher's distinctly Freudian *Sex, Custom and Psychopathology: A Study of South African Pagan Natives* (1937); Laubscher dedicates a portion of a chapter to the *Tokoloshe* in his study and while he conveys a fair deal of information about the *Tokoloshe*, his sources are not clear, and he gives no references to any anthropological works. Furthermore, Coetzee's work is significantly out-of-date, reflecting the sentiments and understandings of a pre- and imminent Apartheid South Africa.

Tucker's work is broad in scope, and considers the *Tokoloshe* in relation to witchcraft, crime, traditional healing, and various encounters, predominantly in a contemporary context. He also contextualises the *Tokoloshe* in relation to broader, almost trans-global understandings of the supernatural. The primary shortfall of this work, however, is its simplistic presentation of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon as an 'African curiosity'; the author's tone is frequently conceited or glib, and he fails to acknowledge the diversity of the region in which his subject resides. Tucker's representation of witchcraft reflects a worldview that is primarily Eurocentric, and does not effectively or adequately demonstrate any comprehension of the *Tokoloshe*'s role within southern African traditional belief systems. The work lacks a meaningful exploration or consideration of the *Tokoloshe*'s origins, and of the role the *Tokoloshe* occupies in the traditional healing industry. While Tucker's work captures the current perceptions of the *Tokoloshe* in popular media, with extensive and numerous online references, he does not present the understandings of new informants (i.e. his work is simply a re-telling of previous publications; he has not engaged with any informants directly); nor does he present any indigenous voice in his work. Furthermore, he cites only five published works that contribute information about the *Tokoloshe*, only one of which (by Niehaus, Mohlala & Shokane, 2001) is the product of academic rigour and investigation. Tucker's work is sensational (on the book's back cover it states: 'it has long been [Tucker's] ambition to produce the weirdest book ever written and,

with this present volume, feels that he may well have achieved this feat!'), but his contribution to the body of knowledge and understanding of the *Tokoloshe* is limited.

1.4.2 Earliest references

Published accounts of the *Tokoloshe* first appeared at the start of the 19th century from the Eastern Frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. These first recorded entries were by amateur anthropologists, travel writers and clergymen. An early reference to the *Tokoloshe* in print (certainly the first I have been able to identify) was penned by Dutch missionary, Johannes Theodorus van der Kemp. Van der Kemp arrived in South Africa in 1799, and ministered variously to the Xhosa and then Khokhoi peoples of Kaffraria (in present day Eastern Cape), establishing a mission station at Bethelsdorp (Enklaar, 1998: 357). Van der Kemp wrote an article entitled 'Religion, Customs, Population, Language, History and Natural Productions of the Country' for the London Missionary Society, and in his 'Specimen of the Caffra Language, Section III, Celestial bodies and phenomena', he lists: '*Thokoloze* or *umsjoulougou* - the devil' (Van der Kemp, 1804: 450), and also gives *Thokolose* (Devil) as an example of a Xhosa word with more than three syllables (Van der Kemp, 1804: 446).² Similarly, he published a selection of Xhosa vocabulary in a Dutch publication, again listing '*Thokoloze* of *umsjoulougou* – de Duivel' (Van der Kemp, 1805: 92). Reverend John Campbell, following on from a visit to Bethelsdorp in 1813 where he met with van der Kemp's widow, reproduced several words from van der Kemp's vocabulary list, including '*Thokoloze* – the devil' in his own list of 'Caffre words' in *Travels in South Africa, undertaken at the request of the Missionary society* (Campbell, 1815: 561).

The first published description (of sorts) of the *Tokoloshe* appeared in the travel writing of Hinrich Lichtenstein in 1811 (in German, and in an English translation in 1812).³ Lichtenstein was a German physician, explorer, botanist and zoologist who had travelled to the Cape Colony in 1804 as physician and tutor to the son of the Commissary General, Jacob Abraham de Mist (Martin, 2015: 9, 14). He spent four years travelling southern Africa, during which time he also met van der

² *Umsjoulougou* appears to refer to the isiXhosa word *imishologu*, meaning disembodied ghosts or spirits of the ancestors (cf. Hirst, 2005: 3).

³ Plumtre's translation of Lichtenstein's work was coolly received, having been considered to be completed in haste, 'frequently incorrect and occasionally erroneous' ('Travels in Southern Africa', 1813: 385; cf. Martin, 2015).

Kemp (who is not portrayed favourably in Lichtenstein's writing; cf. 'Travels in Southern Africa', 1813: 383-384). On his return to Europe, Lichtenstein published his observations and notes, and in his work he writes briefly of the *Tokoloshe* (Lichtenstein, 1812: 255; cf. 1811: 414):

[The Xhosa's] diseases are all ascribed to three causes, either to being enchanted by an enemy, to the anger of certain beings, whose abode appears to be in the rivers, or to the power of evil spirits. The cures consist in the first place of medicines, which have probably a good effect, but recourse is also had to some means of appeasing the wrath of the being in the river, by throwing him in a four-footed beast-- dog, a hare, or something of the kind. If the question be of an evil spirit, and of these they have a great variety, called by the general appellation of Thokilohse and Umsjuluhgu, he must be driven away. This task must be performed by a magician, and the people, who are easily deceived, are taught to see the evil spirit under the form of some animal, a serpent perhaps, or a wasp, or a spider, and all that remains is to catch him, and put him to death.

The second published description of the *Tokoloshe* was written by Wesleyan missionary, Stephen Kay, who travelled across South Africa's Eastern Cape from 1825 to 1830. In *Travels and Researches in Caffraria: describing the character, customs and moral conditions of the tribes inhabiting that portion of Southern Africa* (1833: 339), Kay, having visited the Mission station at Morley (now Old Morley, called *Wilo* in isiXhosa) near Mtata, writes:

Tikaloshi also is much more frequently and familiarly talked about than amongst the more southern tribes. This is an appellation that seems to be given to some invisible and indescribable being, whom they sometimes personify as a little ugly, malignant fellow, capable of doing them much harm, of inflicting pain, and of effecting their ruin. They likewise imagine that he is able to disturb their happiness by a kind of amorous intercourse with their women; by inducing the wife to play the harlot, and the husband to go astray. The men, I was told, sometimes pretend to wage war with him, and, after storming the hut in which he is supposed to be carrying on his mal-practices, loudly boast of victory. How affectingly do such indisputable evidences of gross darkness call for the enlightening influences of the Gospel!

The next entry comes from William Shaw, a Methodist chaplain and missionary working primarily in the Eastern Cape from 1820 until 1855. On his return to England, Shaw published *The Story of My Mission in South-Eastern Africa*, in which he writes (1860: 445):

The people universally believe that, aided by some mysterious and evil influence, the nature of which no one can define or explain, bad persons may enter into league with wolves, baboons, jackals, and particularly with an imaginary amphibious creature, mostly abiding in the deep portions of the

rivers, and called by the Border Kaffirs *utikoloshe*. By the mysterious intercourse said to be maintained with these and other detested or imaginary creatures, the evil-minded wizards and witches are supposed to obtain their supernatural powers for doing harm to those whom they design to injure in person or property.

These early references capture the European/Christian interpretations/translations of their authors: in order to articulate the curiosity that they had recently discovered, the writers fall to the vocabularies and worldview with which they are familiar; so for them the *Tokoloshe* is either ‘the devil’, an inexplicable source of evil or inarguable evidence that Christian enlightenment is required to rescue the easily-deceived natives from such ‘gross darkness’. While these portraits are distinctly filtered through the perspectives of Europe, they do identify some of the traditional (and still current) characteristics of the *Tokoloshe*, namely: its invisibility, malignance, sexual prowess and association with witchcraft.⁴

1.4.3 20th century research

It is the works of the 20th century anthropologists that have been most useful in my project, namely those of Junod, Wilson (née Hunter) and Krige writing in the first half of the century, and Hammond-Tooke and Niehaus in the latter part of the century. In their efforts to chronicle the independent worlds, beliefs and traditions of the indigenous peoples of southern Africa, albeit across the shifting political landscapes of the pre-, Apartheid and post-Apartheid eras, these researchers locate a selection of puzzle pieces that, once collectively assembled and constructed, demonstrate a clearer image of what exactly the *Tokoloshe* is. Hammond-Tooke’s work has been particularly helpful; the anthropologist was prolific, producing detailed considerations of witchcraft, traditional belief and more, and his contribution to the body of knowledge on the *Tokoloshe*, spanning 40 years, is presently unparalleled, particularly his theory on the origins of the *Tokoloshe*. It is also worth highlighting the contributions made by Niehaus in his work, particularly with regard to understanding the impact of witchcraft (and traditional belief) on everyday life in contemporary South Africa. Several researchers have also examined and argued their understandings of what the *Tokoloshe* represents (within the given rural and/or urban settings of their work). The most valuable of these include: Bahre, 2002; Hammond-

⁴ For a detailed commentary on colonial interpretations of indigenous worldviews, see Rachael Gilmour’s *Grammars of Colonialism: Representing Languages in Colonial South Africa* (2006, Palgrave MacMillan).

Tooke, 1974; Hirst, 1990; Laubscher, 1937 & 1975; Lee, 1958; Niehaus, 2001 & 2002; and Wilson, 1951. In order to explore the impact of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon on everyday life, it has been necessary to consider additional research and other literature representing alternative subject areas. The most significant of these have included: the African Pentecostal Churches in South Africa (Anderson, 1992 & 1993); rape in South Africa (Badstuebner, 2008); traditional medicines (Cocks & Moller, 2002; Dold & Cocks 2002; Mander, 1998; Mander et al, 2008; Ndhlala et al, 2011); traditional healing (Jolles & Jolles, 2000); the San peoples (Deacon & Dowson, 1996; Guenther, 1999; Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004; Prins & Lewis, 1992); South African law (Lenta, 2004; Ludsin, 2003; Rautenbach & Mathee, 2010); and witchcraft (Ashforth, 2000 & 2001; Petrus, 2007, 2011 & 2012). In these instances, while the *Tokoloshe* is not the primary focus of these works, the authors elucidate the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon as it relates to their subject area, and though the process has been piecemeal (and the relevant information within each reference sometimes scant), it has produced a comprehensive portrait of the phenomenon.

1.5 Source material limitations

A challenge in this work has been securing a selection of source materials that represents effectively South Africa's broader cultural demographic. The greater portion of literature (academic and otherwise) on the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon is primarily by European writers, by writers of European descent, or by writers educated in Europe. It has been problematic sourcing critical and anthropological materials by Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho or other South African writers. The following is a brief review of entries on the *Tokoloshe* written in Zulu and Xhosa.

The first two notable contributions (notable in that they are both indigenous and also two of the earliest) appeared in *Kafir essays and other pieces* (1861) and *Nursery Tales, Traditions and Histories of the Zulus* (1868). The former is taken from a collection of essays by boys at St Matthew's mission school at Keiskammahoek, collated as samples of the Xhosa language and of indigenous thinking alongside their translations into English by Reverend W. Greenstock, the Church of England missionary who helped found the station in the mid 1850s. In the concluding section of the book, titled 'Kafir stories, but which are not the truth' is included an entry on the *Tokoloshe*. In the book (1861: 73-75) it states:

Tikoloshe is a short man, not higher than a person's knee, (he is) a broad thing, he has strength; the head is a great thing which cannot be described, with stiff

hair bristling like that of the wild boar, and the body is inclined to be hairy. He has a beautiful house under the reach of the river with many apartments. It seems he likes to annoy people; if he calls a man, that man jumps up and runs and goes to throw himself into the river, and never appears again; though he calls him when asleep he will rise. But he may be saved if his friends see him running and consider that the man is called by *Tikoloshe* and hasten and throw stones first into the water; he may throw them himself if he remembers, but he generally gets up and throws himself through fright into the water. At other times Hili sports, when people are away from their houses, and takes their goods such as baskets, and leaves them at the sides of the river or near the bush, or near the kraal. And when people are crossing a river if Hili is sitting on a stone, he calls one by name, and if that man should inadvertently look round, he attracts him to himself and disappears with him in the water. The witch-doctors get wisdom from the *Tikoloshe*, and when they begin to be inspired they go into the river and see things under the water, and learn there all wisdom.

Unfortunately, it is unclear whether the entry is by one of the students or by one of the missionary community members, as the preface suggests the shorter pieces at the end of the book were ‘contributed’ by Reverend Woodrooffe, Mrs Lange and Reverend Waters. Regardless, it is necessary to note that the entry is either the work of a child at the mission school, or of a member of the church community: the Christianised context is unavoidable. *Nursery Tales, Traditions and Histories of the Zulus* is similar in that it also attempts to convey Zulu ideas by publishing works in Zulu alongside an English translation and commentary, in this case by the Reverend Canon Henry Callaway, an English medical missionary who travelled southern Africa from 1855 to 1886, and was the first bishop for Kaffraria. Callaway includes, under the heading ‘Fabulous animals’, four pages’ worth of entries on the *Tokoloshe*, primarily by two Zulu informants, and this work is acknowledged, and quoted in part, in chapter 4 of this study. Callaway was motivated to gain an accurate knowledge of Zulu words and idioms, and to do so employed a methodology that helped capture the authenticity of his informants’ voice. Callaway’s work, and its inclusion of indigenous voice, has added significantly to the body of knowledge relating to the *Tokoloshe*.

John Henderson Soga’s *The Ama-Xosa: Life and Customs*, published in 1932, has also provided valuable insight into the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon (much of which has been acknowledged in chapter 3). Soga’s voice (as a Xhosa contributor) is significant in that he makes a fairly sizeable contribution to the body of learning about traditional belief and the *Tokoloshe* (he dedicates seven pages of his book to the *Tokoloshe* alone), but his observation is considered through a distinct European and

Christian filter. As a child, the Eastern Cape born Soga was schooled in Glasgow for seven years, and he returned to Scotland for a further seven years as a young adult to complete his studies at the University of Edinburgh and the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall (Lowe, 1995).

Of some additional value to this discussion on indigenous voice is the work on traditional healers, *The Izangoma Diviners*, produced by Dr M. Kohler and ‘government ethnologist’, translator and editor, Nicolaas Jacobus van Warmelo, in 1941. The work, which features six entries relating to the *Tokoloshe*, comprises a series of colloquial, verbatim texts that were collected by Kohler during his time as mission doctor in rural kwaZulu-Natal, having been transcribed from informants by a Zulu amanuensis and then translated by Kohler and van Warmelo. The contributions of this work to my study are acknowledged primarily in chapter 3.

I would like to conclude this discussion by referring briefly to the work of Zulu healer and author, Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa. In *Indaba, My Children* (1998: 604-607), Mutwa commits four pages of his epic collection of tales and legends to setting to rights the origins and nature of the *Tokoloshe*, explaining that belief in this phenomenon is rooted not in ‘superstition’ but in ‘scientific fact’. While it is appropriate to consider Mutwa’s contribution alongside those of other indigenous writers, it has also been necessary to consider the wider reception of his work. Derricourt (2011: 41-45) debunks Mutwa’s contribution to literature on traditional belief in southern Africa, criticising its lack of ‘redeeming historical value’ and ‘authentic Bantu tradition’. Derricourt hails Mutwa’s work as fraudulent. While Mutwa’s contribution adds in part to the wider body of literature exploring the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon, his absolutism with regards his expertise, and the lack of verification in his work, is problematic.

Is there a deficiency in source materials written in Xhosa, Zulu or Sotho? Is the material lost or concealed? Has knowledge not been shared for cultural reasons or for reasons of secrecy? A great number of the earliest materials published in the indigenous languages (and certainly in isiXhosa) in the late 19th and early 20th century was done so by the missionaries at Lovedale (near Alice in the Eastern Cape) through what became later known as the Lovedale Press. Could the scant literature on *Tokoloshe* folklore, traditional belief and witchcraft be attributed to the very particular Christian bent of the publishers? These questions were explored further in my fieldwork, during which time I was able to secure a contemporary understanding of

the *Tokoloshe* from practitioners of traditional healing and several young adult informants. This is discussed further below.

1.6 Fieldwork

In 2014, I visited South Africa and was able to complete several weeks of active fieldwork there, allowing me to attend to several questions raised during my preliminary research and to procure some primary source materials. These questions were subsequently explored through formal and informal interviews, and detailed and systematic exploration and investigation through further reading at the institutions acknowledged below. My fieldwork was framed by a flexible and critical approach, allowing me to evaluate the relevance of my questions throughout the fieldwork process. In the interview process, I moderated the contributions from the diverse and dynamic range of informants by drawing on flexibility in the interview and questioning process. I was also guided in my fieldwork by the principles of ethical research, particularly with regard to confidentiality, voluntary participation and cultural sensitivity. While my English and conversational Afrikaans language skills were adequate for my interviews with the young student informers, I did require an interpreter and translator for my meeting with the traditional healers; this was not problematic. I did not encounter any reluctance from informants to participate (formally or informally), despite any perceived sensitivity to the subject matter, particularly considering its intersection with ideas of traditional belief and witchcraft. Furthermore, I had no difficulties accessing the libraries at any of the universities or newspapers. This was facilitated by several known associates working at those institutions, and by a formal, written introduction from my lead supervisor, Dr Oyètadé.

During my initial period of research in the UK, I identified several potential sources of information, but not all of these were available to me in the UK. I was able to locate several of these relevant texts in South Africa during my visits to the university libraries of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, and the University of Fort Hare in East London and Alice. The archive libraries of the Daily Dispatch newspaper in East London and the Herald newspaper in Port Elizabeth proved to be positive sources of information, particularly as they facilitated digital access to the broader archives of the Times Media Group newspapers in South Africa. In my visits to these archives I was able to identify several articles of value. In my preliminary research I identified a detailed list of several products of popular culture

(poems, novels, plays, films, television shows, songs) that feature the *Tokoloshe* as a primary character, theme or symbol (see Appendix A). The majority of these products are accessible or available online; however, some products are published or available in South Africa only, and I was able to locate and obtain several such products during my time there.

I also contacted retired academic, Prof. Peter Mtuze (formerly Professor of African Languages at Rhodes University and University of Fort Hare). I had planned to meet with Prof. Mtuze personally, but during our brief email correspondence it became evident that a personal meeting would not be necessary. In my correspondence with him I asked about the influence of the Christian missionary publishers in the 19th and early 20th century on content published at that time relating to traditional beliefs, and he concurred with Jeff Opland's suggestion that the dearth of materials by Xhosa, Zulu or other indigenous writers on the topic of the *Tokoloshe* can possibly be ascribed to the editorial sensitivities of the missionary presses (Mtuze, P., personal communication, 16 July 2014; Opland, J., personal communication, 26 November 2013). In subsequent readings, I discovered works that re-iterated this sentiment (cf. Peires, 1979: 155-175; White, 1992: 73).

I made contact with Mr Trevor Moses, film archivist with the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NFVSA) in Pretoria. The archives house two products (films) that are relevant, though not essential, to my work and copies of which I have not yet been able to locate elsewhere: an incomplete copy of *Tokoloshe* (1965) and a full copy of *A Reasonable Man* (1999). These films are only available at the archives in Pretoria.

One of the main objectives of my fieldwork was to review what the current beliefs are among young South Africans concerning the topic of the *Tokoloshe*. My preference was to meet with a group of young adults (raised and schooled in post-Apartheid South Africa) who represent the broad cultural and racial demographic of 21st century South Africans. I was able to spend several days interviewing students at a tertiary institution. I met with 24 students. 23 of them were born between 1989 and 1995 during the last days of Apartheid, and one was born in 1986. The cultural demographic of the group (by their own definition) was: one English/White; two English/Afrikaans/White; one Afrikaans/White; thirteen Xhosa; one English/British; one Zulu/Xhosa; one Indian/South African; three Afrikaans/Coloured; and one

English/Afrikaans/Coloured.⁵ Nine of the informants were born in Port Elizabeth (Eastern Cape); four were born in or near Mtata (Eastern Cape, formerly in the Transkei); three were born in Mdantsane (Eastern Cape); one was born in King Williams Town (Eastern Cape); one was born in Somerset East (Eastern Cape); one was born in Peddie (Eastern Cape, formerly in the Ciskei); one was born in Uitenhage (Eastern Cape); one was born in Humansdorp (Eastern Cape); one was born in Pretoria (Gauteng); one was born in Bethlehem (Free State); and one informant was born in Portsmouth (UK). Each informant was interviewed alone, and questions explored, amongst others: the informants' understandings of the nature of the *Tokoloshe*; descriptions of the *Tokoloshe*; points of origin of their knowledge on the *Tokoloshe*; narrative reflections on the *Tokoloshe*; informants' encounters or experiences of the *Tokoloshe*; their belief in the *Tokoloshe*; information on Pinky Pinky; and finally informants' reflections on growing up in post-Apartheid South Africa. Their responses have also been integrated into my thesis, particularly in chapter 3.

While in South Africa, I made contact with Mr Lulama Mpahla, director of the Ithongo Institute of Traditional Healers. I met with him initially to explain my work, and he was then able to convene a meeting for me in East London with a group of nine other Xhosa traditional healers.⁶ This meeting provided me with a very positive opportunity to explore and note the contemporary view of the *Tokoloshe* from the perspective of 21st century practitioners of traditional healing. The meeting ran for just over two hours and covered a focussed set of questions on the *Tokoloshe*. Several of the interviewees responded in isiXhosa and Lulama acted as translator. The

⁵ Ethnic and racial identification is a lingering by-product of the Apartheid era and is rooted in the Population Registration Act of 1950 in which all South African citizens were subsequently classified as white, coloured (including Indian, Chinese or Malay) or African/native/black (cf. Giliomee & Schlemmer, 1989: 64, 82-86; also see 2.3.1.).

⁶ The term 'traditional healer' in South Africa is an 'umbrella term for all practitioners of healing according to traditional African methods' (Carstens, 2003: 323), and is defined as 'an educated or lay person who claims an ability or a healing power to cure ailments, or a particular skill to treat specific types of complaints or afflictions and who might have gained a reputation in his own community or elsewhere' (Rautenbach, 2007: 518; cf. Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 263-264, 266-275; Wood, 2008: 339-340; Junod, 1927b: 505). There are presently more than 200 000 traditional healers operating in South Africa (Carstens, 2003: 323; cf. Street & Rautenbach, 2016). Healers may specialise and operate as diviners, herbalists, midwives or surgeons, and the majority of them are female (Street & Rautenbach, 2016; cf. Rautenbach, 2007: 519; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 266, 274; Krige, 1936: 298-300; Soga, 1931: 155, 158-159; Lee, 1969: 134-139; Hammond-Tooke, 1974c: 348-350, 356-357; Mutwa, 2003: xxii-xxiii). Historically, culturally and linguistically, a number of names have been used to describe or classify traditional healers, including the English misnomer 'witchdoctor' (Rautenbach, 2007: 525; cf. Carstens, 2003: 323; Truter, 2007: 57).

interview was recorded. Prior to my commencing, under the leadership of the senior member of the group a consultation fee was first negotiated as a sign of respect and appeasement to the ancestors of the group's members. Once this was concluded, the traditional healers formally acknowledged my interest in their Xhosa culture and my questioning was able to continue. The informants participated as a group. My questions focussed in particular on: their understanding of what *Tokoloshe* is; the *Tokoloshe* and its association with evil and witchcraft; where *Tokoloshe* comes from; their own encounters with a *Tokoloshe*; frequency of consultations regarding *Tokoloshe*-related problems; the prevalence of *Tokoloshe* within their society; the fictionalisation of the *Tokoloshe* and traditional belief in the media; and finally Pinky Pinky. Their responses have also been integrated into my work, again particularly in chapter 3.

Following my interviews with the young student informants, I was able to observe that the majority of informants shared a common view of the nature of the *Tokoloshe*, namely that it is evil. Only one informant (Z) showed an understanding of the *Tokoloshe* that reflects its unique ambiguity and hints at its original role, i.e. an independent harmless playful, but naughty, creature that has subsequently been harnessed for evil purposes (unlike other witches' familiars that are not independent and are used exclusively for evil ends).⁷ My second observation relates to their descriptions of the *Tokoloshe*. More than a third had no idea what a *Tokoloshe* looks like, and those who did have an idea only had one common understanding – that the *Tokoloshe* is short. Beyond that, there was no common notion of what a *Tokoloshe* might look like. Eleven of the informants referred to *Tokoloshe* characters they had seen in movies on television, and it would be interesting to explore further the impact of those representations on their personal understandings of what a *Tokoloshe* looks like. I was also struck by the observation that several of the informants, who had had no encounter with a *Tokoloshe* and who had no clear notion of what it might look like, acknowledged an unquestioning belief in its existence and, by association, in the traditional beliefs of their parents or grandparents. In the interviews, several informants disclosed they had first heard of the *Tokoloshe* from their grandparents. In the irregular economics of growing up in South Africa, a great portion of the population has been raised by grandparents or extended family members either as

⁷ For the purposes of convention and anonymity, only the first letter(s) of informants' names are included in this work.

parents have worked as migrant labourers in the cities (fathers in industry as unskilled labour, mothers as domestic workers in the suburbs) or due to the decimation of a significant portion of the population by HIV/AIDS. The connection, then, of the younger generations to the traditional beliefs of older generations seems more likely in light of such an upbringing. Several informants made the distinction between rural and urban upbringings, associating traditional beliefs, witchcraft and knowledge of the *Tokoloshe* with a life beyond the city. Interestingly, this view does not necessarily reflect the number of news stories that chronicle the impact of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon within urbanised areas, and that in itself may suggest a generational divide between older and younger (post-Apartheid) urbanised South Africans. Perhaps the younger (culturally integrated and better educated) generation are not the intended audience of those stories?

One of the focal points in my work is cultural identity and its evolution in post-Apartheid South Africa. I have suggested that it may be possible to monitor the development of cultural identity by looking at representations of a shared cultural icon like the *Tokoloshe* in different popular culture media. The responses from the informants to these questions would suggest that there is no explicit shared cross-cultural understanding of the *Tokoloshe* amongst young, urbanised 21st-century post-Apartheid adults in South Africa. In fact, very few of the young informants demonstrated any clear understanding of the phenomenon, and the overwhelming impression I have from them is that the *Tokoloshe* exists exclusively at the periphery of their lives and world views – it is something they acknowledge but in its essence it lacks any real substance. This contrasts with the wealth of material I have discovered in the popular press and in the extensive range of popular culture products in which the *Tokoloshe* is featured regularly as a character, theme or symbol.

Much, if not all, of the healers' understanding of what *Tokoloshe* is, and what *Tokoloshe* looks like, mirrors what I have read previously in my research. Their understanding is consistent with prior records. I was also impressed by their clarity. There was no vagueness to their responses. They answered with authority and conviction. The *Tokoloshe* encounters they narrated were in line with the several others I have read over the past few years: attacks by one or two *Tokoloshes*; feelings of suffocation or of being squeezed; inexplicable appearances in sealed environments; inexplicable beatings. It was also interesting to note (from at least member of the group) the idea that *Tokoloshe* is not always necessarily evil, which is in line with

some sources I have read concerning the moral ambiguity of the *Tokoloshe*. What struck me most was the groups' understanding of the universality of *Tokoloshes* as evil spirits. While the rhetoric and nomenclature around the *Tokoloshe* may be distinctly southern African, the essence of what *Tokoloshe* is or represents as an evil spirit is something the healers recognise as universal. My encounter with the traditional healers in South Africa provided the necessary opportunity to engage with individuals who possess a meaningful homegrown understanding of the phenomenon. This was a valuable exercise and a powerful learning opportunity for me. It reminded me that while my own work in this area is academic and theoretical, the phenomenon I am exploring plays a significant role in the everyday lives of people. And while the *Tokoloshe* may be predominantly invisible and inexplicable, the impact of this creature on people's lives is explicit and profound.

My fieldwork provided me with an opportunity for meaningful discovery, consolidation and confirmation. It generated a wealth of additional materials and helped me gain some insights into the social dimension of what has hitherto largely been a 'cerebral' understanding. A few thoughts stand out for me upon reflection: the *Tokoloshe* is many things to many people; the *Tokoloshe* is not something new – it has played an active role in the lives of South Africans for at least two centuries; the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon intersects with the lives of ordinary South Africans on a regular, if not daily, basis.

1.7 Analysis

The final element of this work is the close reading and contextual analysis of the five products in which the *Tokoloshe* features. In the analysis, it has been necessary to explore the chronological, sociological, and ideological contexts of the works, drawing on the frameworks of popular culture and cultural identity (as established in chapter 2), and on the vocabulary and rhetoric of post-Apartheid critical thinking (as articulated above), to do so. The analysis contextualises the products as representations of the genres in South Africa. Consequently, the analysis features a brief exposition of popular music and of speculative fiction in general as introductions to the role those genres occupy within the spectrum of popular culture in South Africa.

The analyses consider also the position of the white artists/authors, particularly with reference to their appropriation of the *Tokoloshe* from traditional African cosmology. *Die Antwoord* draws on the traditional imagery of the *Tokoloshe*

and its antithetical/anti-conventional sexual behaviour to solidify their own anti-Christian/anti-establishment image (a stark contrast to Coetzee's Afrikaner take on the *Tokoloshe* in the first half of the 20th century); Jack Parow trivialises and lampoons the *Tokoloshe*'s key, malevolent features in his racist exploitation and questioning of South African traditions and Afrikaner identity. In Awerbuck's short story the ithyphallic, abhorrent *Tokoloshe* is the foil for her exploration of suppressed female sexuality; in Salomon's novel, his unconventional portrayal of the *Tokoloshe* is a device to debunk traditional perceptions of the 'other'; and in Human's work, the vulgarity of the *Tokoloshe* and its uncontrollable sexual insatiability is used to expose the erosion of moral and societal stability in South Africa. These themes are all explored in detail in chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 2 – Popular culture and cultural identity in South Africa

2.1 Introduction

The *Tokoloshe* is a uniquely southern African construct, rooted in the traditional beliefs of South Africa's inhabitants for hundreds of years. In its appropriation by the various peoples of South Africa it has become an iconic element of South African cultural identity and features regularly in a wide range of popular culture products. The nature of these appearances, and of the *Tokoloshe* itself, have shifted over the past century, and it is the manifestations of the past two decades in particular that are the primary focus of this study, in that they chronicle a shift in the individual and collective cultural identities of the peoples of South Africa in their post-Apartheid contexts. The objective of this chapter is to explore the concepts of 'popular culture' and 'cultural identity' in the context of South Africa in order to establish a meaningful framework for this study. I do so by distilling the understandings of popular culture within a South African context, and by reviewing notions of cultural identity in South Africa within the particular periods of Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa, specifically the recent past under the presidencies of Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma.

2.2 Popular culture

The *Tokoloshe* phenomenon is represented frequently and widely in the products of popular culture. The following is an attempt to clarify what 'popular culture' is, with particular reference to its meaning in South Africa. Broadly speaking, popular culture refers to the shared knowledge and everyday practices of particular groups of people at a particular point in time. Arndt et al (2007: 7) argue that popular culture arises from the things people do to gain benefits from and with each other, be it for their pleasure, for the common good, to escape/cope with daily life, to make a living, to express themselves, or to relate to the values and understandings of society. Popular culture is transitory. It is subject to change, frequently rendering that which was formerly popular as outdated or elitist, and it often initiates change, creating new forms of expression like 'culture jamming' (rewriting media, such as advertising, in a way that subverts or overturns the original intent). Popular culture is complex, polyphous and unpredictable, and crosses over the borders of genres, countries and continents (Arndt et al, 2007: 8). Typical examples of current popular culture include print media (books, particularly those for children, young adults or aimed for mass

consumption by adults; newspapers; magazines), pop music and radio. Others include television shows, advertising, brand name marketing and products associated with consumer culture (such as Disney films or MacDonald's Happy Meal toys). It is also worth noting new media (including the internet and online/global networking systems such as Twitter, Bebo, Facebook, Youtube), film and fashion (Marshall & Sensoy, 2013; McKinney, 2004). The *Tokoloshe* is represented in each of these in South Africa.

2.2.1 Popular culture in Africa

For the purposes of context, the following is presented as a reflection on popular culture in Africa. While popular culture in Africa shares much in common characteristically with popular culture across the globe, Barber (1997), Narunsky-Laden (2011), and Falola & Agwuele (2009) identify certain distinguishing features of popular culture in Africa, and these are considered below. Popular culture is a contemporary and wide-reaching reality, manifesting the actions and ways of Africans in the present: Africans who actively shape, reshape and remake their own cultural milieus (Falola & Agwuele, 2009: 6). This is typically understood in the context of 'product'. Popular culture in Africa can be viewed as tangible products of artistic expression that can be transmitted across society, particularly through performance, such as film, video, theatre, music, and fashion (Barber, 1997: 2 & 7; Willems, 2011: 49). The key feature of popular culture in Africa is its dynamic political and ideological hybridity (cf. Barber, 1997: 1), where tradition is re-invented and culture re-constructed; where orthodox and heterodox thought is consumed, re-invented, re-defined and re-produced locally (cf. Fabian, 1997: 18); and where local cultural production connects actively to international systems of cultural migration (cf. Furniss, 1996: ix & 7; Arndt et al, 2007: 9; Willems, 2011: 49; cf. Narunsky-Laden, 2011: 175). Popular culture allows people to use representational conventions to explain their shifting relationships, communally and also with authority; it helps people come to terms with, and respond to or challenge, in a conscious or unconscious way, the principal meanings of society (Mano, 2011: 94; cf. Fabian, 1997: 18-19). Popular culture is 'popular' in that it is consumed by many in large numbers, but also in how it engages with issues that matter, arising in response to unfavourable conditions within societies, thus providing a means for interrogating and confronting political issues that require clarity or further understanding, communicating messages and meanings that are not fully represented in the

mainstream mass media, and projecting multifaceted versions of reality that are meaningful to their audience (Barber, 1997: 7; Mano, 2011: 92-93). These processes are made possible by popular media in Africa (such as magazines, popular music, street theatre and cartoons) as part of the broader working machineries of popular culture that function as key drivers of, or instruments for the generation of, urbanisation and modernity, facilitating newly gendered modes of social action and new modalities of being for contemporary Africans at large (Narunsky-Laden, 2011: 175). In recent years these processes have also been mediated via developments in radio, TV, satellite TV, internet, mobile telephones and film, typically featuring local, national and international content, all of which can be seen as a growing part of the contemporary everyday African reality, where popular media technologies have inspired, and are intricately intertwined with, new popular cultural forms in Africa which are becoming ever more prevalent (cf. Narunsky-Laden, 2011: 175). These are examples of ‘convergence culture’, defined by Jenkins (in Willems, 2011: 52) as:

the space where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways...

Convergence culture is the space where these different forms of media encounter, interconnect, form, strengthen or oppose each other (Willems, 2011: 52). The growth of the role of media, communication and popular culture in Africa has been attributed to political, economic and social development which has led to deregulation of the media, market freedom, and commercialisation and democratisation of the airwaves (‘Media, Communication and Popular Culture in Africa’, n.d.).

Fundamentally, popular culture in contemporary Africa employs media, particularly new media, to engage with and explain the dynamic intersections of traditional, contemporary and global beliefs, ideologies and realities in society.

2.2.2 Popular culture in South Africa

Popular culture in South Africa is a syncretic hybrid that is informed and shaped by a broad collection of composite and paradoxical sources: partly rural, partly urban; partly traditional, partly colonial, partly modern; partly African, partly Western, partly Asian. It is informed by historic traditions and by counter and subversive responses to mainstream/official culture, with the popular culture of the present influenced significantly by the past official culture of Apartheid against which it defines itself. Popular culture in South Africa is also influenced by the need to

account for diversity and difference while acknowledging common, traumatic experiences rooted in South Africa's Apartheid past (Mistry, 2001: 3). In South Africa, popular culture functions as a metaphor (political, textual and linguistic) and a question (related to languages and language combinations), avoiding pure identities by preferring multilingualism, fusion and democracy to authentic language and exclusive ethnicity (Barnard, 2006: 40). Popular culture in South Africa is not a fixed entity. It is an ever-changing system of progress that is structured by and through powerful apparatuses of cultural implantation by dominant voices. Popular culture is itself a result of struggle, through incorporation, distortion, resistance, negotiation, and recuperation (Dolby, 2001: 14; Vambe & Khan, 2009: 68). Furthermore, it is heavily influenced by the orientations and objectives of editors, executive producers and marketing executives of popular media, but is also answerable to the people at whom those media are aimed (Qakisa, 2003: 152). Popular culture in South Africa is not limited exclusively to home-grown products, but assimilates global cultural imports easily and readily (Clasquin, 2003: 2-4). The authenticity of popular culture is derived from its capacity to handle these diverse discourses informed by different and often contradictory motivations (Vambe & Khan, 2009: 68). Popular culture in South Africa is an integral part of everyday experiences. It is where contemporary South Africans live (i.e. it is rooted in their given contexts, acting as a springboard for self-reflection and thinking about their relationships in society) (Dolby, 2001: 115; cf. Vambe & Khan, 2009: 70). Popular culture is manifested within the products of social enterprise and media, such as paintings, film, music, fashion, work spaces, food, television (particularly situation comedies and soap operas), cartoons, advertising, the internet and radio (Mistry, 2001:1; Barnard, 2006: 39; Mahasha, 2003: 35). In post-Apartheid South Africa, the various media of popular culture play a significant role in social processes. They act as mechanisms through which political and institutional figures (such as broadcasters, educationalists, media activists and other national programme makers) try to re-shape configurations of identity and the behaviour of regular citizens (Barnett, 2004: 8 & 23). They also influence (in different weightings) social, cultural and political attitudes for or against the politics of debate (Mahasha, 2003: 35), creating opportunities for debate on public platforms, as well as in homes, classrooms and playgrounds, and accompanying state and non-political organisations in their attempts to capture South Africa's evolution into a new, multicultural democracy (Barnard, 2006: 23 & 39). Television programmes, as examples of these

popular media in popular culture, help transform the political practices that have marked South Africa's shift from Apartheid to democracy by actively moulding the thoughts and prospects of a society attempting to survive its history; where popular culture acts as an innovative and in-the-moment expression of beliefs and expectations (Barnard, 2006: 42; cf. Mahasha, 2003: 34; Barnett, 2004: 18-19). These television programmes also reflect the subsequent changes in society. They serve as cultural forums for presentations of the new and emerging national culture where people of different race and culture socialise freely and intermingle with one another. They also address important issues faced by South Africans, such as AIDS, violence against women, homosexuality, and implications/complications of interracial relationships (Pitout, 2003: 38 & 46). *Room 9* is such an example (see 3.10.1). Language in these media is used to demarcate and destabilise identity; drawing on 'multi-, hybrid- and partial-' signifiers, language acts as a pre-emptive originator of novel forms of multiculturalism (Barnard, 2006: 51). Broadcasts within one television or radio channel may be presented in several languages; some programmes are themselves multilingual where presenters represent and speak different languages in one show, sometimes speaking multiple languages, sometimes even in the same sentence (the same is true for soap operas in South Africa). These fluctuations of language are not necessarily accompanied by subtitles/translations, assuming viewers themselves are multilingual or 'open to challenging conventional conceptions' or see it as a sign of South Africa's multicultural vibrancy (Barnard, 2006: 49-51). The multilingual focus reflected by these products of popular culture in South Africa reflect the experiences and challenges of a multilingual society and also suggest an optimistic view of the potential for further cultural hybridity and multilingualism in the post-Apartheid milieu (Barnard, 2006: 51-52). Popular culture is also a key site or location for identity formation, for the ways in which South Africans make sense of their world and locate themselves within it. Popular culture is intrinsically woven into the lives of South Africans. It surrounds them, and influences the way South Africans map their realities and how they relate to others (Dolby, 2001: 14). Dolby argues that young/teenage South Africans, in particular, carefully choose, shape and join specific commodities and other aspects of popular culture (more so than from church, family, neighbourhood or 'traditional culture') to create their identities (Dolby, 2001: 15).

2.3 Cultural identity in South Africa

Over several hundred years, the *Tokoloshe* has evolved into a shared cultural phenomenon for the several ethnicities of southern Africa. However, the shape and value of that phenomenon has been informed and framed uniquely by the particular experiences, beliefs, traditions and interactions of each of those groups of people within their respective pre-colonial, colonial and Apartheid contexts (cf. Tucker, 2013: 26, 47, 195-196). In order to review the value the *Tokoloshe* has today for the peoples of post-Apartheid South Africa, it is necessary to consider the shift in cultural identities that has taken place over the past three decades.

All individuals are the product of culture, and as such individuals and their cultural identity are inseparable. Identity development is impacted on by shifts within society (historical development, communal change) and by changes in the individual (identity crisis, personal growth) (Thom & Coetzee, 2004: 184). Cultural identity is a representation or idea that refers to the features (external and internal) of a particular group or society and that is located in time and space to secure itself to the past and future, and to show or examine cultural shifts that have occurred. According to Bezuidenhout (1998), cultural identity is retrospective (referring to the ‘past through which the meaning of origins and history is made clear’) and prospective (viewing the ‘purpose and the meaning of the continued existence of society’). It is also interactive (reflecting on itself and discarding ‘elements that do not belong to a specific cultural identity’) and coalescing (looking to see how the members of a specific cultural group ‘relate to the identity of the culture and whether there is consensus regarding the internal organisation of that specific culture’). Signs (linguistic and non-linguistic: natural language, rituals or symbols) are used by all constituents of any particular cultural designation to convey meaning, though these signs might have diverse meanings for several group members. Culturally-similar members may also conceive their own binding signs and symbols to instil harmony and accord, forming subcultures within pre-existing cultures (Bezuidenhout, 1998).

South Africans in the post-Apartheid milieu have been challenged with the immense undertaking of ‘reconstituting identities, social relations and, indeed, society itself’ (Scott, 2012: 746). Steyn (quoted in Dekker, n.d.: 6) states:

South Africans, willingly or unwillingly, successfully or unsuccessfully, are engaged in one of the most profound collective psychological adjustments happening in the contemporary world. Situated in an existentialist moment that combines unique intersections of thrownness and agency, they are

selecting, editing and borrowing from the cultural resources available to them to reinterpret old selves in the light of new knowledge and possibilities, while yet retaining a sense of personal congruence.

Because of shifts in power and the socio-political landscape, white South Africans, in particular, have been faced with the need to renegotiate their status within South African society, and to discover new definitions and purpose whilst navigating a ‘crisis of delegitimacy’ (Scott, 2012: 746). In order to reposition themselves within the new national framework, white South Africans are charged with the task of re-inventing their own ‘narratives of identity and belonging’ that must exist alongside, be reliant on, and be a part of a greater host of intersecting and overlapping new (post-colonial/Apartheid) South African narratives (Scott, 2012: 751; cf. Dekker, n.d.: 7 & 16). Fink (2011) suggests that this evolving cohabitation and integration of cultures and identities in post-Apartheid South Africa has produced a contemporary popular culture in which a multitude of artists search for ‘an identity in a country still recovering from racial hatred’ and in which the youth look to the past ‘in order to make sense of the present’. Fink suggests further that music, dance and performance art - all manifestations of popular culture - are essential parts of South African cultural identity, where youth identity and music trends of the present have been forged by an ardent need for self-expression and self-identification.

2.3.1 Cultural identity in Apartheid South Africa

Cultural identity in South Africa is complex. At its broadest, it can be identified by the labels White, Coloured, Black and Asian. These classifications are the historical constructs of South African politics and remain as signifiers in post-Apartheid South Africa (see 1.6). White refers primarily to descendants of the European settlers (Dutch, French, British and German). Coloured refers to the people of mixed race (the product of relationships between the European, indigenous and Malay slave populations). Black refers to the indigenous inhabitants of southern Africa. Asian refers to immigrants from Asia (predominantly from India).⁸ These groups have existed within a hierarchical framework. In Apartheid South Africa, members of the white population occupied the top of the hierarchical pyramid, while members of the black population occupied the bottom tier, with the Asian and

⁸ According to the census of 2011, the South African population of some 51.8 million people is made up as follows: Black African (79.2%); Coloured (8.9%); Indian/Asian (2.5%); White (8.9%); and Other (0.5%) (‘Census 2011 Statistical release – P0301.4’, 2012: 14, 17).

coloured groups located tenuously in the middle. Post-Apartheid societal re-alignment (with formal governmental policies of affirmative action and black empowerment) has actively sought to re-arrange the hierarchy. Several diverse ethnic groupings and cultures are represented within each of these populations, resulting in a heterogeneous social order that is characterised by ‘cross-pollination’ and cultural cross-over (Bezuidenhout, 1998); where South Africans come into contact with a range of cultures that vary in ‘customs, religion, values, norms, laws, literature, behavioural rules, language, arts, sciences’ (Bezuidenhout, 1998). These cultures have been subjected to significant socio-political change in the past two decades in a society that continues to undergo transformation (Thom & Coetze, 2004: 184). Furthermore, within the same cultural groupings in South Africa there exist multiple and often conflicting signifiers. Not all mother tongue speakers of a particular language belong to the same cultural groups (Afrikaans is the mother tongue for many coloured and white Afrikaners but these groups are culturally disparate). Homogenous communities can broadly be divided further by language/dialect and ethnicity (Xhosa-speaking members of the black population represent a collective community shaped by the integration of several other ethnic groups such as the Mpondo, Thembu, Mfengu and Gcaleka peoples). People from different groups may share certain cultural traditions, principles and behaviours, but because of their geographic location may still retain distinct cultural characteristics (Afrikaners living in the Western Cape, Free State or Gauteng share broader cultural norms but have developed independent cultural signifiers such as accent, traditions and folklore as a result of their geographic isolation, rural/urban preoccupations and level of education (cf. Bezuidenhout, 1998).

In the Apartheid era, people typically classified themselves in terms of fragmented racial/ethnic cultural identities as opposed to ‘South Africans’ with a clearly defined overarching national identity. This fragmentation was reinforced by the national broadcaster (SABC) with separate channels and programmes for ethnic groups (Masenyama, 2005: 4-5, 17). The dominant nationalism was shaped by limited and exclusionary forms of Afrikaner Christian thinking, perpetuating a radical form of ‘Afrikaner affirmative action’ (Devroop, n.d.: 9). An isolated Western/European ‘cultural’ community at Africa’s southern-most end was facilitated by Apartheid governance and law, where formalised or official mediums of cultural expression (including ‘education, performances, performances spaces, arts councils, media’) exclusively adopted European models and modes of expression as a way of

culturally ‘belonging’ to the international community (Devroop, n.d.: 9-10; cf. Giliomee, 1991: 33). Cultural identities were formally defined, isolated and limited. Devroop (10) states:

The various race and ethnic groups, however, struggled to keep their inherited cultures alive under repressive laws and the denial of national support. Their efforts were excluded from the mainstream. Several of these races and ethnic groups still felt the need to keep their identity intact through their community cultural activities.

Cultural identity in Apartheid South Africa was largely polarised: black/white, English/Afrikaans, Xhosa/Zulu. Significant socio-political instability in the early 1990s was marked by inter- and intra-cultural conflict: African National Congress (ANC) communists vs ANC freedom charterists; Zulu migrants vs non-Zulus; Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) vs ANC; Afrikaans conservatives (Conservative Party) vs the progressive Afrikaans nationalists (National Party); socialists vs free marketers; and so on (Giliomee, 1991: 33 & 41). As discourse in the early stages of political transition shifted to focus on nation-building for a new South Africa, theorists and academics contemplated the nature of what such a programme should be. Muller (1991: 151 – 153) warns that a programme attempting to pull together South Africans of different cultural backgrounds into one unified group would potentially lead to rebellion and seriously compromise the cohesion of the new state. Muller acknowledges further that ethnicity in the sense of different cultures with different values and languages is a reality with which the new South Africa would have to come to terms. Muller also contemplates an inclusive nation where different languages could contribute positively to the welfare of a multicultural/multilingual society. Pluralism was argued as the only practical answer for a country as deeply divided as South Africa, with nation-building as a measured progression towards a collective South Africanism (Muller, 1991: 151 – 153; cf. Vorster, 1991; Giliomee & Schlemmer, 1989: 155-170, 216-217, 235-241). This pluralism was embedded into South Africa’s new constitution in 1997 in which eleven of South Africa’s languages were given official status: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu (‘Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 - Chapter 1: Founding Provisions’, 1996).⁹

⁹ Other languages commonly used by communities in South Africa include: the Khoi, Nama and San languages; sign language; German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu [sic] and Urdu;

2.3.2 The ‘Rainbow Nation’

In the significantly transformed socio-political climate of post-Apartheid South Africa, it has become necessary to redefine ‘self’ and ‘other’, ‘nation’, ‘nationalism’ and to search for new/different collective and individual identities, to produce a new national culture and to develop citizenship, through a process of ‘identity construction, deconstruction and reconstruction’ (Mistry, 2001: 4; Steenkamp, 2011: 19-20). The ANC-led government’s first attempt to do this was through the construct of building a ‘rainbow nation’, a term first coined by the chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and subsequently ratified in the rhetoric of Nelson Mandela during his presidency, essentially celebrating the many languages, cultures, ethnicities and religions of South Africans. The ‘rainbow nation’ idea draws on Xhosa symbolism. In the Xhosa worldview, the rainbow is said to represent optimism and a promise of positive things to come. It is an appropriate symbol to inform and reinforce the ANC vision of nation-building. ‘The rainbow nation’ also draws on ideas of multiculturalism, where the colours of the rainbow symbolise the diversity of unspecified South African cultural, ethnic and racial groups (Baines, 1998). Baines (1998) states:

Social identities are especially fluid in the new South Africa... It is here that the metaphor of the 'rainbow nation' ... is instructive. The rainbow symbolises a range of cultural groups represented by discrete colours and hues which blur into one another; none of which is completely distinct but each is essential to the composition of the entire spectrum. The rainbow is incomplete without each of the colours, but none of the colours or strands is dominant over the other. Thus the rainbow implies the co-existence of individual and collective identities; a representation of different cultures and of a shared South Africanness.

Motshekga (2012) suggests this reflects the ANC’s original intent to create ‘an inclusive, democratic society based on human values in a culturally, religious and linguistically diverse South Africa’, ideas that are recognised in the Freedom Charter of 1955 and expressed in the constitution of the new South Africa. In the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (1996) it states:

The collision of cultures does not necessarily lead to subjugation and hegemony. It may also lead to subtle cross pollination of ideas, words,

and Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit (used for religious purposes) (‘Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 - Chapter 1: Founding Provisions’, 1996).

customs, art forms, culinary and religious practices. This dynamic interaction has always played a role in cultural enrichment which has resulted in an extraordinarily fertile and unique South African culture which binds our nation in linguistic, cultural, culinary and religious diversity in so many forms... The culture whose emergence and growth is consistent with the goals of our young democracy would be an inclusive, and even eclectic, one.

In the early years of post-Apartheid South Africa the celebration of the ‘rainbow nation’ took centre stage in the press and on other public platforms, such as at Mandela’s presidential inauguration, within governmental publications, at the 1995 Rugby World Cup and at the 1997 SA Music Awards. It was also included in advertising campaigns on radio and TV (such as the Castle Lager ‘One Beer, One Nation’ campaign, and the SABC TV1 channel rebranding jingle ‘*Simunye – We Are One*’). Each of these celebrated ‘rainbowness’, i.e. cultural, racial and ethnic diversity (Mistry, 2001: 5, 9-10; cf. Baines, 1998). Masenya (2005: 18) suggests that by 1999 this overarching sense of national identity was felt strongest by South Africans at the centre of the socio-economic scale. The ‘rainbow nation’ nation-building programme, with its emphasis on celebrating unity and diversity simultaneously, was (and is still) not without its flaws. Mistry (2001: 11; cf. Steenkamp, 2011: 18-19) acknowledges the ‘rainbow nation’ idea as exceptionally hopeful in its outlook but a failure in its attempts to address completely the concerns of specific cultural groups and identities; Baines’ (1998) criticism of the nation-building project is that it is a state construct and not an organic development, indicative then of the state trying to impose a ‘common culture’ onto South African society, emphasising social divisions and exaggerating cultural differences rather than unity; Dolby (2001: 56; cf. Leithead, 2015) identifies that many students in the late 1990’s believed that a ‘rainbow nation’ is an unobtainable goal as ‘people have different ideas’ and those differences prohibit meaningful interaction. The perceived failure of the ‘rainbow nation’ vision is considered further below.

2.3.3 The ‘African Renaissance’

After 1999, Thabo Mbeki, the second democratically elected president of the new South Africa, set forward his manifesto for an ‘African Renaissance’: a ‘pan-African project for Africans to overcome their colonial and neo-colonial past, and to re-imagine and re-position the African continent as part of the global community’ (Devroop, n.d.: 10). Mbeki’s ‘African Renaissance’ reorganised the understandings of the structures of society and of identity to emphasise difference in the desires for

social mobility, while attempting to reawaken an African past by reclaiming forgotten traditions of a former African glory to redirect new cultural policy (Mistry, 2001: 10 & 12). Mbeki's campaign intertwined concerns about 'economy with race and identity', swapping the 'rainbow' concept with a polarising idea of 'two nations', and shifting South Africa's cultural identity from 'collectivism' to 'individualism' (Devroop, n.d.: 10; cf. Bystrom & Nuttall, 2013: 308). This policy, too, was not without its flaws. Mistry (2001: 11) judges the level of identification of the 'new patriotism' as overwhelming and eliding 'any concerns of difference and pluralism'. Thom & Coetzee (2004: 186) argue that young South Africans still associate rather with others who also represent their distinct culture. And Devroop (10) diagnoses the potential demise of nation-building, stating:

The symbolic impact of this 'two nations' divide snowballed into other sectors of society – beyond just blacks and whites. New 'apartheid styled' forms of dichotomies were emerging – "afrocentrism" and "eurocentrism, ethnic pessimism and ethnic optimism, rich versus poor, xenophobia, exile divisions: returnees and those who stayed; also divisions amongst returnees between the foot soldiers and intellectuals. This reaction threatened the construction of a national identity.

2.3.4 Ethnic nationalism, populism and the 'unravelling of the rainbow'

In the second decade of South African democracy, the ANC-led government under Jacob Zuma has attempted in part to continue its policies of multiculturalism and reconciliation. The government has been pressured to face the challenge of reconvening a nation-building agenda in light of political instability within the ANC and the subsequent splintering off from the party by former ANC stalwarts Mosiuoa "Terror" Lekota, Mbhazima Shilowa and Mluleki George to establish the Congress of the People (COPE) and by disgraced former ANC Youth League leader, Julius Malema, to form his own Economic Freedom Fighters party (EFF), as well as by increasing instances of murders of white farmers in rural communities, and by violent outbursts of xenophobia in the cities (the theme of xenophobia is explored further in 5.4.5, 5.5.7). In a parliamentary debate in September 2012, Dr Mathole Motshekga, ANC Chief Whip, presented to the National Assembly a speech re-iterating the ANC's commitment to social cohesion and nation-building, listing the recent progresses made, including the recognition 'that all religions have made valuable contributions to civilization and that there are common values shared by all humankind' and the formation of a Multi-Party Parliamentary Inter-faith Council (the

National Interfaith Council of South Africa). Motshekga also announced the plan to organise ‘regular debates in parliament on matters relating to multiculturalism, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue’, and highlighted South Africa’s participation at the annual Forums of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). In July 2012, President Jacob Zuma took this work forward with the Nation Building and Social Cohesion Summit (Motshekga, 2012). Motshekga reiterated the commitment of the ANC and its government to celebrating linguistic, ethnic, cultural, racial and religious diversity. However, immigration to South Africa from other African countries (as well as those further abroad) and globalisation, and the resultant increase in multiculturalism, as well as the increasing divide between rich and poor, have challenged and diminished the evolution of a national identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, leading to renewed attempts by the national broadcaster (SABC) to re-affirm national identity in exclusive terms; the product of all this is an uncommon, superficial or even superfluous national identity in South Africa that is in a state of flux and is surrounded by multiple fragmented and hybrid identities (Masenya, 2005: 53-54, 63-64; cf. Steenkamp, 2011: 19-20).

Identity formation in South Africa has been further complicated by Zuma’s problematic leadership of the ANC and of the state, as well as by his active promotion of Zulu nationalism. Zuma’s presidency has been plagued by several high-profile scandals, including his use of state funds (some £17 million) to upgrade his private residence at Nkandla, his association with the Gupta family (the scandal is referred to as ‘Guptagate’), as well as his much publicised rape trial in 2006 during his time as deputy president (cf. ‘South African president to partly pay back cash used for home upgrade’, 2016; Tham, 2016; Harding, 2015; ‘The Guptas and their links to South Africa’s Jacob Zuma’, 2016). Furthermore, Zuma’s terms in office have been accompanied by significant, problematic issues (cf. Hain, 2016; ‘Zuma an antithesis to the Constitution’, 2016; Cartwright, 2015; Vincent, 2011: 2; Malala, 2015: 10-11, 23-24, 28-30, 32-33; Vilakazi & Swails, 2016; Hauser, 2016; ‘South Africa’s credit rating has been cut to junk status’, 2017; ‘South African Airways ‘is on verge of bankruptcy’’, 2017): national power shortages, problematic water supplies, increased levels of inequality, high levels of unemployment, high levels of infant mortality, poor performance in the education sector, increased government debt, decreased GDP growth, the lowering of South Africa’s credit rating to ‘junk’ status, the national carrier (South African Airways) on the brink of bankruptcy, student riots

(#RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall), and the police-led massacre at Marikana (see 3.12.2).

Zuma has been criticised publicly from within and without the ANC for ‘squandering’ the legacy of Mandela by encouraging corruption and cronyism within the ANC-led state, demonstrating antithetical values to those embodied in South Africa’s constitution. In nine years as president, he faced eight votes of no-confidence in parliament (‘Jacob Zuma - the survivor whose nine lives ran out’, 2018). In recent years, several rallies and marches have been held across South Africa organised by groups like Unite Against Corruption, #Zumamustfall and Save SA, supported by a coalition of opposition parties, interfaith and civil society organisations and leaders, calling for Zuma to step down or to be removed from office (Laing, 2015; ‘Thousands march in South Africa to demand Zuma resign’, 2017; ‘National Day of Action on Wednesday: South Africans Urged to Keep Going Till Zuma Steps Down’, 2017; ‘The Peoples’ Motion of No Confidence in President Zuma’, N.d; ‘Overview’, N.d; Madia, 2017; ‘Anti-Zuma protests take place across South Africa’, 2017). On 13 February 2018, Zuma was ‘recalled’ by the ANC’s national executive committee and was given 48 hours to resign as president or subsequently to face a no-confidence parliamentary debate and dismissal within the week (Mahr & Thornycroft, 2018). Zuma resigned as president the following day, and has since been succeeded by current ANC president and state deputy-president, Cyril Ramaphosa.

Critics and political commentators argue that Zuma’s political agenda has been divisive and problematic. Gumede (2016; cf. Gumede, 2012; cf. Bystrom & Nuttall, 2013: 323) labels Zuma an ‘ethnic nationalist’ and tribalist who actively promotes Zulu identity in his national politics alongside his attempts to ‘Zulufy’ the ANC. Vincent suggests Zuma is a populist who actively accesses the colloquial rhetoric and political style of populism to sustain his popular support (Vincent, 2011: 2-4; cf. Bystrom & Nuttall, 2013: 308). Van Onselen (2014: xi; cf. 7-12, 26-32, 55-62) brands Zuma a traditionalist, a patriarch, a bigot, a demagogue, a majoritarianist, and an anti-democrat. The negative impact of Zuma’s Zulu nationalism and populist approach on the Tutu/Mandela ‘rainbow nation’ construct is significant (cf. Vincent, 2011: 7): it would seem the ‘rainbow’ has ‘unravelled’ (cf. Malala, 2015: 7).

McKaiser (2012) challenges the notion of ‘multiracial, rainbow nation bliss’, and suggests that ongoing contemporary racial prejudices, racial identities and ‘irrational racial affinities’ prevail in South Africa as significant and undeniable

products of South Africa's lingering racist Apartheid legacy; South Africans' failure to acknowledge this and their own inescapable 'racial baggage' is problematic, unhealthy and an obstruction to the achievement of a non-racial South Africa (McKaiser, 2012: 35-38; cf. Malala, 2015: 66-67; cf. Bystrom & Nuttall, 2013: 308). McKaiser further identifies the spatial, linguistic, cultural and ideological divisions that prevent the realisation of Tutu's dream of South African unity, such as is demonstrated by the mono- or bilingualism of whites versus the multilingualism of blacks (2012: 155, 160). McKaiser (2012: 165) states:

The sooner we abandon the myth of a rainbow nation, a united nation, the better for our democracy. A national identity is neither necessary nor possible: we live in a diverse country with individuals and communities that have profoundly different beliefs, attitudes, habits and ideological convictions. Why insist on a common national identity? The fruitless search for a common national identity is not admirable. It is merely a symptom of a child so bruised and battered by her past that she wants to live in a future that is filled only with jingles. That is understandable, but the wrong goal. We should instead accept that we are deeply divided... and reflect on how we might live in each other's space while disagreeing deeply with each other. The alternative, fake national unity, is simply childish.

During his 'State of the Nation' presidential address, the newly elected president, Ramaphosa, not only invoked the spirit of Mandela, but also revisited the rhetoric of Mandela and Tutu's 'Rainbow Nation', stating (quoted in 'SONA2018', 2018):

For though we are a diverse people, we are one nation. There are 57 million of us, each with different histories, languages, cultures, experiences, views and interests. Yet we are bound together by a common destiny. For this, we owe much to our forebearers...who understood the necessity of the unity and harmony of all the people of this great land. We are a nation at one.

Perhaps Ramaphosa hopes to re-ignite the optimism of the early days of democracy in South Africa by reinvesting in its nation-building ideology? And what does that mean for South Africa's citizens almost 20 years after Mandela stepped off the national platform?

2.4 Conclusion

Race and racial identity in South Africa are no longer tied to the cultural absolutes of Apartheid, but rather rotate on the 'axes of political and social change in South Africa' (Dolby, 2001: 63), where the government of post-Apartheid South Africa has to resolve the anxieties embedded in the attempts to bring together a multicultural nation, while striving to build a new identity and needing to recognise cultural difference and 'accommodate group identities such as cultural or ethnic

minorities' (Mistry, 2001: 11). Consequently, the cultural identity of young South Africans is pieced together from local, national and international sources, drawing on their experiences within an ever-changing traditional culture as it intersects with the urbanisation of modernity and the globalizing thrust of post-modernity (Dolby, 2001: 63). The nature, then, of cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa is problematic, complex, and in an ongoing state of flux. This is shaped and impacted on significantly by powerful influencing factors: South Africa's history; shifts in political agendas in and out of government; the globalised world; conflict between idealism and reality on the street; unemployment and poverty; and immigration.

In the products of popular culture artists make evident the complicated processes of cultural identity formation by representing them, criticising them, interpreting them, and responding to them. In each of the products chosen for analysis in this study, the artists engage with the challenges of cultural identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa and make marked responses to those challenges. The crux of those responses is explored in the analyses that follow in chapter 4 and 5.

Chapter 3 – The Tokoloshe

3.1 Introduction

For the purposes of my exploration of cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, I have opted to focus specifically on five products of post-Apartheid popular culture in which the *Tokoloshe* plays a principal role. That analysis is informed significantly by my understanding of what the *Tokoloshe* is, by what it represents and by how it impacts on the lives of regular South Africans in post-Apartheid South Africa. In order to establish that understanding, I engaged in a detailed exploration of the currently available materials that concern the *Tokoloshe*.

This chapter, then, considers that wide, though often limited, range of literature to formulate a composite and coherent understanding of the phenomenon. I do so by considering also the contributions made by the informants I interviewed during my fieldwork in South Africa. What follows is a dense summary of the available knowledge I have been able to uncover and explore concerning the *Tokoloshe*, with particular regard to: the names for *Tokoloshe*; establishing a comprehensive definition of the *Tokoloshe* (including its appearance, habitat, diet, its mischievous nature, its role as a children's playmate, and its late-twentieth-century incarnation as Pinky Pinky); the origins of the *Tokoloshe*; the role the *Tokoloshe* plays within the cosmology of traditional belief in South Africa (particularly as a witch's familiar and its role in witchcraft); the nature of violent and sexual encounters with a *Tokoloshe*, and possible explanations of and for those encounters (including sleep paralysis, cultural invitation, and nocturnal sexual arousal and orgasm); the role the *Tokoloshe* plays in sexual violence and murder in South Africa; how one may be protected from the *Tokoloshe* (including the use of certain medicines and charms, rituals and particular behaviours, and the services of specialist practitioners); the manner in which *Tokoloshe*-inspired or *Tokoloshe* associated crime is policed and prosecuted in South Africa; and finally representations of the *Tokoloshe* in popular culture and politics in South Africa.

The detail that follows demonstrates the extent to which the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon permeates present-day South African society at almost every level: while channel-hopping on television you might stumble across a Zulu or Sotho horror movie like *The Tokoloshe Slayer* or a Kwela-infused Afrikaans 'Bubblegum' pop song like Karin Fereira's 'Tokkelos'; or you may read an article in the tabloids about a woman being raped nightly by a *Tokoloshe*; or see a flyer pasted up on a billboard

on a busy city street advertising *Tokoloshe* exorcisms; or hear a radio news bulletin about a child murdered in the middle of the night because he was mistaken for a *Tokoloshe* by his drunken assailant; or observe your local politician at a political rally calling for *Tokoloshes* to chase away his opposition. Furthermore, the *Tokoloshe* inhabits the vernacular of most South Africans, regardless of cultural demographic, albeit with varying degrees of understanding and knowledge; it transcends location in that it is not tied to rural, urban or regional experience only; and it exists within traditional and contemporary worldviews, simultaneously embodying both the ancient (as an incarnation of one of Africa's oldest deities) and the current (as an accessible icon of pop culture in South Africa). These characteristics make the *Tokoloshe* a suitable catalyst for my investigation of cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa.

3.2 Appellations

3.2.1 *Tokoloshe* and its variants

The *Tokoloshe* is a mysterious, mischievous water-sprite embedded in traditional belief in southern Africa; the name and understanding of which appears in a range of slightly variant forms across southern Africa: in the oral traditions and beliefs of the peoples of southern Africa (including South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe), but also in the multiple forms of literature (academic, journalistic, prosaic or dramatic) that investigate, propagate or celebrate this creature. For the purposes of this research, I have selected to use the anglicised isiZulu form of the word from *u-Tokolo* (Bryant, 1905: 639), or *tokoloshe* (or *tokolotshe*) (cf. Werner, 1933: 289). There is, however, a significant number of equally legitimate alternatives and dialectical variations: in isiXhosa it is *thikolosh(e)* (McLaren, 1963: 160) or *tikolosh(e)* (Werner, 1933: 289); in Sesotho (Southern Sotho) it is *thokolose* (Hammond- Tooke, 1997: 122); in Northern Sotho it is *tokolotsi* (Niehaus et al, 2001: xiii); in Setswana (Western Sotho) it is *thokolosi* (s.) (Matumo, 1993: 396) or *dithokolosi* (pl.) (Matumo, 1993: 50); in Zimbabwe it is *chitokoroshi* (Andersson, 2002: 430; Mudege, 2007: 137) or *ntogelochi* (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2002: 803); and in Afrikaans there are a string of variants including *tokolos* (Lenta, 2004:378), *tokkeloss* (Eberhart, 2002: 553), *tokkelos*, *tokkeloos*, *tokkelossie*, *tokkelosie* (Coetzee, 1941: 27), *tiekelos*, *takkelosie*, *takkalosie* (Coetzee, 1941: 30), *tokkolois*, *tjokkelos* (Coetzee, 1941: 31) or *tokolosie* (Hammond-Tooke, 1997: 122). Other variations of the word in South African English include: *tagalash*, *tickelesh*, *tigoloshi*, *togolosh*,

tokelosche and *tokilosí* (*Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles*, 2014). Lenta (2004: 378-379) suggests the discrepancies in spelling are the outcome of differing records of oral narratives at different times and in different places, but it is also likely the form of the word evolved over decades and centuries via migration across Southern Africa.¹⁰

3.2.2 Other names¹¹

There are several names for *Tokoloshe*. These include (in isiXhosa) *uhili* (Hammond-Tooke, 1997: 123; cf. Kropf, 1915: 148) meaning (literally) ‘to be confused in the head’, and *ihili*, ‘a foolish, roving, senseless person’ (cf. Hirst, 1990: 241). *uHili* is also translated as ‘dwarf’ (Nabe et al, 1976: 90; cf. Fischer et al, 1985: 179). Laubscher (1937: 9) records that among the isiXhosa-speaking Thembu and Mfengo people, the *Tokoloshe* is known to boys as *sinkanselana*. Other Xhosa names are *uGiligaqwa* (Berglund, 1989: 301) (or *Ugilikakqwa* in Callaway, 1868: 350-351; cf. *Gilikanko* in Hunter, 1936: 275), and *Dziyana* (Soga, 1931: 185). During my fieldwork meeting with the traditional healers, the healers also suggested three additional Xhosa names for *Tokoloshe*: *Sompayana*, *Untayi* and *Ngqivati*. In Callaway’s transcription and translation of an encounter with a *Tokoloshe*, (1868: 350-351) the speaker (in the Qwabe dialect of isiZulu) uses as a name the phrase *Umakqutsha-zinduku-zomlambo*, meaning ‘he who uses in dancing the rods (i.e. reeds) of the river’. The isiZulu word, *uMantindane* (Berglund, 1989: 301; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941:7; cf. Berglund, 1989: 278) is also a name, though the word is essentially an idiomatic word that refers to a witch’s familiar – literally ‘witch’s consort’ (Opland, 1998: 92). Further names include the isiZulu word *intoyetshe* (meaning ‘things of stone’) (Samuelson, quoted in Berglund, 1989: 302) or *intyala* (Cumes, 2004: 128); *iTilwane* from the Bhaca people of the Transkei uplands (Near Mt Frere) (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 280; cf. *ilwane* or *izilwane* pl. in Zulu meaning ‘small wild animal’ (Lee, 1958: 271 & 277); the siSwati word *sloana* (Scott, 1967:

¹⁰ In certain sources in print and online the *Tokoloshe* (or *Tikoloshe*) is incorrectly labelled as *Tikdoshe*. I traced this to a typographical error in Brandon, S.G.F. 1971. *A Dictionary of Comparative Religion*, London: Weidenfield and Nicolson. Subsequent entries for *Tikdoshe* can be found in: ‘African Mythology part 1’. 2002. *Unsolved Mysteries*, [online], available from <http://www.unsolvedmysteries.com/usm287302.html>; Lynch, P.A. 2004. *African mythology A to Z*. New York: Infobase Publishing; Lindemans, M.F. 1999. ‘Tikdoshe’, *Encyclopedia Mythica*, [online], available from <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/t/tikdoshe.html>.

¹¹ The spellings of the several synonyms for *Tokoloshe* in languages other than English are reproduced here as they appear in the original source materials, accounting for variations and/or inaccuracies in spelling.

855); in Xitsonga *vaveni* (Bila, 2012: 49); and the Setswana words *matholwane/bomatholwane* (Matumo, 1993: 50, 396). Names in Afrikaans include: *kloppertjie, toormannetjie, ou eenoog, skoorbek* (Coetzee, 1941: 37), Antjie Somers, *kokkewiet, kabouterjie* (Coetzee, 1941: 41), *boekieman, moesie, orie-oetang, blinkoog* (Coetzee, 1941: 40). In chiShona (in Zimbabwe) the *Tokoloshe* is also referred to as *Chidhoma* and *Chikwambo*: *Chidhoma* matches the traditional South African image of the *Tokoloshe* as an impish, sexual predator (Epprecht, 2013: 34), while *Chikwambo* is associated rather with killing, feasting on the bodies of the relatives of its owner (Andersson, 2002: 447), though it appears these terms may be used interchangeably (cf. Engelke: 2007, 231). Tucker (2013: 9) includes another word, *mubobobo*, as a name (though it refers connotatively to the illegal practice of ‘magical masturbation’ committed by male sorcerers in Zimbabwe; cf. the concept of *mgoneko* in Malawi in Wilson, 2013: 119-161). Coetzee identifies several other names, including: *Ra Mechana* (translated as ‘someone who wears a sack for clothes’); in Sesotho *Monna e Mokhutsoane* (meaning ‘little man’); *Ponikitjlakakai* (Coetzee, 1941: 14); and in the Northern Cape (near Nababeep) the *Tokoloshe* is known as *Heitsi-y-bee* (essentially *Heitsi-eibib*) reflecting its San origins (Coetzee, 1941: 25).¹²

3.3 Features of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon

There is a broad collection of understandings and representations of the *Tokoloshe* across contemporary southern Africa, influenced by culture, language and dialect, religious and traditional beliefs, urbanisation, media and more (cf. Lebeau, 1999: 39). As such, the *Tokoloshe* (as well as the role of witches and their familiars) means different things to different people across southern Africa. As these current understandings of the *Tokoloshe* have been shaped over several centuries and across thousands of kilometres through the interactions of several diverse peoples moving across southern Africa, it is simply not possible to carve out one definitive image or definition of the *Tokoloshe*. It is possible, however, to identify the primary features of

¹² From ‘A history of San Peoples of South Africa’ (2016):

The word San comes from the Khoekhoe language ... [and] probably it refers to people without cattle or people who forage for their food. It is generally applied to the hunting and gathering peoples of southern Africa who are descended from the original humans in this region of Africa. The term San came into use along with the word Khoesan in the late 1920s and 1930s. The terms were coined by Leonhard Schulze and promoted in the English-speaking world by Isaac Schapera.

For a note on pronunciation, see 3.4 following.

the *Tokoloshe* that are common to most, if not all, understandings of the creature. The *Tokoloshe* can be defined by the following five characteristics: it is supernatural; diminutive; roguish; aquatic; and ape-like (McLaren, 1963: 160; Matumo, 1993: 50, 396; Werner, 1933: 289; Nabe et al, 1976: 90; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941:7; Soga, 1931: 185; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 318; Pahl, 1989: 299; *Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles*, 2014; Hunter, 1936: 275-276). The *Tokoloshe* is also commonly considered to take on the role of a witch's familiar (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 318; Niehaus et al, 2001: xiii).

3.3.1 Appearance

While descriptions of the *Tokoloshe* vary in time and place, generally there are several key, identifiable features: the *Tokoloshe* is small, humanoid (or even ape-like), hairy, and muscular (Rosenthal, 1949: 183-185; Hoernle, 1937: 244; Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 129; Soga, 1931: 185-186; Kuckertz, 1983: 115; Knappert, 1977: 173; Werner, 1933: 289; Hunter, 1936: 275-276). The *Tokoloshe* is sometimes portrayed as having one side hairy and the other side smooth; sometimes described as half-human, half-animal; sometimes portrayed with a long grey beard; sometimes with unusually large ears, hands and feet (Coetzee, 1941: 13; cf. Shephard 1955: 81-83; Laubscher, 1937: 8-9). There is not only one *Tokoloshe*, but many (Laubscher, 1937: 8-9), and they may be male or female who are similar in 'height and hairiness' (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 280). The *Tokoloshe* is supposed to have only one buttock (Hunter, 1936: 275-276, Hoernle, 1937: 244; Berglund, 1989: 281).

There are distinct differences in the representation of the *Tokoloshe* across regions and cultures in southern Africa. Niehaus (1995: 525) differentiates the Northern Sotho *Tokolose* of Green Valley from the *Tokoloshe* of the Cape Nguni, stating that the Northern Sotho variety 'have two buttocks and look like a large baboon' where the only human feature is that it walks on two legs. Abel Coetzee, writing in the early 1940s, explores the reception of the *Tokoloshe* by Afrikaners (white South Africans of European descent who speak an evolved form of Dutch known as Afrikaans) and of the assimilation of the *Tokoloshe* into Afrikaans folklore and culture. Coetzee identifies traits and characteristics of the Afrikaans *Tokkelossie* that are shared from its traditional roots, though there are clear regional differences, with the greatest similarities in the communities of the Eastern Cape (closest to the Cape Nguni) and in the communities in and around Johannesburg (and the mining industry with its migrant labour). Coetzee summarises the Afrikaans image of the

Tokoloshe as follows: it is usually black, but sometimes pale, blue, reddish, light yellow, grey or even black with white stripes in colour. It has very long hair (falling even to its feet), though is sometimes depicted as being bald or sometimes with grey hair due to its age. It is also often portrayed with a beard. The *Tokoloshe* is sometimes portrayed with one or two horns on its head and wearing a hat made of reeds through which the horns stick out. The general depiction is of a creature that is ugly, with hollow cheeks, a knobbly nose, thick lips and a long chin and a big red mouth with big, long yellow teeth, and eyes that spit fire (or even perhaps only one eye in the centre of the forehead), sometimes with large ears adorned with earrings (Coetzee, 1941: 31). The *Tokoloshe* is muscular, and often is portrayed with a dog's or bull's tail; it is sometimes portrayed in women's clothes, such as a white dress, white socks and black shoes, or in a short jacket and long trousers, usually with a walking stick and a bundle, sometimes carrying a bow and arrows. Sometimes it is considered to be half-human, half-animal (such as a baboon, fish, or even water-snake) (Coetzee, 1941: 32). Perhaps the greatest difference is the absence in the Afrikaans portrayals of the *Tokoloshe* of the aggressive sexuality with which it is associated so significantly in traditional depictions (Coetzee, 1941:43). Like the Xhosa version of the *Tokoloshe*, the Nama incarnation is a small, invisible man (who can be seen by his owner) who performs certain poltergeist-type activities, steals for its owner, has a large penis and is regularly taken on by women as their lover. However, the Nama version differs in that it sometimes appears with an animal snout, has no association with water, does not play with children and does not have a split tongue (Schmidt, 1984: 38).

The penis of a male *Tokoloshe* is extraordinarily long and large, so much so that he carries it over his shoulder (Badstuebner, 2008: 31; Hoernle, 1937: 244; Hunter, 1936: 275-276), hangs it around his neck (Berglund, 1989: 280), or ties it around his waist (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 280). The female *Tokoloshe* is said to have enormous breasts (Niehaus, 1995: 525), a large vagina (Bahre, 2002: 321), with hair all over her body (but no beard like the male *Tokoloshe*) (Broster & Bourn, 1982: 58). The female may have had a part of one of her fingers cut off (according to Xhosa custom) (Bahre, 2002: 321). Female *Tokoloshes* typically live with men, while male *Tokoloshes* live with women. For the most part the *Tokoloshe* is naked (and apparently impervious to heat or cold), but oftentimes wears an animal skin over its shoulders (Hunter, 1936: 275-276; Coetzee, 1941: 14; Hoernle, 1937: 244). The

Tokoloshe is also often armed with a reed cane (Coetzee, 1941: 14) or a whip (Shephard 1955: 83).

A unique characteristic of *Tokoloshes* is that they speak with a lisp (Hunter, 1936: 275-276; Hoernle, 1937: 244; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 280). Berglund suggests that the *Tokoloshe* typically has a split tongue and consequently speaks imperfectly. However, this is improved by an operation while in the service of a witch after which ‘he speaks that tongue which they understand’ (Berglund, 1989: 280).

Tokoloshes are able to make themselves invisible (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 282). This is usually achieved with the aid of a charm or a magic stone (called *ikhubalo*) which the *Tokoloshe* carries in its hand or in its mouth (cf. Hunter, 1936: 275-276). Consequently, the *Tokoloshe* is invisible to everyone ‘except the witch who binds it’ (Badstuebner, 2008: 32; Hoernle, 1937: 244; Hunter, 1936: 275-276) and ‘innocent children under the age of puberty’ (Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 7; Krige, 1936: 324), or those who have access to special medicines which can be smeared on one’s eyes (Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941:37). The *Tokoloshe* may also appear as a shadow when it really intends putting the ‘wind up’ someone (Rosenthal, 1949: 183-184). They travel by flying through the air (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 280).

The *Tokoloshe* is apparently attended on by owls and monitor lizards (leguaans) (cf. Broster & Bourn, 1982: 58; ‘Tokoloshe – how to chase this African goblin’, 2011; Rosenthal, 1949: 183-184; Laubscher, 1937: 8-9).

3.3.2 Habitat

Shephard (1955: 81) rather poetically states: ‘Where the water lilies star the streams like sapphires, there you will find the home of the Tikoloshe’. The *Tokoloshe* is an amphibious creature reputed to live in rivers (Callaway, 1868: 349; Lee, 1958: 271; MacDonald, 1890: 205, 208), in deep pools, caves or mud huts underwater, in the reeds alongside rivers (Krige, 1936: 89 & 354; cf. Broster & Bourn, 1982: 58), in gullies or on riverbanks (Hunter, 1936: 275-276; Hoernle, 1937: 244; Eberhart, 2002: 553; cf. Coetzee, 1941:15; Rosenthal 1949: 183; cf. Hirst, 1990: 241 in which he suggests the *Tokoloshe* has a great fear of water and rivers). Sometimes the *Tokoloshe* bites people while they are bathing in the river; a bite from a *Tokoloshe* is said to produce boils, rashes or possibly even leprosy. This can be dealt with by chewing a certain ‘medicine’ and spitting it into the water before bathing and then not looking back when leaving the water (Willoughby, 1932: 3). However, a *Tokoloshe* in the service of a witch is said to be kept by its owner in a store hut (Hunter, 1936: 277), or

hidden in the corner of a witchdoctor's hut (Rosenthal, 1949: 184). Kohler & van Warmelo (1941: 38) suggest: 'he does not live in the hut, nor is one built for him, he just dwells outside visiting the house and going off again'. In urban areas, the *Tokoloshe* inhabits the dark corners of a maid's quarters, under the floor, under a bed where there is no window or light, or even buried in a beer pot (Coetzee, 1941:15).

3.3.3 Diet

Coetzee (1941: 15) lists the following in the diet of the *Tokoloshe*: 'frogs, roots, lizards, meat, maize porridge and African beer – often served in a broken pot'. The *Tokoloshe* is especially fond of milk, particularly sour milk or calabash milk (which women may not touch without permission), and supposedly roams villages drinking calabash milk at night (Callaway 1868: 350; Laubscher 1937: 9; Krige, 1936: 354; Shephard 1955: 82-83; cf. Berglund, 1989, 289). The *Tokoloshe* loathes any food containing salt, for salt is deadly to him (Laubscher 1937: 9; cf. Coetzee, 1941: 15; Shephard 1955: 82-83). Hunter suggests the *Tokoloshe* is fond of sweets and sugar (Hunter, 1936: 276). Some accounts suggest the *Tokoloshe* prefers meat, and bites off the toes of his sleeping victims (cf. Andersson, 2002: 428), or requires human blood so as to maintain the powerful bond between witch and *Tokoloshe* (cf. Lyncaster, 2014: v, 7).

3.3.4 A playful poltergeist

The *Tokoloshe* in itself is only playfully mischievous, with an inclination towards thieving (Hoernle, 1937: 244; Berglund, 1989: 280), typically full of harmless pranks and 'behaving much like poltergeists, throwing stones on roofs or upsetting cooking pots' (Shephard 1955: 82). It is not considered entirely evil. Laubscher makes the suggestion that *Tokoloshe* 'is also known to put himself at the disposal of those wishing to counteract witchcraft, so that he is not under all circumstances a little fellow of evil' (Laubscher, 1937: 9). In my fieldwork meeting, one of the traditional healers also pointed out that the *Tokoloshe* is not considered evil by all; she explained that *Tokoloshe* is associated through its ancestral lineage with the maGaba clan: members of this clan recognise *Tokoloshe* as a sacred spiritual being and when they praise their clan they embrace *Tokoloshe* although they are not witches or intent on doing evil.

3.3.5 Children's playmate

The *Tokoloshe* is a popular playmate of children (Soga, 1931: 185-186; cf. Mkhize, 1996). *Tokoloshe* displays his fondness for children by pretending to stick-

fight with them in the fields (cf. Rosenthal, 1949: 187). Also, it makes itself invisible and steals food from kraals for hungry children. The children are warned, though, never to speak at home about it and are beaten by *Tokoloshe* if they do so (Laubscher, 1937: 9; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 38; cf. Zondo, 1995). The *Tokoloshe* is primarily thought of as having a negative effect on children as they learn from it how to steal. It is said that the *Tokoloshe* will not make friends with children who have been baptized ‘because they bear the mark of God’. Moreover, children who play with a *Tokoloshe* are said to develop an unusual paleness and dryness of the skin which makes it look as if the skin has been ‘smeared with ash’ (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 281). Parents instruct their children to tell them if they see a *Tokoloshe*, and they beat their children if they tell tales of playing with the *Tokoloshe*, as a child who grows up knowing the *Tokoloshe* will continue to do so as an adult and may become a witch (Hunter, 1936: 277).

3.3.6 Fieldwork interviews

During my fieldwork interviews, I asked each of the young student informants what they thought a *Tokoloshe* looks like. Seven of the informants stated they had no idea what a *Tokoloshe* looks like. One informant (Z) added she had no real idea what it looked like and had only seen images of a *Tokoloshe* on television. Another (Ch) said she had no idea, as a *Tokoloshe* is a spirit. Eleven of the informants identified the *Tokoloshe* as being small ('tiny', 'short', 'little', 'looks like a midget'). Eight said the *Tokoloshe* was male, one said it was female, and one said it was male or female. Four informants (Kh, E, I and R) said the *Tokoloshe* was black (or dark). Those with some idea about the appearance of the *Tokoloshe* presented diverse descriptions. A said she thought the *Tokoloshe* looked like ‘a scarier version of a sangoma with dreadlocks’ or ‘like a witch from a fairy tale with a pointy nose’, a ‘bed monster’ that ‘comes at night’. Em perceived the *Tokoloshe* as a bogeyman, a ‘scruffy thing with big eyes’. P recalled a description from her childhood, portraying the *Tokoloshe* as ‘hairy down one side and white down the other’, and having a big head and big feet. L said it was a weird-looking man with dreadlocks, while Pe said it had a pointed nose and long nails, and wears shoes that are too big. I said *Tokoloshe* was hairy with big eyes, Z said the *Tokoloshe* has a long beard, and Kh said it has holes for eyes, and has wings. J said it has long pointy ears, while K said it has small horns on its head. S said one arm and leg is longer than the other. E said it has a scary face and long hair, and wears ‘crazy stuff’ (clothes that are dirty and torn apart). K said the *Tokoloshe* was

invisible, and *R* said the *Tokoloshe* looks like a ‘shadow gremlin’. *B* said her idea (from her childhood) is that the *Tokoloshe* looks like a round clock with ears and feet.

I also asked the traditional healers to clarify for me their understanding of what *Tokoloshe* is. They explained, with no hesitation or uncertainty, that when visible *Tokoloshe* appears as a very short, old man. He is usually clothed, but the nature of what he wears differs from one account to another as he can appear in different guises. Typically, he wears ordinary clothes and sometimes wears gumboots. He has a very long penis, which can be bound around his waist and is used for evil purposes. When I asked about the gender of *Tokoloshe* some suggested he can change into a woman, or can appear in any form really, but the consensus after some discussion was that *Tokoloshe* is almost always male. The group agreed that *Tokoloshe* does not like salty food. The group also agreed that *Tokoloshe* likes children, particularly young boys. One of the healers suggested that *Tokoloshe* likes to play with children in the evening, especially when it is dark. She said evidence of the presence of *Tokoloshe* is that the children will be playing in a negative manner or fighting. Another healer suggested a child who possesses a *Tokoloshe* may be identified by the fact that he or she may not do well at school; the child may be mentally ill, may display unpredictable or strange behaviour (oscillating between good and bad behaviour), and may prefer to stay alone for most of the time.

3.3.7 Pinky-Pinky

One particular manifestation of the *Tokoloshe* is referred to as Pinky-Pinky (or also Pinky-Ponky), a ‘pink tokoloshe’ that is, according to Goldstuck (2006: 248):

... half-male, half-female, half-human, half-animal. It is short and hairy, wears a dress along one side and trousers along the other, can be seen only by children, hangs around in school toilets, and is partial to girls with pink panties – hence *Pinky-Pinky*.

In September 1993, the press in South Africa reported for the first time on sightings of this incarnation: a ‘pink tokoloshe’ that can be seen only by girls who are threatened to be raped by the creature if they happen to be wearing pink underwear. Boys cannot see Pinky-Pinky, though they can feel it on their faces when they are slapped or scratched by the creature (Goldstuck, 2006: 249-250, 312-315; cf. Molefe, 2014; Matuntuta, 2016). The identifiable characteristics of this creature, however, are familiar: particularly with reference to its size, hairiness, powers of invisibility (and visibility to children only), aggressive sexuality, and a water-based habitat: all of

which are, of course, the characteristics of the *Tokoloshe*. Goldstuck suggests that the first reported sightings of Pinky-Pinky were in schools in Johannesburg's white suburbs; reports of further encounters subsequently emerged in September 1994 from some of Pretoria's black townships' schools. Sightings have since continued to be reported into the new millennium as far north as Bulawayo in Zimbabwe and Kalamare in Botswana (Tucker, 2013: 127-128, 131-132). Goldstuck suggests further that the appearance of this hybrid creature coincides significantly with the racial desegregation of schools in South Africa during the deconstruction of Apartheid. Certainly, schools in the White suburbs of South Africa would have been in their third year of desegregation at this time, facilitating a cross-cultural melting-pot of Black and non-Black cultural norms, beliefs and histories, the likes of which had not widely been seen before on the playgrounds of South African schools, and appropriately an environment ripe for the assimilation and re-evolution of newly-discovered southern African belief, folklore and legend. In 'Penny Siopis', it states:

Pinky Pinky is a very real figure for many girls and embodies the fears and anxieties that girl's [sic] face as their bodies develop and their social standing changes. He can also be seen as a figure that has grown out of the neurosis that can develop in a society that experiences such change and tension as is found in Southern Africa. It is also a society in which rape and the abuse of women and children is extremely high. Pinky Pinky plays a pretty good game of hide and seek, taking advantage of adolescent angst made all the more complex by growing up in a society wracked by violence and uncertainty.

During my fieldwork, I asked the young student informants if they had heard of Pinky-Pinky. Eight of them said they had. *L* said she heard it was a 'little ghost'. *S* had heard about it, but didn't know what it is. *K* said Pinky-Pinky is the same thing as *Tokoloshe*: the small kids she grew up with used to say that if you made friends with Pinky-Pinky then Pinky-Pinky would steal for you. Five of the informants (*P*, *I*, *Z*, *E* and *Ph*) said Pinky-Pinky was something that lived in a toilet. *P* said it was something she remembers from childhood; it was in the toilet at school, and children were scared of it, but she didn't know what it was. *I* heard about it at school, and remembers a song about 'being Pinky-Pinky and killing people'. *Z* said Pinky-Pinky was seen by children and used to visit primary schools; she would appear as a little girl, and everything she wore was pink. When she came out of the toilet she would be invisible, but she would come into the classroom and play pranks on the teacher. Pinky-Pinky was feared, though, by the children as it wasn't a normal thing to see. *Ph* said he had heard of Pinky- Pinky living in toilets or in the dark, and that it had two

faces: one pink and one purple. *E* had heard of a Pinky-*Ponky*¹³: a white woman who lived in the toilets or in the bushes: she could ‘steal you and take you away to her own world’.

I also asked the group of traditional healers about Pinky-Pinky. They said they knew, rather, of Pinky-*Ponky*. *L* explained that Pinky-*Ponky* is another name for a certain type of *Tokoloshe*. He explained further that this type of *Tokoloshe* is very powerful, and a very popular type of *Tokoloshe* in Duncan Village (a township settlement in East London) where he grew up. He recalled one ‘doing a lot of damage there in Duncan Village’. He said:

Once we were asked to pray in a certain school here in Duncan Village, and people were called from the communities to go and chase that kind of evil away. And it was targeting school-going kids. It is a kind of *Tokoloshe* thing: a pupil who saw it – when they give you an explanation – you could see that this was a *Tokoloshe*; all the features of *Tokoloshe* were there...

Conceptual images of Pinky-Pinky have been created by artist Penny Siopis and photographers Lutendo Malatji and Thapelo Motsumi (‘Penny Siopis’, n.d.; Matuntuta, 2016).

3.4 Origins

While the *Tokoloshe* now occupies a position in various avenues of broader contemporary southern African culture, it is possible to trace the lineage of the *Tokoloshe* back directly to the beliefs of the /Xam peoples of southern Africa, a former clan of the San peoples who inhabited southwestern Africa for several millennia.¹⁴ Kidd (1906: 137) and Willoughby (1932: 102; cf. Francis, 2009: 111) suggest the origins of the *Tokoloshe* sprouted from encounters of the San and San belief with the Nguni peoples in South Africa. Hammond-Tooke (1997: 122-124; cf. Junod, 1938: 28; Lewis-Williams & Pearce, 2004: 219; Prins & Lewis, 1992: 133, 137-141, 143-144;) in particular, shows the influence of /Xam culture on the Cape Nguni (the isiXhosa-speaking peoples), with reference to the borrowing and adapting of the /Xam trickster deity figure, */Kaggen*, into Xhosa culture, manifested now as

¹³ The name difference suggests regional variations: Goldstuck and Siopis refer to incidents that occurred in the northern region of South Africa, while my interviews were with informants primarily from the southern region of South Africa.

¹⁴ /Xam is essentially the language of the /Xam-ka !ei people, a now extinct group of indigenous people originally residing in /Xam-ka !au (literally ‘the dust of the /Xam’) in what is today South Africa’s Northern Cape province (Bennun, 2004: x, 6, 29, 88).

Tokoloshe.¹⁵ Hammond-Tooke identifies two common yet exclusive key features of both the *Tokoloshe* and */Kaggen* to qualify his claim: a unique form of articulation (namely, lisping); and a characteristic moral ambiguity inherent in the nature and perception of both characters (cf. Deacon & Dowson, 1996: 102-104; Hammond-Tooke, 2002: 282, 289; Guenther, 1999: 106). An outstanding feature of the *Tokoloshe* is its large, long penis; */Kaggen*'s name, in certain instances, is given to mean 'Penis' (Guenther, 1999: 105; cf. Bennun, 2004: 94). Also, */Kaggen*'s Hei//om, Nama and Damara equivalent, *Haiseb* (or *Iseb* or *Heitsi-Eibib*), possesses a talented and 'cumbersomely long' penis that lusts after women (Guenther, 1999: 102-103, 105, 107; Deacon & Dowson, 1996: 104-105).¹⁶ Finally, */Kaggen* and the *Tokoloshe* are also both supernatural, potent shamans. The *Tokoloshe* can act independently of a witch and is considered an *igqwira* (a sorcerer) (cf. Soga, 1931: 186): this Nguni word is derived from the San word !gi:xa, where the palatal click is represented by “!” in San and “q” in Xhosa; also the guttural San “x” is rendered as “r” in Bantu languages like Xhosa - !gi:xa is one who is full of !gi i.e., i.e. a shaman (Lewis-Williams & Pearce, 2004: 218-219). Schmidt identifies the *Tokoloshe*'s invisible poltergeist-like behaviours, its capacity to transform into an animal and its supernatural sexual relationship with women as shared features with older Nama (Khoekhoen) supernatural beings (Schmidt, 1984: 38).

The concept of the *Tokoloshe* was subsequently passed from the Xhosa to the Zulu (Krige, 1936: 354; Hammond-Tooke 1997: 122; Ngubane, 1977: 34; cf. Shaw, 1860: 445). Hammond-Tooke (1975: 19) clarifies that Jenkinson and Owen, both writing in the second half of the 19th century, do not include the *Tokoloshe* among the

¹⁵ */Kaggen* is the creator of all things; a being who can appear in spirit or in physical form, such as a bull eland, a louse, a snake or a praying mantis [the connection to the praying mantis supposedly stems from the insect's ability to transform itself from a stick, in appearance, to that of 'a flying creature with spreading wings'] (Lewis-Williams & Pearce, 2004: 106, 112-115; cf. Bennun, 2004: 52-53).

¹⁶ A note on pronunciation: / = the dental click (made by pressing the tip of the tongue against the upper front teeth and then withdrawing it with a fricative sound, represented by the letter 'c' in Xhosa, Zulu and seSotho languages, similar to the 'tsk tsk' sound of gentle reproof in English); // = the lateral click (made by pressing the front part of the tongue on the roof of the mouth and then removing it quickly, releasing air along the sides by drawing the tongue in from the front teeth, represented by the letter 'x' in Xhosa, Zulu and seSotho languages; the sound is often used by horse riders to 'signal their steeds to start or go faster'); ! = the guttural (alveolar-palatal) click (made at the very back of the mouth by pressing the tongue firmly against the back of the alveolar ridge and snapping it down sharply, like the 'popping of a cork of a bottle of Champagne', with no letter equivalent); ≠ = the palatal (alveolar) click (made by pressing the tongue on the front part of the roof of the mouth and removing it quickly, represented by the letter 'q'); the 'X' is pronounced as an aspirated guttural sound, much like the 'ch' in *loch* (Bennun, 2004: 391-392; Lewis-Williams, 2016: 11).

main Zulu familiars which were traditionally animal-form witch familiars and that the supernatural, humanoid creatures like the *Tokoloshe* are copied from the Xhosa. Callaway, relating in some detail the *Tokoloshe* as pictured by the Zulu in the mid-19th century, also suggests (according to Zulu informants) that concepts of the *Tokoloshe* came to the Zulu from the Xhosa: Mbanda, quoted in Callaway (1868: 349), states: ‘I hear of this creature from men who come from the Amakxosa; for among the Amazulu there is no Utikoloshe ...; ... it is found among the Amakxosa’. Callaway bases his argument partly on what has been recounted to him by informants and partly on the several Xhosa-isms used by his storytellers (Berglund, 1989: 302; cf. Hammond-Tooke, 1997: 122).

Coetzee (writing in 1945, and translated and quoted in Willemse, 2010: 93-94) explains that the *Tokoloshe* also penetrated the beliefs of whites (and Afrikaners) through their cultural interactions with the Xhosa and other indigenous groups, primarily as part of the cultural exchange that occurred between Afrikaners and these groups during the Afrikaner *Voortrekkers*’ (Pioneers’) Great Trek from the Cape across the southern African hinterland (1835-1846) (Coetzee, 1941: 46-47). Willemse (2010: 93-94) acknowledges, too, the close proximity in which indigenous workers and their *Boer* (Afrikaner) employers lived in the rural communities of the early Cape Colony, or of the informal villages and farming communities of the northern Boer republics, providing opportunities for cultural exchange. In Coetzee’s 1941 work, he is able to distinguish areas in the western Cape where the *Tokoloshe* was completely unknown to Afrikaners from other areas around South Africa where the *Tokoloshe* was widely known, particularly by those Afrikaners living close to the then Transkei (now in the Eastern Cape), Zululand (now KwaZulu-Natal) and Swaziland (Coetzee, 1941: 21-23). Coetzee was able to establish that the *Tokoloshe* was known at that time by Afrikaners living as far north as Pretoria and even as far west as Argentina where several hundred Boers had immigrated during the first decade of the twentieth century (Coetzee, 1941: 47).

Elder (2003: 1) suggests that the representation of the *Tokoloshe* as a sinister being (as opposed to simply a mischievous one) was the product of the advent of Apartheid. However, references to the *Tokoloshe* as a malevolent being predate the rise of Apartheid by well over a century (cf. 1.4.2).

Migrant labour in South Africa has played a key role in the further dissemination of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon. The interaction of cultures, languages

and beliefs that occurred within the big city townships and the mining compounds provided a rich milieu for the transposition of the *Tokoloshe* from the Nguni belief systems of the Xhosa and Zulu people to the shared broader socio-cultural heritage of the migrant labour force from across southern Africa. Coetzee suggests that according to tradition the Basotho (by whom Sesotho is spoken) learned of the *Tokoloshe* from the Xhosa and subsequently incorporated the phenomenon into their beliefs (Coetzee, 1941: 16).¹⁷ Niehaus et al (2001: 214; cf. Monnig, 1967: 73-75) clarify that the *Tokoloshe* familiar was not endemic originally among the Northern Sotho, and that witches in Green Valley in north-eastern South Africa only began to use *tokolotsi* after the population removals of 1960 and the migrant work that followed those removals. Niehaus' informants suggested the familiar was introduced to the village by migrants working on the Witwatersrand or purchased from 'doctors of witchcraft' in Durban (Niehaus et al, 2001: 50; cf. Niehaus, 1995: 517-518, 528; Tucker 2013: 21-22). Andersson reports evidence of the *Tokoloshe* (or *chitokoroshi*) in Shona culture (in the Buhera district of Zimbabwe), where the creature was brought to the region by Buhera men working as migrant labourers in South Africa (Andersson, 2002: 442; cf. Manganga, 2014: 134; Lebeau, 1999: 200, 202).¹⁸

¹⁷ Molofo, in his acclaimed fictionalised Sesotho account of Zulu king Shaka (*Chaka*, first published in 1925), includes Hili in his cast of magical creatures (Molofo, 1981:164).

¹⁸ In Tanzania, sightings of a similar creature called *Popobawa*, were first recorded in the mid 1960s. The *Popobawa* (or *Popo Bawa*, literally 'bat wing'), which is said locally to have originated in Zanzibar, is an oversexed, shape-shifting creature that frequently appears inexplicably at night in various forms, though often as a one-eyed dwarf or giant with pointed ears, wings, talons and/or a large penis; *Popobawa* is referred to as a djinn, spirit, demon, beast, monster, or an embodied form of witchcraft; it is unleashed by witches to rape men and women as they sleep and is associated with uncleanness and sodomy (Nickell, 1995; 'Sex attacks blamed on bat demon', 2007; Thompson, 2011: 8, 11; cf. Thompson, 2017: 9-11, 95, 139). The origins of the *Popobawa* are unclear, with some suggestions proposing the origins lie in Yemen, or as a djinn linked to Islam and the Arab world (Thompson, 2017: 155). I would argue there are two factors to suggest the origins of the *Popobawa* lie in South Africa: first, the return of migrant workers from South Africa to Tanganyika after independence in 1961 (and the cessation of migrant labour to South Africa by President Nyerere); and second, the influx of South African exiles and refugees into Tanganyika/Tanzania from 1962 onwards. In the 1940s and 1950s, large groups of people from Tanganyika, particularly Nyakyusans, travelled to South Africa to work in the mines (in 1952 alone, 3,000 or so Tanzanians were recruited to work in the mines, cf. Wilson, 2011: 69). After Tanganyika's independence, President Nyerere ended the possibility for travel to South Africa, banning contract labour recruiting and effectively ending the legal status of migrant labour; and several Tanganyikans returned home as a result (Mwakikagile, 2008: 243-244; cf. Paton, 1994: 199-200). In the early 1960s, several ANC members were deployed in Tanzania: the ANC's military wing, *uMkhonto weSizwe*, established military camps in Tanzania at Kongwa, Morogoro, Mbeya and Bagamoyo where several hundred exiled ANC guerrilla fighters were trained or were held in transit to training camps in the Soviet Union or East Germany, and the ANC also set up its headquarters for its External Mission at Morogoro. Tanzania became a refugee hotspot for South Africans fleeing Apartheid, particularly after the Soweto uprising in 1976, with a camp being set up at Mazimbu (later renamed the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College) and later at Dakawa to accommodate and educate the children of South African exiles living in and around Dar-es Salaam

Schmidt, in his ‘Observations on the acculturation of the Nama in South West Africa/Namibia’ (1984), suggests that the *Tokoloshe* (or *Tokolossi* in this instance) was not prevalent in then South West Africa (today Namibia) in 1960. Schmidt states his lack of awareness of the phenomenon at the time may have been down to his ‘scanty knowledge of Nama spiritual life and a lack of direct questioning’, but by the 1970s Schmidt identified the *Tokoloshe* was now a commonplace, fearful figure of belief in several Nama (Herero and Rehobothers) adult and children communities, and that among the Nama and Herero peoples, the elderly members claimed that in ‘former times there had not been such a thing, and that they had had to have the matter explained by the younger generation’ (Schmidt, 1984: 38). Schmidt attributes the advent of the phenomenon to the arrival of migrant and settler Xhosa and Zulu workers into Namibia, though he suggests further a strong Afrikaans influence, too, in that the name (*Tokolossi*) is similar in form to the Afrikaans equivalent (*Tokkelossie*) (Schmidt, 1984: 39). German anthropologist, Wagner-Robertz, in her work in Namibia similarly suggests that in the 1970s the *Tokoloshe* (or *Tokolussi*) was new to the beliefs of the Damara people with whom she was working (Low, 2004: 119-120).

Carstens, in his 1961 ethnographic study of the small coloured community of Steinkopf in the North Western Cape (now in South Africa’s Namakwa District Municipality in the Northern Cape province), notes that stories about the *Tokoloshe* were common in Steinkopf, having been brought into the community by men returning from their work on the diamond mines at Kleinzee. Carstens suggests further that the idea of the *Tokoloshe* was brought into the region by migrant workers, reputedly Owambos from northern Namibia/southern Angola, who either left the *Tokoloshes* at the mine when they were employed there in the 1940s or sent them to frighten off the coloured workers who took their jobs when they left in 1949 (Carstens, 1961: 342-343). In Steinkopf at this time, the *Tokoloshe* was described variously as either resembling a little baboon (as in the version associated with the Cape Nguni, cf. Hunter, 1936: 275-276) or as a small black man wearing a large hat (more in line with Coetzee’s Afrikaans version, cf. Coetzee, 1941: 31-32). It seems

(‘uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) in exile’, 2011). The banned South African Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) also established a community of exiles in Tanzania (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2004: 704). It is feasible to suggest that the *Tokoloshe* (in some form or other) was in the cultural baggage brought into Tanzania in the early 1960s, either by the returning migrant labourers or by the South African exiles and refugees. The subsequent appearance of a *Tokoloshe*-like creature shortly afterwards (appropriated and re-named) does not seem unrelated.

plausible that a version of the phenomenon may have been brought to the mining community by white (predominantly Afrikaans) labourers employed at the mine from the 1920s to the 1940s, while the second version was probably brought by the Xhosa-speaking migrant labourers employed from the Eastern Cape from the 1950s onwards (cf. Carstens, 2001: 45, 126, 167, 169). It seems unlikely that the idea was brought into the region by Owambo workers, given that the phenomenon was largely unknown in the Namibian region before the 1960s. The behavior of the Kleinzee *Tokoloshe* matches that of other reports: it is a nocturnal, malicious poltergeist, frightening, harming or even biting its victims while they are in bed (Carstens, 1961: 343). Carstens theorises that the new-found belief in the *Tokoloshe* represents the Steinkopf inhabitants' prejudices and antagonisms towards 'Bantu-speaking people' who had become their competitors/economic rivals on the labour market (Carstens, 1961: 344; cf. Carstens, 2001: 170).

The introduction of multi-racial education in South Africa in 1991 facilitated another significant set of societal transactions, in that children raised in particular cultural milieus were now able to interact freely at school with children raised in cultural environments vastly different from their own. As indicated in 3.3.7 above, reports of *Tokoloshe* (and Pinky-Pinky) sightings at newly integrated schools were a relatively frequent occurrence in the early 1990s. Fordred-Green (2000: 705) suggests that the hysteria accompanying these sightings was largely the manifestation of fear and insecurity on the part of the students who now found themselves in social interactions for which they were not possibly prepared, and the greatest threat they could possibly encounter from these new cultural exchanges that were occurring took the form of the culture's most significant monster, i.e. the *Tokoloshe*! In the case of the Pinky-Pinky sightings, which took place largely in desegregated schools in urban areas of the Witwatersrand in the mid 1990s, these encounters incorporated an evolved version of the *Tokoloshe* (slightly different in appearance), yet the key features and function of those encounters are the same as those described by Mkhize's (1996) comments on sightings among prepubescent or early adolescent (mainly rural) girls in KwaZulu-Natal. Thornton (in Goldstuck, 2006: 314-315) echoes Mkhize's notions of these encounters as signifiers of identity development within a shifting socio-cultural landscape, i.e. within the early years of democratised South Africa, a period of tremendous and significant change with regard to society, ethnic identities and cultural boundaries.

In the late 20th and early 21st century, the advent and accessibility of new technologies and new media have also played a significant role in the dissemination of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon (cf. Bahre, 2002: 302). The increasing popularity and recognition of the *Tokoloshe* across southern Africa is such that it has led the Comaroffs to suggest the contemporary notion of the *Tokoloshe* has, in fact, absorbed the characteristic features of other familiars, such as the zombie (*umkhovu*), producing a singular, composite universal familiar (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2002: 803; Epprecht, 2013: 256; cf. Mutwa, 2003: 214; McNab, 2006: 24-25). While this research has focussed on the *Tokoloshe* in southern Africa only, there is evidence of similar representations further north, such as the *Tuyewera* or *Tuyobela* in Zambia and Malawi: an impish creature with the power of invisibility that is used in witchcraft to steal or to kill while its victims are asleep (Werner, 1933: 249-250; cf. Wendland & Hachibamba, 2007: 144-145).

The beginnings of the *Tokoloshe* have also been explained and captured in oral records across South Africa as personal and intimate stories of seduction, witchcraft and vengeance (cf. ‘Tokoloshe’, n.d; Mutwa, 1998: 604-606). In my fieldwork meeting, I asked the healers where they thought *Tokoloshe* had come from. They agreed it was difficult to say if *Tokoloshe* had come from any one part of Africa because of the migration of peoples across the continent. One member of the group (*M*) said that because *Tokoloshes* are spirits used by witches who send them out to various locations such as ‘to the mines to work there’, or ‘to guard the sugarcane’. They take various forms (human or invisible) and can be all over the world and, like ‘elves’, they are simply everywhere. Another member of the group, feeling moved by her ancestors to share this story, gave her own account of the origin of *Tokoloshe*: she said *Tokoloshe* was a child born of incest; his mother and father were sister and brother; and so he was expelled from his family, and he was cursed forever upon his own death to live out his ancestral life [the afterlife] as an ageless, loose spirit, existing through the spirits of the dead, ‘never being able to get through to a living being’.

3.5 Cosmology of traditional belief

The *Tokoloshe* is rooted in the complex cosmology of traditional belief in southern Africa, the complexity of which is complicated further by a series of

regional, historical, linguistic and socio-cultural variations across southern Africa.¹⁹ The impacts of migration, of colonialisation and the advent of Christianity, of Apartheid and of modernity are also evident in the makeup of traditional belief in the region. As such, it is not possible to claim any one belief holds true in exactly the same way for everyone. Also, the interactions of so many diverse cultural groups over several centuries have facilitated the cultural borrowing and hybrid world-views that are characteristic features of traditional belief in southern Africa (cf. Hammond-Tooke, 1989: 7-9). It is in this context that the position and role of the *Tokoloshe* within the cosmology of traditional belief in southern Africa can be understood.

Belief in, and fear of, the *Tokoloshe* in southern Africa is a small, tangible part of a greater spiritual and supernatural worldview that is present in 21st century southern Africa, but that is anchored in traditional belief. Broadly speaking, the five principal elements of the cosmology of traditional belief are: belief in a Supreme Being (also referred to as ‘the Sky’, ‘Father of Strength’, ‘Creator’, ‘Maker’, and ‘Great Spirit’); in the ancestors (also called ‘shades’ or ‘senior relatives’); in spirits; in familiars (of which the *Tokoloshe* is but one); and in the forces of societal and familial pollution (mystical forces that act on people intermittently without human involvement, diminishing their resistance to disease and creating conditions of misfortune) (Kuckertz, 1983: 113-117; Partridge, 1977: ix; Hammond-Tooke, 1975:16-21; Hammond-Tooke, 1974b: 319-333; Walaza, 2005: 20-24, 26-29; Mtuze, 1999: 49-50; Mtuze, 2003: 40-47, 54-55; Hammond-Tooke, 1989: 47, 58, 63, 91; Berglund, 1989: 29; Junod, 1938: 116; Hunter, 1936: 275). Traditional belief and Christian dogma are regularly coupled in southern Africa, producing a unique and exceptional complementary worldview (cf. Pauw, 1974: 101-102; Pauw 1975: 159, 163; Cocks & Moller, 2002: 15).

3.5.1 Familiars

Familiars are animal agents or animal-like supernatural spiritual agents that are either captured and trained or created and subsequently controlled by the witches

¹⁹ The systems of traditional belief across Africa are referred to as African traditional religion (ATR) or African indigenous religion (AIR) and refer to ‘living institutionalized religious beliefs and practices rooted in past religious culture, transmitted to present generation by successive forebears through oral traditions, sacred institutions, and religion which is updated by each generation in light of new religious experiences’ (Gbenda, n.d.: 2). For further detail on ATR/AIR, see ‘Religion in Africa’, n.d.; Gbenda, n.d.: 2-6; Awolalu, 1976: 1-2; ‘Traditional African Religious Beliefs and Practices’, 2010: 33-34; Adamo, 2011.

who catch or create them. These familiars occupy an ambiguous position in southern African cosmology as they hover between the natural and the supernatural (Petrus & Bogopa, 2007: 3).²⁰ Familiars may be baboons which are used to ride on, or other animals such as polecats, wild cats, hyenas, leopards, lions, and skunks; birds, including the lightning bird and nocturnal birds like owls; or reptiles, including snakes and crocodiles (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 282, 284-287; Hoernle, 1937: 244; Soga, 1931: 193-197; Berglund, 1989: 279-285; Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 129-130; Hammond-Tooke, 1981: 98-99; Krige, 1936: 324-325; Laubscher, 1937: 13-15, 18, 21-22, 25, 32; Hammond-Tooke, 1997: 122; Kuckertz, 1983: 115; Laubscher, 1975: 128, 153, 162-163, 171-172). Witches also use zombies as familiars; these are the disinterred and resurrected corpses of victims that have been enslaved to do the witch's bidding (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 287-288; cf. Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 130; Hammond-Tooke, 1981: 99; Berglund, 1989: 279; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 7, 35-36; Krige, 1936: 326-327; Comaroff & Comaroff, 2002: 787). All familiars are used as messengers and agents of evil (Wilson, 1951a: 309; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 7; Werner, 1933: 24). Hirst suggests that the familiars are crass caricatures of the sacred animals and messengers associated with ancestral spirits and traditional healers, while the sacred animals are visible, revered as sacred and have a protective, moral importance for the living, the familiars are invisible (seen only by their owners) and they are used for sexual pleasure and are sources of unmerited misfortune (Hirst, 1990: 246-247).

The *Tokoloshe* is said to have a special relationship with the lightning bird (*impundulu*): they are believed to be friends, meeting together at a special meeting place in the skies where they plan ways and means of seducing women. However, sometimes they are portrayed as conflicting adversaries, and while *Impundulu* is considered to be stronger than *Tokoloshe*, it does not have the strong medicines that the *Tokoloshe* does (Laubscher, 1937: 15). While animal-like familiars are common to most parts of southern Africa, in the Lowveld region of South Africa, the

²⁰ For further detailed information on witchcraft and witches in southern Africa, please see: Ashforth, 2001: 5, 8-9; 'A strange case of sorcery', 1995; Berglund, 1989: 274-275, 287, 289; Broster & Bourn, 1982: 85; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 264-265, 279, 289; Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 128; Hammond-Tooke, 1974b: 338; Hammond-Tooke, 1975: 19, 25; Hammond-Tooke, 1981: 95, 97-98, 100; Junod, 1927b: 504-507, 509-510, 512-513; Junod, 1938: 116; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 35; Krige, 1936: 321-323; Krige & Krige, 1943: 250-251, 253-255, 263-265, 269-270; 'Muti – what is it and how can I get it?', 2011; Ngubane, 1977: 32-33, 35; Niehaus, 1995: 517-518, 520; Niehaus et al, 2001: xiii, 25; Niehaus, 2002: 216, 273, 277; Petrus & Bogopa, 2007: 2-4; Soga, 1931: 180-181; Wilson, 1951a: 307-310; Wilson 1951b: 165-167.

Tokoloshe and *Mamlambo* (a female water spirit that takes the form of a river snake) are considered as ‘new witch familiars believed to have been purchased by local witches from Nguni-speaking witch-healers on the mines or in KwaZulu/Natal’ (Niehaus et al, 2001: 46; cf. Hammond-Tooke, 1997: 122).

A witch is said to work always by means of a familiar. These familiars have ‘auras’, do not fend for themselves, but have to be fed, and are capable of human-like communication, understanding their witch’s instructions and sharing the power of speech (Niehaus et al, 2001:48; cf. Kuckertz, 1983: 115). Familiars are feared as much as, or even more than, witches themselves as there are a great deal more of them than witches, and a single witch may keep more than one familiar (Berglund, 1989: 278). Familiars may be inherited or may be passed on from one person to another (Hoernle, 1937: 244). They carry out the personal, malicious intentions of the witches who own them, and the hardship, injury and death that they cause is undeserved by the innocent sufferer (Kuckertz, 1983: 116). Such evil ends may include the familiar being sent by the witch to obtain ‘dirt’ from potential victims of witchcraft, such as samples of faeces, urine, vomit, hair, or even nail-parings; to identify the names of potential victims; to destroy homesteads; to frighten or harm people, and to deprive them of sleep through poltergeist-like activity; and to fatigue cattle, particularly oxen (Berglund, 1989: 288-289). The relationship between witches and their familiars is complex and dualistic: witches are often identified with their familiars, and in some sectors are said to merge identity with, and possess the attributes of, those creatures. They may actually metamorphose into familiars themselves, and the familiar into human form, transcending the restrictions of normal human and animal behaviour (Niehaus et al, 2001: 45-46). The witch usually develops a sexual intimacy with the familiar (Hammond-Tooke, 1981: 98), most of which are thought to be of the opposite sex of the witch, and frequently take the form of a pale-skinned beautiful girl or handsome man (Wilson, 1951a: 309; Hammond-Tooke, 1981: 99). The work of the Kriges on the Lovedu people indicates that in this region witches are not considered to have sexual relations with familiars (Krige & Krige, 1943: 251-252).

3.5.2 The *Tokoloshe*-witch relationship

Witches in southern Africa are frequently (though not always) conceptualised as women, and the *Tokoloshe* is usually associated with a witch in blatant sexual terms (Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 130; cf. Ashforth, 2001: 23; Hoernle, 1937: 244;

Berglund, 1989: 280); though Niehaus suggests that the *Tokoloshe* is used by male and female witches almost equally (Niehaus et al, 2001: 51; cf. 215). The *Tokoloshe* has a unique relationship with its witch-owner, and while reports conflict there are those that suggest the identities of the witch and the *Tokoloshe* may be inseparable: the witch may assume the image of the *Tokoloshe*, or the *Tokoloshe* assume the witch's image - all in order to enact her evil (Niehaus, 1995: 526). Witches are not immune to the malicious powers of the *Tokoloshe*. If the *Tokoloshe* becomes angry at what the witch is asking it to do, or feels sorry for the potential victim, it may save the victim or kill the witch (Hunter, 1936: 277). Some claimants also suggest that when a *Tokoloshe* is killed so, too, will its witch-owner die, as the witch uses the same fat as the *Tokoloshe* to assume its form, and there is, therefore, a 'mystical interdependence of their identities' (Niehaus et al, 2001: 51). Witches are also supposed not to put salt in their food as they frequently share their food with their *Tokoloshe* for whom salt is fatally poisonous (Pahl, 1989: 299). Witches are said to pair up their baby daughters with a *Tokoloshe*, and the *Tokoloshe* will kill the daughter if she will not have him (Broster & Bourn, 1982: 85; Hunter, 1936: 276-277; cf. Wilson, 1951a: 309; Kuckertz, 1983: 115).

The *Tokoloshe* is used harmfully by witches, and specifically against livestock and people (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 27, 281; Rosenthal, 1949: 184; Kuckertz, 1983: 115; Krige, 1936: 324; Hunter, 1936: 275-276). The udders of cattle, particularly, are targeted by the *Tokoloshe* in their attempts to milk cows (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 282). Against people, the *Tokoloshe* is used for various nefarious tasks, such as placing poisons or medicines in food or snuff, or even directly into the victim's body (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 282, 289; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 38). The *Tokoloshe* may also be used to bring physical or mental illness to a person, or to choke and strangle the victim in their sleep, quite possibly even resulting in that person's death. The *Tokoloshe* may carry a person away (*ukuthwebula*) in a whirlwind so he will find himself in a different place altogether (Coetzee, 1941: 18; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 280; Laubscher, 1937: 9; Lebeau, 1999: 376). *Tokoloshes* may also be used to guard the witch's home, to steal from members of the community, or as the witch's lover (Niehaus et al, 2001: 53). Another function may be to fetch hidden or buried parts of a person's body and convey these to the witch for use in concocting deadly poisons. The *Tokoloshe* may be used to place the poison in the victim's food. Once ingested, the potion may lead to illness, mental disorder or

delinquent behaviour (Laubscher, 1937: 66). Predominantly, though, the *Tokoloshe* is used by witches at night to assault (disorientate, disturb, bite, injure, stab, beat) victims (Coetzee, 1941: 34-36; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 282; Hunter, 1936: 277; cf. 294, 540; Rosenthal, 1949: 184; Berglund, 1989: 281; Niehaus, 1995: 527) or to molest, rape and abuse male and female neighbours who are sexually attractive or as an ‘act of revenge against those who were more influential than they’ (Niehaus et al, 2001: 51-53; Niehaus, 2002: 28). Niehaus relates 18 counts of witches who were accused of violent sexual attacks and who purportedly used a *Tokoloshe* to do so. Some of the accused were elderly men who had ‘lost their virility’ or were unemployed, rendering them ‘undesirable’, including one 50-year-old, unemployed man who was accused of having assumed the shape of a *Tokoloshe* to rape women and castrate men (Niehaus, 2002: 283). Nine of the accused were women, one of whom was a 19-year-old woman (whose parents were desperate for her to marry a securely employed man) who had allegedly assumed the shape of a large baboon-like *Tokoloshe* to have sex with a young male bank teller (Niehaus, 2002: 284). The work of the *Tokoloshe* is not limited to rural areas as it accompanies its witch-owner into urban areas as well (Pahl, 1989: 717).

Nineteen of the young student informants I met with said the *Tokoloshe* was something they associated with evil or evil-doing: ‘harmful - like a devil’ (*Sh*); ‘an evil thing, like a conscience – if you’ve done something bad, *Tokoloshe* will come... like karma’ (*E*); ‘*Tokoloshe* is a naughty ghost’ (*R*). Eight informants said a *Tokoloshe* is an evil spirit or demon: ‘*Tokoloshe* only comes when something bad is going to happen’ (*Ch*); ‘*Tokoloshe* visits homes at night, and babies are able to sense this – babies cry or have bad dreams as they are aware that *Tokoloshe* is there and *Tokoloshe* is evil’ (*K*); ‘You must be very scared of *Tokoloshe* because he is a bad spirit, and will do magic’ (*P*).

Eight informants associated the *Tokoloshe* with witches and witchcraft: ‘*Tokoloshes* are sent by people or your enemies to your home to spy on what is happening in your home, in your life’ (*K*); ‘*Tokoloshes* are used in witchcraft to scare or torture people’ (*Z*); ‘the *Tokoloshe* works with witches, if a family faces a problem then they might go to traditional healer; the healer might suggest that the reason for the problem is that someone is sending a *Tokoloshe* or someone is practicing witchcraft on them’ (*Y*); ‘I was told witches work with *Tokoloshe*; the *Tokoloshes* tell the witches what to do’ (*I*). One informant (*P*) said *Tokoloshes* are ‘little things that

are part of your childhood – like if you see a flash or if you are alone and the electricity goes out and you hear a noise – that's a *Tokoloshe* – something sudden and unexplained.' One (*E*) stated a *Tokoloshe* is 'like a bogeyman; the type of thing parents use to warn or educate children: don't steal or do something bad or *Tokoloshe* will get you.'

The healers I met with also spoke about the *Tokoloshe* and its association with evil and witchcraft. According to the healers, *Tokoloshe* is evil with a proclivity for thieving, and is predominantly possessed and used by witches (or evil people) for casting spells on people, typically at night. One of the healers explained:

If you are staying in our area and there are people who are envious [of you], they will use *Tokoloshes* to drag you back to move themselves forward. They may dig holes, putting things into the hole with your names or your kids names on them, and other terrible *muti*, too.²¹ This is done by the witches in our areas. *Tokoloshe* works in many different negative, destructive ways to destroy families: sometimes they put those spells on our roads because they are targeting a particular family, so that when they are travelling out and about in their fancy cars they will have an accident.

Another member of the group told, as an illustration, of a man who might want to rob a bank but is afraid of guns and doesn't want to get shot at so he might send a *Tokoloshe* to commit the robbery for him. At the conclusion of my meeting with the healers, I asked the group if there was any information they wished to reiterate or to make clear as being important. They agreed on the following: *Tokoloshe* exists; *Tokoloshe* is evil; and 'it is going to stay with us for many years to come'. They said it is the responsibility of traditional healers to chase away this kind of evil as the *Tokoloshe* is the enemy of the traditional healer.

²¹ *Muti* (or *muthi*) (lit. 'tree' or 'shrub') refers to traditional medicines in South Africa - in most cases plant material, made and given out by an experienced or trained traditional healer to help patients in distress. Most healers or herbalists claim to have secret knowledge about the preparation and administering of effective *muti* to achieve positive healing powers (Ndhlala et all, 2011: 832). The word *muti* is applied to both poisonous and healing substances: *umuthi wokwelapha* (medicines for healing) and *umuthi wokubulala* (medicines for killing), and is often associated with witchcraft. Some medicines can be used both for healing and causing harm, depending on the reason why they are used (Ngubane, 1977: 22). *Muti* can be made from herbs, roots, animal fats (such as lion or seal fat), manufactured fats (such as *Nkanyamba* fat of the snake), lion and elephant dung, powdered shark fins, snake venom, 'powdered belly of crocodile', seawater, *Tokoloshe* fat (or oil) and human bodily substances (Niehaus et al, 2001: xiii & 25; Krige, 1936: 321-323; 'Muti – what is it and how can I get it?', 2011; Junod, 1927b: 513; Krige & Krige, 1943: 254-255; Hammond-Tooke, 1989: 120; Broster & Bourn, 1981: 97; Cocks & Moller, 2002).

3.5.3 Tokoloshe recipes

There are several accounts that report how witches concoct and produce their own *Tokoloshe*. One suggestion is that the *Tokoloshe* develops or emerges from a particular type of potato-like root (*isindiyandiya* or *ikhubalo lika Tikoloshe*) which can be found at the bottom of deep pools or purchased from a herbalist and which contains the *Tokoloshe* or some of his power; this root then changes into a *Tokoloshe* by its own volition (Krike, 1936: 89; Niehaus et al, 2001: 51; cf. Dold & Cocks, 2002: 592, 594). Another way is for a witch to make the *Tokoloshe* from animal fat or other traditional medicines by smearing the mixture onto domestic animals like dogs, cats or even humans (perhaps even onto the witch him/herself) to change them into a *Tokoloshe* (Niehaus et al, 2001: 51; Tonnesen, 2007: 67). Other accounts state that the *Tokoloshe* may be made by a witch or sorcerer from the body of a dead person: the eyes and tongue are removed, and the body shrunk by inserting a hot, iron rod into the skull; the *Tokoloshe* is then given life by blowing a ‘secret powder’ into the mouth of the corpse (‘Tokoloshe – how to chase this African goblin’, 2011). A *Tokoloshe* may be made by young women using a piece of bread made from sorghum and placing into it the lungs of a chicken, mixing it with traditional medicines, placing it first on the ashes and then in a pot and stirring; this mixture then changes into a *Tokoloshe* (Coetzee, 1941:19). Sizani (2011; cf. Ngcobo, 2013) describes the making of a *Tokoloshe* using red Lesotho porridge mixed with evil *muti*. Another suggestion is that a *Tokoloshe* can be made from the hair of a white person (Ngcobo, 2013). One herbalist (quoted in Ashforth, 2000: 188-189) explains a recipe that includes the fat of a black cat, some particular mountainous herbs and the fat of a river crocodile all mixed together and buried in a container at a crossroads for seven days so that the shadow (*isithunzi*) of a passing pregnant or menstruating woman can transfer into the container and transform the *muti* into a *Tokoloshe*. Mutwa tells a dark and gruesome tale of *Tokoloshes* farmed by ‘wizards’ from ‘cretin’ and ‘idiot’ babies, fed animal milk and blood, and whose bodies were forced into grotesque shapes, and whose tongues were damaged to destroy speech; the child was then taught to climb and burrow with its crooked limbs, to commit murder, and to remove its tracks perfectly afterwards. Subsequent to this, and in response to the difficulties in breeding, rearing and sustaining this kind of *Tokoloshe*, wizards resorted to using baboons and monkeys, turning their young into weird monstrosities and teaching them to do considerable damage to the enemies of their masters (Mutwa, 1998: 606-607). Some

sources suggest that the *Tokoloshe* is the spawn of sexual relations between a man and an animal (*Tokoloshe*, 2010: 5.33-6.37), or of a witch with a baboon (Holland, 2005: 149-150). Bartholomew (2010), an ethnopsychologist, suggests a *Tokoloshe* is the trapped soul of a child or foetus who is earthbound after being raped, killed for *muti* or aborted, or of a ‘mature soul who was trapped in the ‘tokoloshe’ body because of his fear and anger’; the soul has been caught by a witch or sorcerer in a pot or ‘some type of body, often made out of astral material, comprising of burning flesh and loose hanging skin’.²²

3.5.4 Comments on traditional belief in the 21st century

I asked the healers about the prevalence of the *Tokoloshe* within their society. One of the healers responded, saying:

Tokoloshe has been around in the past, and people who lived in the past were fortunate in that they were able to see him as he appears, but during our days now *Tokoloshe* works mainly in spirit, and his spirit is so influential to today’s youth because you will see young people’s behaviour is changing. And that is where *Tokoloshe* is influential, in changing their behaviour as well. So even though in the past there was a man appearing in human form, [*Tokoloshe*] now works mainly as a spirit, and that spirit is possessing young people in different ways.

I also asked the student informants if they believed the *Tokoloshe* actually exists. Eight said ‘no’, six said ‘maybe’, and ten informants said ‘yes’. A said she doesn’t believe *Tokoloshes* exist, but respects the phenomenon: ‘I won’t judge someone who believes in it.’ N said she doesn’t share those beliefs as she lives in the city and has never seen a *Tokoloshe*. P said she thinks that maybe *Tokoloshes* existed in the past ‘during the time of the older generations’. L said she doesn’t believe *Tokoloshes* exist as she has never seen a *Tokoloshe*, but she acknowledged that all cultures have some entity, like a bogeyman, that is used by parents to warn children. Y said she doesn’t believe in *Tokoloshes* as she’s a Christian and doesn’t believe in such things. I said she believes *Tokoloshes* may exist, but she has never seen one so she can’t really say. Aa and E both said they had never had a *Tokoloshe* encounter or seen a *Tokoloshe*, but acknowledged the possibility *Tokoloshes* may exist. J said she doesn’t believe there are *Tokoloshes* specifically, but acknowledges that there are spiritual entities.

²² According to Bartholomew (2010), ethnopsychology is ‘a bridging between Western Psychology and African Traditional Healing Philosophy’ that is practiced by specialist ethnomedicine practitioners (‘Ethnopsychology’, 2006).

S said that the *Tokoloshe* is something she has ‘chosen to believe in as a young adult, prompted by her mom’s illness’; the *Tokoloshe* was not part of her belief system as a child. *R* said he believes there are evil spirits that can take different forms so he believes something like a *Tokoloshe* could exist. *K* said he believes *Tokoloshes* exist, based on an experience he had observing his nephew playing with and talking to an ‘imaginary friend’. *Pe*, *Z*, *E*, *Ph*, *Aa* and *Ch* each said that although they had never had an experience or encounter with a *Tokoloshe* they believed *Tokoloshes* exist. Similarly, *Se* said that while he hasn’t experienced a *Tokoloshe* himself, he believes they exist as supernatural phenomena.

I asked the informants if they thought growing up in post-Apartheid South Africa had impacted on their understanding of, or engagement with, traditional belief. Five of the informants felt their understanding of traditional belief matched that of their parents or grandparents, while nine informants felt that growing up in post-Apartheid South Africa had impacted more significantly on their understanding of traditional belief.

K, *E* and *Pe* each thought their understanding of traditional belief is the same as older generations (that of their parents or grandparents), but *K* said she has her own child, and when her child is older she wouldn’t talk about the *Tokoloshe* because she doesn’t really share those traditional views anymore as she’s a Christian. *I* felt that while growing up in post-Apartheid South Africa she was able to communicate more freely with people of different ethnicities/cultural groups, she thought her understanding of the *Tokoloshe* is the same as older generations as she was told those stories about the *Tokoloshe* originally by her grandmother. *P* acknowledged that she shares the traditional beliefs of her family (she was raised by her grandmother in rural Eastern Cape, and surrounded by several traditional healers in her family, including her paternal and maternal aunts).

S said she sees the post-Apartheid generation as being different to older generations, as the younger generation has a capacity to tolerate/understand culture in a different way to older generations. *Z* said she thinks her understanding of traditional belief is different to her parents’ generation because of growing up in post-Apartheid South Africa, but she doesn’t think it is right that the younger generation doesn’t respect culture as much as in the past. *Pe* acknowledged that young South Africans have a broader understanding of culture in general in post-Apartheid South Africa, but perhaps a lesser understanding of their own cultures (she remembers while

growing up she was made aware of witches by her mother: “don’t go to my neighbour because she’s a witch.”) N acknowledged that her beliefs are different to those of her family/older generations as she is living in the modern world in the city. She also acknowledged that growing up in post-Apartheid South Africa has meant she has a different/broader understanding of other cultural beliefs and traditions (having been to a mixed, multi-cultural school). She used to get scared of the stories about the *Tokoloshe* when she was younger, but not anymore as she no longer believes in the *Tokoloshe*. She doesn’t think the *Tokoloshe* will survive within South African culture as it is rejected more and more by subsequent generations. A felt that growing up in post-Apartheid South Africa has given her an opportunity to understand more about the cultures that make up the cultural landscape in South Africa, and she acknowledged cultural difference within South Africa, as well as differences between people within her own culture growing up in diverse locations (rural versus urban, impoverished versus moneyed). She felt she doesn’t really know much or enough about the *Tokoloshe* to really understand what role it may play in society, but she has discussed it with friends who didn’t want to talk about it because they are Christians. Z thought her understanding is different to that of her parents and grandparents: in the past *Tokoloshes* weren’t always feared: they were welcomed, but now people chase them away, and use salt in doorways to keep the *Tokoloshe* from coming into their house. She has a daughter, but never talks about the *Tokoloshe* with her child; her daughter just watches cartoons and fairy tales, and Z doesn’t think she’ll talk about the *Tokoloshe* with her daughter.

3.6 Encounters with the *Tokoloshe*

3.6.1 A violent poltergeist

Over the past century and a half, accounts of encounters with the *Tokoloshe* have been recorded by amateur anthropologists, researchers and in newspapers. These have ranged from accounts of poltergeist-type activity and unexplained violence to the downright bizarre (cf. Hunter, 1936: 278-281 & 492-494; Rosenthal, 1949: 188; Soga, 1931: 188-191). Accounts have also been reported regularly in the media in the late 20th and early 21st century. A story in *The Daily Dispatch* in November, 1982 told of a *Tokoloshe* dressed in a school girl’s uniform demanding to be allowed to write a mathematics exam (‘Tokoloshe wants to write exam’, 1982; cf. Anderson, 1995). Pillay (2004) tells of a family plagued by a *Tokoloshe* for over 20 years: a little girl of about one year of age started seeing an African boy sitting next to her; this boy was

invisible to the adults; the curtains would move even though the windows were closed, and her mother became covered with unexplained bruises on her body; the mother also heard her name being called and the sound of scratching from the back of her wardrobe. The family moved house but the strange activities continued, with the mother feeling she was being throttled, hearing strange noises, and with house lights switching on and off. Another story, published in *The Sunday Times* in 2004, told of a family who claimed a *Tokoloshe* was starting fires in their house (Naidoo, 2004). In February 2008, *The Daily Sun* ran a story about a *Tokoloshe* that tore up a woman's school textbooks and terrorised her family with his 'sexy dance – waving his underpants in the air' (Mkhetho, 2008). In May 2013, *The Daily Sun* published a story about a *Tokoloshe* that lives with a disabled man and regularly devours his groceries (Thamage, 2013). Similar stories have been broadcast on *Daily Sun TV* (cf. 'My Tokoloshe Hell!', 2014; 'Tormented By Evil Tokoloshe!', 2013). Niehaus details a string of cases of encounters or of incidents involving the *Tokoloshe* being used in witchcraft against someone (cf. Niehaus et al, 2001: 54-56, 94, 98, 103, 108, 115, 163, 177, 180).

Tokoloshe encounters, though, are typically experienced by one individual at a time, and are almost always nocturnal. Arrival of the *Tokoloshe* is often accompanied by particular or inexplicable sounds: 'the sound of a stone hitting the corrugated iron roof' ('A strange case of sorcery', 1995); 'I heard a noise like a cat or something on the roof' (Thandi, quoted in Badstuebner, 2008: 31). The *Tokoloshe* is usually invisible but may also appear in male form: Patient, (in Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 38; cf. 'A strange case of sorcery', 1995; cf. Laubscher, 1937: 12) states:

At night I dream about a Tokoloshe. He throttles me as he stands on top of me. During the night I then cry loudly, he pulls me and I am so terrified that I cannot sleep again. He gets up, I am afraid and cry till he goes out. He does not speak; he has a moustache and eyes. He resembles a person, but he looks terrifying.

The victim is unable to move: 'Its victims... are unable to resist a force that pins them to the bed' ('A strange case of sorcery', 1995); 'One sits at my feet, the other at my head, and they use their force on me' (A patient, quoted in Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 39; cf. Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 44). The victim is then strangled or choked by the *Tokoloshe* (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 281; cf. Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 38). Zukile (quoted in Badstuebner, 2008: 31; cf. Scott, 1967: 855; cf. Laubscher 1937: 9) claims:

I became afraid to sleep for it would come to choke me, its hands around my neck so that I could not breathe... it was a killer, I knew, and I became very afraid.

Sikhumbana (in Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 38) states:

[*Tokoloshe*] goes there and throttles that person, who then cannot sleep till dawn, but remains in a sweat because he is being throttled by the *Tikoloshe*; and sometimes his neck is swollen, so that he cannot even swallow food.

During my fieldwork investigation, I asked the young student informants if they had had a personal encounter with, or an experience of, a *Tokoloshe*. Twenty-one of the twenty-four informants stated they had not had a *Tokoloshe* encounter. A stated: ‘I don’t think I’ve been serious enough about the *Tokoloshe* to make it appear’. P said she has never seen one, but had heard other people say they’ve heard that *Tokoloshes* are sent by people and ‘they’ve seen them in person’. L said she has never seen a *Tokoloshe*, but acknowledges that all cultures have some entity that is used by parents to warn children. I said she has never seen a *Tokoloshe*, but has heard stories about people being abducted by *Tokoloshes*. K said she has never seen a *Tokoloshe*, but has seen children upset, having bad dreams and she believes they were upset by a *Tokoloshe*. Kh said she had never seen a *Tokoloshe*, but heard from a friend who saw it at night. Y said she had not had a real *Tokoloshe* encounter, but one night in summer, while making a salad, she sensed something moving past her and ‘got freaked out’ but she didn’t know what it was, saying it was the closest thing she had had to a *Tokoloshe* experience.

Three informants confirmed they had had an experience with a *Tokoloshe*. S recounted an episode from home when her mom was ill, an illness the informant believes has been caused by a *Tokoloshe*-like demon inside her mother. Her father came in with a crucifix to exorcise the demon, but as the door was closed the demon never left [though, in typical accounts of encounters with a *Tokoloshe*, the being is not hindered by physical barriers]. R had an experience with a shadowy figure that looked like it was playing hide and seek. It ‘spooked him out’, he got ‘chills’ and ‘felt’ something, but doesn’t know what it was. Finally, Z recalled an experience she had had one night, like a nightmare, feeling strangled. She thinks that experience could have been a *Tokoloshe* encounter.

In my meeting with the traditional healers, five members of the group recounted their own encounters with a *Tokoloshe*. This was prompted by one member

of the group asking if their own understandings of what *Tokoloshe* is came from their imaginations or from personal experience. The eldest member of the group answered first. She said she had once seen a *Tokoloshe* live when she was very young and at boarding school. She said she was attacked by a *Tokoloshe*, who appeared as a half-human/half-creature and who tried to suffocate her. She was able to resist by pushing the creature away. *C* recalled her own encounter:

I've also seen *Tokoloshe*, but I was young - about ten years old – but I was not aware that this creature was a *Tokoloshe*. There were two of them. Before you encounter *Tokoloshe* you feel very drowsy, and then he will come and take whatever he wants very quickly. I tried to fight them: they were trying to take my blanket, they were opening up my blanket, but I just felt so sleepy... The window was closed, but they came in to the room through the closed window, and they have so much power, short as they are...

Another member of the group related a close encounter from her youth when she was at school. Some of the young boys experienced someone beating them, and they didn't know who was beating them. They would cry out that someone was attacking them all the time, and she said it was *Tokoloshe*, and the reason they were beaten was because they had been eating food containing salt, and 'we all know that *Tokoloshe* doesn't like salty food'. She also told a story about a boy from her childhood. They would play on the river bank making pots and model cows from clay. One boy had a *Tokoloshe*, and he called his *Tokoloshe* 'T-Square'. The boy would play with his clay oxen and he would perform magic, making the clay oxen move on their own - he would call in T-Square to make the oxen move, 'and it would happen like that...' Finally, *N* told of her encounter: she said *Tokoloshe* cut part of her finger with the intention of using her blood for evil spells. She was adamant it happened, stating there was blood on her pillow: 'there was blood everywhere'.

3.6.2 Sexual encounters

The *Tokoloshe* is said to be very passionate with a fondness for using his enormous genitalia, and women often take *Tokoloshes* for their lovers (Ashforth, 2000: 47; cf. Krige, 1936: 354; Callaway, 1868: 349). Sentsho (1995) states that a *Tokoloshe* is 'reputed to have an insatiable sexual appetite and in order to satisfy this lust it prowls around at night to rape unsuspecting women' (cf. Werner, 1933: 289). The *Tokoloshe* is said to have so much sex that his right hip and buttock have been worked away (Berglund, 1989: 281). When a young woman or bride shows an unwillingness to live with her husband, or signs of frigidity, or if she is

not capable of bearing children, it is thought that she is being secretly visited by a *Tokoloshe* (Shephard 1955: 82-83). The acknowledgement of consensual sex with a *Tokoloshe* is also used by women to explain difficulties conceiving and delivering a child – a problem that is alleviated through such a confession (Tucker, 2013: 72). Infertility, difficult pregnancy, miscarriage, frigidity, bleeding and vaginal sores in women, male impotence or infertility, or when a woman loses interest in her husband, are all sometimes explained as being caused by the result of rape by a *Tokoloshe* (Sentsho, 1995; Niehaus, 1995: 527; Niehaus et al, 2001: 53; Wood, 2008: 351; Tonnesen, 2007: 68, 70; Lebeau, 1999: 203, 234; cf. Laubscher, 1937: 10). It is said that a woman engaged in a relationship with a *Tokoloshe* will not be able to suckle her baby until she gets rid of the *Tokoloshe* (Hunter, 1936: 493).

Sexual encounters with a *Tokoloshe* are characterised as violent, aggressive or dangerous (Hirst, 1990: 242; Badstuebner, 2008: 26 & 31; Lee, 1958: 271; Eberhart, 2002: 553; Lebeau, 1999: 371-372), and the tell-tale signs of a *Tokoloshe* nocturnal sexual attack include swollen genitals, lower back or stomach pain, vaginal secretions or wetness (or semen) on the legs of the woman it has attacked ('A strange case of sorcery', 1995). Laubscher (1937:10; cf. Hammond-Tooke, 1981: 99; Badstuebner, 2008: 31; Wilson, 2013: 122-123, 125) states:

These sexual acts are always performed at night while the husband is asleep. The *Tikoloshe* is always invisible to adults, but in spite of his invisibility the woman knows, for although she does not see him, she experiences the sexual act, more often in the form of a dream. Further evidence in the morning, of vaginal secretions, is considered proof by her that she had a visit from the *Tikoloshe* during the night.

The tabloid papers in South Africa regularly run stories of *Tokoloshe* sex attacks (cf. Mkhize, 2001; 'Tokoloshe tracker in my tummy!', 2014; Zuma & Nxumalo, 2014; 'Run tokoloshe run!', 2015; Matlala, 2015; Webb, 2000). In the past decade the popular press in South Africa has also reported incidents of bisexual and homosexual rape by *Tokoloshes* (Nkosi, 2012; 'Gay tokoloshe rapes Soweto man every night', 2015). In some quarters, the *Tokoloshe* is said to have the power of *mashoshapansi*: the capacity to 'extend his penis to any length' and then send it underground or through a crack in the door 'into the genitals of a sleeping or unsuspecting woman' (Sentsho, 1995; Delmar, 2004; cf. Niehaus, 1995: 525; Niehaus, 2002: 282-283, 295; Wilson, 2013: 122, 153-160).

The *Tokoloshe* can be seen as personifying unfulfilled and illicit sexual desires, and portraying amoral, uninhibited male sexuality (Niehaus 2002: 282-283). Laubscher (1975: 128) states:

[*Tokoloshes*] indulge in depraved sexual activities, and appear to exist beyond all the sexual inhibitions and taboos of society. It is from behind the barriers of these moral inhibitions that they emerge to plague the erotic proclivities of women. Their roles are those of seducers, whose magic is almost exclusively directed to exploit female sexual passion to a pitch where their love making becomes utterly irresistible.

In her work with the amaMpondo in the early 1950s, Wilson considers the *Tokoloshe* as a symbol or compensatory image of female illicit or suppressed sexual desire, basing her argument on the fact that female members of the clan were excluded from marriage with potential partners who lived in the local area because of clan exogamy (the custom of marrying a person belonging to another tribe or clan) (Niehaus, 2001: 52). Wilson (1951a: 312; cf. Laubscher, 1937: 49 – 50) states:

I relate the emphasis on sex in witchcraft among the Pondo to the system of clan exogamy, which excludes large categories of individuals living in the same neighbourhood from marrying or flirting with one another, and the idea that the familiar is a light-coloured person to the caste system which almost excludes sex relations between persons of different colors. In short, I suggest that the [*Tokoloshe*] is a symbol of forbidden sex attraction and that such attraction is common in a society in which large categories of people who live in close contact with one another are forbidden to marry.

Wilson's claim is supported in part by the work of Lee (1958) and Laubscher (1937 & 1975) who both focus particularly on the *Tokoloshe* experience as a female one. Lee, who considers the content of Zulu dreams, claims that the *Tokoloshe* is predominantly dreamt of, or hallucinated by, non-psychotic women under the age of 50 in dreams that are 'frankly sexual in character – and are often of violent sexual attack' (Lee, 1958: 271, 277-279). Laubscher, writing in the late 1930s, reads such encounters as descriptions of female auto-eroticism and penis envy. Laubscher (1937: 24) states:

It is evident that the description of symptoms so consistently given in many parts of the Transkei, especially by the old wives of the tribe, about the... *Tikoloshe*... is but a description of auto-eroticism. Perhaps more so has it reference to the auto-erotic phases of schizophrenia... The existence of the... *Tikoloshe*... in this culture of dominant, aggressive masculinity, can only be conceived as compensatory reactions for penis envy. This penis envy, as the result of castration fears and the relative inferiority of the female, in a culture where sex means so much, has led to phantastic compensations, rationalised, projected and transformed into the sexual activities of these strange mythical creatures.

Hammond-Tooke, in his work on the Cape Nguni in the 1970s, explores the idea that the *Tokoloshe* represents male perceptions of female unstated negative attitudes to, and deprivation in, patriarchal Cape Nguni society. Hammond-Tooke claims women in Cape Nguni society, as they are perceived by Cape Nguni men, are deprived, ‘perpetual minors’ under the control of men. Women may not appear in court, hold political office, be polygamous, take lovers, be disrespectful to senior men; but these same women dominate the family home and fields, and are essentially the key to fertility. The resulting dichotomy is one where women are actually perceived as more important than men, and this produces ‘dissonance, unease and contradiction’. Subsequently (Hammond-Tooke argues) men imagine that women react with ‘resentment and cherish negative emotions’. Female deprivation is viewed then as sexual, with the perception of that inter-sex conflict objectified by the concept of the witch as female and by women taking demon lovers, like the *Tokoloshe*, ‘to fulfil their sexual needs and wreak vengeance on men’, resulting in male feelings of guilt which are ‘transmuted into righteous indignation’. The most obvious symbol of this female resentment is the image of the enormously ithyphallic *Tokoloshe* (Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 131-132). Hammond-Tooke (1974b: 338) states:

It is possible, perhaps, to explain this conceptualization of the witch as a woman, and her familiars as beings with abnormal sexual endowments, as a projection of male fantasies and guilt feelings in a strongly patrilineal society, where women are accorded a subordinate role and where they do not have the sexual freedom enjoyed by men. Looked at from this point of view, witch beliefs among the Nguni are a projection of the men’s guilty recognition of the relative deprivation of women in the field of sex and the symbolization of the resentments and aggressions that they know that *they* would feel if subjected to the same conditions.

Hammond-Tooke explains the dichotomy as follows: women are considered to accept their sex role within Cape Nguni society, but the product of this construct is essentially an intersex tension within and outside marriage. The perception of this discrepancy is that women are sexually deprived. However, a secondary construct is that women actually reject their sex role, thus producing an experience of cognitive dissonance between the primary construct and the secondary construct. The resulting ‘mediatory construct’ (within the context of a system of witch beliefs) is that witches take demon lovers (Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 134). Hammond-Tooke (1974a: 135) states:

What I have postulated here is that the meaning of the images of the witch and her familiars derives from an (unconscious) attempt to mediate between contradictory constructs and that the precise form of the resulting images derives from their aptness to symbolise the contradiction.

Niehaus argues that Wilson's and Hammond-Tooke's theoretical accounts of the *Tokoloshe* amongst Xhosa-speakers in the Eastern Cape of South Africa do not clarify the situation amongst the North Sotho speakers of the Lowveld (in the north-eastern parts of South Africa) (Niehaus, 2002: 282; Niehaus, 2001: 52-53), primarily as the *Tokoloshe* is also used by men in the Lowveld to achieve certain nefarious ends. Instead, Niehaus suggests the *Tokoloshe* symbolises more 'general illicit sexual desires' or 'desire of unconstrained sexual expression', an idea which he claims is supported more broadly by the representation of the *Tokoloshe* in the Lowveld as a large baboon (Niehaus, 1995: 512, 526). Niehaus (2002: 282) states:

In the lowveld the *tokolotsi* can thus be interpreted more fruitfully as personifying... unfulfilled and illicit sexual desires. The image of the *tokolotsi* as a large baboon, descriptions of the uses to which it was put, and the duality between the witch and the familiar all support this interpretation.

Niehaus explains that the baboon is seen or perceived as sexually promiscuous and an appropriate human double, displaying 'childish morality' (hence baboons are considered to be children's peers). Niehaus explains further the word baboon (*tshwene*) is never said in the presence of children as any contact with a baboon is thought to endanger children's health; rather the animal is referred to euphemistically as 'the thing from the mountain' (*selo sa thabeng*). Furthermore, baboons (like children) are not socialised and so 'lack restraints on wants and desires imposed by culture'; as an instigator of unwanted sexual intercourse the baboon is an appropriate symbol as it is perceived to be dangerous, strong and ugly. Young people who dream of sex or a baboon are told that the *Tokoloshe* is troubling them (Niehaus, 2001: 53-54; Niehaus 1995: 526-527). Niehaus explains further that fears of the *Tokoloshe* only became prevalent in the Lowveld after the enforced changes to labour patterns in the 1960s, and that the symbolic meanings of witch familiars such as the *Tokoloshe* are connected directly to the economic implications of modern migrant labour practice: husband and wives are separated for a significant part of their working lives, leading to the use of the *Tokoloshe* as a perpetrator of rape by those living alone on people who they desire sexually (Niehaus, 2003: 116). Niehaus (1995: 515) states:

The ape-like *tokolose* symbolizes the potential animal-like craving for unconstrained sexual expression. This familiar provokes thought about the separation of spouses and the sexual deprivations that accompany labour migration.

Those claimed to use the *Tokoloshe* are typically elderly or unemployed men who are considered to be ‘sexually deprived, envious and resentful’: elderly men are considered so as they have ‘lost their sexual vitality’; and unemployed men as they are unable to support dependents, are usually single and are undesirable as partners. *Tokoloshes* are said to be used by such men to make up for the absence of sexual fulfilment in their lives (Niehaus, 1995: 528 – 529).

Bahre (2002) examines Xhosa migrants working in Cape Town but living in the former Ciskei and Transkei regions of the present Eastern Cape, and suggests that the *Tokoloshe* represents both sexual desire and also sexual anxiety caused by the imminent threat of rape posed to women as well as by the potential inadequate support from their partner. Sexual nightmares and hysterical crying when partners were returned home can be seen as examples of the anxiety women undergo when their men returned home (Bahre, 2002: 327-328; cf. Lee, 1958: 271). Lee (1958: 278) states:

Married women, however, tended to dream of snakes and *tokoloshe* more frequently when their husbands – normally away – were home on holiday. From all the clinical evidence available, it would seem that the sexual difficulties and frustrations of married women are increased by the physical presence of the husband. Here we have a symbol formation in the dreams, together with very great anxiety. These are regarded as being the most horrible and terrifying dreams of all.

Bahre (2002: 328) also suggests there was an indication women were particularly unhappy with their marital sexual role, where sex is a cause of anxiety (as unfilled desire, rape or financial implications of not having sex):

Experiences, desires, as well as fears that were embedded in relations come to the fore in the intermediary role of the *thikoloshe*... At times, people’s behaviour resembled the image of the *thikoloshe*: they behaved like dangerous creatures, stealing, raping, murdering, and abusing. While the witch fed the *thikoloshe* and had sexual intercourse with it, the *thikoloshe*, in return, would steal for the witch and rape women. The collective fantasies of witch familiars, and the centrality of sex, blood and money in these fantasies, provided a discourse on the nonnormative exchanges that took place in everyday life. The exchanges among witches, their familiars, and their victims followed the same gruesome pattern of exchange that was often practised and experienced in painful ways. Thus, they were a symbolic and fantastic

imitation of the harsh realities of life in a socio-economic, emotional and politically destructive environment.

Bahre suggests that beliefs about the *Tokoloshe* (and other witch familiars), represent fantasies stemming from contemporary issues in relationships, such as sexual desire, sexual abuse, the threat of AIDS, economic stresses and the desire for wealth (Bahre, 2002: 330; cf. Lebeau, 1999: 203).

3.6.3 *Tokoloshe* children

While it is not considered common practice for the *Tokoloshe* to father children due to the fact that it is ‘extremely careful and carries medicines for preventing conception’ (Laubscher, 1937: 10), where a woman does bear a child by the *Tokoloshe*, the infant can immediately be recognised as his, on account of ‘prominent deformities’ (cf. Shephard, 1955: 83) - children born with huge heads, with very small heads, who are deformed in body (with very short legs and arms but a long trunk), or born with a part of the skull missing (with large bulging eyes) are claimed to be the offspring of the *Tokoloshe*. ‘Thus the *Tikoloshe* is held responsible for all monstrosities and dwarfs born of women’ (Laubscher, 1937: 11). It is also suggested that men do also keep female *Tokoloshes* (Niehaus, 1995: 525; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 281). Male and female *Tokoloshes* also have sexual relations together and give birth to offspring (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 282). Laubscher suggests they have their own wives and ‘procreate as human beings do’ (1937: 8-9). A male *Tokoloshe* in the service of a witch may also father ‘future witches who are brought up by the witch and then becomes the lover of his own children’ (Berglund, 1989: 280).

3.6.4 Possible explanations for encounters with the *Tokoloshe*

The impact of *Tokoloshe* encounters on the lives of those who experience them is frequently significant. While it is not the intention of this work to de-value or dismiss any of the claims of those who have reported *Tokoloshe* encounters, it is appropriate to consider the body of literature available that may suggest possible non-traditional explanations as to why those encounters have been experienced. My research has identified material suggesting that *Tokoloshe* encounters may be either hallucinations that are the product of psychosis, dementia, Charles Bonnet syndrome, *peduncular hallucinosis*, or overstimulation of the *indusium griseum* (Luhrmann, 2011: 72; Teeple, Caplan & Stern, 2009; Maclennan, 2009; Moodley & Fournier,

2009); the product of sleep paralysis; or of dreams associated with nocturnal sexual arousal and/or orgasm.

3.6.4.1 Sleep paralysis

The symptoms of the ‘Incubus’ type of sleep paralysis, in particular, match closely, if not identically, the key features of a nocturnal *Tokoloshe* encounter. Santomauro & French (2009; cf. Morton & Mandell, 2010; ‘Sleep Paralysis and Associated Hypnagogic and Hypnopompic Experiences’, n.d.) classify sleep paralysis as an REM-related parasomnia, and define it as follows:

Sleep paralysis is a period of transient, consciously experienced paralysis either when going to sleep or waking up. During an episode the individual is fully conscious, able to open their eyes but aware that it is not possible to move limbs, head or trunk. There may be also be the perception of respiratory difficulties and, understandably, acute anxiety. In addition, the individual might experience hallucinations.

Episodes of sleep paralysis can continue for just a few seconds or up to 10 minutes. Episodes can stop unprompted, by a strong attempt by the sufferer to break the paralysis, or by someone else touching them or speaking to them (Santomauro & French, 2009). The principal types of sleep paralysis hallucinations are: Intruder (the feeling/sight of a presence in the room with you); Incubus (feelings of pressure, choking or suffocation); and Unusual Bodily Experiences (‘feelings of being moved, drifting, rolling, floating, cold or heat, as well as out-of-body experiences’). ‘Intruder’ hallucinations ‘may be caused by a hypervigilant brain state, in which detection thresholds are lowered and become biased towards cues of threat and danger’. Symptoms of ‘incubus’ hallucinations ‘may reflect the nature of respiration during REM sleep’, while the symptoms associated with ‘unusual bodily experiences’ are associated with ‘activity of sub-cortical brain structures’ (‘About Sleep Paralysis – Neurobiology’, n.d.). Sleep paralysis occurs when the mechanism that usually immobilises the body during REM sleep (the period during which most vivid dreams occur) partially continues during wakefulness (Morton & Mandell, 2010; cf. Santomauro & French, 2009). The sufferers realise they are immobile, and the blend of regular alert ‘consciousness’ with ‘dream consciousness’ can produce peculiar and sometimes frightening hallucinations (French, 2009; Morton & Mandell, 2010). The three primary symptoms of an episode of sleep paralysis are wakefulness, realistic perceptions of the environment and immobility. Those experiencing an episode may also feel an overwhelming sense of fear and dread (with ‘feelings of intense terror,

bliss, joy, anger', or 'of dying or imminent death', or episodes of 'false awakenings') or a sensed evil presence (or seeing areas of intense darkness, or 'seeing a human, animal or monster and possibly interacting with them'). Sufferers commonly experience chest pressure (and other tactile hallucinations such as 'touching or pulling on the limbs or head, pressure on the bed, feeling the bedclothes moving, and feelings of tingling, vibrating, shaking', or pain) or difficulty breathing (and other sensations of smothering or choking). Attacks usually occur while lying in a supine position facing upwards. Sufferers may also experience additional unusual sensations, such as 'hallucinations of an auditory, olfactory and/or physical nature', like 'doors opening, animals growling, approaching footsteps', shuffling, knocking, 'scratching, internal buzzing/beeping' and other mechanical sounds, breathing, talking, indecipherable or 'malevolent whispering as well as smells of rotting flesh, 'death', decay, damp, mould'. Other symptoms include proprioceptive hallucinations such as 'feelings of being moved, drifting, rolling, floating, cold or heat', or 'out-of-body experiences' ('About Sleep Paralysis – Symptoms', n.d.; cf. Santomauro & French, 2009). There may also be a sexual element (blissful and erotic feelings) to the experience (cf. French, 2009; Santomauro & French, 2009; 'About Sleep Paralysis – Theoretical Model', n.d.; Mdlalani, 2009). The following account of a *Tokoloshe* encounter includes several key symptoms of sleep paralysis: auditory hallucinations, sensed presence, breathing difficulties, chest pressure, lying in a supine position, sexual attack and an overwhelming sense of fear. Phillipa (quoted in Badstuebner, 2008: 32) states:

I heard scratch, scratch, like a chicken but no one has chickens here and I could not see because we have no lights at night in this place... after that nothing then it comes like smoke from the corner of my room and I couldn't breathe I couldn't move and it came on top of me... that little heavy thing and put its cold hands around my neck (like this) and then it raped me...I was so scared it would kill me.

Sleep paralysis can be triggered by sleep disruption (particularly in insomniacs and shift workers); traumatic life events; anxiety; and depression. ('About Sleep Paralysis – Risk Factors', N.d.; cf. Lerner, 2005).

3.6.4.2 Cultural invitation

Tokoloshe-like encounters are not unique to southern Africa. In fact, episodes of sleep paralysis and night-time attacks by strange creatures are at the heart of the traditions and belief systems of many cultures, with diverse and varied accounts and

explanations from across cultures and time dependent on cultural setting and belief (cf. Santomauro & French, 2009; ‘About Sleep Paralysis – Culture and History’, n.d.; Morton & Mandell, 2010; French, 2009; Lerner, 2005; Naidoo, 1999; Mdlalani, 2009; ‘The True Night-Mare: SP in Myth and Legend’, n.d.; Wilson, 2013: 127). Luhrmann argues that the manner in which people experience hallucinations is formed largely by ‘cultural invitation’, where visions are experienced under socially specific conditions; someone who experiences a hallucination is likely to interpret the experience as a possible *Tokoloshe* encounter if the concept of a *Tokoloshe* is already rooted in his/her religious and cultural belief system, and the conditions experienced in the hallucination potentially mimic the conditions that are pre-established in the vocabulary of their religious/socio-cultural imagery (cf. Luhrmann 2011: 76-79, 82). French (2009) echoes this sentiment, exploring the extent to which levels of belief impact on the tendency to read hallucinatory experiences like sleep paralysis in supernatural terms, and how significantly the content of the hallucinations is affected by pre-existing belief systems. French (2009; cf. Lerner, 2005) states:

It seems likely that the core experience has itself played a role in the development of belief systems relating to the spirit world in many cultures and that those very belief systems, once elaborated upon, are then capable of influencing the hallucinatory content of sleep paralysis episodes in subsequent generations.

Mdlalani (2009) draws the correlation between sleep paralysis experiences and traditional belief in South Africa, claiming that sleep paralysis is typically connected with witchcraft, informed as these experiences are by warnings of *Tokoloshes* or zombies visiting during sleep. Mdlalani (2009) states:

And believe me I bought the theory as a child because the creatures I used to see that resembled leprechauns or celestial beings were nothing I never knew to exist, and when the explanation came that it was the doings of witches, I swallowed it all.

3.6.4.3 Nocturnal sexual arousal and/or orgasm

Dream-like encounters with a *Tokoloshe* that are of a particularly sexual nature may be considered as experiences typically associated with nocturnal sexual arousal and/or orgasm. Laubscher (1937: 12) explores the nature of sexual *Tokoloshe* encounters in detail. In his work he claims that a large portion of patients explained that they had been visited by the *Tokoloshe* in their dreams, and it is in their dreams that they have sexual intercourse with the *Tokoloshe*. The reason for the act taking

place in their dream state is due to the women having resisted the *Tokoloshe*'s advances in their waking state. The subsequent evidence for these encounters is increased vaginal secretions after the dreams. Laubscher (1937: 24) acknowledges further that these erotic fantasies involving sexual relations with the *Tokoloshe* which are commonly manifested in the content of their dreams are essentially examples of auto-eroticism: the arousal or self-satisfaction of sexual feeling and desire by masturbation or without an external stimulus. Laubscher (1937: 27) states:

It is, of course, understood that their dreams are not viewed as mere phantastic thoughts, and hence not worthy of consideration. The descriptions of dreams given by normal native women indicate that the dream material contains reality for them, for those self-same women have mentioned the presence of increased vaginal secretions on awakening; although they do not actually admit that the *Tikoloshe* had intercourse with them, they give this evidence as supporting the reality of the experience.

These sexual encounters are subsequently portrayed as ‘amusing escapades or mischievous sexual tricks’ for which the blame is set on the mischievous *Tokoloshe*, and by which wives are enabled to repress or hide their erotic sexual desires and experiences from their husbands (Laubscher 1937: 27-28).

It is possible to consider such encounters as cases of female nocturnal sexual arousal or orgasm (or ‘wet dreams’): sexual arousal during sleep that awakens one to perceive the experience of orgasm (‘Do women have wet dreams, too?’, 2007; cf. Tonnesen, 2007: 68; ‘Tokoloshe...fact or fiction’, 2008; Tucker, 2013: 59). Dr Ellen Laan, a psychologist at the University of Amsterdam, explains the female wet dream as an experience in which ‘some women are woken in the night by the intense pleasure of an orgasm’. It is unlikely there’d be any ejaculate, but the vagina becomes wet and lubricated. As with men who have between four to five erections a night - connected with rapid eye movement (REM) - similar patterns of arousal have been observed in studies measuring vaginal reactions during sleep. While women’s genitals become engorged, it usually takes a little more stimulus, a small amount of friction or instinctive squeezing of the groin muscles, to produce an orgasm, particularly if the sensitivity threshold is low (‘Women have wet dreams too’, n.d.; cf. Delvin & Webber, 2012; Do women have wet dreams, too?, 2007).

3.7 The *Tokoloshe* and Sexual Violence in South Africa

Sexual violence in South Africa is an unusually common experience for a significant portion of that country’s population (Nicholson & Jones, 2013; ‘South

African rape survey shock', 2009; Badstuebner, 2008: 28). Such violence impacts noticeably on many members of society, but it also intersects with traditional belief as the *Tokoloshe* is often claimed as either a frequent cause of, or a reason for, sexual violence against women, men and children in southern Africa.

There have been several reports in the press of the *Tokoloshe* being involved in acts of rape, either as perpetrator of the rape, as an explanation for manifestations of emotional distress or similar behaviour that is the result of rape, or as justification for committing the rape. In 'A strange case of sorcery' (1995), it tells of a 60-year-old man from the village of Shatale who was accused of witchcraft and of raping four women in his village. The article states:

The owner of the house is 60 years old and clearly disturbed. He stands and sits, wipes imaginary beads of sweat from his brow, and twitches persistently. "Yes," he admits. "The Zion Christian Church (ZCC) says I have a tokoloshe in me ... I am not aware of raping these women. I receive no pleasure from it ... I have visited five *inyangas* [herbalists] in the past for health reasons and I think one of them gave me the tokoloshe that is doing these things."

Four women who live in the village explained how each of their lives had become a nightmare because of the *Tokoloshe* who, for the past five or six years, had been coming into their homes almost nightly, usually after 10pm, 'announced by the sound of a stone hitting the corrugated iron roof'. The *Tokoloshe* always appeared instantly and took on the physical form of the man. The women's husbands were either asleep at the time or were thrown to the ground and immobilised. The women then fell into a dream state and were unable to resist a force that pinned them to the bed. After sexual intercourse, the *Tokoloshe* disappeared as suddenly as it had arrived. Sometimes, in the morning, their genitals were swollen, their legs covered in semen and they experienced a sharp pain in their lower backs. The article explains that while the executive of the Shatale civic association did not normally intervene in witchcraft accusations, in this case there was consensus between the parties involved, and that the civic association had brokered an agreement between the parties whereby the local branch of the ZCC would, a few weeks following, conduct a cleansing ceremony to 'exorcise the spirit from the body of the man and chase it from the township'. When asked why the man should not be jailed, the civic association chairman replied: "Because the tokoloshe would simply escape and come back in another form". The civic association also called in a psychiatrist from the hospital nearby to check if the man was schizophrenic or suffered from some other mental illness. Another story

(‘Tokoloshe dad fingered in court’, 2007) tells of a teenager who was suffering from nightmares and behaved aggressively towards her father. Her parents asked people to pray for the child, and they were subsequently told that a *Tokoloshe* was responsible for the girl’s behaviour. Later, the girl (then aged 16), revealed that her 35-year-old father had been raping her for the past six years. In the Pretoria sexual offences court, the mother, pointing at her husband, said: “But the tokoloshe was residing in our house - it was him”. A third story (‘Sangoma told woman to strip and lie down’, 2008) tells of a 39-year-old man who raped a 22-year-old woman at his house in Ennerdale, south of Johannesburg, claiming he was a healer and wanted to exorcise an evil spirit that was possessing her; the man had asked the woman to go home with him to collect medicines for her brother; he subsequently told her she was possessed by a *Tokoloshe*, and instructed her remove her clothes and to lie down so that he could perform the exorcism; he then raped her. The circumstances of this last story are commonplace, in which an unsuspecting victim is first led to believe she is possessed by a *Tokoloshe* and then subsequently raped by her ‘healer’ as an act of exorcism (cf. ‘*Notito v The State*’, 2011; Traditional healer in court for rape’, 2012; ‘Prophet’ rapes teen to chase away tokoloshe’, 2015).

Prominent convicted criminals who cited the *Tokoloshe* in their defence include serial rapist Daniel Molewa who repeatedly attacked and indecently assaulted eight women in Soshanguve, South Africa, over a period of three months in 2001 and 2002, and subsequently blamed a *Tokoloshe* for his actions (Venter, 2004a; ‘Serial rapist blames tokoloshe’, 2004; ‘Serial rapist: the tokoloshe made me do it’, 2004; Venter, 2004b); convicted rapist and brutal and sadistic murderer Jack Mogale, who raped at least one of his victims claiming he needed to do so in order to exorcise the *Tokoloshe* that he said was possessing her (‘Reverend raped me’, 2011; ‘Women must be taken care of: rape accused’, 2011; Van Wyk, 2011; Molatlhwa, 2011); and patricidal murderess Nicolette Lotter who claimed in her trial that she had been ‘sexually molested by a tokoloshe that often visited her at night’, before meeting her ‘saviour’ and co-accused, Matthew Naidoo and, together with her brother, murdering both her parents (Moodley, 2012; ‘I was raped by tokoloshe – Lotter’, 2011; Lotter ‘raped by tokoloshe’, 2011).

Badstuebner suggests that the high frequency of *Tokoloshe*-rape encounters that are related by women within South African society reflects an attempt to facilitate an acknowledgment of, and solution to, the rape crisis that is somehow

tolerable within the constraints of a largely male-dominated society. Badstuebner (2008: 32-33) argues that a woman's claim of a *Tokoloshe* rape creates an opportunity for socially and culturally acceptable healing to take place (in the form of visits to traditional healers at their surgeries or prophets and ministers during the services in the African Independent Churches). Such healing facilitates personal and domestic cleansing, an opportunity for the victim to talk about their experiences, as well as communal responsibility in the improved management of community settlements (in terms of improved lighting and volunteer patrols at night). Badstuebner (2008: 33) states:

For women whose fears of assault, and assault itself, are very real, *Tikoloshe*-encounters enable them to speak out without placing themselves at risk from retaliation from specific gangs of being a threat to male dominance in general. The *Tikoloshe* is a particular fear made real; he has become, at least in the more dangerous sections of the townships, the epitome of sexual violence. The *Tikoloshe* is a threat to women but his presence prods men into considering their women are at risk from sexual attack from a being that they cannot control. His presence puts pressure on them and the community as a whole to be 'right' in their relations within the home and within the community, which includes refraining from sexual violence both inside and outside of home.

3.8 The *Tokoloshe* and Murder in South Africa

A significantly high number of murders and serious violent assaults are committed in South Africa every year (cf. Rohrer, 2010; 'UNODC Homicide Statistics', 2013). A number of attacks that have resulted in violent and fatal bloodshed have been claimed by their perpetrators to have been enacted either due to: possession by a *Tokoloshe* (the most famous case is possibly that of serial killer Elifasi Msomi who claimed he was acting under the influence of a *Tokoloshe*: 'Foreign News', 1955: 12; De La Haye, 2012; Pistorius, 2002; 'Tilcoloshe's Friend', 1956; Cassim, 1981: 133); as an act of defence against a *Tokoloshe* or where the perpetrator thought the victim was a *Tokoloshe* (such as the case of child-abductor and killer, Muiziwakhe Mbeje, who claimed he had been attacked by a *Tokoloshe* and was acting in self-defence: Ndlovu, 2007a; Ndlovu, 2007b; Ndlovu, 2007c; 'Dad thought son was an animal', 2007; cf. 'Police 'won't forget this case'', 2007; 'State blamed for teen's prison death', 1999; Mbongwa, 2001; Van Heerden, 2005; Knappert, 1977: 173-174); as an exorcism of a *Tokoloshe* (such as the case of baby-killer Sipho Khumalo: "'Tokoloshe baby' killer gets life', 2001; "'Tokoloshe' killer vanishes as if by magic', 2001; Suder, 2001a; Suder, 2001b; Laganparsad, 2001;

‘Tokoloshe’ killer gets life sentence’, 2002; cf. Dube, 2003); or to collect human body parts for traditional medicines (*muti*) (‘Men caught with body parts’, 2010). Tragic cases of young or infant children being mistaken for a *Tokoloshe* and subsequently killed include those of Patrick Stuurman (Jordaan, 25 August 2010; Jordaan, 26 August 2010; ‘Tokoloshe’ killing’, 2008); Masixole Sotenjawa (‘Tragic lapse that killed a child’, 2004; Bhengu, 2004); and Azakhanye Sowazi (‘Baby Tokoloshe killed!’, 2015).

3.9 Protection from the *Tokoloshe*

Accompanying the widespread belief in the *Tokoloshe* is a collection of resources that may be used independently or collectively by the wary, the victimised and the luckless in order to secure protection from the *Tokoloshe*, namely: through the use of certain medicines and substances; by performing certain rituals or manifesting specific behaviours; or by employing the services of specialist practitioners.

3.9.1 Medicines and charms

The use of particular substances and/or talismans such as salt, charms, plants and traditional medicines that can be placed in particular locations, worn, smeared on the body or even imbibed can all be used to secure protection from a *Tokoloshe*. Salt is considered to be a fatally poisonous substance to a *Tokoloshe*. As the *Tokoloshe* is renowned for stealing food a simple solution is to put salt in the food. Once the *Tokoloshe* consumes the food it will die (Shephard, 1955: 83; Coetzee, 1941: 36-37). Another possibility is to sprinkle the *Tokoloshe* with salt water. This renders the creature visible, and it can then be caught and destroyed (Menges, 2011). *Tokoloshe* repelling salts can be purchased at a range of locations across South Africa, including general dealers, superstores and even chemists. *Tokoloshe* salt is produced by several manufacturers in South Africa and is available through wholesale in an assortment of colours, receptacles and volumes (cf. du Toit, 2013). To protect the homestead these salts can be spread around the house or dissolved in water and sprayed around the property (Ndhlala et al, 2011: 834; Holland, 2005: 150). To avoid being followed by a *Tokoloshe* one may bathe in water containing a solution of the salt (‘Legends and superstitions’, 2010; ‘Faith or just money’, n.d.).

Another option is to procure a talisman or charm. A silver charm is said to be particularly powerful (‘Tokoloshe – how to chase this African goblin’, 2011; ‘Protection against tokoloshe’, 2011). Coetzee (1941: 36-37) suggests other charms to keep the *Tokoloshe* away include keeping a piece of unsalted bacon or a pigs’ tail

with you in your pocket or bag or shoe; wearing a piece of bacon or a pig's back foot around your neck, and a piece of *leguaan* (monitor lizard) or snake skin around your arm (cf. Holland, 2005: 152); keeping a piece of silver nitrate with you; or carrying a sheaf of green oats with you. One may also smear pig fat on the threshold and window-frames of the home, or bury a pig's knuckle under the threshold. Pig fat or bacon is thought to destroy the power of the *Tokoloshe*'s magic that makes him invisible. Shark bones can also be used to keep the *Tokoloshe* away from the homestead (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 268), as can a dried honeycomb which is 'burnt by the eldest son in the doorway of the hut every night to drive away the malicious and mischievous imp, *Thikoloshe*' (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 41). *Tokoloshes* can also be scared away by mirrors (Tucker, 2013: 15) mouse traps, dogs (Hunter, 1936: 282 & 297), dolls and the Bible (Ngcobo, 2013). Young men in the Eastern Cape reportedly use a sacred white stone (*ifutha*) to protect themselves from the *Tokoloshe* and other evil spirits; the stone is crushed and mixed with water to make a paint with which the young men cover themselves (Qwazi, 2013).

The primary source of protection from a *Tokoloshe*, in the form of substances, comes from traditional medicine (*muti*). These medicines include infusions, concentrates, inhalants, powders, poultices and protective charms or may be plants (dried or live) that can be planted or scattered about the house or property (Mander, 1998: 31; cf. Hunter, 1936: 296-297), and may be 'drunk in infusions, inhaled, rubbed into cuts on the body [*umgcabo*], smeared on pegs and buried, washed with or used as enemas' (Hammond-Tooke, 1989: 120; cf. Jolles & Jolles, 2000: 231-236).²³ The most popular herbal remedies or ingredients used for protection against the *Tokoloshe* are: *amakhubalo*, cycads, *ikhubalo likathikoloshe*, *imphepho*, *intelezi*, *isindiyandiya* and *isiphephetho* (Ngubane, 1977: 22 & 109; Dold & Cocks, 2002: 592 & 594; Broster & Bourn, 1981: 54, 81, 86 & 125-126; Mander, 1998: 67 & 69; Cocks & Moller, 2002; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 270, 275 & 282; Hammond-Tooke, 1989: 78-79; cf. Lebeau, 1999: 279). These medicines may be applied ritualistically (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 27). Traditional medicines are sold through formal and informal avenues: informal avenues include street traders and traditional healers (Mander et al, 2008: 192; 'Tokoloshe – how to chase this African goblin', 2011; cf.

²³ Incisions (*umgcabo*) are the main treatment 'against malicious spells cast by witches and sorcerers, harmful medicines, nightmares', particularly those caused by the *Tokoloshe*. For information on function, procedures and ingredients, see Jolles & Jolles, 2000: 231-236; cf. Lebeau, 1999: 372).

‘About Lesotho’, 2010), while formal suppliers include retail (*muti* or *amayeza*) shops, ‘health shops, pharmaceutical manufacturers and laissez faire manufacturers’ (Mander et al, 2008: 191 & 193; cf. Cocks & Moller, 2002; Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 266). Branded products (including Ingwe Tokoloshe Salts) are also available from mainstream suburban retail outlets in South Africa such as Spar (cf. ‘Spar good for you’, 2011), and from urban wholesale merchants in-store and on-line (cf. ‘Catalogue’. 2007; ‘Product – Tokoloshe Salts’, 2012).

3.9.2 *Tokoloshe* fat

Tokoloshe fat is considered highly valuable in that it may be used by diviners and healers, together with other ingredients, to combat black magic or to drive *Tokoloshes* away from the homes of members of the community (Krike, 1936: 327; Kohler, 1941: 38). *Tokoloshe* fat can be burnt to chase the *Tokoloshe* away and stop the *Tokoloshe* from bothering you, or given to dogs in milk so that they can be quick to pick up his scent (Hunter, 1936: 281). The body fat of the *Tokoloshe* is said to resemble that of a pig, while his ‘inside fat’ is yellow like that ‘of a fowl’ (Hunter, 1936: 281). The substance is said to be ‘imported from Mozambique where people are said to have a special method of catching *Tokoloshe*’, and then marketed and sold by trading stores or herbalists in southern Africa, often as pink or yellow liquid in phials or bottles labelled ‘*Tokoloshe* fat’ and manufactured in Johannesburg (Jolles & Jolles, 2000: 235; Mandt & Mandt, 2007): samples of *Tokoloshe* fat were being sold in South Africa as early as 1905 (Bryant, 1905: 639; cf. Shephard, 1955: 9). Collecting *Tokoloshe* fat is said to be a particular and demanding exercise, performed by skilful healers (Kohler, 1941: 38, 40; Berglund, 1989: 302). The traditional method for authenticating *Tokoloshe* fat is to dip a stick into the supposed fat of a *Tokoloshe*, and then place it in a stream or river where the current is not too strong. If the fat is real *Tokoloshe* fat, the stick will ‘not float with the current, but against it’ (Hunter, 1936: 281; Kohler, 1941: 38). In a televised exercise to test clinically the authenticity of *Tokoloshe* fat, samples purchased in KwaZulu-Natal were scientifically analysed and subsequently identified as being liquid chicken fat (Mandt & Mandt, 2007).

3.9.3 Rituals and other behaviours

A second approach to securing protection from the *Tokoloshe* is to enact certain particular behaviours or rituals. The first of which is to raise one’s bed up off the floor (typically on bricks or tin cans) so that the *Tokoloshe* cannot reach you (Moodley & Fournier, 2009: 278; Walaza, 2005: 17; *Tokoloshe*, 2010: 1.28-1.41;

Cumes, 2004: 16).²⁴ Others include throwing cooking water or soapy water over the *Tokoloshe* to make him visible; giving him a beating using a reed cane, black cane or a whip smeared with pig fat or bacon; saying his name out aloud and spitting; leaving a bright light on; leaving a Bible open on a chapter about witchcraft; or burning leather or an old shoe (Coetzee, 1941: 36-37). Hunter suggests a *Tokoloshe* can be caught and tamed by cutting his hair (Hunter, 1936: 277). Kidd (1906: 137) suggests the *Tokoloshe* can be appeased by slaughtering cattle ‘in his honour’.

3.9.4 Specialist practitioners

Those seeking protection from the *Tokoloshe* may also draw on the expertise of a specialist agent such as a practising traditional healer or a prophet from one of the independent African Pentecostal churches. It is believed that a *Tokoloshe* can be caught only by a powerful and qualified traditional healer who can use magical elements to trap, paralyze or kill the *Tokoloshe* and banish the creature from one’s home or village (‘About Lesotho’, 2010; ‘Protection against tokoloshe’, 2011; ‘Legends and superstitions’, 2010; ‘Tokoloshe – how to chase this African goblin’, 2011; cf. Lebeau, 1999: 294). The number of practising traditional healers in South Africa is said to exceed 200 000 (all of whom demonstrate a broad range of skills across a representative spectrum of training, experience and ‘legitimacy’), with a dependent industry worth an estimated R500 million (approx. £36 million) per annum (Dold & Cocks, 2002: 589; cf. Ndhlala et al, 2011: 833). In contemporary South Africa, traditional healers may advertise their services in newspapers, on street billboards, through flyers which are handed out at street corners and also on the internet, making explicit their speciality in dealing with *Tokoloshes* (cf. ‘Citismalls’, 2012; ‘Tokoloshe’s Photos and Videos’, 2012; Manuel & Manuel, 2012; Martin, 2010; cf. ‘Prince Omar, Fortune Teller, Herbalist, Astrologist with healing powers’ & ‘Dr Ibrah, Marriage Consultant and Traditional herbalist’ - both in ‘Weird Flyers’, 2011; ‘Great Sangoma’, 2012). A traditional healer may deploy one of several methods by which to catch and destroy a *Tokoloshe* or to protect a homestead from a *Tokoloshe*, such as smearing *muti* around the threshold or homestead to render the *Tokoloshe* visible or immobile, or burning medicines to drive the *Tokoloshe* out (cf.

²⁴ Woods (2016) suggests this behaviour relates rather to the shift of workers from their rural dwellings to urban accommodations; as wood fires were replaced with coal stoves in their quarters, so people became increasingly exposed to low-lying toxic carbon monoxide, hence the need to raise their beds up off the floor.

‘Tokoloshe – how to chase this African goblin’, 2011; Kohler & van Warmelo, 1941: 38-40; Soga, 1931: 186-187; Ashforth, 2000: 47-49; ‘How I bust a tokoloshe’, 2015; Niehaus et al, 2001:42; Olivier, 1981: 77; Lebeau, 1999: 373-374). During my fieldwork interview with the group of traditional healers, I asked about the frequency of consultations regarding *Tokoloshe*-related problems, and they responded saying it depended on the area they worked in and on the specialisation and skills of the traditional healer. One explained:

You may be a *sangoma* for consultation only, you may be a *sangoma* to heal: you specialise with this thing – like our academic doctors you know – there is a gynaecologist, a physician; someone might come saying “There are things running around the house. Please remove the spell”. [The healer] consults, and then [the healer] may say “No, I have no remedy for this thing. You must go to Mr So-and-so for help or to Ms So-and-so. She has the medicines to help you, to chase that spell away for you...”

L explained further:

As a traditional healer you may identify that with some person there’s a *Tokoloshe* troubling him in his life, but not every *sangoma* possesses the power to deal with *Tokoloshe*. There are special, gifted *sangomas* who can deal squarely with *Tokoloshe*. Others will refer to someone else. So, to answer the question, it depends in your area on how many people you see who experience the same problems, but others might have been referred to you from another village because they know that you can chase the spell away...

Another added that it takes a special *sangoma* to recognise when a person is being affected by a *Tokoloshe*’s evil ways.

Assistance may also be sought after from a prophet or minister associated with one of the African Pentecostal churches in South Africa, such as the ZCC (Anderson 1992: 7-12; Hammond-Tooke, 1989: 52). These churches regard themselves as Christian but also incorporate a number of traditional features that include spirit possession, hallucinations, dreams, divine healing and ritual washing (Broster & Bourn, 1981: 117), adapting traditional rituals and customs into prophetic practices to identify and eliminate evil medicines and wizardry through healing and exorcism (Anderson & Ontwang, 1993: 66). Healing is a primary feature of the Pentecostal churches, typically occurring during the church services, by immersion (especially in cases of possession by evil spirits) or through a consultation with a prophet. The sacrament of ‘laying on of hands’ is the most common rite, and the use of holy water is widespread (Hammond-Tooke, 1989: 136-137; Anderson, 1993). Prophets, in these churches (such as in the ZCC) are enormously important. They are seen as

‘messengers who hear from God and proclaim his will to people’; they have power from God to see revelations about the sufferer, particularly illness, which they are expected to recognise before the sufferer says anything, and then to provide effective healing through prayer, dispensing ‘holy water and other symbolic healing objects as the need arises’ (Anderson, 1993). Like traditional healers, the church prophets are ‘messengers’ or ‘diviners’; there are also similarities between the methods of prophetic diagnosis and traditional divination (Anderson & Ontwang, 1993: 129-130; Anderson, 1993). Most specifically these prophets and ministers, often armed with holy staffs and whips, are a means for exorcising *Tokoloshes* from the homes of church members through prayer and intervention (Anderson & Ontwang, 1993: 45, 86 & 90-91; cf. Anderson, 1993; Khumalo, 1999; Lustig, 2010). In my meeting with the traditional healers, the healers pointed to the increasing number of ‘born again’ Christian churches that offer to chase away *Tokoloshes* as evidence to the prevalence of *Tokoloshes* still present within their community. One said:

Some Christians do believe that there is *Tokoloshe*. In churches today they even say they must chase away *Tokoloshe*. They still believe *Tokoloshe* exists. The majority of people out there still believe that there is *Tokoloshe*.

The group clarified that because so many people still believe in the existence of *Tokoloshe*, when anyone says they are going to help get rid of *Tokoloshe* then people will go in numbers to that person for help. They explained this as a reason why all these churches are ‘mushrooming’, because people want to see *Tokoloshe* chased away. One member of the group responded as follows:

If you go to a born again church and talk to them [you will] find out they are always fighting those *Tokoloshe* spirits. This thing is living amongst us: it is here in our areas, in our villages, in our townships. It is all over the world. [If you] watch African magic films you will see people chasing and fighting these evil spirits; how *sangomas* are fighting them. And you can see how people use bad *muti* to make evil things. [You] can find examples throughout Africa, central Africa. Talk to born again churches. [Converts] will talk about how they were possessed by evil spirits to do bad things; you will hear people give testimony that this evil is a living thing.

The *Tokoloshe* is an intrinsic part of a broader worldview in South Africa, playing a tangible role in the lives of regular citizens across southern Africa. It is appropriate, therefore, that the systems of managing that phenomenon within society should be connected so integrally to everyday life, in terms of access to traditional medicines as basic commodities, and access to healing for general well-being. While

the *Tokoloshe* may be invisible, the resources devoted to *Tokoloshe* management are not: in terms of the farming, harvesting, distribution, manufacturing and sale of traditional medicines; the training of, and provision of services by, practitioners; the provision of facilities from which traders and practitioners operate; the mediums used to market products and practitioners. These are all significant, and contribute directly to making a very real impact on the formal and informal economy of South Africa and across its borders.

3.10 Policing the *Tokoloshe*

For more than 30 years, *Tokoloshe*-inspired or *Tokoloshe*-associated crimes in South Africa have been investigated alongside other occult-related crimes by a specialist unit in the South African Police Services: first called the Occult-Related Crime Unit (ORCU), and then later called the Harmful Religious Practices Unit (HRPU). The ORCU was established in 1981 by Dr Kobus Jonker at the instigation of the then minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok (Gifford, 2009), and was made up entirely of specially trained, devout Christian police investigators (Duguid, 2004). According to ‘Objectives of the Investigation and Prevention of Occult-Related Crime by the General Detectives’ (2006), the aims of this unit were primarily to prevent and investigate occult-related crime, specifically crime ‘which relates to or emanates primarily from any belief or seeming belief in the occult, witchcraft, Satanism, mysticism, magic, esotericism’, including ‘ritual *muti*/medicine murders, witch purging, witchcraft-related violence and sect-related practices’. Over a period of about 20 years, Jonker investigated hundreds of occult-related crimes, including *Tokoloshe* rape (Gifford, 2009; Lustig, 2010). The ORCU was supposedly disbanded in 1997 ‘after human rights groups claimed that it was not constitutional in a country that guaranteed religious freedom’ (Gifford, 2009; cf. Kemp, 2015). However, the current commander of the SAPS Occult Crime Unit, Dr Attie Lamprecht, disclosed in 2013 that the ORCU ‘merely went underground because the glare of publicity sometimes hindered investigations’ (Steven, 2013; cf. Kemp, 2015); it also became apparent that the unit had been rebranded in 2012 as the HRPU (Kemp, 2015; cf. ‘Harmful religious practice is a crime’, 2014). In 2014, there were at least 40 specially trained Occult Unit investigators in South Africa, operating in each of the nine provinces (Steven, 2013; Kemp, 2015; cf. Harvey, 2012; Jadoo, 2012). Members of the SAPS Police Department are able to enrol in a five-day long Occult Related

Crimes Investigators Course ('SAPS Division Training - Investing in Human Capital', 2013). In 'Occult related practices on the rise – SAPS' (2015), it states:

... the [HRP] unit [is] responsible for investigating cases dealing with harmful practices where there [is] no physical evidence. This is in addition to investigating muti murders; spectral evidence, including spiritual intimidation and astral coercion; curses intended to cause harm; voodoo; vampirism; harmful cult behaviour; animal mutilation and sacrifice where evidence of occult involvement is believed to be indicated; human sacrifice, and the interpretation of alleged occult signatures.

It was reported in 2012 that Jonker, the former ORCU commander, had trained three SAPS investigators in the Eastern Cape over several months 'as part of a national drive by the SAPS to crack down on *muti* murders and other occult-related crimes', including allegations of rape by a *Tokoloshe* (Steven, 2013; Harvey, 2012; Jadoo, 2012). While the HRPU has been criticised by several academics, politicians and the South African Pagan Rights Alliance (SAPRA), its work has continued: in 2014, the Gauteng provincial unit reported increased incidents of occult-related crime, particularly among black youth (Smillie, 2014; Petrus, 2011 & Petrus, 2012; 'Occult Crime Unit to investigate the supernatural', 2012; Kemp, 2015). In August 2104, the Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services, in partnership with several government departments, local and religious leaders and the police, rolled out 'the Harmful Religious Practices campaign' in all nine provinces 'to educate schoolchildren about the dangers of such practices (Mkhize, 2014; cf. 'Harmful religious practice is a crime', 2014).

3.10.1 Room 9

In an instance of 'art imitating life', a television drama about a fictitious Occult Detective Unit was broadcast in South Africa in 2012; first televised on SABC1, *Room 9* is a 13 episode police procedural drama TV show, based 'in an alternate Pan-African world' referred to as the New Azania where South Africa has been re-structured into six sectors, and where a 'war is being waged between light and dark, between good and evil' ('Room 9 Press Kit', 2012). The series was subsequently broadcast on The Africa Channel in 2013 (Nthini, 2013). The first episode deals with the case of a cleaner who is found brutally murdered, supposedly by a *Tokoloshe*.

3.11 Prosecuting the *Tokoloshe*

In South Africa, *Tokoloshe*-related acts of violence, rape and murder (and other cases of witchcraft-related violence and violations of the Witchcraft Suppression Act) are judged according to common law (essentially Roman-Dutch law which has been interpreted through English law and subsequently revised and elaborated by the South African judicial and legislative procedures) (Rautenbach & Matthee, 2010: 111-112; Ludsin, 2003: 91). Common law is informed particularly by South Africa's colonial past, with the earliest efforts to control witchcraft in southern Africa being put into law by colonial administrators from 1847 onwards, culminating in the Witchcraft Suppression Act of 1895 (Digby, 2006: 319-321; Ludsin, 2003: 89). The Act of 1895 was amended in 1957 by the Suppression of Witchcraft Act, enacted by the parliament of the Union of South Africa to unify the colonial laws. This Act outlawed 'any kind of supernatural power, witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment or conjuration', as well as any person undertaking to tell fortunes or pretending to have knowledge of occult science. It also detailed the types of activities that were included under witchcraft (Digby 2006: 321-322), outlawed 'accusations of witchcraft and the practice of divination', and prohibited 'the hearing of witchcraft cases in the chiefs' courts'. This effectively rendered the expansive industry of traditional healing in South Africa illegal (Ashforth, 2001: 14). The Act of 1957 was subsequently amended in 1970 (The Witchcraft Suppression Amendment Act, 1970 - Act No. 50 of 1970) and in 1999 by the Parliament of South Africa, 'so as to make it an offence for a person who pretends to exercise supernatural powers to impute the cause of certain occurrences to another person'. This Act remains in force in South Africa today (cf. Ludsin, 2003: 90). The Act: 'aims to punish accusations of witchcraft' levelled at individuals; it 'targets diviners or traditional healers who smell out witches'; and 'criminalizes efforts to hire diviners or traditional healers to find a witch'. Furthermore, 'anyone claiming to be a witch or who sells or advises in the use of charms, medicines or other tools of witchcraft can be punished'; and as can 'persons who use supernatural powers to locate missing or stolen property upon payment'. The Act also allows for 'punishment of a fine or imprisonment' (Ludsin, 2003: 90). The primary criticisms of the 1957 Act (according to Petrus) is that it makes no distinction between practitioners of 'good' magic (such as diviners and herbalists) with practitioners of 'bad' magic (witches and sorcerers); it does not recognise these 'good' practitioners as protectors of their communities; it does not 'recognise the

ontological status of witchcraft in African world-view'; and it actually led to a rise in witchcraft-related crime as it criminalised diviners, herbalists and anyone consulting them (Petrus, 2011: 2-3). In 2007, the Office of the Premier of the Mpumalanga province in South Africa prepared to pass the Mpumalanga Witchcraft Suppression Bill (a Bill that 'would explicitly acknowledge the existence of witchcraft and criminalise it'); however, the Bill was contested by SAPRA who, in defence of Wicca (a minority pagan, pre-Christian New Age religion that is seen as separate from Satanism), claimed the Bill criminalised people who practice witchcraft; the Bill was not passed (Petrus, 2011: 4).

Belief in the *Tokoloshe* and other indigenous supernatural beings can create conflict between South Africa's common and customary laws of South Africa, where 'someone's actions might be seen as lawful in terms of customary law, but unlawful in terms of the common law'; customary law refers to the written and unwritten laws of South Africa's indigenous communities, where 'limited criminal jurisdiction is conferred on traditional leaders (chiefs or headmen)' to adjudicate 'customary law issues between individuals living in indigenous communities; customary law is a part of modern South African law on a par with (and not subordinate to) common law' (Rautenbach & Matthee, 2010: 111-112, 118). Belief in the *Tokoloshe* has been used as a court defence for the execution of criminal activity. Two examples are the cases of Rex versus Ngang (Rautenbach & Matthee, 2010: 126-129; Burchell, 1960: 424; Ludsin, 2003: 94; cf. 'Rex v. Dhlamini, 1955' in Burchell, 1960: 424; cf. Blackwell, 1962: 19), and Rex versus Mbombela (Shephard, 1955: 82; Digby, 2006: 39 – 40; Lenta, 2004: 354). Mbombela's case was the inspiration for the 1999 film, *A Reasonable Man*, which re-casts the story into post-Apartheid South Africa. The film considers how a 'white' lawyer might pursue a court case where the content of the case has been shaped largely by 'black' culture, demonstrating the need in the democratised South Africa for greater understanding of the different cultures that constitute a multi-racial society that has been transformed politically but still exists significantly in a social reality representative of a 'segregated past' (Digby, 2006: 40; 'Plot Summary for *A Reasonable Man* (1999)', 2013; cf. Lenta, 2004: 363-364, 366-368).

Legal adjudication within a democratised South Africa has been pressurised to stretch beyond judgements based exclusively in common law. The Constitutional Court in South Africa has affirmed in its determination of the scope of religious

freedom, that ‘religion is a matter of faith and belief’. Those beliefs, which may seem ‘bizarre, illogical or irrational’ to non-believers, are revered and at the heart of the believers’ faith (Lenta, 2004: 374-375). Lenta states further:

“Yet, that their beliefs are bizarre, illogical or irrational to others or incapable of scientific proof, does not detract from the fact that these are religious beliefs for the purposes of enjoying the protection guaranteed by the right to freedom of religion.” In other words, the Constitutional Court has recognized that democratic adjudication requires that in a dispute involving the beliefs of a particular cultural group, the judiciary, who are not members of that group, must attempt to understand what it means to be part of that group and what the perspective of those who belong to it actually is. Failure to comprehend these cultural beliefs will mean that judges will not even begin to be able to weigh the demands and requirements of individuals within particular groups equally against others. Of course, this does not mean that judges should value all beliefs equally or that all beliefs should receive practical endorsement in legal decisions. If believers in the *tikoloshe* were required by virtue of their belief to sacrifice the lives of innocent and unwilling individuals, such a belief would neither be valued by, nor would it receive practical endorsement from, the Constitutional Court.

3.12 Representations of the *Tokoloshe*

3.12.1 In popular culture

In the pre-Apartheid, Apartheid and post-Apartheid eras, the *Tokoloshe* has featured regularly as a principal character, theme or symbol in a wide and extensive range of popular culture mediums, including literature (biography, children’s literature, novels, poems, and short stories); theatre; film; television; music; advertising; fashion and design; and cartoons (see Appendix A). During my fieldwork meeting, I asked the traditional healers what they thought about the fictionalisation of the *Tokoloshe* and of traditional belief in the media, particularly on television. The oldest member of the group responded, saying that in today’s media people want to portray *Tokoloshe* as a myth. She said further that:

...[this] is dangerous because immediately when you do that you are making it more powerful – and the messengers of *Tokoloshe* are the ones who are spreading this rumour that *Tokoloshe* is a myth because they don’t want their activities to be exposed, so that’s what they do. They do this as a way of degrading traditional healers, so that the healers can be seen as people who are raising things that are not there.

The healers insisted *Tokoloshe* exists, and agreed that what is happening in today’s media makes them unhappy. They clarified that due to the client-healer confidentiality by which they are bound they are not able to disclose issues about the *Tokoloshe*. One said:

Clients will come to you secretly – people who experience *Tokoloshes* in their lives – they don't talk publicly about it, and so we traditional healers are bound by client-healer confidentiality; we are not able to disclose, so we don't go out there to dispute these things as a myth because we are bound by that confidentiality between ourselves and the client.

The healers said that the media distorts reality, and that the stories about *Tokoloshes* terrorising families such as one incident in Bushbuckridge are proof that the *Tokoloshe* is everywhere.

3.12.2 In politics

In the past twenty years, the *Tokoloshe* has also been employed in the rhetoric and democratic machinations of politicians, political scaremongers and activists in South Africa. During the lead up to the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, stories circulated about *Tokoloshes* potentially lurking in voting booths and bewitching voters (Goldstuck, 1994: 174-175; cf. 'Witchcraft to play role in elections', 1994; cf. Robins, 1995); and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), threatened to withdraw from the election as his ballot paper picture (on the thin sticker that had been made specially for the IFP and that would be affixed to the bottom of the ballot paper) was scrunched up and made him look like a *Tokoloshe*, making him anxious about whether people would vote for him if he looked like a *Tokoloshe* (cf. Harris, 2010: 61, 200). In the lead up to the 2011 municipal elections, the *Tokoloshe* was invoked by Christian Democratic Party leader, Rev. Theunis Botha, in his media campaign in which he objected to the election rhetoric of the ANC's Jacob Zuma ('The Tokolossie is watching you', 2010; Roodt, 2011; cf. Viljoen, 2010; cf. Van Onselen, 2014: 11; 'Zuma warns of ancestors' revenge', 2011; Boyle, 2010; 'If you Vote ANC then the Tokoloshe will come for YOU', 2011). During the Marikana Commission (the investigation set up in response to the massacre in 2012) it was suggested that the striking miners had not been deterred by the significant police presence as several of the miners had been rendered invincible by supernatural protection²⁵; incisions had been found on some of the

²⁵ In early August 2012, a crowd of miners, most of whom were employed by Lonmin platinum mine, gathered on a hill near the Nkaneng informal settlement in the mining town of Marikana in North West Province to strike over a wage dispute. The strike was ruined by intimidation and violence, and ten people (including two policemen and two security guards) were killed. After several days, the growing crowds were ordered by the police to disperse. When the strikers did not disperse, the police opened fire on them with automatic weapons. 34 miners were killed, with 78 others injured (Tolsi, 2013; cf. Vermaak, 2013a; Vermaak, 2013b). The Marikana Commission, led by Judge Ian Farlam, was subsequently established to probe the cause of the 44 deaths during the illegal strike at the mine. One

bodies suggesting some of the miners had undergone *umgcabo* treatments (see 4.9.1 above): since the striking miners believed this protection worked against the *Tokoloshe*, they believed it would work even better against humans (Tolsi, 2013; cf. Vermaak, 2013a; Vermaak, 2013b). The killings at Marikana prompted the emergence of a new underground graffiti activist movement, calling itself the Tokolos Stencil Collective (TSC) that uses spray cans, plastic boards stolen from political campaign posters (that are then reworked into stencils), balaclavas and social networking websites as ‘weapons’ in their struggle for ‘dignity and freedom and against oppression’ (Underhill, 2014; Mazvarirwofa, 2014; ‘We send our Tokoloshe to battle with those trying to make us forget the atrocities of Marikana’, 2014; Davis, 2014; ‘tokolos-stencils’, 2014; Mann, 2014; Knoetze, 2014). The TSC explains its *Tokoloshe* connection (in Underhill; cf. ‘City works for a few’, 2014) as follows:

Like the tokoloshe which, though invisible, finds a way to scare the shit out of children throughout the country, our noble aim is to terrorise the South African elite: those who screw us with forced removals, privatisation, gentrification and, of course, the many Marikanas that plague our society each and every day.

And during the national elections of 2014, ANC Sports Minister, Fikile Mbalula, whilst addressing a rally in the Western Cape, verbally attacked the opposition-led provincial government for ‘what he termed a failure to deliver for poor communities’ and then equated the manner in which the Democratic Alliance was running the Western Cape with ‘witchcraft’, urging residents to summon the help of *Tokoloshes* to ‘chase these witches away’ (Koyana, 2014a; Koyana, 2014b) This prompted three notable cartoon responses in the South African press: by Grogan (2014) in the *Independent Newspapers*, by Chip in the *Cape Argus* (Snaddon, 2014); and by Dr Jack and Curtis in the *City Press* (Swanepoel & Curtis, 2014). In 2014, the *eNews Channel Africa* published a cartoon under the title ‘Zuma not responsible for Nkandla’ (see 2.3.4), in which a personified South Africa asks “...So then who the *#@#! is responsible?!” and Mathole Mothshekga (ANC MP and lawyer), with one arm around Jacob Zuma and the other pointing at a *Tokoloshe*, says “The *Tokoloshe*” (Nell, 2014). Following on from the municipal elections of 2016, a cartoon by Fred

particular line of enquiry at the Commission considered why the miners had not been deterred by the large police presence. It was presented to the Commission that the post-mortem on people killed at Marikana showed they had fresh incisions on their bodies, incisions of the type typically used to protect people against the *Tokoloshe* (Vermaak, 2013a; Vermaak, 2013b).

Mouton in *Die Burger* in 2016, depicts Jacob Zuma spinning a ‘wheel of fortune’ to select the blame for the ANC’s poor performance in the elections: the *Tokoloshe* is given as one of the potential causes (Mouton, 2016).

These *Tokoloshe* references show that the *Tokoloshe* is an accessible and provocative symbol in the rhetoric of those working in the public, political arena. Also, they reflect the extreme range of receptions the *Tokoloshe* has in South African society, literally as a supernatural agent to be feared, and symbolically as a flexible, rhetorical device. The *Tokoloshe* phenomenon intersects with a broad range of societal realities, and manifestations of belief in, or acknowledgement of, the *Tokoloshe* can be found in nearly all walks of life across South Africa. The *Tokoloshe* is also a rhetorical device in the political machinations of South African democracy, conjuring up not only loaded notions of traditional belief at its most basic level, but also suggestions of the *Tokoloshe* as a provocative, playful and pregnant symbol in political debate. This ancient being, and all it has the potential to represent, is a presence in the complicated industry of democracy in South Africa, paradoxically as a symbol of fear and as a symbol of hope.

3.13 Conclusion

Essentially, the *Tokoloshe* is a negative phenomenon that presents itself variously through the beliefs, interactions and media of people across southern Africa. It is an evolving, multivalent and ubiquitous phenomenon that exists across the cultures and languages of southern Africa. It is the product of cultural borrowing and acculturation over several centuries, and its value within each group of people mirrors the socio-historic differences of South African society itself. As such, it occupies a place in both traditional belief and current popular culture. The *Tokoloshe* is variously the personification or representation of evil, a representation of threat/fear (sexual, violent or transitional), an expression of sexuality, sexual desire or sexual identity, a medium for the exercising of power (prompted by jealousy or greed), a source of amusement or entertainment, a device for the attribution of accountability or culpability (social, behavioural or medical), or a literary and political device.

It appears the *Tokoloshe* has existed in southern Africa for several centuries, but its features, characteristics and behaviour have evolved across time, changing to accommodate the particular needs of each cultural group that has appropriated it. Its home is in the many cultural and linguistic permutations that southern Africa has to offer: as people have criss-crossed their ways across southern Africa, so, too, has the

Tokoloshe, adapting and transforming itself as it has travelled from one cultural incarnation to the next. It has taken on some of the features of other symbols of belief in southern Africa, emerging as an overarching, all-embracing/composite, singular phenomenon. As the *Tokoloshe*'s features are so remarkable, it is possible to map out its progress across southern Africa, noting intersecting points of cultural exchange. While belief in the *Tokoloshe* may vary across age groups, ethnicities and geographic/urban/rural location in South Africa, the phenomenon is ubiquitous in contemporary life: in the media, on television and in film, on the music charts, in court rooms, in church, on the streets and in the school playgrounds, in the rhetoric of politicians and satirists. In the 21st century, the *Tokoloshe* is anchored to the complex belief systems of millions of South Africans, Zimbabweans and more, and it is acknowledged and engaged with across those systems in an irregular and assorted manner that reflects the socio-historic diversity of South Africans themselves, from reactions of fear and reverence to laughter, indifference and disbelief. The *Tokoloshe* can be found occupying a role in the most conservative of traditional beliefs whilst simultaneously inhabiting another role as a figure of irreverent divertissement; it is seen as a personification of evil and a synonym for Satan, while functioning as a politician's metaphor, a pop song's sweetheart and a cartoonist's prop all at the same time. The *Tokoloshe* is all those things.

The *Tokoloshe* is also the source of a great deal of economic industry, particularly with reference to traditional healing and traditional medicines. The provision of agricultural, manufacturing, marketing and distribution resources devoted to managing the *Tokoloshe* makes a very real impact on the formal and informal economy of South Africa and across its borders, contributing billions of rands to the South African economy every year, combating monsters like the *Tokoloshe* whilst providing employment for hundreds of thousands of practitioners, retailers and the producers of traditional medicines.

The *Tokoloshe* is firmly entrenched in the South African socio-cultural, historic and present experience. There are specially trained police officers and investigators who actively investigate crimes linked to or inspired by the supernatural and to the *Tokoloshe*. Judges are required to determine the outcomes of investigations on murderers who wittingly plead *Tokoloshe* possession to defer culpability for their crimes, or on the tragedies of those who unwittingly kill young children because they have sincerely mistaken the poor child for a *Tokoloshe*. Creative artists, writers,

film-makers and those working within the extended entertainment and arts industries access and generate an increasing number of *Tokoloshe* stories, committing human resources and capital to its continued proliferation whilst employing strings of artisans in the process. While the *Tokoloshe* may be invisible, its impact on society is not.

Chapter 4 - The Tokoloshe and Zef Culture

4.1 Introduction

South Africans, across the colour divide, have been faced with the challenge of attempting to forge their places in a new and unfolding society prompted by the reinvention of the nation in its democratisation. White South Africans have had to negotiate the irregular and unfamiliar terrain of this post-Apartheid world by coming to terms with past privileges and questioning their cultural make-up so that they can find a meaningful place for themselves in this new reality. Afrikaners in particular, as principal architects and beneficiaries of the Apartheid dispensation, have found themselves in the midst of an unexpected identity crisis. This period of transformation and questioning is reflected broadly in the works of several artists, especially by those who represent the Zef movement. Jack Parow and *Die Antwoord* [*The Answer*] capture the processes of a community in crisis by reflecting the key issues of that process in their image, music and attitudes. These artists successfully draw on the *Tokoloshe* in their art to do this, using this enigmatic and shape-shifting phenomenon to highlight their ambiguous positions in South African society, caught up as they are in the culpabilities of the past and the aspirations of the future. Like the *Tokoloshe*, this artistic/cultural construct threatens the fabric of mainstream society, through its rejection of purity, honesty and certainty. What's more, like the *Tokoloshe*, their work raises powerful questions about masculinity, sexuality and morality and makes accessible an identity that is the very antithesis of Calvinist Afrikanerdom.

This chapter considers specifically the representation of the *Tokoloshe* in two pieces of Zef music, namely *Die Antwoord*'s 'Evil Boy' and Jack Parow's 'Hosh Tokolosh', and examines what those representations suggest about shifts in cultural identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, particularly within Afrikaans culture. In this chapter, I explore the relationship of popular culture with cultural identity, with reference to popular music in South Africa, as well as a brief consideration of shifts in Afrikaans cultural identity, before detailing Zef culture and the roles played by South African music artists *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow in rendering Zef culture identifiable and accessible in mainstream popular culture in South Africa and abroad. The key traits of the *Tokoloshe* are its malevolence, its sexual perversity, its amorality and its hedonism. Jack Parow and *Die Antwoord* have drawn on these traits, as embodied by the *Tokoloshe*, in their contemplation of Afrikaner (and other) identity

in contemporary South Africa. I engage in a detailed contextual analysis of the two songs, ‘Evil Boy’ and ‘Hosh Tokolosh’, with attention given to how the *Tokoloshe* is portrayed in those songs, and what that portrayal suggests about shifts in identity in South Africa in the 21st century.

4.2 Popular music

For the purposes of this work, I have opted for a definition of popular music that captures its social, artistic and commercial aspects: popular music refers to ‘any commercially oriented music principally intended to be received and appreciated by a wide audience, generally in literate, technologically advanced societies dominated by urban culture’; in the past 150 years, genres of popular music have included waltz music and operettas, ragtime, jazz, country music, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, disco, heavy metal, funk, punk and hip-hop (‘Popular music’, 2016). A key feature of popular music is its hybridity of traditions, styles, and influences; popular music is also ‘an economic product which is invested with ideological significance by many of its consumers’ (Shuker, 2002: 228).

The two songs I am analysing in this chapter are specific examples from a genre of popular music from within the South African music oeuvre. Popular music is a distinct feature of popular culture (see 2.2), and popular culture has a symbiotic relationship with cultural identity: shifts in one regularly impact directly or indirectly on the other. As the producers of popular culture generate original and adapted products for (popular) consumption so, too, does the media of popular culture (including radio, television, film and music) subsequently influence and affect the formation of people’s lifestyles and identities: such as a sense of self, gender, class, ethnicity and race, nationality, and sexuality; and perception of ‘self’ versus ‘other’ (Dekker, n.d.:3). Hegemony in society, then, is challenged daily by the processes of identity formation that are contributed to by the products, modes, styles and subject matter of popular culture (including the images of popular media) and by individuals themselves. Dominant ideologies and the ‘discourses perpetuated by the capitalist global music industry’ subsequently prompt discursive and counter-discursive responses within any given society (Dekker, n.d.: 4). In Chapter 2, I explored the concepts of ‘popular culture’ and ‘cultural identity’ in the context of South Africa to establish a meaningful theoretical framework to which my research and fieldwork may be applied. The following discussion on popular music in South Africa, is intended to augment the arguments and theories considered in that chapter.

4.2.1 Popular music in Africa

Africa is not a village, and I hope to avoid a reductionist approach to this phenomenon in this review. What is of value, here, is an acknowledgement of the distinct features and perceptions of popular music in Africa. Popular music is a significant and prominent demonstration of the intricate and unique experiences that define popular culture. In the 21st century, that demonstration is facilitated more readily by traditional and new media (including the internet, cable television and social networking sites), subsequently and potentially transcending age, gender, class, religion and ideology (Adegoke, 2011: 150). Popular music in Africa is often referred to as Afro-Pop (or Afropop), a term popularised through the success of Afropop Worldwide, an award-winning radio program and online magazine dedicated to music from Africa and the African diaspora first established in 1988 ('About Afropop Worldwide', 2011; cf. 'Glossary', 2007). Afropop is a generic label for the wide and diverse styles, traditions and languages of contemporary (and typically urban and electric) African dance music, and subgenres include South Africa's *mbaqanga*, Algerian *rai*, Senegalese *mbalax*, Zimbabwean *jit*, Zaire's *soukous*, Nigerian *juju*, Ghana's *highlife* and East African *taarab* ('Glossary', 2007; 'Afro-Pop', 2017; Scaruffi, 2002). The context for popular music in Africa emerges from the socio-political circumstances and challenges found in Africa, including problematic governance, low levels of literacy, unrest among young people, high levels of unemployment, infrastructure issues, economics and poverty, corruption, and civil war. Individualistic artists' ideological perspectives, culture, identity and circumstances, as well as the influences and impacts of media and globalisation, also provide a context for a popular music in Africa that is constantly in flux as it makes evident diverse ideas and shifting points of focus. Collectively, these elements also create a popular music that goes beyond stereotypical notions of popular African music simply as 'protest music' (Adegoke, 2011: 153-154; cf. Tangari, 2005). Adegoke suggests that popular music is an 'avant-garde' hybrid: it appropriates global products and syncretises them with forms of local music through reworking, reconciling, fusing and blending extant musical sounds, instruments, accents, genres, styles and recording techniques to create new cultural forms (Adegoke, 2011: 154; cf. Scaruffi, 2002; 'Rediscovering Afropop and its influences', 2015). Popular music in Africa encourages artists and individuals to assert themselves, using language switching and other code switching devices (gestures, body language and dance

amongst others) to negotiate the African individual's experience of a globalised world, and frequently produces identifiable sub-culture genres within any given art-form, such as 'Nigerian hip hop, African American hip hop, South African hip hop' (Adegoke, 2011: 156). Adegoke also identifies the escapist role played by popular music, particularly among young people who have been marginalised through joblessness, poor education, isolation from parental support and inadequate government assistance. In such circumstances, popular music provides an escape whilst providing a stage for identity performance within society. Adegoke attributes the popularity of popular music like hip-hop to the shared, empathetic experiences it provides (Adegoke, 2011: 160).

4.2.2 Popular music in South Africa

Popular music in post-Apartheid South Africa is an avenue within popular culture that provides a transformational opportunity for individuals and communities to convert piecemeal elements of daily life into indicators of 'national culture' and 'a national narrative', and present appropriate 'counter-narratives of nation' that function as destabilisers of the same national culture (Scott, 2012: 748). Impey, (in Dekker, n.d. :2) identifies the influences of western and indigenous musical practices in the creation of South African popular music, and sees that music as an expression of the wider socio-political transformations in cultural identity in South Africa. Haupt (quoted in Dekker, n.d.: 6-7) also emphasises the national importance of music as a means of self-definition and existential clarification in the localised context of post-Apartheid South Africa. Ballantine (2004: 105) suggests this is particularly true for white musicians in post-Apartheid South Africa who generate songs that demonstrate a flexible disregard for unchanging or indispensable identities by means of unswerving censure, biting parody, comedy and the articulation of elusive identities. These songs act as optimistic markers for a more integrated future, and the characteristic features of such music are frequently irony, unpredictability, and unconventional or 'bad' behaviour - all contributing to meaningful 'self-reinvention'. Such re-invention typically produces subversive youth sub-cultures whose identities and sense of belonging are forged by the counter-discursive actions of their music production, and who distinguish themselves from mainstream culture through these new, re-constructed styles as an indication of unified defiance against homogenous culture and the mainstream media industry. Dekker (n.d.: 4-5) states:

Subversive musical genres such as hip hop appropriate elements of popular music, fragmenting them and constructing new images and texts that challenge dominant oppressive discourses. They use the media resources available to them such as the internet and digital technology (the very tools of Empire) to question and challenge dominant power relations.

Balog et al (2012) acknowledge that South African artists of different races, genres and backgrounds have much to say about their country's problems in post-Apartheid South Africa, but they also argue that the same artists 'rarely share the same opinions on issues and how the country should move forward', resulting in a music scene that is fractured and lacks cohesion, and which is indicative of a society that is similarly splintered and lacking unity. Prior to 1994, South African music could unite around the inspiration of racial freedom, but that same medium now finds itself in an age of ambiguity that is characterised by a lack of absolute 'economic and social freedom' where the identity of the nation is ambivalent. Balog et al suggest that music in post-Apartheid South Africa mirrors the process of identity crisis being experienced in other sectors of South African society, as it fights to secure a position and value in a socio-political environment that is unstable and incoherent. South African popular music is 'multifarious, multilingual, multicultural and multimusical' (Ballantine, 2004: 125).

4.3 Afrikaans identity

The analysis in this chapter explores two examples from Zef culture, and it is necessary to contextualise this sub-culture within the broader understanding of Afrikaans culture and identity. The following is a brief delineation of the concepts 'Afrikaans' and 'Afrikaners'. Afrikaans is one of South Africa's eleven official languages. It is spoken domestically by 13.3% of the country's population: by white Afrikaners as well as by members of South Africa's 'coloured' population (people of mixed-race living predominantly in the Western Cape area) (Conway-Smith, 2010). According to the 1998 census, the largest portion of the population who speak Afrikaans as their mother-tongue language are coloured people, and approximately 43.8% of all South Africans aged 7 or older speak, read and write Afrikaans (DeMartino, 2009: 21). The language evolved initially as a creolised means of communication between Dutch settlers, Khoe and San people and the Malay/Portuguese-speaking slaves resident at the Cape during the 17th century; during the 18th and 19th centuries, the language was referred to variously as Khoikhoi Dutch or Cape Dutch, and remained a collection of several dialects with

diverse and distinct vocabularies and sentence structures (including Cape Afrikaans, Orange River Afrikaans and Griqua Afrikaans) until the annexation and standardisation of the Afrikaans language by Afrikaner nationalists in the early 20th century (in response to, amongst others, the perceived threat to Afrikaans by British imperialism and its medium of English, and in response to the programme of nation-building associated with early Apartheid) (DeMartino, 2009: 7-8, 24-25; cf. Van der Waal, 2012: 8-9). The term ‘Afrikaner’ was subsequently employed collectively by the nationalist regime to indicate an amalgamation of white Afrikaans language users, to whom belonged a particular identity. This identity was reinforced through the institutions of education and religion, and in the dissemination of an independent language (Verwey & Quayle, 2012). Vestergaard (2001: 20-21; cf. Verwey & Quayle, 2012) identifies the principal foundations of Afrikaans identity as Calvinism, patriarchal authority, Afrikaner nationalism, and conservative values (the nuclear family, heterosexuality and whiteness). It was the Afrikaners who exercised political and economic authority during the Apartheid era, and thus, Afrikaans became associated with oppression.²⁶ In post-Apartheid South Africa, and through the workings of an emerging, albeit complicated, new national identity, the use of Afrikaans in the public arena remains a challenging and problematic issue, and attempts to escape the ‘political baggage’ ingrained in the Apartheid associations of ‘Afrikanerdom’, have led several Afrikaners to think of themselves variously as either ‘Afrikaner’, ‘South African’, or simply according to their profession or their geographical location. There have also been efforts to identify all speakers of Afrikaans (across the colour/race bar) as ‘Afrikaanses’ (Marx & Milton, 2011: 743; cf. Blaser, 2012: 18-19; Vestergaard, 2001: 22 & 30). In this chapter, I use the term ‘Afrikaners’ to refer to ‘white’ residents of South Africa who are Afrikaans mother-tongue users and who suppose their language, culture, faith and past to be their own.

In post-Apartheid South Africa, the underpinning principles that define ‘Afrikaner’, have changed remarkably, and white Afrikaans identities have had to engage with a multiplicity of often ambiguous discourses to rationalise their position in post-Apartheid South Africa (cf. Verwey & Quayle, 2012). This has been problematised by increased levels of unemployment in white Afrikaans communities;

²⁶ For detailed information on Afrikaner nationalism and the background to and ideology and functioning of Apartheid, see: Gilioomie & Schlemmer (1989), particularly chapters 1-3; Grobbelaar (2001: 301-313); and also the entries to ‘DF Malan’, ‘Hendrik Verwoerd’, ‘BJ Vorster’ and ‘PW Botha’ in Parker’s acerbic *50 people who stuffed up South Africa* (Parker, 2010: 33-36, 87-89, 187-195).

by the emergence of Afrikaner squatter camps to house displaced and impoverished white Afrikaners; by the perceived targeting and murders of white Afrikaner farmers; and by calls to minimise or remove Afrikaans as medium of instruction at several historically Afrikaans universities (Simpson, 2013; Henderson, 2016; Makhubu, 2015; Roets, 2017; Giliomee, 2015). It has become possible to distinguish ‘orthodox’ Afrikaners (those who ‘resist change and cling to established values’) from ‘heterodox’ Afrikaners (those who ‘welcome the new challenges and champion the opening of the social field’ (Vestergaard, 2001: 19, 26-28; cf. Marx & Milton, 2011: 725; van der Westhuizen, 2016). A range of strategies and cultural activities have evolved since 1994 to explore Afrikaans (and white) identity in post-Apartheid South Africa and to safeguard the survival and continuation of the Afrikaans language in the public sphere. These have included the introduction of several Afrikaans art and music festivals (Marx & Milton, 2011: 725; cf. Van der Waal, 2012: 11). Van der Waal (quoted in Conway-Smith, 2010) suggests that through the use of Afrikaans in theatre and music, Afrikaans is emerging as ‘something in its own right’, being freed from the baggage of its Apartheid past, and developing a new association as a language of culture. Some (alternative) young Afrikaans artists (graphic artists, musicians, writers, playwrights and performers) in contemporary South Africa explore an overtly anti-authoritarian identity that has inconstant borders and is receptive to global and local African influences. This they do by appropriating from the wide range of cultural assets available to them, including re-appropriating traditional Afrikaner imagery and symbols in ways that challenge ‘traditional’ Afrikaner values through a kind of ‘semiotic guerrilla warfare’, to decode past narratives via contemporary understandings. Vestergaard suggests that South Africa’s current progressive constitution (with its entrenched safeguarding of basic rights) has facilitated the opportunity for young Afrikaner artists to voice opposition to, and alternative views of, what being an Afrikaner means in South Africa without running the risk of persecution (Vestergaard, 2001: 35-36; cf. Marx & Milton, 2011: 726-727).²⁷ Bezuidenhout (in Scott, 2012: 750; cf. Marx & Milton, 2011: 733) highlights three movements or attitudes in post-Apartheid music in Afrikaans: the ‘nostalgics’ (representing a yearning for the past), the ‘romantics’ (representing what it entails to

²⁷ Consider *Tokkelos* by singer/songwriter Karen Ferreira. Less vulgar/aggressive than Zef, this song uses subtle sexual innuendos, indigenous visuals and sounds to showcase unconventional Afrikaans identity (cf. Appendix B; ‘Tokkelos’, 2010; *Karen Ferreira – Tokkelos*, 2010).

be ‘Afrikaans’), and the ‘cynics’ (representing the denouncing of nostalgia and Afrikaner Christian nationalism, celebrating marginality and social reality). Scott (2102) considers *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow as examples of Bezuidenhout’s ‘cynics’, and suggests that by situating these artists in a wider context and by looking at the movement of dissident patterns in particular types of music, their significance can be more readily ascertained. That context is rooted in the pioneering endeavours of late-twentieth century, alternative musicians like Bernoldus Niemand, Johannes Kerkorrel, Valiant Swart and Koos Kombuis (the latter considered by some as the ‘grandfather of Zef’ (Scott, 2012: 750; cf. Marx & Milton, 2011: 735).

4.4 Zef culture

Zef (or Zef-side) is a post-Apartheid sub-genre of South African popular music and a cultural phenomenon associated almost exclusively with *Die Antwoord* comprising band members: Ninja (real name Watkin Tudor Jones), Yo-Landi Vi\$\$er (real name Anri du Toit) and DJ Hi-Tek (real name Justin de Nobrega); and Jack Parow (real name Zander Tyler). It has a particular musical and visual style, and uses a blend of crude and hybridised South African language in its execution. The word Zef is used to signify something “common” or “kitsch”/mass-produced, and is typically connected to poor(ish), suburban white South Africans. Zef historically is an indecent name, applied as a racial slur to imply “white trash” (or “red necks”). Jones (quoted in an interview in Myers, 2015) states:

Zef is like dirt, it’s like scum, there was no zef movement before we came along. It was an insult, it’s like eurghh, talking shit about people. It’s a word made up by non-zef people, Afrikaans people talking shit about their dress: ‘Eurgh that dress is so zef, it’s disgusting.’... We made it into a fucking movement.

Since its appropriation by *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow, the word has taken on a quality of *nouveau riche* ‘coolness’ or credibility, suggesting a more positive spin on the original concept (Du Preez, 2011:106; cf. Smit, n.d.: 4; cf. Marx & Milton, 2011: 735). Zef is a derivative of Ford Zephyr, a brand of motor vehicle that was particularly sought after by blue-collar Afrikaner workers during the mid-twentieth century (Du Preez, 2011:106; cf. Truscott, 2011: 97), and parallels the rising popularity of the roughly-behaved ‘ducktail’ biker subculture during the same period (whose hair at the back of their heads was oiled and shaped to look like a ‘duck’s tail’) (Du Preez, 2011:106). Fairbanks (2012) defines Zef as ‘the nasty, freaky, gleefully trashy underbelly of post-apartheid white South African culture.’ The artists

themselves have given a range of (sometimes contradictory, sometimes nebulous or obfuscating) explanations of Zef (cf. Jones, quoted in an interview in Mechanic, 2010c). *Die Antwoord* describes Zef as ‘the ultimate South African style’ (Marx & Milton, 2011: 735; cf. Jones quoted in Du Preez, 2011:106-107), and also as a borrowing of assimilated, disjointed elements from Western and American popular culture, all facilitated by shifts in tastes and genres in the music industry at the turn of the century, made accessible by new trans-global media and rooted in South Africa’s previously isolated context (cf. Jones quoted in Smit, n.d.: 4). Tyler says that Zef is the antithesis of ‘classy’, highlighting its self-deprecating, impoverished, unrefined and dysfunctional/heterodox nature (cf. Smit, n.d.: 4-5; Lewis, 2016: 164). However, Jones’ more recent take on their appropriation of Zef is a little less abstruse. In Myers (2015), Jones admitted that much of the band’s agenda could be attributed to the band’s anti-establishment attitudes, to not taking themselves too seriously, and fundamentally to their desire to getting noticed by being as uniquely South African as possible. In the hands of Tyler and Jones, Zef is a device that accesses vulgarity and controversy to stand out and be noticed, attempting to make Afrikaans cultural identity and language ‘cool, irreverent and unique’ or (in Jack Parow’s case ‘palatable’), and refusing to allow ‘whiteness’ to disappear or become obsolete (cf. Lewis, 2016: 164-165, 179-180, 191).

4.4.1 Zef music

Musically, Zef is a form of Afrikaans ‘rave-rap’ (white ‘conscious’ hip-hop music) heavily influenced by UK rave music, African American hip-hop culture, the rap genre *braggadocio* (bragging or bravado), ‘grime culture’ (a mix of garage, drum and bass, dancehall and hip hop) and Cape Town hip-hop (Wright, 2010; Du Preez, 2011:114; Williams & Stroud, 2013: 19; Dekker, n.d.: 14; Marx & Milton, 2011: 739). Traditionally, hip-hop is considered a genre of black music; a ‘counter-culture defying systems of white oppression and global capitalist interests’. ‘Conscious’ hip-hop is about figuring out who you are and where you belong, challenging those in authority, and legitimising the disenfranchised (Dekker, n.d.: 14). South African artists such as *Prophets of the City* and *Brasse vannie Kaap* developed Cape Town hip-hop in the coloured communities in the 1980s as a way to contest their black/coloured identities in Apartheid South Africa, attempting to unify ‘black’ identity through their music, and trying to move ‘beyond an oppressive racist discourse’. These artists developed a unique relationship with ‘whiteness’ by

producing an original type of music that was inspired by the politically-conscious work of American hip-hop artists such as *Public Enemy* and *KRS-One* to re-contextualise global struggles of consciousness into localised struggles against Apartheid and notions of ‘whiteness’ and ‘colouredness’ (Dekker, n.d.: 14; Williams & Stroud, 2013: 18). In post-Apartheid South Africa, *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow have, in turn, appropriated (or as some critics suggest ‘stolen’) Cape Town hip-hop to great effect and with remarkable success (Marx & Milton, 2011: 735; Dekker, n.d.: 15).

4.4.2 Zef aesthetics

Zef has a distinct visual aesthetic that mirrors the dress-codes of rap and hip-hop, and incorporates through caricature obsolete ‘poor white’ cultural and style elements from the 1980s (Dekker, n.d.: 17). The artists perform in baggy, oversized trousers or hoodies, and are adorned with ‘extravagant golden accessories’ and ‘ersatz’ jewelled teeth. Jones wears the recognizable prison tattoos of the ‘Number’ gangs (the 26s: criminals motivated by financial reward, represented by an image of Richie Rich; the 27s: those who kill; and 28s: perpetrators of sexual crimes, represented by a large penis): these tattoos link Jones explicitly to the Cape Flats ‘gangsta’ culture he emulates (Marx & Milton, 2011: 737 & 742; Du Preez, 2011:106; Williams & Stroud, 2013: 28). The aesthetic also employs poor working-class stereotypes: Tyler sports a 1980s-styled ‘handlebar moustache’, and wears the stereotypical clothing of the white Afrikaans male: shorts and a vest, large amounts of gold ‘bling’, and his signature ‘larger-than-life’ elongated, leopard-print or golden peak cap (he is also described as the ‘Afrikaans Eminem’), and is regularly portrayed driving around in a ‘pimped up car with big furry dice dangling from the rear-view mirror’; Jones regularly performs in skimpy silk “Pink Floyd” pants, holding on to a hip-flask/half-jack bottle, with a mobile phone secured in his underwear, and wearing slippers, and has a block-cut hairstyle; and Du Toit sports a blonde ‘weed-whacker’ mullet hairstyle (short in the front and sides, and long in the back) (Conway-Smith, 2010; Du Preez, 2011:104, 106; Fairbanks, 2012; Fink, 2011; Smit, n.d.: 3; Dekker, n.d.: 17).

4.4.3 Zef language

The language used in Zef lyrics is explicit and vulgar (Wright, 2010; Smit, n.d.: 4). It also incorporates ‘linguistic remixing’ where multilingual artists sample sociolinguistic elements like mixed-language communication, various registers and

styles of speech, and elements of township street life in their performances (Williams & Stroud, 2013: 19). *Die Antwoord* raps in a mix of quickly-delivered Afrikaans, heavily-accented English, and Cape Coloured colloquialisms, with heavy doses of strong obscenities (Conway-Smith, 2010; Du Preez, 2011:107). *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow (all white performers) deliberately ‘remix’ vernaculars, modes and registers from the collection of languages with which they engage, adopting the form and methods of ‘black’/non-white music, and producing new musical forms in a local context that serve to demonstrate identity, culture and voice; they do so by tapping into the cultural norms and mixed-language (English and Afrikaans) street-rap vernacular of the coloured community of the gangster-ridden Cape Flats (Williams & Stroud, 2013: 17; Marx & Milton, 2011: 739).²⁸ That vernacular, which denotes Cape coloured identity, dates back to life in District Six, the 19th century multilingual and cosmopolitan/multicultural neighbourhood of Cape Town where both Dutch and English functioned as *linguae franca* (Van der Waal, 2012: 9). The area was infamously depopulated between 1968 and 1982 during the forced removals of the Group Areas Act of 1966. In re-defining Zef and toying with new notions of Afrikaans identity in contemporary South Africa, *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow access loaded and historic political signifiers of pre-Apartheid and Apartheid South Africa. It is important to remember that this multilingual cultural experimentation takes place under the influence of a globalised music industry, of which *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow are both effective receivers and transmitters: these artists each have successful international careers, profiles and audiences, and they explore their linguistic hybridity on global platforms. Also, previously isolated communities, like those of the Afrikaners, are no longer bounded or closed by their geography or politics; globalisation and new media have created avenues for discourse that were previously inaccessible (cf. Williams & Stroud, 2013: 16-17). ‘Whiteness’ and ‘being Afrikaans’ have been knocked off-balance by the evolutions of post-apartheid South Africa. The work of *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow purposefully reconfigures white Afrikaans identity by inverting the essence of what one might believe cultural music

²⁸ Given the several interactions of diverse ethnicities and cultures across southern Africa for several hundred years, the mixing of languages has been a common feature of communication leading to several common and evolving tongues that draw on their Portuguese, Dutch, French, English, Malay, San and Khoi, Xhosa, Zulu, Sesotho (and more) heritages. For a detailed exploration of the origins and evolutions of South Africa’s languages, see *Language and Social History: Studies in South African Sociolinguistics* (1995), edited by Rajend Mesthrie.

and identity should be, and by addressing white Afrikaans youths' perceptions of their marginal and liminal experiences in post-Apartheid South Africa. Through Zef culture, young Afrikaners are enabled to access coloured (gang)-culture as a means for identity re-invention and to engage publicly with the struggle of being Afrikaans, young and white in the post-Apartheid dispensation (Marx & Milton, 2011: 723-724, 735). Williams & Stroud (2013: 18-19) argue that Zef culture has 'become a form of release for white Afrikaner youth amidst an assumed crisis of power, masculinity and sexuality'. However, these artists avoid expressing candid or explicit political ideologies. Marx & Milton (2011: 734) state:

In both *Die Antwoord*'s and Jack Parow's musical repertoire there is an almost banal, nihilist notion, denying boundaries and celebrating a hybrid identity that resists being named ... Rather than critically engaging in the discourse of the problematised white Afrikaans identity, these artists articulate what the Ninja refers to as 'being fucked into one person'.

Die Antwoord and Jack Parow embrace a genre typified as 'black' to defy prevailing preconceived ideas about black and white identity, and thus pull apart an array of outwardly unchanging identities (Marx & Milton, 2011: 737).

4.5 *Die Antwoord*

Die Antwoord is the product of an initial collective artistic collaboration of South African artists in post-Apartheid South Africa: Watkin Tudor Jones, Anri du Toit and Zander Tyler. Tyler claims he met Jones and Du Toit over the internet and subsequently worked together in their group MaxNormal.tv at Jones' invitation (Tyler performed Afrikaans material with them); Tyler suggests the first days of *Die Antwoord* grew out of that partnership; however, Tyler branched out on his own, subsequently emerging as 'Jack Parow'. *Die Antwoord* was officially formed as a collaboration between Jones, Du Toit and de Nobrega in 2005 ('Jack Parow & Mr Hyde', 2010; 'Mystic Diaries Volume 6', 2012; Meletakos, 2012).

4.5.1 Ninja

Jones (also known as Ninja), an English-speaking white South African, is *Die Antwoord*'s front-man. Jones has a long history within the alternative music scene in South Africa. Previous incarnations/personae include 'The Man Who Never Came Back', 'Yang Weapon', 'MC Totally Rad', 'Max Normal', 'Constructus Corporation' and 'maxnormal.tv' (where the band performed live in three-piece suits fronted by Jones delivering his 'motivational-speaking-style raps to the audience' as Max Normal) (cf. Wright, 2010). Jones achieved some success with these 'conceptual'

projects but repeatedly abandoned them for new endeavours. He performed both individually and collaboratively with several groups including rappers, *The Original Evergreens*, in the 1990s. His ‘Ninja’ (white trash rapper) persona is the latest (and most successful) in a line of artistic inventions (Scott, 2012: 747; Kitchiner, 2013: 71). Jones (in Myers, 2015) explains his stage persona is essentially a ‘hyper version of himself’, a darker, unrestrained and unintimidated version of himself. Jones suggests he and du Toit enjoyed their alter egos so much, they essentially exchanged them for their original selves. Du Preez (2011: 104) suggests Jones’ ‘Ninja’ persona represents both a parody and an affirmation of repressed, abject white heterosexual masculinity, confronting audiences with an odd, yet tough, masculinity.

4.5.2 Yo-landi Vi\$\$er

The female member of the group is Afrikaans-speaking Anri du Toit, an art trained ‘trend-setting hipster’ originally from Port Alfred who performs (rapping and singing with an ‘eerie’ voice) in *Die Antwoord* as potty-mouthed ‘Yo-landi Vi\$\$er’ (Kitchiner, 2013: 71; Wright, 2010, cf. Myers, 2015; Du Preez, 2011: 104-105). Du Toit’s performance Mask/character as Yo-Landi reflects not only her struggle with identity as an Afrikaner and an artist, but also her personal identity: du Toit grew up as an adopted child, raised by a clergyman and his wife, before attended boarding school several hours away from her childhood home (Ryder, 2015). Jones and du Toit have a daughter together, although they are not a couple (Mechanic, M. 2010c).

4.5.3 DJ Hi-Tek and others

The third regular member of the trio is ‘beat master’ Justin de Nobrega who provides the ‘synth-heavy ringtone rave that underpins their songs’. Performing as ‘DJ Hi-Tek’, de Nobrega is typically hidden ‘by grotesque masks, hoods, or disabled bodies’ (Kitchiner, 2013: 71; Wright, 2010). The group has collaborated with several South African artists including ‘local gangsta rappers’ like Wanga and late artist and music performer, Leon Botha (known as DJ Solarize) (Wright, 2010; Du Preez, 2011: 115).

4.5.4 Success story

On the band’s official Facebook site, they include a ‘short story’ about how they started *Die Antwoord*. In ‘Love all but trust no one’ (2010) they claim Jones, du Toit and de Nobrega began *Die Antwoord* in 2005, drawing on ‘some funky rap lyrics and a futuristic zef vision’. They emerged on the South African underground music scene in 2008 when they began to gain popularity online. The music video for the

band's debut single 'Zef Side' received over a million views when it was released in 2008 (Fink, 2011), but the trio found significant international success when their music video 'Enter the Ninja' became an online phenomenon, going viral in February 2010 (as of July 2017, it has had just over 57 million hits on YouTube). Later that year, they gave critically acclaimed performances at the renowned Coachella festival in California, and were also signed (briefly) to release their debut album on Interscope (the label of Lady Gaga, U2 and the *Black Eyed Peas*) (Conway-Smith, 2010; Scott, 2012: 747). The contract with Interscope was terminated due to disagreements about the offensive content of *Die Antwoord*'s lyrics (Fairbanks, 2012). *Die Antwoord* has sold out concerts across the globe; they have been noticeably profiled internationally in a collection of publications, including the *New York Times* and music magazines *Spin* and *Rolling Stones*; they have featured on primetime American television (*The David Letterman Show*); they have fronted campaigns; they have won several awards; and their artwork has also been exhibited in Europe and America (Kitchiner, 2013: 71). The band has grown to be one of the most popular acts internationally to come out of South Africa. Their single 'Enter the Ninja' peaked at #37 in the UK Top 40 charts on 25 September 2010 ('Official Charts - Die Antwoord', 2015). Their album \$O\$ scored #4 in the US Dance and Electronic Albums top 10 in 2010; and the album *Ten\$ion* scored #8 in 2012. *Die Antwoord*'s album, *Donker Mag* (released in 2014), reached the #1 spot on the Dance/Electronic Albums charts and #37 on the Billboard 200 charts (Murray, 2014). The album also peaked at #11 in the Australia albums top 50 ('Donker Mag - Die Antwoord'. n.d.). Balog et al (2012) suggest the trio's offensive approach makes their messages 'more appealing to foreign audiences and very different from most South African music'. Despite their international popularity, the band is not necessarily popular with all South Africans. Balog et al suggest the group is predominantly fashionable only among a small group of young, alternative, white South Africans. Also, *Die Antwoord* is mostly an internet phenomenon, and many South Africans have limited internet and YouTube access. Furthermore, while foreign audiences may be entertained and intrigued by the group's video artistry and theatrical live-performance personae, local audiences fully appreciate and understand the vulgarity of their lyrics and the significant impact of the expletive-laden material. Their Afrikaans lyrics include references to Ninja being 'die wit kaffir' (the white nigger) and obscene lines, such as 'Wat stink meer as a snoek? 'n fokken snoek se poes,' ('What stinks more than a fish? A fish's cunt'). These lyrics may be

considered distasteful and offensive (Balog et al, 2012; cf. Mechanic, 2010c; Noakes, 2010). *Die Antwoord*'s music videos sell themselves with sex, money, celebrity and horror (the standard marketing devices of the commercial global music industry) drawing on images of 'dollar signs, large penises, breasts and atrocities' (Dekker, n.d.: 18). Dekker suggests further that the band employ the strategies and tools of the commercial music industry, along with the media of digital technology and the internet (like YouTube) to challenge the music industry from within and exploit media stereotypes. Their 2014 music video 'Ugly Boy' features cameo appearances by English fashion model, actress, and singer Cara Delevingne, American actor Jack Black, and controversial American musician and songwriter Marilyn Manson: these artists are (bankable) icons of global mainstream pop culture (Myers, 2015). On 9 September 2016, it was reported that the group were set to disband in 2017, but the following day du Toit announced via Instagram that Jones had been misquoted; the band would release one final album (*The Book of Zef*) in 2017, but would then continue with a world tour and produce a *Die Antwoord* feature film, to be called *South African Ninja* (Keating, 2016; Ralph, 2016; Yoo & Monroe, 2017; Bein, 2016; Powell, 2017). In June 2017, *Die Antwoord* released a short film online (called *Tommy can't sleep*), directed by du Toit and again starring Hollywood star Jack Black with Jones' and du Toit's daughter, Sixteen (Shawgo, 2017).

4.5.5 *Die Antwoord* and identity

Die Antwoord uses several narratives and the repeated use of irony in their profane (and often tactless) lyrics and music videos concurrently to confront, defy, sustain and underpin South African stereotypes (Scott, 2012: 751; cf. Kitchiner, 2013: 71). *Die Antwoord* describe themselves as 'the love child of diverse cultures—black, white, coloured and alien' (Balog et al, 2012). Jones (as Ninja, quoted in Scott, 2012: 748) says:

I represent South African culture. In this place, you get a lot of different things ... Blacks. Whites. Coloureds. English. Afrikaans. Xhosa. Zulu. [Whatever]. I'm like all these different people, fucked into one person.

What *Die Antwoord* extols is hybridity, creating a new style by 'borrowing' from diverse cultures and old paradigms (Lewis, 2016: 165). Scott argues that although Jones and du Toit are both white, they utilise (through appropriation) the racial signifiers of other race groups (such as Jones' prison 'gangsta' tattoos) to render their white identity ironic and re-inscribe on his white skin a new or different tale of

identity. Jones, in the song ‘Fishpaste’, exclaims: ‘I am a fucken coloured ‘cos I am a fucken coloured if I want to be a coloured; My inner fucken coloured just wants to be discovered’. *Die Antwoord* exhibits a composite identity that is made problematic by their indicative white skin (Scott, 2012: 755). Both ‘poor white trash’ and Cape coloured (mixed race) identity can be argued as liminal identities in South Africa. *Die Antwoord* challenges the boundaries and centrality of whiteness by highlighting a liminal poor white identity with their clown-like stage personas, distinguishing themselves from middle class whites, boldly embracing and elevating their outlandishness to levels of admiration, and promoting a more ‘hybrid, creolised Afrikaans’. Barely any boundaries remain unbroken and unproblematised by their hybrid Zef identity construction: *Die Antwoord*’s embodiment of the essence of Zef enables their audiences to understand their distinctive blend of liminality (Marx & Milton, 2011: 737-738; cf. Du Preez, 2011: 105-107). Jones (quoted in an interview in Mechanic, 2010c; cf. Noakes, 2010) states:

We like to absorb all the different elements of South Africa that we find interesting and attractive and unique. We’re like sponges. There’s things about the Xhosa culture that we love, and we love things about the Afrikaans culture; that’s very amusing and interesting to us. And then there’s the colored culture, which is a whole other thing... They refer to themselves as coloreds, not “blacks.” The PC-version people try and promote this image of South Africa as a rainbow nation and make it all like pretty and stuff. But it’s actually like this [fucked]-up, kind of broken fruit salad. ‘Cause all those things don’t mix that well together in the real world. But for us it does mix. That’s why we say it’s, like, “[fucked] into one person.” ‘Cause that’s how we feel on a certain level. Like we absorb all these things, but they’re not harmoniously flowing together through the air in this pretty rainbow picture.

4.6 Jack Parow

Zander Tyler is an Afrikaans rap artist who originates from Bellville and Durbanville in the Western Cape and began rapping in the late 1990s (Du Preez, 2011: 115; ‘Jack Parow & Mr Hyde’, 2010; Peters, 2014). As a child, Tyler holidayed regularly on the farm of his Afrikaans grandparents in the Langkloof (a valley in the south Karoo surrounded by mountains), and he was schooled in one of the largest Afrikaans high schools in the Cape. He acknowledges the influence of South African singer-songwriter David Kramer’s music on his own (Kramer’s music is itself a hybrid of traditional Afrikaans, English and Cape coloured sounds) (Rust, 2010). Prior to his success as Jack Parow, Tyler rapped in English with different bands in Cape Town (including black and coloured rappers). His Afrikaans-rapping Zef

persona grew out of a collaboration with bands like *The Clenched Fist* and *Brasse vannie Kaap* (cf. Solomon, 2010). Smit (n.d: 2; cf. Cooper, 2009) suggests Tyler first began experimenting with Afrikaans rap when he wrote an ‘angry Boer [Afrikaner]’ piece for *The Clenched Fist*’s track ‘Hard Headed Hobo’ in which he parodied the Afrikaner male stereotype. Tyler subsequently broke away from *The Clenched Fist*, and began rapping regularly in Afrikaans, joining with groups such as *Die Donkermag* and *Die Heuwels Fantasties* (Meletakos, 2012; Solomon, 2010). Tyler (quoted in an interview in Cooper, 2009) claims the name of his alter ego, Jack Parow, came about as follows:

We were really drunk and were watching Pirates of the Caribbean and I said: “Fuck fuck Jack Sparrow the pirate of the Caribbean I’m Jack Parow, pirate of the caravan park.” It just stuck.

Tyler’s rap performance as Jack Parow is influenced by ‘Gangsta Rap’, a subgenre of hip hop that emerged in the 1980s in Los Angeles, and is typically associated with artists like *Public Enemy* and *N.W.A (Niggas with Attitude)*, though he also cites artists such as Snoop Dogg, the Wu-tang Clan, Ludacris and Lil Wayne as being influential (Smit, n.d.: 3; Solomon, 2010). Tyler achieved success and fame in South Africa and abroad; he has taken top billing at major South African music events, and has performed in Russia, England, Dubai and toured Europe with huge success in The Netherlands (Du Preez, 2011: 115; ‘Jack Parow Summer Tour’, 2015). In 2009, his eponymous first album achieved gold status in South Africa in just two weeks, and the album achieved platinum status within the year. His song ‘Cooler as Ekke’ was an online success (with over 3 million views since its posting on YouTube in 2009) (Solomon, 2010). His second album, *Eksie Ou* (released by Parow’s own label in 2011), achieved Gold status within four months. ‘Hosh Tokolosh’, the first single from the album, became the first Afrikaans song in the history of South Africa’s most popular radio station, 5FM, to reach Number 1 on the station’s Top 40, followed promptly by the title-track, ‘Eksie Ou’ (‘Jack Parow Summer Tour’, 2015). He was nominated for 6 categories at the 2011 MK Awards including Best International Breakthrough Act (‘Jack Parow & Mr Hyde’, 2010). Tyler’s appeal is not limited to the Afrikaans-speaking community in South Africa, and he recognises his popularity among the English-speaking community, whom he describes as being ‘much more open-minded to something that is different’ (‘Mystic Diaries Volume 6’, 2012). Apart from his music, Tyler has also produced his own *braai* (barbeque) sauce and his own

brandy (Parow Brandy) (and also teamed up with *Fokofpolisiekar* to produce a limited edition beer/stout called Cape Cobra); he has his own comic book; he has had a string of corporate sponsors, including Puma, Ray-Ban, Nixon, GoPro, Twisp, Red Bull, Jägermeister and Dakine; in 2013 he appeared in the movie *Babalas [Hangover]*; and in the summer of 2014 was one of the celebrities fronting a mobile network's television marketing campaign (Fink, 2011; Jason, 2015; 'Jack Parow', 2015; 'Everything you need to know about Jack Parow's brandy', 2017; 'Jack Parow and Fokofpolisiekar team up for limited edition Cape Cobra karate stout', 2017). Tyler has continued to collaborate with other South African bands and artists, such as *Die Heuwels Fantasties*, Francois van Coke (*Fokofpolisiekar & Van Coke Kartel*), *Dirt Nasty* and David Kramer (Du Preez, 2011: 115; 'Jack Parow Summer Tour', 2015).

4.6.1 Jack Parow and identity

Since achieving success as Jack Parow, Tyler has distanced himself from his Zef associations. Tyler (in 'Jack Parow & Mr Hyde', 2010) claims he doesn't refer to his own work as 'Zef', and (quoted in Meletakos, 2012; cf. 'Mystic Diaries Volume 6', 2012) says he prefers for his music not to be classified or labelled at all, citing several songs that are distinctly un-Zef-like. If anything at all, he says he sees himself fundamentally as an Afrikaans rapper.

In his attempt to process and reclaim Afrikaans identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, Tyler rejects the traditional associations of Apartheid Afrikaner identity and its popular conventions, and claims to strive instead for an authentic, contemporary voice that celebrates and develops the Afrikaans language (Smit, n.d.: 2, 6-7; 'Mystic Diaries Volume 6', 2012). In Meletakos (2012), Tyler rejects the sentimentality of other Afrikaans pop artists, advocating rather a rhetoric and image that reflects the language of real life. Smit (n.d.: 1-2) suggests Tyler's (subversive and stereotypical) mode of performance and his Jack Parow 'self' offer up a substitute for conventional types of representation in Afrikaans culture: this is a method of deconstructing and subverting traditional understandings of 'whiteness', questioning perceptions, indicating a swing away from the established idea of the 'white male as coloniser and oppressor' and showing a departure from the challenging post-Apartheid representations of 'white guilt'. Smit argues Tyler uses his references to, and performances of, the poor white identity embodied in his Jack Parow persona to

pull apart and explore the idea of white as ‘invisible and privileged’. Marx & Milton (2011: 736) state:

Hip-hop culture forces us to notice race and it contains the potential to disrupt the powerful position of whiteness by recognising the complexities of racial identities as well as their power. Jack Parow, for example, explicitly refers to his own whiteness, but also his awareness that rap is something originally regarded as black when he states the following during an interview: [It is also good that I, the white kid, make rap music - something that usually gets characterized as a ‘black’ thing. Now I am doing something to change the image.]

Dekker suggests that the Jack Parow identity construct is produced through an alignment with aspects of South African ‘consumer culture’ to highlight inequities within the strata of white class structure while simultaneously reconstructing the idea of ‘white trash’ as something trendy and fashionable (Dekker, n.d.: 18).

4.7 Critical opinion

The work of the Zef-movement artists is typically delineated by critical commentators as: self-parody (or an exploitation of poor-white stereotypes); as ‘blackface’/minstrel cultural appropriation/theft; or as expressions of liminality. The following briefly considers those arguments. Truscott (2011: 97-98; 102-103; cf. Solomon, 2010) identifies, through the rise of the Zef movement, a pattern of Afrikaner self-parody in post-Apartheid youth culture that allows Afrikaners to reject the associations of the past and to re-define themselves as ‘authentic post-Apartheid South Africans’. This self-parody effectively identifies the problematised characteristics of what it means to be an Afrikaner and then parodically negates them; it acts as a system that denigrates, transforms and simultaneously preserves the past through its ‘ironic repetition as parody’. Truscott cites the song ‘*Doos Dronk*’ [cunt drunk], the product of a collaboration between *Die Antwoord*, Jack Parow and the band *Fokofpolisiekar*, as an example of such self-parody. In the song, the artists lampoon the excessive alcoholism that typifies the community they represent (cf. Truscott, 2011: 101-102).

Fink (2011) suggests that Jones’ white-trash Ninja persona is an exploitation of the stereotypical ‘poor white’ Afrikaner that draws international attention to South Africa’s present socio-political realities. Wright (2010) considers the range of Jones’ previous artistic endeavours and posits *Die Antwoord* as simply ‘another conceptual project’ where Jones and du Toit have taken on more subversive incarnations in their work, thus calling into question the credibility and authenticity of their endeavours.

Several critics have argued that *Die Antwoord*'s appropriation of cultural signs and rhetoric is tantamount to the 'blackface' minstrel performances popular in the UK and USA in the 19th and 20th centuries (Fairbanks, 2012; cf. Conway-Smith, 2010). Haupt (2012: 417-421), elucidates this argument. Haupt points out that Jones regularly uses racially problematic language like 'kaffir' and 'nigga' that indicates white, racist projections of blackness (cf. Jason, 2015); the band has remarkably better resources than the community they ape in their art (Haupt cites *Die Antwoord*'s video for 'Enter the Ninja' as having benefitted from 'a great deal of conceptualisation and expertise'); Ninja's accent is an artifice and the (Cape Flats, prison-gang) tattoos that adorn his body are in essence nothing more than part of the costume of his character; the song lyrics and syntax employed are fundamentally English. Haupt suggests that the references to Cape gang culture are superficial and are accessed to legitimise Jones' 'Ninja' persona, while the repetitive use of obscenities is engineered to legitimise Jones' street image. For Jones' performance to work (and to be successful) he needs to 'blacken up' (appropriate the cultural signifiers of Cape Flats gang culture: tattoos, dialect and expletives) and become, literally and figuratively, the '*wit kaffir*' [white kaffir] he claims he is. Kitchiner (2013: 65-78) similarly considers *Die Antwoord*'s performance as a mimetic act (essentially a crude minstrel show, referred to as 'thug minstrelsy') which employs contemporary art forms and new media to communicate established understandings of 'black inferiority' by reducing 'rap and African-American culture to negative stereotypes'. Kitchiner argues that *Die Antwoord* (whose members are essentially representatives of South Africa's historically privileged white minority) has profitably 'resurrected, revised, and repurposed' 'gangsta' rap to reflect and signal white values in post-Apartheid South Africa, subsequently warping and expanding the original inner-city black focus of the genre, and indicating a contradictory move towards racist attitudes. Kitchiner also acknowledges *Die Antwoord*'s privileged availability of resources to produce, promote and distribute their work, unlike those of the coloured artists whose work they mimic (Kitchiner, 2013: 78). Jason (2015) echoes this, and cites as an example the work of Cape Town hip-hop act *Black Noise*, one of the oldest of such groups in South Africa. *Black Noise* have received accolades for their work, but have been less successful commercially than their Zef counterparts. In June 2017, South African musician Ntsiki Mazwai announced in the press that *Die Antwoord* should be taken to the Human Rights Commission for exploiting Xhosa culture. Her

objection is in response to the depiction of Ninja on *Die Antwoord*'s 2016 album cover (*Mount Ninji and da Nice Time Kid*) wearing the traditional clothing (hat and blanket) used in the Xhosa circumcision ritual ceremony (Zeeman, 2017; cf. Fenner, 2017). Marx and Milton (2011) argue that while Jones, Tyler et al do not explicitly criticise or analyse white identity, South African identity or even the ANC regime, their Jack Parow, Ninja and Yolandi Vi\$\$er personas offer up an important take on life for whites and Afrikaners in post-Apartheid South Africa as they explore identity beyond the frameworks of 'whiteness' or 'good vs bad' (Marx & Milton, 2011: 742-743).

In Verwey & Quayle's study of Afrikaner identity in post-Apartheid South Africa (2012), the authors highlight three key issues demonstrated by the participants in their study: an active attempt to sever links with their Apartheid heritage by shedding explicit elements of their identity (stereotypes, history, culture, blatant racism) and by diminishing the significance of their language in present-day identity; a prevalence to define identity in terms of 'whiteness' (and thus privilege); and the exercising of implicit racist ideology in dialogues about perceptions of black competence and threats posed to whites. Verwey & Quayle (2012) state:

Far from redrawing the cultural boundaries as they integrate into the 'rainbow nation', these strategies produce a ghettoized Afrikaner identity based on racial exclusivity, racist notions of inherent black inferiority, and out-group threat.

In the products of Zef culture, it would appear that the intentions of the artists mirror those of the participants in Verwey & Quayle's study, insomuch as they actively reject their Apartheid pasts while continuing to access racist imagery in their rhetoric; however, unlike the participants in the study's sample group, the Zef artists deliberately define themselves, musically and lyrically, in non-white terms, and aesthetically in strongly negative white terms as 'white trash'.

Other commentators (like Mechanic, 2010a) suggest that the authenticity of *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow is irrelevant: they are simply 'artists' whose work should be admired and enjoyed. O'Mahony (n.d.) argues that *Die Antwoord*'s work is an original and sincere response to human emotion, coupled with an 'ordinary sense of humour' and a good sense of fun, regardless of how authentic, psychedelic or removed from reality they may appear. Du Preez (2012: 102-112) presents *Die Antwoord* as the embodiment of the liminal - a 'monstrous' hybrid of 'outsiders' and

‘interlopers’, resembling a carnivalesque ‘circus troupe of freaks’ who have, in the style of banished freaks, exploited the channels of technology, media and cyberspace for their own commercial gain, and projected an image that is grotesque and monster-like; Du Preez even likens Ninja’s hairstyle and expression to that of Frankenstein’s monster. Furthermore, the words of their songs show a fixation with anatomical openings, secretions and excretions, and bodily processes (Du Preez, 2011: 112).

4.8 ‘Evil Boy’

The *Tokoloshe* features explicitly in the lyrics and music video of *Die Antwoord*’s song ‘Evil Boy’. The song was released in 2010 as the final single from *Die Antwoord*’s album \$O\$ which was financed by Cherrytree/Interscope Records. It was produced by Los Angeles-based DJ, producer, rapper and songwriter, Thomas Wesley Pentz (also known as Diplo), in collaboration with French ‘tropical house’ producer Hugo Douster, and written by Jones, De Nobrega, du Toit and Pentz. Musically, the song is ‘21st-century party rap’, laced with ‘a feverish *kuduro*-style rhythm (*kuduro* is late 1990s Angolan up-tempo dance music), and a creeping synth hook’ (Nickum, 2012). In ‘Evil Boy’, the *Tokoloshe* is used as a device through which traditional Xhosa and Afrikaner understandings of identity are challenged and reconstructed, primarily through subversion and obversion.

4.8.1 Lyrics

‘Evil Boy’ is written in English, Afrikaans and Xhosa (see Appendix B).²⁹ The lyrics (and translations) included here are by *Die Antwoord* (“Die Antwoord: "Evil Boy" lyrics in Xhosa, English, Afrikaans, and Prawn”, 2010). The song was inspired by Jones’ Evil Boy tattoo (a depiction of Caspar the Friendly Ghost with an oversized erection), and initially the song only included a section by Jones (an ‘evil ninja’ rap verse) and a section by Du Toit (an ‘evil witchy’ rap verse), but during the writing period a discussion with the teenager Wanga Jack (known simply as Wanga) about Xhosa ritual circumcision prompted Jones and du Toit to write an additional verse which was subsequently performed by Jack.³⁰ Jack explained that every time he went

²⁹ Lyrics have been reproduced from the original source material, accounting for any variations or inaccuracies in spelling.

³⁰ In 2013, claims were published in the South African press that Jones and du Toit had exploited and bullied several young artists, including Jack. These claims were refuted in turn by *Die Antwoord*. Du Toit (and subsequently Jones who was dating du Toit at the time) met the then 16-year-old Jack when homeless 19-year-old du Toit found temporary accommodation with Andre Laubscher. Laubscher’s smallholding on the slopes of Tamboerskloof in Cape Town was at the time home to four

home to visit his mother he was pressurised by the male members of the community to get circumcised, but he was too afraid to go through the ritual which has a high mortality or medical complication rate.³¹ Jack was asked subsequently to translate Jones and du Toit's lyrics into Xhosa, and to record the rap (copying Jones' style) and perform it in the music video ('Die Antwoord reacts to exploitation allegations', 2013; cf. Dombal, 2010; Mechanic, M. 2010b). Jones (quoted in Dombal, 2010) states:

...Wanga was supposed to go to one of these rituals because he wasn't circumcised. We thought maybe he just shouldn't go because 60 kids fucking died this year because their penises didn't work properly afterward and shit. So I asked him what would happen if he didn't go to the bush, and he said that he wouldn't be a man and he wouldn't be able to speak to the other men. So I asked him why he was speaking to me and he said, "Because you're cool, Ninja." Then he looked at my tattoo and said he wanted to be "Evil Boy for life."

The lyrics in 'Evil Boy' reject, explicitly, this Xhosa tradition. In the song, Jack (in 'Die Antwoord Lyrics "Evil Boy" (feat. Wanga)', n.d.) raps:

*Mamelapa umnqunduwakho!
Andifuni ukuyaehlatini!*

*Incanca yam iclean!
Incanca yam inamandla! Ndiyinkwekwe enkulu!
Angi funi ukuba yeendota!
Evil boy 4 life! yebo!
Evil boy 4 life!*

underprivileged artists from the Cape ganglands (including Jack) who had formed a hip-hop crew together called *The Glue Gang Boys*, and of which Jack was a member. Jack says he was paid R750 (approx. £37) to record the Xhosa rap in 'Evil Boy' and R2000 (approx. £100) to perform in the video, and that he had received no royalties for having co-written the song with them (he receives no song-writing credit for the song). Laubscher claims Jones used the boys to create his Ninja persona, plying them with alcohol and drugs, coercing Jack to sign an illegal contract (Jack was underage at the time of signing his contract with Interscope), and using another members' lyrics. He also claims the Evil Boy image was stolen by Jones from one of his own drawings. *Die Antwoord* published an eight-part response on their Facebook page in which they deny the suggestions made by Laubscher and Jack. The essence of their rebuttal is that Laubscher was a sexual pervert who took photographs of nude girls, and that Jack was an ill-disciplined, badly behaved artist who has since done time twice in prison. Most significantly, they claim they [Jones and du Toit] wrote Jack's verse in 'Evil Boy', and Jack's help was solicited to help translate the lyrics into Xhosa (Blignaut, 2013; 'Die Antwoord reacts to exploitation allegations', 2013; McNair, 2013).

³¹ Circumcision in Xhosa culture is seen as a 'rite of passage into manhood: males who have not undergone the ritual are not considered real men; they are ridiculed and ostracised'. Circumcision typically takes place when a young man is aged between 15 and 17. Every year, approximately 40,000 young boys spend about six weeks over the summer or winter holidays at an 'initiation school' in a secluded area where they are 'taught the virtues of discipline, courage and how to be reputable men in society' (Fihlani, 2012).

[In English, this reads as follows]:
Listen here, you fucking asshole!
I don't want to go to the bush with you!

My penis is clean!
My penis is strong!
I am a big boy!
I don't want to be a man!
Evil boy 4 life! Yes!
Evil boy 4 life!

As is characteristic of *Die Antwoord*'s other material, this song contains explicit and potentially offensive or shocking language and imagery, all of which re-enforces the in-your-face aggression and untouchability of Jones and du Toit's Ninja and Yo-Landi personae. Jones ('Die Antwoord Lyrics "Evil Boy" (feat. Wanga)', n.d.) raps:

Fok rustig eks apokaliptikal [fuck chilling out, I'm apocalyptic] fucking you
in the face
Zef cherries tjoon my... spieg my fokken hol nat [Zef girls tell me to spit their
assholes wet]

and du Toit raps:

Fuck a pen and pad I write my raps with a ouija board
Draw a pentagram on your chest wif my lip-stick

Jack's sequence starts with:

Mamelapa umnqunduwakho! [Listen here, you fucking asshole!]

Jones suggests *umnqunduwakho* is the 'worst word' you can say in Xhosa - 'it's a heavy insult'. Jones (in Dombal, 2010; cf. Mechanic, M. 2010b) states that the offensiveness/shock-value of the word was what attracted him to use it at the start of the song. The attitude and sentiment of both Jones and du Toit's verses are predominantly ego-centric. Jones raps:

If you feeling me...cool...not feeling me...fuck off!
Wies jy? fokkol! umnqunduwakho! [Who are you? No-one! Fucking arsehole!]

and again:

I gotta rock if you motherfuckin like it or not, yo
Is you ready for this ho\$tle take over? bow to the fokken master

and du Toit raps:

Yo-landi Vi\$\$er so fancy like this dope ass beat
Rock the motherfuckin microphone with no panties
I'm a bad ass chick yo my black magic
Speletjies [little games] make all the boys go... damn that's sick!

There are also several references in the song to penis and penis size, including the song's introduction:

Yooo evil boy!
Why is your *incanca* [penis] so big?
All the better to love you with!

and

Take your dirty hands off my *umthondo wesizwe* [penis of the nation]!

This particular reference is a play on words: the phrase sounds very similar to *umkhonto weSizwe*, meaning Spear of the Nation, which is the name of the armed wing of the ANC founded by Nelson Mandela in 1961. Later, Jones raps:

Roll through the club like a
Tokoloshe
Ninjas hung like a *fokken* [fucking] horse
Yeah girl! I'm a freak of nature

and

My *slang* [snake] is banging

Du Toit says:

Even though you lying down, I can make you stand up...

The song also challenges traditional views about homosexuality. The circumcision ritual is typically performed by male traditional surgeons (*iincibi*), and women are forbidden to go near the initiates during the ritual. The lyrics in Jack's verse suggest that only gay men touch each other's penises:

Incanca Yam yeyamantobi! [This penis is for the girls]

This sentiment, as it relates to the circumcision ritual, is significantly controversial and anti-traditional. Jones suggests that in the lyric he is being deliberately ironical, as 'Xhosa culture is un-fokking-believeably homophobic' (Mechanic, M. 2010b). Jones (quoted in Dombal, 2010) argues that the lyric *Sukubammha incanca yam!* [Don't touch my penis], *Andi so stabani!* [I'm not a gay] is a deliberate provocation, suggesting that the circumcision ritual is potentially homo-erotic, which challenges/insults traditional Xhosa culture.

4.8.2 Music video

The music video for ‘Evil Boy’ was produced by Interscope Records, directed by Jones with South African cinematographer and director Rob Malpage, and edited by Saki Bergh (*Die Antwoord - Evil Boy (Explicit Version)*, 2010). It was uploaded on YouTube in October 2010, and has since had over 26 million views. The video features artwork (graffiti and sculptures) executed and directed by Jones (including a large revolving Evil Boy sculpture by film special effects/construction manager Marcia Vermaak), and is based on or inspired by the work of American-born, Johannesburg-based artist and photographer Roger Ballen. The video is presented as a tightly-edited horror short that employs the conventional editorial tricks of the popular shock-horror movie genre: multiple and rapid edits, blackouts, flickering overhead lights, use of Satanic imagery, creepy critters and sudden reveals. The opening tracking shot (0:02-0.15) travels down a dark and rubbish-strewn corridor lined with cardboard boxes under flickering florescent lights. It is clear something is scratching through the boxes, and that ‘thing’ is revealed suddenly to be an ugly and frightening hairy creature (the *Tokoloshe*). Large albino spiders suspended from the ceiling shake and shiver during several shots. During the video there are several flashes of shots revealing an ‘evil’ version of Ninja, dirtied and with distorted facial features. At other points, Ninja brandishes a mutated monster-arm/claw akin to that of the lead character in the South African sci-fi/horror film *District 9* (cf. Du Preez, 2011: 110-111). Du Toit (as Yo-Landi) draws a lipstick pentagram on the chest of her handcuffed victim (portrayed by DJ Diplo). At one point, she is seen in the video transformed into an albino ghost wearing contact lenses; she also wears a sinister jester’s costume and an outfit that appears to be made of rats (Du Preez, 2011: 111; cf. Jones quoted in Mechanic, 2010b). The location for du Toit’s verse is a theatrical bedroom/sacrificial altar scene that draws on the cartoon-like ‘horror’ visuals of the preceding sequences (the set is dressed with skull-like decorations, child-like cartoon drawings of vampire faces on cardboard boxes, live rats, lit black candles and glass jars, and the bed is covered in a silky red bed sheet). The bed is raised up on bricks; a direct reference to one of the methods people protect themselves from the *Tokoloshe*. Jack’s verse is performed in a dark and sinister forest of sorts, and the initiates with whom he engages (whilst dressed and adorned in a traditional manner) are portrayed in a scary and intimidating manner: their faces are featureless, their heads are

covered, and one wields a large weapon (a *panga*). Jack's two female backing dancers are tied to a tree. The video features a great deal of explicit sexual imagery, particularly representations of penises. The video focuses on the large sculpted version of Jones' Evil Boy tattoo character (with its oversized erection), and also depicts various penises in the set (apparently growing on trees in a forest and also sketched on the cardboard boxes). At several points during the music video, Jones (as Ninja) is seen singing into a long penis/microphone sewn from his trousers, and there are also representations of simulated masturbation, and an image of an erection rising under the bed sheets. Wanga and Ninja are repeatedly depicted making pelvic thrusts and, while clothed, it appears they are in a state of sexual arousal. Female sexuality in the video is represented as freakish. On two occasions a woman's breasts are exposed: in the first instance the woman (an autograph-seeking fan) exposes herself to have Ninja autograph her breasts and it is revealed she has no nipples; and in the second instance du Toit looks at herself in a mirror as she removes her top, and the viewer is presented with an image of her breasts, but instead of nipples the viewer is confronted with two eyes staring right back. Dekker (n.d.; 18-19) suggests these exaggerated images (the large phallus, the nipple-eyes) are stereotypical and satirical representations of the misogynistic and voyeuristic attitudes that are evident in 'capitalist music production'. The final image of the video is that of the revolving evil boy statue. The *Tokoloshe* appears at several moments in the video. Ninja (quoted in Dombal, 2010) states:

...we thought it'd be quite cool to have the Tokoloshe in the video... We were just thinking of different Evil Boy elements, so the Tokoloshe is pretty much an Evil Boy himself. He's just a little mischievous man-boy thing with a giant demon penis. It came from one of my lyrics: "I'm gonna roll to the club like a Tokoloshe/ Ninja's hung like a fuckin' horse."

Throughout the video the *Tokoloshe* is portrayed as something scary, alien, sexual, life-size, monstrous, and sinister (cf. 3.3.1). In the first images of the *Tokoloshe*, the viewer sees only its hands/arms and the back of its head as it rummages curiously through trash: it is unclear what the creature might be, but the viewer is aware it is 'other'-worldly. The reveal, when it is presented, is deliberate, brief and shocking: an ugly face, bulging eyes, gaping mouth with several teeth missing, leathery skin, and animal ears. The creature is then portrayed with several hedgehog-like quills protruding from its back, and a large stomach. It moves in a sudden and demon-like manner. Approximately 01:25 minutes into the video, the *Tokoloshe* is revealed to be

shaking its long penis; later it swings it about when it dances. In Wanga's rap (his apparent response to ritual circumcision) the traditional elements are portrayed as something sinister: the environment is dark and unpleasant with lifeless trees; the initiates are presented as mysterious, ghost-like and aggressive; the two dancers are tied to a tree like sacrificial offerings: the ritual is presented not as an honourable rite of passage, but as something malevolent and violent (Wanga defends himself with *knopkerrie* - a traditional fighting stick).

At its most fundamental level, the song (and video) is about the rejection of traditional South African values, both black (Xhosa) and white (English/Afrikaans). Wanga's verse (and the portrayal of elements from the circumcision ritual in the video) particularly and explicitly reject a core feature of traditional Xhosa culture: the rite of passage from boyhood to manhood; Wanga opts for a lifelong, 'evil' state of boyhood rather than undergo this key ceremony, embedded in the beliefs and customs of his forefathers. Jones and du Toit (through their *Die Antwoord* personae) actively and consciously reject the traditional values of English and Afrikaans white South Africans by marketing an artistic product that is sexually explicit, profane, linguistically impure and vulgar, all of which deliberately provoke the sensibilities of a white population that is predominantly conservative and church-going. Both acts of rejection are appropriate indicators of a shift in identity in 21st century post-Apartheid South Africa: a conscious re-defining of who South Africans can be through a bold and largely contradictory response to the traditions, customs and values of the past. However, it is important to note that Wanga Jack was not given any writing credits on 'Evil Boy', and Jones himself stated that Jack's role was simply to translate Jones' lyrics into Xhosa. The essence of this is noteworthy: although it appears (in both the song and in the video) that Jack is criticising his own (Xhosa) culture, the text, rather, is by Jones, and Jack is simply the mouthpiece for Jones' sentiments. The lyric, then, conveys not the ideas of a born-free 21st century black South African, as it is made to appear, but those of a (then) 36-year-old English-speaking Apartheid-era-born white South African. In light of this, it can be argued that the song reflects not challenging post-Apartheid black views on traditional belief, but rather Jones' own view on traditional culture and circumcision, influenced as it is by his own white, Apartheid upbringing: which supports Haupt and Kitchiner's theories that *Die Antwoord* are racist. In a 2012 performance of the song by *Die Antwoord* in Mexico ('Die Antwoord - Zef Side / Evil Boy / Baby's On Fire (Corona Capital)', 2012) Jones

performs Wanga's verse and does so in a Xhosa accent, performing it not as Ninja but as an impersonated version of Wanga (cf. 01:27 onwards), a further example of what Kitchiner refers to as minstrelsy.

Given that the song is explicitly about the Xhosa circumcision ritual, the penile imagery in the lyrics and video is an appropriate motif (cf. Mechanic, M. 2010b; Dombal, 2010). Similarly, considering the song as a criticism of traditional belief and considering its penile theme, the *Tokoloshe* is an appropriate image to draw on as an effective and clear representation of both traditional belief and sexuality. The *Tokoloshe* is a powerful, malevolent element of traditional belief; it is the embodiment of evil and the source of fear for a great portion of South Africa's population (cf. 3.5.2 & 3.9). It is also principally mischievous. Its appearance in the video mimics not only the roguish and provocative intent of its Zef handlers, but also acts as a manifestation of the very worst element in traditional belief; its presence, by association, endorses the idea that the features of traditional belief (such as ritual circumcision) are repulsive, frightening and perverse. The rite to manhood conveys notions of achieving male superiority and sexual authority. In traditional belief it is those two very concepts that are undermined by the *Tokoloshe*, particularly in the idea that once a woman has been raped by a *Tokoloshe* she can never be satisfied by her husband and is also likely to be infertile as a result of the rape. In the video, the two female victims tied to the tree appear to be writhing not in pain or fear, but with sexual pleasure (*Die Antwoord - Evil Boy (Explicit Version)*, 2010: 01:26-2.10, especially at 01:39-01:40), emphasising this notion that sex with a *Tokoloshe* is preferable to sex with a man (cf. 3.6.2). In this regard, the *Tokoloshe* triumphs over the husband, rendering his manhood impotent. Any act that hopes to elevate male status and celebrate manhood becomes redundant as it cannot remove the one omnipresent factor that is empowered to demote and belittle that very manhood. The ritual, then, is a hollow act, and the inclusion of the *Tokoloshe* throughout the video stands as a visual reminder to that.

The *Tokoloshe* is used as a simile in the song's lyrics:

Roll through the club like a
Tokoloshe
Ninjas hung like a fokken horse.

In this instance, Ninja is compared to a *Tokoloshe*. The comparison likens Ninja to one who is a deviant, a rapist and, as the song title suggests, evil. As subtle as it is in

the lyrics, the comparison is well-made, and it is more explicit in the video. Ninja is a deviant: his language, speech patterns, vocabulary, appearance all deviate from any standard or commonplace representations of what might be expected of an educated, white South African. Similarly, in the song Ninja presents himself as a sexually aggressive character, lyrically and visually (this is emphasised by his semi-erect penis/pelvic thrusts, the use of arm gestures as phallic symbol, and the penis-like microphone attached to his shorts). The characteristics of the sexual behaviour of the *Tokoloshe* are particular: it is abusive, perverse, invasive, traumatising, and is said to produce infertility, stillbirth and deformity (cf. 3.6.2 & 3.6.3). The lyrical and visual content of ‘Evil Boy’, and its Satanic imagery, reflect these characteristics. By drawing on the imagery of the *Tokoloshe* and its sexual misdemeanours, which are considered as expressions of the antithesis of conventional or traditional sexual behaviour, *Die Antwoord* crystallise their image as anti-establishment, anti-conventional (Kitchiner’s ‘freak show’), anti-traditional and (given South Africa’s Apartheid Christian context) anti-Christ. Further, Ninja, as portrayed in the lyrics and video of this song, is quite simply ‘not a nice guy’: he is aggressive, oftentimes ugly (with a distorted face), dirty and vulgar. Through the persona demonstrated in this song and video, Ninja, as the primary representative of Zef culture at its worst, presents a clear and unambiguous image as to what he represents. Zef, in this regard, is obscene, antagonistic, intolerant and arrogant.

4.8.3 The *Tokoloshe* and liminality

On a broader level, the *Tokoloshe* is an apt image for *Die Antwoord* to draw on, in that both the *Tokoloshe* and *Die Antwoord* can be seen as signifiers of liminality: the *Tokoloshe* is rooted in traditional rural belief and mythology, yet terrorises the streets of urban reality; it exists on the fringes between the physical and the spiritual worlds; it is profane and sacred; it is both playful and horrific; human-like and animal-like; part-human and part-divine; a product of the struggle between patriarchal and matriarchal culture (cf. Lenta, 2004: 372; Stratton, 2011; Niehaus, 1995: 515; Laubscher, 1975: 133-134). Niehaus explains that witches and familiars represent an ambivalence where animal and human identities are diverse demonstrations of the same figure. These witches and the *Tokoloshe* (as witch familiars) exist as oddities on the borders of both human settlement and nature. The *Tokoloshe* and the witch ‘exist simultaneously in the village and the forest, but are not fully part of either realm’. In some instances, witches are closely linked to *Tokoloshes*

and other familiars, are said to have animal-like attributes, and may metamorphose into a *Tokoloshe*. This ambivalence or ‘duality’ is central to the idea of witchcraft as a perilous and extraordinary force, where the connection between *Tokoloshes* and witches echo the innate struggle between humanity and its primal instincts and urges (Niehaus, 1995: 515).

Laubscher considers the origins of the *Tokoloshe* which he suggests came about during a struggle between patriarchal and matriarchal cultures. Laubscher argues the *Tokoloshe* is an evolved, amalgamated mythical being from an ancient time, where the energy of the male sexuality was glorified and venerated as the source of life, manifested by a strong sex drive, masculine physicality and unusually-large penis (Laubscher, 1975: 133-134). Laubscher (1975: 134) states:

The *Tikoloshe* is bound by no taboo, and one must look upon him as an amoral creature. Indeed he symbolises the wild fire of pubescent sex. He is the chief actor in the Xhosa world of female erotic phantasy. The emphasis on the size of his phallus suggests that time and imagination have made him a depraved creature of a human type, whereas the size of his phallus cannot really refer to a physical human origin, but is rather representative of a universal procreative power. It symbolises the fructifier of all nature, and fits well into a world of mind, when the earth was looked upon as the womb of universal life. One can be sure that human minds did not deliberately with preconceived design create this dwarf-like creature. His composition is something that emerged with time from a status of divinity to that of a human type, with its unbridled passions in the erotic life of man.

Laubscher’s interpretation serves this analysis well: Wanga’s exhibitionist sexuality and virility is a vivid and graphic representation of that ‘wild fire of pubescent sex’, and his rejection of traditional values renders him amoral; Yo-landi’s sequences in the video play out like scenes from a pornographic fantasy, and her lyrics clearly set her as the protagonist in that fantasy: it is ‘female erotic phantasy’; Ninja’s performance (his physicality, crude mimetic gestures, and use of a penis microphone) all demonstrate unrestrained desire (Laubscher’s erotic ‘unbridled passions’). Laubscher’s representational meaning of the *Tokoloshe* is strongly reflected in the lyrical and visual imagery of ‘Evil Boy’.

In the post-Apartheid context, many South Africans find themselves occupying a space and place in time that is ambiguous: bound by the socio-historic baggage of the past, desperate for a meaningful role in the future, whilst attempting to navigate the unfolding uncertainties of the present. *Die Antwoord*’s attempt to reinvent or re-articulate a certain strand of identity within South Africa is a

demonstration of that liminal paradox at play. Turner (quoted in Du Preez, 2011: 107) states:

[t]he attributes of liminality or of liminal personae ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the networks of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial [M]en are released from structure ... only to return to structure revitalized by their experience.

Ninja and Yo-Landi represent a group whose identities are unclear and contradictory: they are white, yet they reflect a music style that is black (or coloured); the language of their music is a multi-layered hybrid drawn from the diversity of its South African context, and which utilises a vocabulary that is simultaneously authentic (it exists on South Africa's streets) and inauthentic (it is not their native tongue); their work is heavily influenced by music forms and fashion from the 1970s and 80s, yet their primary marketing tools are the technologies and media of the 21st century - they are current and retrospective at the same time; and most fundamentally Ninja is, and isn't, Watkin Tudor Jones, as much as Yo-Landi Vi\$\$er is, and isn't, Anri du Toit: the two artists exist somewhere between their natural origins and their outlandish stage personae. Furthermore, in the song and music video both Jones and du Toit represent extended 'evil' versions of their personae, producing what is, in effect, an extension of an extension of themselves. That identity struggle is also evident in the role played in the song and video by Wanga Jack. Urban and traditional values clash in Wanga's refusal to participate in the circumcision ritual, and subsequently to re-enter formal society, and that challenges aspects of blackness, suspending him in liminal space: he is not a man, yet no longer a boy; an uncircumcised/incomplete Xhosa male (cf. Du Preez, 2011: 107-108; Scott, 2012: 756). Also, in terms of the socio-political landscape on which their creative misadventures play out, these artists position themselves in a 21st century post-Apartheid dystopia while dragging behind them their collective pasts that are entrenched in the inescapable agonies, guilt, angers and privileges of dysfunctional, exploitative, racist South Africa.

In 'Evil Boy', Jones, du Toit and Jack, as representatives of English-, Afrikaans- and Xhosa-speaking South Africans, demonstrate the complexities and ambiguity of identity re-definition in post-Apartheid South Africa. They do this by accessing (and embracing) the loaded, antithetical values (with regard to societal

stability, conventional behaviours and order, and sexuality) embodied by the *Tokoloshe*. The *Tokoloshe* is a symbol of fear and instability; a creature beyond the normal controlling measures of societal order: it is a hindrance that requires specialised, and not always successful, intervention. In the third decade of post-Apartheid South Africa, citizens continue to establish and determine their role and position in a society that is defined by the turbulence of its recent and historic past, the challenges of the present and the uncertainties of the future. This is particularly true for white South Africans whose political (if not economic) status has been radically re-aligned since 1994. The sentiments and imagery of *Die Antwoord*'s 'Evil Boy', alongside their artistic personae constructs, is a snapshot of that dynamic struggle at play.

4.8.4 'Evil Boy' in brief

'Evil Boy' is an aggressive multi-lingual rap song that employs linguistic mixing, obscene language and shocking/offensive imagery (sexual and political) to challenge perceptions of traditional/conservative beliefs on circumcision and homosexuality. The music video is similarly provocative, employing the cinematographic devices and conventions of the horror genre, Satanic imagery and explicit sexual imagery, as well as satirical representations of misogyny and voyeurism and sinister representations of elements of Xhosa tradition. The explicit sexuality, profanity and vulgarity of the song and video all act as a rejection of traditional/conservative/Christian sensibilities, and as indicators of a post-Apartheid identity shift. The *Tokoloshe* is portrayed in the video as terrifying, monstrous, sexual and alien, embodying the very worst elements of traditional belief, thus endorsing or emphasising (according to the design of the artists) the perversions, terrors and repulsions of traditional belief in general. They employ the *Tokoloshe* in this work to accentuate their anti-establishment, anti-conventional, anti-traditional, anti-Christian agenda. Primarily, the artists convey the identity crises of post-Apartheid South Africans through the demonstration of their own ambiguous identities in the work: in terms of their musical style, their language, their fashion/image, their use of media, and their personal socio-historic contexts.

4.9 'Hosh Tokolosh'

'Hosh Tokolosh' features on the album *Jack Parow - Eksie Ou* [I'm the guy], released by Tyler's own label Parowphernalia in November 2011. The song is written by Goran Manojlovic (also known as Kid Amadeus), *Die Antwoord*'s Justin de

Nobrega, Nick Matthews (known as DJ Invisible), Xander Ferreira (also known as Gazelle), and Tyler, and was produced by de Nobrega and Manojlovic ('Jack Parow - Eksie Ou'. 2011). The official music video for 'Hosh Tokolosh' was directed by Louis Minnaar (Cowie, 2012), and was published online in July 2012 (*Jack Parow & Gazelle - Hosh Tokolosh (OFFICIAL VIDEO)*, 2012). The song and video feature a performance by New York-based South African musician, artist, photographer, and DJ, Xander Ferreira whose African dictator conceptual persona/image was inspired by the late African leaders Muammar al-Gaddafi, Idi Amin Dada, and Mobutu Sebe Seko, and was co-created by Ferreira and partner Mathews (who also appears in the video) (Fulton, 2014). The appearance of the *Tokoloshe* in the song and video is an engineered vehicle through which notions of Afrikanerdom are reconsidered, challenged and endorsed.

4.9.1 Lyrics³²

Lyricaly, 'Hosh Tokolosh' ('Jack Parow: Hosh Tokolosh Lyrics', n.d., see Appendix B) demonstrates the familiar key characteristics of other Zef songs: it is an Afrikaans/English hybrid, switching languages regularly mid-phrase:

hoor hoor top van die food chain [hear hear, top of the food chain]³³

and

luister ek hoor die tokolosie is back [listen, I hear the *Tokoloshe* is back]

And it regularly employs the vernacular of the street:

awe bra hoe lyk dit [hello friend, how is it looking]

In the title, 'Hosh' means 'Hey' or 'Hello', and is an aggressive greeting such as may be used by people meeting for an altercation. The song is also frequently vulgar: 'fuck' (or its Afrikaans variants *fok*, *fokit*, *befuck shit*, *foken*) is used six times. It also establishes certain Afrikaans stereotypes that are typical of the Zef image:

oukie doukie a boer en n soutie [okay, an Afrikaner and an Englishman]³⁴
chips en n toby awe daars nie vont nie [chips and a beer, yes, that's perfect]

and

³² As before, original lyrics have been reproduced from the source material, accounting for any variations or inaccuracies in spelling.

³³ English translations are from 'Hos Tokolosh – Lyrics', 2014, with additional personal literal translations.

³⁴ 'Soutie' is an insulting term used for English-speaking white South Africans. Such South Africans are said to have one leg in South Africa and one leg in England, consequently dangling their genitals in the salty ocean. *Sout* directly translated means 'salt' ('Soutie', 2005).

kam in my sokkie en ent in my oor [comb in my sock and cigarette behind my ear].

This particular image is a popular Apartheid-era stock representation of an Afrikaner male. The song also incorporates sexual imagery:

kom ons fok n ront [come let's fuck around]

sweetheart vanaand gan jy nie slap nie [sweetheart, tonight you're not going to sleep]

arme mah poppie reg om te boor [poor, cute young woman, ready to be drilled]

Musically, the song is divided into two parts: Parow's rapped verses and Gazelle's sung chorus (cf. *Jack Parow & Gazelle - Hosh Tokolosh (OFFICIAL VIDEO)*, 2012). Both are underscored by a driving off-beat single chord and a non-decorative snare drum and high hat. From 01:56 an ornamental sliding high-pitched electronic-synth part kicks in. The syncopated vamping chord continues during the bridge ('Hosh Tokolosh, *wat soek jy in my bos...*), but the percussive part shifts to a military-styled snare drum accompaniment. From 02:58 onwards the synth replicates a 70's-styled sci-fi octave slide. The song has a distinct dance beat, and the repetitive chord structure and refrain make it catchy and easy to sing along to. The sci-fi tones at the end of the song emphasise the other-worldly nature of the *Tokoloshe*, re-enforcing its inexplicable/alien nature. The song is themed directly around the *Tokoloshe*, particularly its nocturnal sexual activities, and the threat it poses to women. After an initial verse in which Parow mostly introduces himself (and greets the *Tokoloshe* - this is only apparent in the video), and establishes a playful atmosphere, the song's refrain kicks in, issuing a playful warning about the *Tokoloshe*:

*tokolosie gan jou vangalangang
as jy hardloop in die gangalangang
hoekom lyk jy dan so bangalangang
want hy pik jou soos n slangalangang*

[*Tokoloshe* is going to catch you]
[When/ if you run in the corridor]
[Why then do you look so scared]
[Because he bites you like a snake]

What follows next is essentially a dialogue between Gazelle and Jack Parow:

jah [yes]

yes gazelle
awe bra jack [yes brother Jack]
luister ek hoor die tokolosie is back [listen I hear the *Tokoloshe* is back]
rerig oh fok wies bang [really oh fuck who's scared]
kom ons gan voor die tokolosie ons vang [come, let's go before the *Tokoloshe* catches us]

A series of *Tokoloshe*-related comments are then made (in rhyming couplets):

boeta bou mah jou bed op die klippe [brother build your bed on stones/ bricks]
lat die plek pop soos n pyp fol pitte [let the place pop like a pipe full of (marijuana) pips]
die hutte die sweet die laat nag parties [the heat, the sweat, the late night parties]
sweatheart vanaand gan jy nie slap nie [sweetheart tonight you are not going to sleep]
dis die nag wat die toklosie rond slyp [it's the night that the *Tokoloshe* creeps around]
weg in die dag mah venag gan hy uit kryp [away in the day but tonight he's going to creep out]

The essence of this verse is that women are vulnerable to attacks from the *Tokoloshe*, and in light of this they are not likely to get any sleep: either as a result of staying awake afraid, or as a result of an all-night long rape by the *Tokoloshe*. Parow then issues a series of threats directed at the *Tokoloshe*:

hosh tokolosh wat soek jy in my bos [what are you looking for in my place (literally: bush)]
watch it jy moet my vrou uit los [Watch it, you must leave my wife alone]
se hosh tokolsh wat soek jy hier [Say hey *Tokoloshe* what are you doing here]
ek klap jou want jy steel my bier [I smack you because you steal my beer]

The primary feature of this song is its playful nature: the beat and bounce of the music, coupled with its 70's retro sci-fi sounds, conjure up a light-hearted, informal and pedestrian 'vibe'; it is devoid of the urgencies and foreboding negative or minor musical motifs one might expect from a song about an evil rapist monster. Similarly, the rhyme scheme and lyrics also convey a lightness: this is particularly true for the final words of each line in the chorus that hang-a-lang-a-lang on, producing a childlike quality to the song. Ferreira's gentle and lyrical baritone vocals in the refrain support this. Tyler's rap delivery also adds to this, as it lacks any menace or threatening tone.

Die Tokkelosie gaan jou vang ['The *Tokoloshe* will get you'] is a typical warning South African parents may well say to their children as a device for behavioural modification, such as 'Don't play out there or the *Tokoloshe* will get

you', or 'Tidy your room or the *Tokoloshe* will catch you'. In my fieldwork interviews, several informants recounted examples from their childhoods where the *Tokoloshe* was used as a threat or warning to modify children's behaviour. *P* said when she was younger, if her grandmother had asked her to do something and she didn't want to, then her grandmother would say: "Okay, when you are sleeping I am going to ask *Tokoloshe* to come and beat you..." and *P* was subsequently scared! She also remembers that her teachers would say 'if you go to the toilet there is a *Tokoloshe* there', especially if someone hadn't flushed the toilet: then they'd be warned that the *Tokoloshe* will beat you. *Y* recalled being scared by her parents: "If you don't eat this food, then *Tokoloshe* will come and eat you!" *E* recalled being instructed things like: "Don't go alone! *Tokoloshe* will get you!" or "*Tokoloshe* is in that dark room!" *Kh* told a story about a little girl who used to keep her toys and her room very untidy. Her mother used to warn her if she didn't tidy her room then the *Tokoloshe* would come. When the little girl still didn't keep her room tidy the *Tokoloshe* came to her room, and she screamed for her mother. Her mother said: "I told you to keep your room tidy!" *Kh* recalls this tale making an impact on her when she was younger. Several of the informants were able to contribute narrative reflections on the *Tokoloshe*: *S* had heard that 'blacks put beds on bricks to avoid the *Tokoloshe* climbing up on their beds'; *A* had heard from a fellow student about being raped by a *Tokoloshe*; *J* said she had heard *Tokoloshes* could only be found in black locations [townships] and not in whites' homes as it was associated with black traditional belief. She recalled that at school, boys would tease girls about the *Tokoloshe* and make them scream as the girls would be scared of the *Tokoloshe*. She also remembers seeing *Tokoloshe* Salt being sold in shops in Jeffrey's Bay. *Al* recalled being looked after as a child by a lady who didn't like the *Tokoloshe* being mentioned. She would tease the lady: 'Oh, the *Tokoloshe* is coming!'

The idea of the *Tokoloshe* as a monster to be feared is a concept much drawn on to intimidate or threaten people, particularly children, not only by parents, but also by traditional healers who play 'upon the superstitious fears and credulity of the people' (Soga, 1931: 186). In cases of familial calamity, the *Tokoloshe* is charged with being the source of present and potential future molestation, and children are reared from early infancy 'in an atmosphere of fear and reverence of that which is mysterious' (Soga 1931: 188). In order to frighten a child into obedience the child may be threatened with some type of supernatural punishment such as is associated

with the *Tokoloshe*. Van der Vliet reports that among the South Sotho, children are told that if they wonder off or if they make a nuisance of themselves, then the *Tokoloshe* will come after them; and crying or disobedient children are told ‘*Tokoloshe will get you*’ (Van der Vliet, 1974: 224). Coetzee, writing in the early 1940s, notes that children of whites are also kept in check by mention of the *Tokoloshe* that, the children are told, catches children who are naughty and who tell lies, who are impolite or dishonourable, and who run around after dark or alone in the bush, or who play in deep water, or who don’t want to go to sleep (Coetzee, 1941: 39).

In the song, the lack of real peril and the good-humoured feel of the music creates a rather fun, pleasant atmosphere. The overall effect of this is to dilute or trivialise the essential characteristics of the *Tokoloshe*: a dangerous, sexual predator that is the source of fear and violence for a great many people across southern Africa. Tyler and his team have essentially created a charming and catchy ditty that is quite ‘sing-along-able’ about a monster that is considered by many to be the personification of evil.

4.9.2 Music video

Unlike ‘Evil Boy’, the music video for ‘Hosh Tokolosh’ (*Jack Parow & Gazelle - Hosh Tokolosh (OFFICIAL VIDEO)*, 2012) follows a narrative that is not related to the primary lyrics of the song. Instead, it portrays a single, simple storyline: a *Tokoloshe* emerges (in the manner of Pinky-Pinky, cf. 3.3.7) from within a bucket toilet located, township-style, outside a shack; it grows to giant-size, and then reaches in through the roof of Jack Parow’s shack to whisk him away (00:47). Parow is subsequently placed into a *muti* larder of sorts, surrounded by various objects including a comical, giant skull; human organs (or rather, jars containing a brain, a heart, and what appears to be intestines); a larger-than-life sized candle in a candlestick holder; an ever-watching, moving eye-ball (01:17); and later a jar containing Gazelle (who has what appears to be entrails wrapped around him) (01:08) (cf. note on *muti* in 3.5.2, 3.5.3 & 3.8). Parow produces a large mallet from his jacket and smashes the glass jar, releasing Gazelle (01:22). The two, joined by their third companion (DJ Invisible), then go on the run from the *Tokoloshe* across the veldt. Parow escapes up a tree, produces his mallet again (which magics itself to giant-size) and bashes the *Tokoloshe*, now reduced to a diminutive status, on the head (02:33). Parow and Gazelle then ride off on the shoulders of the *Tokoloshe*, again transformed

inexplicably to its giant-size (02:42). The video is presented primarily in comic-book/animation style, with most of the action taking place illuminated by a giant moon (00:04), essentially the events all occur at night, the traditional haunting time of a *Tokoloshe*. The setting for the story appears to be an undeveloped/incomplete township: roads and street lights over a series of hilltops, but only one small shack, complete with outside toilet, stands built. The interior of Parow's shack is seen (at 00:18). The room is decorated with several portraits (of a lion, a cat, and Ferreira as Gazelle) and a sun-shaped clock on the wall, and a comical human skull is located on the bed next to him. The bed, which is raised up on bricks (cf. 3.9.3), has a leopard-skin print pillow and bed cover (matching the design of Parow's iconic oversized peak cap), plus a patterned, red throw-over, and the room is coated in spider webs. A lone (humourous-looking) sheep stands on a chair in the room, and a brass monkey is placed in front of the bed on the floor. The room is illuminated by a single, naked bulb. Several sequences in the video have, as their backdrop, revolving and rotating psychedelic images of bones (often an image of a skull and crossbones) and dice (cf. 00:58; 01:02), with leafy shrubs and exotic plants, stuffed animals (sheep, hyenas) and skulls in the foreground, all under the watchful gaze of a menacing set of eyes (the symmetrical layout of shots use DJ Invisible's black and white keyboard to form the shape of a smiling mouth full of teeth, and what appears to be brains on the floor to create the idea of a moustache - cf. 00:58). The overall effect is that of a smiling face, looking directly at the viewer. Parow, Gazelle and DJ Invisible each appear in the recognizable apparel of their (stock) characters: Parow in his cap, vest, and shorts (and at 02:33 sporting gold jewellery and a gold knuckle duster); Gazelle in his African dictator-inspired print jacket and hat; and DJ Invisible in his trademark conical hat and silver visor. At one point we see a female drummer (cf. 02:02), wearing DJ Invisible's head gear, but clad in a print-bikini with bare midriff and arms exposed. She beats the drums with a pair of bones. The *Tokoloshe* is depicted as having a head of long hair (its hairy hands and arms are also exposed). It wears a necklace of bones and its black face, neck and legs are covered with white linear markings, creating a sinister effect. The *Tokoloshe* wears jeans that are ragged at the knees, a striped jacket (with three lapel badges), a hat and a belt that has a distinct 'bling' dollar-sign belt buckle. The *Tokoloshe* is also wearing sunglasses; the round lenses have been adapted to create an image of swirling, circular, hypnotic white eyes (cf. 00:30). It moves with an ape-like gait. At one point it is depicted smoking a

traditional pipe (00:22), and at another it is seen dancing, framed by two (stuffed) dogs with menacing, red eyes (01:01). On two occasions Gazelle is depicted riding the hyena (02:00 & 02:49). On the second occasion, his movements are sexually suggestive. The representation of the *Tokoloshe* in this video also suggests the image of a gollywog doll: the wild, black hair; blackened face; bulging white eyes; the jacket top and trousers; exposed, black hands; black shoes; white teeth-like markings. The gollywog character is widely considered as racist or pejorative. The video also draws heavily on images of witchcraft and divination, as is made evident by the appearance of the *Tokoloshe*, the *muti* ingredients, the omnipresent skulls, and the twirling images of bones or dice which replicate the tools of divination. The dice frequently indicate the number four or five which mirror the images of the skull and crossbones. Parow is seen (at 01:26) wearing a shirt depicting a skull. The video plotline suggests that Parow and Gazelle have been snatched up by the *Tokoloshe* for use as *muti* ingredients. The scenario is comical, and the ingredients are portrayed in a cartoon-like manner (heightened by the roving eye-ball). *Muti*-related crime - child abduction, murder and dismemberment - are serious and very real issues in South Africa. The portrayal of *muti* in the video is comic-like and potentially trivialises the issue. Parow et al draw on key elements of traditional belief to create entertainment (successfully and profitably); this is done with irreverence, making light of a theme that has weighty social implications. This is complicated by the artists' own cultural disassociation: in essence what results is a thematic minstrel-type performance; the artists may not be performing in 'blackface', but their treatment of the material, and the gollywog-like representation of the *Tokoloshe*, could be regarded as an equivalent. In this instance, the *Tokoloshe* is expressly a source for amusement, and features of traditional belief are drawn on to provide a colourful, psychedelic backdrop in this musical interlude. Tyler and his collaborators, in this work, suggest that traditional belief need not be taken seriously; the cartoon-like format of the video, doll-like appearances of the performers, and accessible and hummable tune all convey a sense of child-like fun. Furthermore, the work conveys evidence of variable values within the diverse belief systems in post-Apartheid South Africa, and those may not necessarily have shifted over the past two decades. Tyler is significantly popular, and this song reached the top of the charts in South Africa, reaching a large (predominantly white) audience.

4.10 Conclusion

In the songs ‘Evil Boy’ and ‘Hosh Tokolosh’, traditional belief is represented, criticised, trivialised and exploited by white South African performers who do so using constructed artistic personae, and these representations are disseminated through the medium of pop culture. In order to manage and interpret this, it is necessary to consider South Africa’s socio-historic/post-Apartheid context that is informed and influenced by the actions, beliefs and prejudices of the nation’s recent and historic past. A wide range of constituent factors can be identified in these works: historic racism and identity constructs; perceptions of whiteness and blackness; the role of traditional and new media in the dissemination and accessibility of a broad range of opinion across not only South Africa, but, significantly, across the globe, conveying evolved and evolving representations of reality to audiences who do not necessarily share or appreciate fully the contexts from which the work originates; and shifts in global trends about connectivity with and to non-traditional/fringe artforms and the redefinition of mainstream. These two products are not simply ‘pop songs’ or ‘music videos’: they are pregnant documents that are informed by the complexities of pre-colonial, colonial, and Apartheid-era socio-historic interactions; and they chronicle an out-of-the-ordinary cultural-linguistic hybridisation through appropriation of conflicting ideologies, and the reception of which across the globe reflects the evolution of media, tastes and pop in the 21st century. Broadly speaking, they are a meeting point of years of social interactions across southern Africa, facilitated by 21st century technology, and subsequently made accessible, though not necessarily clear or intelligible, to a global audience: a very local and particular set of circumstances made exceptionally global on the broadest of stages.

Identity in the ‘new’ South Africa is not a clear-cut matter. The socio-political state-led structures of Apartheid facilitated a particularly clearer, binary line with regard to identity: white/non-white; Christian/Satanic; ‘right’/‘wrong’, and so on. In post-Apartheid society, however, the lines are less clear, and identities are not as absolutely forged. The rejection of traditional belief and values in ‘Evil Boy’ suggests that people should be challenging who they have been defined to be, but one thing *Die Antwoord* [*The Answer*] does not provide in this regard is an actual answer. Even these artists - Jones, du Toit, Tyler, Ferreira - choose identity constructs to facilitate their voices as artists; who they really are is unclear or misleading: they are not what they say ‘on the label’. Jones, du Toit and Tyler struggled for years to achieve

success as South African artists, and have done so by assuming these imaginary personae, forged piecemeal from cannibalised elements of poor white, coloured ‘gangsta’ and American pop identities. It would appear the construction of identity for these artists in post-Apartheid South Africa is predominantly an engineered process.

It is appropriate, then, to ask some important questions. Are these White South African artists simply exploiting Black artists and Black culture for their own commercial gain, or do they provoke meaningful discussions about who South Africans actually are in the 21st century? The South African ‘gangsta’ rap artists whose styles and work is parodied and appropriated by these Zef artists are typically working class coloureds. These artists do not readily get airplay on South African radio stations, or benefit from significant investment by recording companies to make superior quality, elaborate or highbrow music videos. The global success of the Zef artists (and of *Die Antwoord* in particular) is largely attributed to very effective and skilled use of technology with access to the media tools required to market their product. The primary difference between the Zef artists and their township equivalents, apart from access to resources, is the colour of their skins! Is the struggle concerned with rejecting Apartheid identities, or simply about trying to forge new identities in the 21st century? Zef culture is rooted in a paradoxical temporality; a blend of Apartheid racial stereotypes; a mix of 70s and 90s fashion and 80s music, but trying to move forward by challenging traditional beliefs (such as ritual circumcision) and traditional conservative Afrikaner values (which it does by being offensive at every possible level: lyrically; in its imagery; and in its pervasive sexuality). These artists use images, rhetoric and icons from the past to try and define who they are in the present or who they could be in the future. Is there any truth or validity to Jones’ assertion he represents all South Africans ‘fucked into one person’? Is the South African of the future not simply a singular representative of one of the many cultures that make up the national ‘rainbow’, but rather a complete representative of all the cultures in that rainbow? Is there something prophetic in their work? Does their work ridicule or belittle traditional beliefs and values, or does it endorse them by celebrating them in such a globalised high-profile fashion? Finally, are these artists even enfranchised to play with traditional South African icons like the *Tokoloshe*, or is it the cultural property of an exclusive demographic? Who does the *Tokoloshe* actually ‘belong’ to? These final questions are made all the more problematic by the *Tokoloshe*’s shared history with the diverse peoples across southern Africa; one could

argue that ‘ownership’ of the authentic/original *Tokoloshe* (i.e. */Kaggen* according to Hammond-Tooke) sits with the San peoples of southern Africa, but the notion of cultural purity in South Africa is an impossibility due to the fundamental hybridity and creolisation of all ethnicities across South Africa (see 2.3.1). The *Tokoloshe* is a shared phenomenon, albeit in a number of diverse and inconsistent fashions, and it is that privilege which Jones and Tyler invoke. What is significant for this study is the manner and nature of that invocation, particularly considering the ‘versions’ of the *Tokoloshe* that they celebrate.

‘Evil Boy’ and ‘Hosh Tokolosh’ explore a (South) African individual’s shifting and diverse experience of the globalised world, by drawing on the existing sounds, accents, genres and styles from within and without South Africa (such as American hip-hop, township rap, Cape ‘gangsta’ street vernacular). These elements have been claimed and syncretised by *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow, both with and without the resources of the global music industries (including the platforms of traditional and new media), to create the new and avant-garde subculture and escapist mix that is ‘Zef’. The power of new media is in its capacity to transcend age, gender, class, religion and ideology, and evidence of this has been seen in the global/online popularity of both songs and of both sets of artists. South Africa’s social and economic imbalances and instabilities, coupled with *Die Antwoord*’s and Parow’s exploration of identity reconstruction (with regard to ‘whiteness’, Afrikaner-dom and South African-ness) and the increasing influences of globalisation come together in this crucible that is ‘popular music’. Hip-hop (by which these artists are significantly influenced, and of which these two songs are part representations) is a most appropriate genre: it is subversive; it deconstructs; it challenges repressive and prevailing thought; it builds new discourse; and it provides a collective, sympathetic understanding. These characteristics are common to ‘Evil Boy’ and ‘Hosh Tokolosh’. ‘Evil Boy’, in particular, demonstrates an attempt at self-definition and existential explanation, all within the localised context of post-Apartheid South Africa: the boy(s) in question is ‘evil’ for life because of the rejection of traditional values and beliefs; Jones directly confronts and challenges conservative principles; and Jones and du Toit both make their unwavering positions explicitly and dismissively clear (‘...not feeling me...fuck off!’ ‘Who are you? No-one! Fucking arsehole!’). In ‘Evil Boy’ and ‘Hosh Tokolosh’, Jones and Tyler demonstrate a supple disregard for static or obligatory identities, and they do this by means of unswerving censure, sharp satire

and irony, comedy, and the appearance of renegade characters. In these songs, the artists differentiate themselves from mainstream culture through their unpredictability and their misbehaviour, re-inventing themselves as a sign of united insubordination against homogenous culture and the mainstream media industry. The lyrics, themes and imagery of ‘Evil Boy’ and ‘Hosh Tokolosh’ strongly reject the traditional, core values of Afrikaner identity. This is made clear in these two songs by: the repeated application of anti-Christian and Satanic/witchcraft imagery; plain anti-authoritarian attitudes and behaviours (specifically in ‘Evil Boy’); crude and profane language; highly sexualised imagery and perverse or deviant sexual behaviour; in the elevation of the very lowest forms of common/poor-white style, manners and outlook; and in the appropriation and usage of the Cape ‘gangsta’ sounds and styles of South African hip-hop. As already discussed (in 1.4.1), Coetzee, writing in the years that preceded Apartheid, attempted to measure the extent to which African/indigenous culture had influenced and impacted on Afrikaans culture, using the *Tokoloshe* to do so. According to Coetzee, the *Tokoloshe* that inhabited Afrikaans culture in that age did not mirror its highly sexualised counterpart from traditional belief (cf. Coetzee, 1941: 34), and it existed peripherally, at best, in only a portion of Afrikaans communities. In post-Apartheid South Africa, the Afrikaans representations of the *Tokoloshe* in these two songs contrast dramatically with the one suggested by Coetzee. Furthermore, these representations have been afforded the possibilities of extensive distribution and recognition via the highly accessible avenues of new and popular media. The Afrikaans *Tokoloshe* is no longer sexless nor peripheral. Instead, this ‘new’ portrayal is a bold and aggressive manifestation of the very challenge the Zef artists pose to the Afrikaner community: the *Tokoloshe* is ungodly, perverse, amoral, hedonistic. By embracing this *Tokoloshe*, Jones and Tyler call into question the very characteristics and virtues by which Afrikaners have defined themselves for so long: Godliness, purity, morality, patriotism and nationalism (cf. Willemse, 2010: 94).

It would appear that through these two songs, with their innate models of self-parody, *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow have created an opportunity for young Afrikaners/Blacks/South Africans to discard strongly the links of the past, and to redefine themselves as *bona fide* post-Apartheid South Africans, consequently belittling, changing and simultaneously maintaining Afrikaner (and Black South African) identity. Both sets of artists also occupy positions within the international music industry, and it is evident that both songs draw on uniquely South African

symbols, stereotypes and characters, patterns of speech and dialects to help establish a firm and exclusive, inimitable position and (localised) artistic identity for these South African artists performing on the global stage. The South African flavour of the music is a distinct and marketable feature of their work which has contributed largely to the artists' success abroad. Fundamentally, these two songs embrace the possible and irregular multiplicities of 21st century South Africa, and celebrate its dystopian disorder and potential.

The *Tokoloshe* is a powerful representation of masculinity, sexuality (and its perversions), immorality, liminality and fear. Jones, Tyler (and their cohorts) toy variously with these several values in their work by directly accessing the *Tokoloshe* image in their art. In doing so, they question some of the key pillars of traditional Afrikaner identity, in particular conservative Christian values, and they highlight the tenuous position Afrikaners now occupy in a redefined post-Apartheid society. As these *Tokoloshe* values are antithetical to the tenets of conservative Afrikanerdom, the artists make bold challenges to the framework of traditional Afrikaner identity: their work suggests that the past cultural anchors are no longer fit-for-purpose in a democratised South Africa.

Chapter 5 - The *Tokoloshe* and Speculative Fiction

In the past decade, speculative fiction has emerged as a popular mouthpiece for South African authors in which the issues of post-Apartheid South Africa are examined in newly-imagined dystopian contexts. The *Tokoloshe* has appeared in several of these works, and they have subsequently been identified for examination in this project; in particular, three pieces have been selected: Diane Awerbuck's short story, 'Leatherman'; Andrew Salomon's novel, *Tokoloshe Song*; and Charlie Human's novel, *Apocalypse Now Now*. These three samples of speculative fiction are each rich, symbolic interpretations of society and identity in post-Apartheid South Africa. The authors locate their stories in an alternate South Africa where the supernatural and the natural co-exist, and the interactions between the two are used as a medium for Awerbuck, Salomon and Human to explore significant common contemporary issues of present-day South African society. The appearance of the *Tokoloshe* in each of these stories, in particular, facilitates an exploration of issues of identity, cultural appropriation and sexual morality in modern South African society. Furthermore, South Africa's challenging history is omnipresent in these narratives, and serious questions and comments about South Africa's future are raised by the authors. The novels also focus on South Africa's inescapable legacy of violence, abuse and prejudice, largely informed by cultural misperception and misunderstanding and then manifested as racism/xenophobia. Finally, and perhaps most importantly for this study, the works explore identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa, looking specifically at the complicated, powerful and uncontrollable processes involved in shaping identity.

This chapter, then, considers the representation of the *Tokoloshe* in these three works of speculative fiction through contextual analysis, and articulates what those representations of the *Tokoloshe* infer about changes in identity in post-Apartheid South Africa.

5.1 Speculative fiction

Speculative fiction is a wide literary term that includes any writing with elements of the supernatural, the fantastical, or the futuristic.³⁵ Ramsey suggests that examples of speculative fiction typically include one or more of the following:

³⁵ Sub-genres within speculative fiction may include: science fiction; fantasy; horror; magic realism; and paranormal (such as ghost stories); as well as a variety of additional sub-genres, including: hard (or pure) science fiction; soft (or sociological) science fiction; militaristic science fiction; near-future

[the story] takes place in the contemporary world but adds fantastic or speculative elements; it takes place in a past that is different from what is generally accepted; it includes aliens; it includes faery [sic], mythical creatures, or invented species/races; it includes magic; it explores future technology or alternate technology; it takes an existing scientific fact and extrapolates it beyond what is known; it takes place on another planet or world; it takes place in the future; it includes characters with actual paranormal abilities such as telepathy; it includes supernatural occurrences for which no logical or scientific explanation exists.

The term ‘speculative fiction’ first appeared as a synonym for ‘science fiction’ in an editorial of *The Saturday Evening Post* by the writer, Robert A. Heinlein, in 1947.³⁶ It has come to signify a body of literature that considers worlds that are variations of our own realities, and regularly presents an optimistic image of the future, or of an alternate world. These notions are used by writers to explore ideas about their own societies, including complicated issues like class structure, race and gender, and about the future of humanity. They challenge political ideologies and reflect critically on the central and fundamental ideas and structures on which our society is based, by considering possibilities and alternatives for a different kind of life (Pretorius et al, 2011; Liebenberg, 2014: 196-197; Steenkamp, 2011: 6; cf. Gilks, n.d.). Steenkamp argues that speculative fiction can be used as a way of exploring the intricate interactions of self, other and landscape. In speculative fiction, commonly used devices include ‘environmental catastrophe’ ‘disruptive civil war’ and ‘imagined futures’ in which new imaginary landscapes are created and in which the protagonist has to reconsider their sometimes cruel and avaricious views of humanity and/or non-human ‘others’ and of the natural environment, as well as their own moral responsibilities. These worlds provide the setting for discourses on climate change, genetic and social engineering, and identity (Steenkamp, 2011: 186-187). Steenkamp (2011: 187-188) states:

Speculative fiction, then, has its roots in material conditions, and its writers act, in much the same way as satirists do, as the conscience of the societies

science fiction; romantic science fiction; first contact; time travel; shared universe; supernatural; fairy tales; science fantasy (or future fantasy); urban fantasy; contemporary fantasy (or modern fantasy); dark fantasy (or gothic fantasy); epic fantasy (or high fantasy, or heroic fantasy, or traditional fantasy, or sword and sorcery); romantic fantasy; historical fantasy; cyberpunk; steampunk; splatterpunk; alternate history; alternate reality (or parallel universe); superhero fiction; apocalyptic (or holocaust) fiction; post-apocalyptic (or post-holocaust) fiction; utopian; dystopian; and space opera (‘Speculative fiction’, n.d.; Ramsey, n.d.; Williamson, 2011; Gilks, n.d.).

³⁶ For further information on the history of use of the term ‘speculative fiction’, the main approaches of speculative fiction, as well as early and recent formulations about the field of speculative fiction, see Oziewicz, 2017.

which produce them. However, these texts also imagine spaces that are in many ways removed from the limitations of the ‘real’ world, both reflecting and *envisioning* realities. The element of play which characterizes the speculative mode enables its authors to re-think, expand and contest entrenched categories and restrictions, and particularly those which govern the relationships between self, other and environment. In fact, the speculative narrative transgresses boundaries at the very level of structure: it combines aspects of satire, fantasy, science fiction and the fable. The characters who traditionally inhabit this genre are frequently trickster figures, occupying marginal spaces which challenge hierarchized binary oppositions, such as self/other, human/animal, human/machine and self/environment.

Steenkamp (2011:7-9) suggests further that while writers of such fiction may work in an adaptable world of words, their socio-historic contexts cannot be ignored; indeed, the literature frequently functions as an omen to the anxieties, aspirations, distractions and potential calamities of a particular community arising from their own present ‘political, historical, environmental and/or economic trajectories’.

5.1.1 Speculative fiction and popular culture

Elements of the speculative appear in several works by writers of the classics, such as Greek dramatist Euripides’ version of *Medea* (5th century BCE) and satirist Lucian’s *Trips to the Moon* (2nd century CE) and also in the plays of William Shakespeare (of which *A Midsummer-night’s Dream* is arguably the most famous such example). Early works of the genre include Verne’s *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (1864) and *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870), Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726), Shelley’s *Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818), Poe’s *The Balloon Hoax* (1844), Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), and H.G. Wells’ novels *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). The expansion of magazine publication in the late 19th century, in particular, facilitated the affordability and availability of early speculative fiction writing, particularly shorter works of science fiction (Sterling, 1998).

Examples of speculative fiction can be found at the heart of 21st century popular culture. These include J.R.R Tolkien’s Middle Earth epic fantasy (*The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*); Gene Roddenberry’s *Star Trek* sci-fi universe; George Orwell’s dystopian *1984*; George Miller’s post-apocalyptic *Mad Max* movie series; the Marvel and DC superheroes comics, TV and film franchises (including Superman, Batman, Spiderman, The X-Men, The Avengers and many more); and works like *Carrie*, *The Shining* and *It* from the canon of American horror-writer, Stephen King.

In July 2017, six of the top ten highest grossing movies of all time (worldwide) are all examples of speculative fiction cinema; and, one of which (*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2*) is, as of July 2017, from the most successful literary series of all time, with more than 450 million Harry Potter books in print worldwide (and, in August 2016, the stage play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* by Jack Thorne became the fastest selling book in the UK in ten years) ('All Time Box Office', 2017; 'Because It's His Birthday: Harry Potter, By the Numbers', 2013 ; 'Harry Potter and the Cursed Child is fastest-selling UK book this decade', 2016). The success of these products, alongside the significant economic success and popularity of others, such as those of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, BBC's time-travelling *Doctor Who*, HBO's series *Game of Thrones* (based on the fantasy novels by George R. R. Martin), AMC's *The Walking Dead* (and its spin-off *Fear the Walking Dead*, all based on Robert Kirkman's zombie apocalypse comic series), Suzanne Collins' dystopian *The Hunger Games* series (three books/four films) and Stephanie Meyer's vampire/werewolf *Twilight* saga (four books/five films), have seen the products of speculative fiction occupy a prominent position in global popular culture ('All Movies: Marvel Cinematic Universe', 2017; 'One Man: Many Faces', 2017; 'Song of Ice and Fire', 2017; 'Game of Thrones: Episodes', 2017; 'The Walking Dead: Episodes', 2017; 'The Story', 2017; 'The Hunger Games', 2017; 'The Twilight Saga', 2017). While it is true to say that not all speculative fiction is popular, the tropes, stock characters, vocabularies and potentialities of speculative fiction inhabit popular culture explicitly and are exploited via the mediums of the entertainment industry and new technology (cf. McLean, 2007; Folch, 2013; Norton, 2015).

5.1.2 Speculative fiction in Africa³⁷

Bould (2015a) argues that examples of African science fiction (and other speculative fictions) have existed for over a century, but these have not been well

³⁷ Bould (2015b) acknowledges the dangers of a reductionist approach to such an endeavour, stating:

There are vast differences between – and within – North and sub-Saharan Africa. Across the continent, the influence of Arabic, European, Islamic, and Christian cultures has played out in myriad ways, as have colonialism, postcolonialism, and neo-colonialism. There are important distinctions to be drawn between – and within – indigenous and settler cultures, both in Africa and in diaspora. There are complex questions to be asked of the many hybridities thrown up at the lived interfaces and interweavings of these cultures and identities. While such questions have no straightforward answers, there is much to be gained by thinking collectively about them. My own instinct is not to try to nail down a rigid schema, but to keep matters fluid, relationships open, and potentials in play, and to recognize the specific conjunctural value of "African sf" as a temporary, flexible, non-monolithic, and, above all, strategic identity.

documented.³⁸ Bould cites Egyptian Muhammad Muwaylihi's 1898 time-travel novel, *A Period of Time*, and South African Joseph J. Doke's novels, *The Secret City: A Romance of the Karroo* (1913) and *The Queen of the Secret City* (1916) as the earliest examples by indigenous and settler writers (cf. Bould, 2015b). Bould suggests that additions to the canon of African science and speculative fiction over the century have been slow and without any clear indication of following or establishing any particular national or African tradition. Onwualu (2015) suggests that speculative fiction has been of little interest to African audiences, particularly as Africans have not been the intended audience. Okorafor (quoted in Onwualu, 2015; cf. McTernan, 2015), states:

...few science fiction classics and contemporary works feature main characters of African descent, African mythologies, African locales, or address issues endemic to Africa. And, until recently, next to none were written by African writers.

Onwualu suggests further that Western speculative fiction typically considers 'anxieties and concerns' that are largely alien to the African experience. Onwualu (2015; cf. Caraivan, 2014: 97) states:

In societies far more concerned with "real" problems like bad roads, corruption, refugees, militants, food shortages, poor electricity, water wars and famine, stories about robots just seem fanciful and irrelevant. ... Okorafor quotes Naunihal Singh ... who put it succinctly: "Bring the Terminator to West Africa, and he'd stop running in a day. He'd sit there and glitch. It'll be hard to make people afraid of a future where computers take over the world when they can't manage to keep the computers on their desk running. These are very western stories."

However, recent trends indicate a shift in the output of speculative literature. This is evident in the works by African writers such as the award-winning Lauren Beukes, Nigerian-American author Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death?* (2010), and Ghanaian Kojo Laing's speculative novel, *Big Bishop Roko and the Altar Gangsters* (2006). It is also reflected in the works of film producers (such as *Crumbs*, a post-apocalyptic Ethiopian movie directed by Miguel Llansó). Another vehicle is in magazine editions (such as *omenana* and the *Afrofuture(s)* edition of *Jalada*, and in four recent collections of African writing, such as Ivor W. Hartmann's *AfroSF: Science Fiction by African Writers* (2012), Ayodele Arigbabu's *Lagos_2060: Exciting*

³⁸ Bould (2015b) details extensively examples of several genres of speculative fiction produced across Africa over the past century.

Sci-Fi Stories from Nigeria (2013), Story Club's mostly Malawian *Imagine Africa 500*, and Nerine Dorman's *Terra Incognita: New Short Speculative Stories from Africa* (Bould, 2015a; Steenkamp, 2011: 190). Onwualu (2015; cf. McTernan, 2015) states:

Today however, things are changing. We are in an era in African literature where we are beginning to value the stories we have always told each other. The ones we created away from the eyes of Western audiences. These stories, in which magic is as natural as breathing, are now being used to grapple with the nature of urbanisation, technology and the social upheaval of changing gender roles. They can sometimes break the “rules” of linearity and characterisation, but they are vibrant and optimistic – and above all, they are uniquely ours.

Kenyan film-maker, Wanuri Kahiu, re-iterates that genres of speculative fiction, such as mythical realism, fantasy and science fiction, have been evident in Kenyan storytelling and mythology for many years (McTernan, 2015). Several writers identify differences between Western and African speculative and science fiction. Byrne (quoted in Caraivan, 2014: 103) suggests that recent speculative and science fiction coming out of Africa avoids the danger of stereotypical portrayals of identity-less and uncivilised ‘masses’, tackling issues of race and culture head-on. The emergence of African science fiction cinema is evident in films such as South African-born Neill Blomkamp’s *District 9* (2009) and *Chappie* (2015), Kahiu’s short film, *Pumzi* (2009), Ethiopian-American Haile Gerima’s *Sankofa* (1993), French-Tunisian Nadia El Fani’s *Bedwin Hacker* (2003), Cameroonian Jean-Pierre Bekolo’s *Les Saignantes* (2005), Beninese-French Sylvestre Amoussou’s *Africa Paradis* (2006), and Nigerian Muyiwa Ademola’s *Kajola* (2005) (Bould, 2013). Bould (2013) also identifies the role southern Africa has played in American and British-produced speculative and science fiction on film and television, citing several recent products for which Namibia and South Africa have provided locations, personnel, and resources: such as *Doomsday* (2008), *Outcasts* (2010), *Dredd* (2012), and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2014). Onwualu (2015) identifies several key issues with regard to speculative and science fiction in Africa. Onwualu states:

...most of the genre is still dominated by white southern Africans, it can sometimes be plagued by unexamined racial, sexual and gender biases and frankly, I would like to see more African women stepping up to add their voices, but overall, it just feels less fraught. For the most part, African speculative storytelling lacks the defensive anger that comes from having to prove itself worthy against an arbitrary standard. There are no rules – as yet – about whose voice counts as legitimate. Also it largely avoids the unexamined

privilege of a colonialist narrative that assumes that somehow the traditions and beliefs of the world are its own to mine as it pleases.

5.1.3 Speculative fiction in South Africa

There is an established tradition of speculative fiction writing in South Africa, but as previously mentioned, it is typically not well recorded or explored.³⁹ Steenkamp (2011: 12, 14 & 16) identifies a lack of academic investigation into South African speculative fiction, and highlights as possible reasons the genres' associations with 'pulp fiction', 'low-brow escapism', other misperceptions, and a preoccupation in South African literary studies on narrative depictions of racial and gender conflicts. The following is a brief survey of published works of the genre over the past 130 years. Caraivan (2014: 95) nominates H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) as the first example of speculative fiction in South Africa, particularly as it explores 'what if' scenarios against issues such as 'racial and cultural differences, colonial relations and interracial relationships'. Caraivan argues that the primary themes of the work (as adventure story and 'Lost World' story) reflect the distinct perspectives of the broader genre of speculative fiction. Some of the earliest examples of twentieth century South African speculative fiction include: Doke's novels (mentioned above), Archibald Lamont's *South Africa in Mars* (1923); British-born William M. Timlin's novel, *The Ship that Sailed to Mars* (1923); South African writer Ferdinand Berthoud's story 'The Man who Banished Himself' (published in *Weird Tales* in 1924) and the part horror-story 'Webbed Hands' (published in *Strange Tales* in 1931); and farmer and occasional journalist, Leonard Flemming's short story 'And So It Came to Pass' in *A Crop of Chaff* (1925) (Bould, 2015b; Caraivan, 2014: 95; Wood, 2009). Caraivan (2014: 96; cf. Wood, 2009; Steenkamp, 2011: 14) suggests

³⁹ While this review focuses on South African speculative fiction written in English, it is worth acknowledging contributions to the genre by South African writers in other languages. Works in Afrikaans include: C.J. Langenhoven's 1923 utopian space travel work, *Loeloeraai; Ondergang Van Die Tweede Wêreld (Destruction of the Second World*, 1933) by Eugène N. Marais; *Swart ster oor die Karoo (Black star over the Karoo*, 1957), *Die groen planeet (The green planet*, 1961) and *Die hemelblom (The Heaven Flower*, 1971) by Jan Rabie; Karel Schoeman's *Na die Gelyfde Land (Promised Land*, 1972); Andre Brink's *Kennis van die Aand (Looking on Darkness*, 1973); Eben Venter's *Horrelpoot (Trencherman*, 2006); Fanie Viljoen's *Miserella* (2007); and Jaco Jacobs' *Virus* (2012) (Visagie, 2015; Wood, 2009; Steenkamp, 2011: 20; Meads, 2011). Speculative fiction (or works that incorporate speculative elements, including traditional belief speculation, in their telling) in Sesotho include Thomas Mofolo's *Chaka* (1925) and Libakeng Maile's adaptation of *Animal Farm*, *Pitso ea liphoofolo tsa hae ('The Meeting of the Domestic Animals')*. Films include *Mighty Man*, adapted from the comic series about a township super-hero (in Zulu, 1978), Tinashe Arthur Chikwanda's short sci-fi film, *The Fading Mask* (in Xhosa, 2014) and Jahmil XT Qubeka's sci-fi movie, *Stillborn* (in Xhosa, 2017) (Ryman, 2017b; Wood, 2011).

that literature in general during the years of Apartheid was largely realist in nature, acting as an ‘important weapon against a regime that attempted to hide its atrocities’.

However, one example of politically-inspired speculative fiction is Arthur Keppel-Jones’ *When Smuts Goes: A History of South Africa from 1952 to 2010, first published in 2015* (1947) (Bould, 2015b). In the 1960s, *Probe* magazine emerged, published by the Science Fiction Club of South Africa (SFSA), and has published for several decades since then, including works by writers such as W.G. Lipsett, Gerhard Hope, Arthur Goldstuck, Liz Simmons and Yvonne Walus, and also several anthologies of short stories (*The Best of South African Science Fiction*) (Caraiyan, 2014: 97; Wood, 2009). Caraiyan (citing Byrne, 2004: 522-523; cf. Wood, 2009) identifies three novels published in the turbulent 1980s as good examples of late Apartheid-era speculative fiction. Two of these are Nobel laureate J. M. Coetzee’s allegorical *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), set ‘nowhere’ and ‘nowhen’ in an ‘unnamed frontier settlement where the forces of civilization are ranged against unidentified barbarians’, and the dystopian *The Life and Times of Michael K* (1983). The third is *July’s People* (1981) by fellow Nobel laureate Nadine Gordimer. Caraiyan (2014: 96-97) states:

... [the] novels are futuristic dystopias in which white families are forced to leave an urban environment now surrounded by rebels and to relocate to an unfamiliar village in the middle of a black community. The two Nobel laureates focus on an imagined near future and draw attention to the potential of writing speculative fiction instead of realistic novels.

Wood (2009) includes Michael Cope’s *Spiral of Fire* (1987) in this section of the canon. It is a meta-fictional novel that contrasts the interaction with ‘alien culture’ with the realities of the destructive interactions of the police and armed forces in the townships in State of Emergency 1980s South Africa. Early twenty-first century examples of post-Apartheid South African speculative fiction publications and novels include *Chimurenga* – a publication celebrating pan-African culture, art and politics which has been publishing in print or online since 2002 (including works by acclaimed authors Njabulo Ndebele, Lesego Rampolokeng and Henrietta Rose-Innes); and *Something Wicked* – a magazine publishing science fiction, horror and fantasy in print and subsequently online by writers including Sarah Lotz, Dave de Beer and Richard Kunzmann since 2006. Other works include Zakes Mda’s *Heart of Redness* (2000); Lily Herne’s zombie-apocalypse novel, *Deadlands* (2011); the South African vampire film, *Eternity* (2010); *Moxyland* (2008) and *Zoo City* (2010) by 2011

Arthur C. Clarke Prize-winner, Lauren Beukes; and works by 2008 Caine Prize-winner - for best African writing in English - Rose-Innes, such as her post-apocalyptic short story, 'Poison', and novels *Shark's Egg* (2000), *The Rock Alphabet* (2004) and *Nineveh* (2011) (Caraivan, 2014: 97-98; Wood, 2009; Human, 2015a; Steenkamp, 2011: 190). Caraivan (2014: 98) states:

[Beukes and Rose-Innes] concentrate on a futuristic South Africa that still preserves the heritage of Apartheid. Moreover, they focus on the relationship between the ancient and the modern and on the role played by women in post-Apartheid society. Firstly, the connection with the past roots of African history is underlined by their use of animals or insects that dominate both the individual and social groups. Secondly, the reference to the Apartheid period is marked by themes and issues such as segregation within the African communities, xenophobia, racial tensions, scarce resources, hostile landscapes and environment, and frontier settlements. Thirdly, the technologically advanced society portrayed relates the writings to science fiction.

Some of the most recent works of speculative fiction include: Lotz's novel *The Three* (2014); Louis Greenberg's alternate Johannesburg reality, *Dark Windows* (2014); Alex Smith's *Devilskein & Dearlove* (2014) - a Cape Town-set retelling of Burnett's classic, *The Secret Garden*; David Horscroft's *Fletcher* (2014), Andrew Miller's *Dub Steps* (2015), Fred Strydom's *The Raft* (2015), Rachel Zadok's *Sister-Sister* (2013), set in a future Johannesburg that has been destroyed by climate change, and *Nwelezelanga: The Star Child* by Unathi Maguben (2016) (Human, 2015a; Smith, 2015; Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 78-79).

Byrne, writing in 2004, identifies a lack of published works and of an audience for science fiction in South Africa. This Byrne attributes to limited technological know-how in South Africa, to the pattern of supply-and-demand that determines sales, and to the genre's association with an inaccessible and foreign way of life (as promulgated by American science fiction novels, Hollywood films, television shows and the advertising industry) (Byrne, 2004: 522). Nick Wood (2009) suggests that the genres of speculative fiction typically have been given lower priority by South African publishers, citing the absence of a 'significant black readership' as a potential cause. Wood also acknowledges that traditional Western examples of science fiction may be perceived as less relevant to the African (and South African) experience. Interestingly, Felicity Wood (writing in 1991) argues that the major political shifts of the late twentieth century in South Africa would actually be

conducive to the growth of fantasy writing in South Africa. Wood (quoted in Steenkamp, 2011: 15) states:

Things are changing in South African society; thus there is a possibility of new developments in South African literature, which might result in conditions that are more favourable for the growth of fantasy. The political terrain is shifting and things are far less clear-cut and there is less uncritical allegiance and adoration and far more cynicism.

Several authors and academics suggest there has been an increase over the past decade in published speculative fiction in South Africa, dominated predominantly by young writers, with the genre providing an accessible means of expression in post-Apartheid South Africa (cf. Liebenberg, 2014: 197-198; Hatfull, 2015). Human (quoted in Hatfull, 2015) states:

There are obviously a lot of theories about the role post-apartheid literature in South Africa [sic]. My own take is that the revolutionary impulse has been channelled more into individual understandings of how to live within a still very much divided and imperfect society. The rest of the world resonates strongly with that; more people are realising that their own societies, no matter how first-world and glossy, have some major systemic issues too.

The increased output of speculative fiction in post-Apartheid South Africa is also attributed to shifts in creative thinking about the value of South African-generated material. Other reasons include the success and popularity of author Lauren Beukes as well as Neill Blomkamp's Oscar-nominated film *District 9* and the growing support of the South African (and international) publishing industry (cf. Hatfull, 2015).

The value of speculative fiction in post-Apartheid South Africa can be found in the provisions it makes for dealing with the challenges of the present by suggesting alternatives: both for the present and for the future (cf. Steenkamp, 2011: 192-193). Wood (2009) acknowledges a potential upsurge in the output of speculative fiction in South Africa, in light of broader and improved science education, an increase in emergent work by black authors writing in the country's several official languages, and articulated subversive and multiple responses to 'South Africa's post-colonial experience'. Lotz (in Hatfull, 2015) purports that speculative fiction in South Africa allows the medium to explore the country's identity, framed by a dreadful past, a present in flux, and an uncertain future; and to avoid the prejudices South African audiences may have against local writing. Liebenberg (2014: 198) identifies speculative fiction's capacity to expand on and amplify specific ideas and subtleties

as a key advantage of the genre in South Africa.

5.1.4 Themes in post-Apartheid South African speculative fiction

Steenkamp suggests the primary post-Apartheid pre-occupations of speculative fiction in South Africa are gendered and racialised inequality (highlighted through racism and xenophobia), identity formation (as impacted on by oppression, institutionalised racism and global advancements in technology), and post-colonialism (relating not only to the South African situation, but also to exploitation and inequality within a global context) (Steenkamp, 2011: 16, 160 & 188-189; cf. Caraivan, 2014: 104; cf. Hatfull, 2015). Steenkamp suggests the theme of recovery from displacement/dislocation or from cultural denigration is a common feature of post-colonial literature (Steenkamp, 2011: 24 & 154). This is pertinent to the South African context, as one considers the significant transformation and recovery required in response to the specific oppressive circumstances of Apartheid South Africa, of which displacement/dislocation and cultural denigration were primary features. The idea of belonging in post-Apartheid South Africa is an important component of self and national identity, made problematic by South Africa's violent Apartheid past. The features of which included the enforcement of race and pass laws, and the Natives Land Act and Group Areas Act. In South African speculative fiction, the narratives of human conflict frequently play out in sectionalised dystopias against the backdrops of environments destroyed by catastrophe, infertile post-apocalyptic wildernesses and urban landscapes that recall the race ghettos of Apartheid. The state of 'place' is significant in its mirroring of the state of recovery of 'self' (Steenkamp, 2011: 25 & 154).

A key feature of South African speculative (and science) fiction is its capacity to integrate traditional mythologies with science fiction (and other speculative forms) within a context that is current and that acknowledges the global information culture of the twenty-first century (Steenkamp, 2011: 137-138). Carstens & Roberts (quoted in Steenkamp, 2011: 138) state:

By shifting to the SF mode, African authors might begin to re-articulate oral histories whilst engaging with and creating a future for Africa – a task currently left mostly to jaded historians, world-weary journalists and cynical social commentators. SF, does not only concern itself with the articulation of techno-enhanced futures, but also accommodates mythic journeys into the distant past. What SF does, however, is create a link between past, present and future projecting the mythic mode of orality into the future, situating it as a valid alternative to techno-culture, or expressing potent fusions and

intersections between myth and technological rationalism.

Byrne identifies the South African landscape as a recurrent theme in South African science fiction. Settings are regularly hostile, resources scarce, and writers often provide lengthy descriptions of the countryside to highlight its complexities. Byrne also highlights the frequency of stereotypical or caricatured representations of racial others in interracial encounters (Byrne: 2004: 524-525). Caraivan (2014: 94) highlights the range of perspectives on ‘otherness’ that speculative fiction offers, particularly with regard to society in post-Apartheid South Africa, and the opportunity to explore the ‘other’s’ perspective. Steenkamp (2011: 160) suggests that the encounter with (an)other in speculative fiction frequently prompts a ‘call to responsibility’; this recurring theme in South African speculative fiction ‘exposes not only the urgency of this call to accountability, but also the risks associated with it’.

5.2 Awerbuck, Salomon and Human

The three pieces of writing selected for analysis in this chapter were all published in the past five years: Diane Awerbuck’s ‘Leatherman’ in 2015; Andrew Salomon’s *Tokoloshe Song* in 2014; and Charlie Human’s *Apocalypse Now Now* in 2013. Awerbuck is an educator and writer. Her first novel, *Gardening at Night* (2003), won the Commonwealth Best First Book Award for Africa and the Caribbean. She also published *Cabin Fever* (2011) (a collection of short stories), *Home Remedies* (2012) and her thesis, *The Spirit and the Letter: Trauma, Warblogs and the Public Sphere* (2012) (‘About Diane Awerbuck’, n.d.). Awerbuck’s short story, ‘Leatherman’, was the winning entry in Short Story Day Africa’s 2015 short fiction competition (Bould, 2015a). Her short story, ‘Nagmaal’, was shortlisted for the 2017 Commonwealth Short Story Prize (‘Diane Awerbuck shortlisted for 2017 Commonwealth Short Story Prize’, 2017).

Cape Town-based writer and archaeologist, Salomon, is the author of *The Chrysalis* (2013) (a young adult novel) and several published short stories. In 2009, Salomon received a PEN/Studzinski Literary Award for African Fiction, and in 2011 was shortlisted for the Terry Pratchett First Novel Award (‘Andrew Salomon’, 2014; ‘Andrew Salomon - Tutor: Write a Novel’, 2016).

Human is also Cape Town-based and has worked as a digital marketer, novelist and screenwriter. His novels *Apocalypse Now Now* and *Kill Baxter* (2014) have been published in several countries, including the United States of America, the

United Kingdom and Japan, and have been translated into Afrikaans, Italian, German, Czech and Japanese ('Charlie Human', 2017). Human's screenplay, *Wasteland*, received development funding from South Africa's National Film and Video Foundation. In 2014, Human was chosen as one of the Mail and Guardian's 200 Young South Africans (Human, 2015a; Freeman, 2013). In 2015, it was announced that *Apocalypse Now Now* is being adapted for the big screen by Oscar-nominated screenwriter, Terri Tatchell (who was responsible for scripting *District 9* with her husband, Neill Blomkamp) (McNary, 2015). In August 2017, Be Phat Motel released a 47-second-long 'Teaser Trailer' for a short film version of an extract from the novel (*Apocalypse Now Now - Teaser Trailer*, 2017), and in September 2017, released the 8-minute-long short film online (*Apocalypse Now Now - Full Proof of Concept Short Film*, 2017).

5.3 'Leatherman'

Diane Awerbuck's 'Leatherman' is a short story that is set in a familiar South Africa, and includes a *Tokoloshe* character; its conclusion is brought about by a supernatural/magical phenomenon; and Awerbuck uses satire, allegory, and the notion of binary opposites (such as human/animal or virginity/corruption) in the story to reflect on issues of identity and transformation in post-Apartheid South Africa. These characteristic features emphasise the speculative nature of the writing. Awerbuck's story grapples with identity in a fictional South Africa: where the monolithic, colonial anchors of the past are inescapable and omnipresent; where current issues are problematic and hard to define and solve; and where the future cannot be anticipated with any degree of accuracy. Awerbuck uses both the short story and speculative fiction forms to amplify and scrutinise the key issue of female identity/identity formation or transformation in post-colonial/post-Apartheid South Africa, acknowledging explicitly her socio-historic context, and the *Tokoloshe* as character within the story acts as the catalyst for her to do so.

The story is set in a near-future Cape Town, and traces a day's events in the life of the story's protagonist, Joanna. The character is a features researcher at a fictional magazine, *Allure*, who attends an art party at Cape Town's Castle to which the magazine staff have been invited. At this event, Joanna, who is an ageing virgin, meets 'a capering, hairy-knuckled little man pushing a wheelbarrow' named Hili (the 'leatherman' of the title in reference to the lederhosen he wears). He is, as we discover, a *Tokoloshe* (as mentioned previously in 3.2.2, Hili is another traditional

name for *Tokoloshe*); and the encounter sets off a burning, sexual longing within her. The two attempt sexual intercourse, but Joanna's desires go unfulfilled as the laws of the supernatural and magical intervention prevent consummation from taking place (cf. Adeyi, 2015; Bould, 2015a).

5.3.1 Female sexuality

From the opening paragraph of the story, the protagonist's inability to lose her virginity is firmly established as the central plot point (Awerbuck, 2015: 13-14). The notion of her loss of virginity (and the tearing/breaking of her hymen) is reinforced even in reference to her shopping experience: while Joanna is trying on a new pair of animal-print pants to wear to the party, she tears them in the crotch ("She had torn the material hymen.", pg. 15). This can be seen as a foreshadowing of the impending tearing of her own hymen, the occasion of which is set up during the story and brought to its failed conclusion. As the story subsequently unfolds, so her sexual desire increases, triggered by the several encounters she has, and the observations she makes, during the evening. On her way to the party, walking towards the Castle through the Company's Garden:

"Joanna felt the energy zing up through the bones of her feet, her knees, her thighs, and the hot pot of her pelvis: predestination." (pg. 16)

Arriving at the party, she observes a group of young women 'with their faces streaked with silver paint and their chests bare', welcoming the guests with drinks:

"Joanna couldn't look away from those puckered nipples, those sides of flesh." (pg. 17)

When she first notices Hili wheeling about an art structure built of paper and glue at the party, her sexual awareness becomes piqued (pg. 20). As she begins to talk to him, her physical responses and her desire increase :

"Joanna could smell his armpits, some sharp, bittersweet scent, and felt the synapses blistering in her brain, old pathways being cauterised, new ones being laid down. She wanted to grip his biceps and bury her nose in the clump of damp hair there. Her mouth was watering." (pg. 21-22)

Hili disrobes, with Joanna's help, and their sexual congress is imminent:

"I am about to be ploughed, she told herself. Ploughed and furrowed. The good earth. The fertile earth. The flaming trellis. Her teaspoon of bright blood would trickle out onto the soil here in the meadow and seed it for the next season. When she walked through it on her scissoring legs in September, she would know firsthand its heat and pain and growth." (pg. 23)

Hili then cuts the skin-tight trousers from her body:

"She held the zip of her pedal-pushers away from her skin for him, and he flicked the blade under the cloth. He was going to divide her, known and unknown, cast off the bit of skin that stood between Joanna and experience. Hili yanked the blade through the fabric and her pants ripped and stuttered. Joanna pictured herself doing star jumps, bouncing high on the tiny trampoline of her virginity, a girl in a tampon advert, touching the sky." (pg. 24)

Awerbuck presents a female figure that contrasts boldly with traditional (more conservative/less sexualised) representations or perceptions of women in South Africa. In Joanna's daily business, even mundane activities have sexual connotations or sexualised value – they represent the increasing sexual affirmation or contact she needs to continue as a fulfilled member of society. Consequently, all her interactions, observations of others, and her awareness of the environment in which she operates – all carry a loaded sexual energy. Joanna's heightened and sexualised state of consciousness is reflected in the wider imagery used within the story. Awerbuck employs several devices to achieve a heightened sexualised tone in the story. She uses puns (pg. 13) 'a light-fingered someone with a cunning tongue', and metaphors and similes, such as in the description of the Castle (pg. 14: 'the main building itself was an icon, an areola'), and in reference to the drinking yoghurt (pg. 15). She also employs (deliberate) sexual innuendo (pg. 15) and sexualised descriptive phrases (pg. 20). There is also a distinct primitive or animal-like quality to her bubbling sexuality (cf. pg. 23 'there was pressure on her eardrums, the night air, the reversed juices of the grass like blood running the other way along their vessels, the ancient mammalian impulse'). This is emphasised in Awerbuck's characterisation of Hili (particularly his animal-like appearance, especially pg. 21) and in the farming references ('ploughed', 'furrowed' 'fertile earth'). Awerbuck provides a gateway into an appreciation of female sexuality that is not traditional. Apartheid-era understandings and portrayals of female sexuality were informed and framed predominantly by conservative Christian thinking or traditional codes of behaviour rooted in hetero-patriarchal society (cf. Gunkel, 2010; Klausen, 2010; Sarkin, 1998). In Joanna, the reader is presented explicitly with a heightened and omnipresent female sexuality. Furthermore, that (traditionally unseen) female sexual drive is acted upon, but not simply with any man; it is acted upon (albeit unwittingly) with the single-most sexual icon of traditional belief in South Africa.

5.3.2 The *Tokoloshe* and sexual desire

The *Tokoloshe* is frequently associated with human sexuality in southern Africa (cf. Bahre, 2002: 327-328, 330; Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 131-132; Hammond-Tooke, 1974b: 338; Laubscher, 1937: 24, 49–50; Laubscher, 1975: 128; Lebeau, 1999: 203; Lee, 1958: 271, 277-279; Niehaus, 1995: 515, 526-529; Niehaus, 2001: 52-54; Niehaus 2002: 282-283; Niehaus, 2003: 116; Wilson, 1951a: 312). Awerbuck's female protagonist is an unafraid post-Apartheid take on the female psyche, in that it contrasts clearly with the understandings of sexuality of Apartheid-era southern African women. Gunkel (2010: 11; cf. 14-16, 27-30) argues that understandings of sexuality in post-Apartheid South Africa are significantly framed by the colonial (and Apartheid) positions on sexuality; in Apartheid discourse, in particular, race is the product of heterosexuality, and European ideas of sexuality (and the desire of the ‘black other’) continue to be affected by colonialism as whiteness (including white privilege and sexual entitlement) is negotiated around black sexuality. The Apartheid government enacted several laws, such as the 1949 Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, the 1950 Immorality Act (in which the government outlawed sex between whites and all other ‘races’), and the 1975 Abortion and Sterilization Act which attempted to stop doctors performing abortions (thus discouraging young, unmarried white women from having premarital sex, effectively controlling white female reproductive sexuality) to buttress the National Party’s racist heteropatriarchal sex-gender system and Apartheid culture, especially against the perceived threat of Western immorality in the latter part of the last century (as demonstrated by the legalisation of homosexuality and abortion in Britain, Canada and the USA, and the advent of rock music, progressive fashion in the form of the mini-skirt and oral contraceptives in South Africa) (Klausen, 2010: 39-41, 43; cf. Sarkin, 1998: 142, 149). Only same-race heterosexuality was approved by the patriarchal government, promoted and policed by its Christian Nationalism and Calvinist morality; any other forms or expressions of sexuality were considered depraved. To contrast with the perceived promiscuity of the ‘barbarous’ black woman, white women in Apartheid South Africa were extolled as sexually virtuous and thus ‘civilised’, standing not only as the continuators of their race, but also as the reproducers of the boundaries between South Africa’s races (Klausen, 2010: 41-43).

Joanna, in Awerbuck’s story, is a virgin, but not because she is innocent or virtuous. Instead, she is simply not attracted to the men available to her as they are

either too young and inexperienced, or too old (like “her father’s hairy, beery friends”, pg. 13). Joanna has been unable to find the right opportunity or partner to surrender her maidenhood, indicative not only of her own inability to do so, but also a comment on the men within society around her who have failed to ‘win her over’ and assist her with this rite of passage. Awerbuck’s narrative suggests a mutual incompatibility between Joanna and her appropriate potential mates. Also, it is evident that sex occupies a prominent position in her day-to-day thinking (as discussed in 5.3.1 above). The partner she is finally attracted to represents the antithesis of Apartheid representations of masculinity. Hili is unconventional, ugly and abhorrent, animal-like, highly sexual, unrestrained, anti-Christian, immoral, not of her race/kind. These are the very characteristics the Apartheid regime attempted to outlaw. Hili is the ideal ithyphallic resource to meet Joanna’s suppressed sexual desires (as expressed by Wilson, Hammond-Tooke and Niehaus in 3.6.2 above), and, as a post-Apartheid woman, she is ready to satisfy them. It is also significant that Joanna is approaching middle age, with its associations of loss of fertility. When Joanna finally identifies a mate, their coupling fails. On her way to the party at the Castle, Joanna stops briefly in a field, only to discover it is an overgrown abandoned building site with the brick foundations of the house’s ruins now exposed (pg. 17). It is to this spot Joanna returns with Hili for their sexual encounter, lying down across the old brick foundations for their intimate act. However, it is this very circumstance that prohibits their intercourse and sends Hili running off, crying “The bricks!” (pg. 25). Awerbuck cleverly references the popular belief that by sleeping on a bed raised up on bricks one may prevent an attack from a *Tokoloshe* (cf. 3.9.3). This is essentially what Joanna does when she lies across the brick foundations, albeit unwittingly, thus thwarting her best intentions. Joanna’s perpetual maidenhood is inevitable. She is unable to relinquish her maidenhead even to the most powerful of South Africa’s sexual predators. Her status, as an unfulfilled sexual female, is irrevocable.

5.3.3 The character, Hili

During Joanna’s interaction with ‘the leatherman’ there is no explicit indication she is aware he is, in fact, a *Tokoloshe*. To the reader familiar with the idea of the *Tokoloshe*, the narrative hints are direct and clear, and he is portrayed in a conventional manner. He is diminutive (‘a homunculus in tights’), hairy, and animal-(or dog-) like (‘goatish legs’, ‘He smiled and his teeth were yellow, with an old dog’s

striations', 'smelled like a wet dog', 'a happy satyr'). He is particularly fond of sour milk (or, in this case, sour yoghurt), is endowed with a large penis, and is sexual ('He looked like he fucked anything that moved') (pg. 19-24; cf. 3.3.1, 3.3.3 and 3.6.2). Also, he is named Hili, a synonym for *Tokoloshe*. Joanna fails to register the reference when he introduces himself to her. Instead, she asks if the name is Israeli. Hili responds, a little amusingly, that the name is from further south, i.e. from southern Africa. It appears Awerbuck's protagonist is consciously unaware of Hili's true identity. At the very broadest level, I think Awerbuck is identifying or commenting on an inherent inability in South Africans to acknowledge or recognise some of the key/iconic features of the complex cultural milieu in which they find themselves. All the clues or hints of Hili's identity are presented to Joanna, down to his oversized penis, and despite this vivid evidence, she cannot (or will not) identify who he really is. This demonstrates a failure to connect with or an inability to acknowledge what appears to be directly in front of her. I would dare suggest that Awerbuck is toying with the notion of imperceptibility in post-Apartheid South Africa, that is, the incapacity of South Africans to appreciate or recognise fully both the subtleties and even the palpabilities of South Africa's complex and potentially incomprehensible cultural stew. Moreover, the failed coupling at the climax of this story suggests not only is there a cultural imperceptibility, but also an inevitable incompatibility, and this is a rather provocative comment on post-Apartheid South African society. Despite Joanna's best efforts to offer up herself to Hili, and despite Hili's remarkable capacity, ability, aptitude and skill for the task at hand – it simply cannot be.

It is also worth considering Joanna's attraction to Hili, despite his sinister appearance, magical/supernatural nature and the dark tone against which his sexuality is depicted (cf. pg. 21, 23-24). The idea of Hili's semen as a source of death, and not life, is introduced on pg. 23:

"The penis waved agreeably at her and produced one lubricating droplet, clear as venom."

Hili is depicted as being dirty, misshapen, magical, ungodly and producing poisonous seed (cf. 3.6.2). However, Joanna finds herself inexplicably drawn to him. This mirrors Niehaus' ideas about the *Tokoloshe* representing 'the potential animal-like craving for unconstrained sexual expression' (Niehaus, 1995: 515).

5.3.4 The Cape Town Castle

It is significant that Joanna encounters the *Tokoloshe* at the Cape Town Castle. The Castle is one of the oldest buildings in South Africa, built by the Dutch settlers at the Cape between 1666 and 1679 as a symbol of colonial authority with the purpose of resisting an attack by sea. The pentagonal castle structure included five bastions (in which were the quarters of some of the officers and men, and on which were mounted several cannons) and within the grounds were the Governor's residence and a large Council Hall (completed in 1695). The building is a South African National Monument ('Castle of Good Hope, Castle Street, Cape Town', 2011). This fortress was built to demarcate the colonial presence of the European settlers and to house its military protectors. It has long stood as a symbol of colonial might, and its prisons served as holding pens for colonial political prisoners.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the Castle also stands as a symbol of colonial or military impotence. It was never known to have 'fired a shot in anger' and provided no defence to the city at all when the British took the colony from the Dutch in 1795 - the British forces landed at Simonstown and battled the Dutch at Muizenburg, some 40 kilometres or so south of the Castle. Effectively, the Castle never served the purpose for which it was originally intended. It is within these walls (archives of the past and monuments to history) that Joanna, in the present, encounters Hili. Essentially, an encounter occurs between an incomplete woman and something that represents failed, problematic or repressed sexuality and identity. This happens within a space that itself represents failed/archaic/colonial/masculine power. In this light, the failure of Joanna's encounter with Hili does not seem so unlikely or implausible. Applied more generously, the allegory can be seen thus: the colonial and Apartheid roots of the South African experience anchor the post-Apartheid experience in which identity (in this case, female identity) plays out and interacts with significant and fundamental expressions of culture and belief. As I have suggested before, I would argue that Awerbuck is identifying the inescapable failure of intercourse (by which I mean the relationships that occur every day in society) within post-Apartheid South Africa. Awerbuck is suggesting that society in post-Apartheid South Africa is destined to fail; regardless of how desirous of that intercourse South Africans may be, and regardless

⁴⁰ In 1879, after the British defeats by the Zulus at the Battles of Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift, and following the British victory at Ulundi, the Castle housed as its prisoner the captured King of the Zulus, Cetshwayo kaMpande ('Cetshwayo - Zulu king', n.d.). During the Second Boer War (1899-1902), the Castle was also used to house Boer prisoners.

of how powerful or attractive the ideas within that society may be. Ultimately, Joanna remains unfulfilled, unable to take on her new identity as a changed woman.

The event at the Castle also has a certain nightmarish or freak-show quality to it from which Joanna attempts to escape. The elements that contribute to establishing this atmosphere are found in the vivid descriptions of the event, such as the women welcoming the guests with their faces painted and breasts exposed, the art installations and decorations set up around the parade ground, the noise (human ‘shrieks’ and booming music). Other elements include the sense of hysteria (she attempts to escape out of the ‘babbling maze’ surrounded by people who are like ‘invading ants’), the damp rooms, the shaky videos, the sweaty circus performers, and the weirdness of Hili’s appearance, dressed as he is in ‘lederhosen over gartered stockings’ (pg. 17-19). This nightmarish/freak-show atmosphere provides the tone for the environment in which Joanna’s first encounter with Hili takes place. In line with the argument I have set out above, that dark tone can also be seen to apply allegorically; in other words, interactions within post-Apartheid South African society occur within an environment that is nightmare-like: the attempted communion of identity and culture happens in an hysterical context of irrationality, distraction, incongruence and helplessness.

5.3.5 Identity and transformation

In ‘Leatherman’, identity and transformation, particularly female identity and the desire to transform, is a primary theme. Awerbuck creates a world in which no female image is represented in a positive way, emphasising Joanna’s obsession with body size and body image. The girls she secretly observes at a local bar are ‘thinnish, hungover, imperfect’, smelling of ‘dirty panties and oily scalps’ (pg. 14). Of Siobhan, Joanna’s colleague, it is said that her stomach is ‘digesting itself’, and Siobhan’s fingers are described as ‘starving’ (pg. 13-14). The clothes Joanna takes to try on for the party are ‘doll-sized, made for aliens’ (pg. 14). She considers the salesgirls who work in the shop as ‘stick-insects’, and the women working at the Castle are skeletal (pg. 17). Joanna contrasts their appearance with her own, predicting for herself a future widow’s/window’s hump (pg. 14) (the result of years slumped over her computer) and in the changing room noting her ‘scrumpy, lumpen arse’ (pg. 15). The pedal pushers she selects to try on rip as she climbs into them (pg. 15), and she is forced to struggle into them completely and to purchase them. The women for whom she does research are ‘invariably older, pencil-skirted, divorced’, who smoke but

never eat, and who spend their time obsessing over dirty relations with younger men (pg. 13). Hili wears stockings/tights – while this is not the typical apparel one associates with the *Tokoloshe*, I think here Awerbuck is again playing with ideas about identity and gender:

“Why did men always do that for carnival — dress up in women’s underwear? Was it meant to be funny? Secretly they hate us. She didn’t enjoy wearing a bra, either, but somebody had to be in control; somebody had to say no. Otherwise, chaos.” (pg. 19)

Ultimately, though, it is the laws that govern the natural and supernatural worlds that prohibit their sexual relations. Is this a suggestion that despite one’s best efforts, there are still elements beyond human control? The pair of ‘pedal pusher’ calf-length trousers Joanna purchases are skin-tight and have an animal-print design on them. In order for Hili to have sex with Joanna, Hili has to cut the trousers off her. Joanna quite literally sheds her animal-skin to engage with Hili, albeit unsuccessfully. This can be seen as a shedding of one identity in order to embrace another. However, as the encounter fails, so Joanna is left without the former or the latter; in a way she is ‘between identities’ or liminal. Awerbuck anticipates Joanna’s failed transformation:

“But, surely, in a million other unseen changing rooms, her sisters were undergoing the same transformation. From the pods they would emerge the same light and laughing butterflies. She would go, she would, to fly in their rabble, to be flung against the smouldering streetlights.” (pg. 15)

Awerbuck’s story captures effectively the double/paradoxical temporality in which post-Apartheid South Africa exists, rooted constantly in a problematic past and desperate to move forward into the future. Joanna is unable to transcend her virginal past, even when the exciting prospect of a transformed future is presented to her. She is trapped: desperate to transform, yet despite her best efforts unable to. In applying the allegory to South Africa, it is possible to consider Joanna as representing South Africa, desperate to shake off the trappings of the past, to transform and embrace the future, and yet shackled to the traumas, labours and constructs of their own histories. Joanna’s name is (deliberately, to my mind) reminiscent of the allegorical titular character in Guyanan Eddy Grant’s 1988 pop hit and anti-Apartheid anthem, ‘Give me hope, Jo’anna’. The song, which was a top 10 hit in the UK, was banned in South Africa for its anti-Apartheid sentiments which included its criticism of Apartheid-led political violence during the 1976 Soweto uprising and the role played by South African soldiers in the civil war in Angola (Perry, 2008; van Rooyen, n.d.; see

Appendix B). In Grant's song, Jo'anna is the personification of Johannesburg, the metaphoric seat of Apartheid's power from whence the forces of oppression are exerted carelessly over the mass population, armed might is dangerously enforced within and without her borders, and powerful propaganda is disseminated to justify to the international community her actions. Grant advocates intervention to encourage the regime to see 'how everybody could live as one', citing the then Archbishop Tutu's calls for the overthrow of the Apartheid regime and bemoaning the government's apparent blindness for not seeing 'that the tide is turning' and that the end of Apartheid is inevitable (cf. 'Gimme Hope, Jo'anna', n.d.). The most effective and memorable element of the song is its catchy refrain, 'Give me Hope, Jo'anna, before the morning come'. Despite its serious content, the rhythm, tempo and danceable bounce of the song, together with its chordal structure and kwela-infused sounds combine to generate a positive sentiment that reinforces the hopeful optimism of its author; the song is a powerful, positive and hopeful cry for change in Apartheid South Africa. In Awerbuck's fictional South Africa, there is no hope, remedy or conclusion for Joanna.

5.4 *Tokoloshe Song*

Salomon's novel is set in an alternate Cape Town where *Tokoloshes* are portrayed as sensitive and misunderstood living creatures, and not as the evil and troublesome monsters of traditional belief and popular mythology. In this instance, it is Salomon's unconventional representation of the *Tokoloshe* that acts as the medium through which fresh and re-iterated considerations of the disenfranchised in South Africa can occur. By re-inventing (and flipping) the traditional view of the *Tokoloshe*, he facilitates a novel dialogue about perception and identity in post-Apartheid South Africa.

The protagonist, Richard Nevis, is a former lawyer now dedicating his time to restoring boats and volunteering at a shelter for abused *Tokoloshes*, an operation established in response to the aggressive prejudices held against *Tokoloshes* found in this parallel South Africa. At the shelter, he befriends a *Tokoloshe* named Lun, but they are forced into a life-and-death confrontation with two sets of villains: a human named Kras with a pet giant flesh-eating arthropod named Arthur; and a devil-like, taloned monster named Mamron who is served by a pair of beautiful, tongue-less, murderous twins. Richard and Lun subsequently team up with a powerful pair of midwives, Emily and Sindiwe, who are members of a secret order and who are

significantly skilled in martial arts, and together they race across the Karoo to Helen Martins' Owl House in Nieu Bethesda in a quest to open a mysterious ancient metal box. They are all pursued unknowingly by a third villain, an assassin known as Doorway. The action concludes in the waters off Mossel Bay and features a thrilling tumble with a hungry great white shark (cf. Sadler, 2014; 'Tokoloshe Song', 2014; Hunter, 2014; Kahimbaara, 2014).

Tokoloshe Song not only features a *Tokoloshe* as a principal character in its telling, but also serves up allegorically a host of topical commentaries on life, crime, violence and prejudice in post-Apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, it wrestles with the challenges faced by those who actively engage and contend with these issues. As such, the novel's parallel South Africa is a mirror to the harsh realities that beset South Africans in their day-to-day encounters. The analysis in this chapter considers the significance of three characters in the novel (Lun, Mamron and Kras), the locations in the novel (particularly Cape Town, Uniondale, Nieu Bethesda and Pinnacle Point), the blending of traditional belief with speculative fiction, and the principal themes in the novel (namely abuse/torture and retribution, and prejudice and xenophobia).

5.4.1 Characters in the novel

Salomon's portrayal of the *Tokoloshe*, Lun, in his novel is mostly an antithetical one, contrasting significantly with the conventional or traditional representation of *Tokoloshes* in popular culture and in traditional belief. This portrayal is in line with the novel's premise that *Tokoloshes* are, in fact, misunderstood creatures and quite unlike that of their depiction in traditional belief. From Richard's first meeting with Lun (and within the first few paragraphs of that meeting) Salomon presents the reader with a character that is more human than monster:

"He looked more like a scared, muscular and furry child than the evil menace people feared him to be." (pg. 15)

As the narrative plays out, Lun is shown to be understanding and intelligent (pg. 76-77). Lun is also brave and self-less: his name means 'strong' (pg. 279-280); Lun demonstrates his courage when he and Richard meet Mamron, and then tries to help Richard escape from Mamron (pg. 158-164); Lun tries to protect Richard when he is attacked by Shenk (pg. 288), and later he saves the ancient *Tokoloshe* when Kras attempts to shoot her (pg. 319; cf. pg. 232, where Jacqui tells of an encounter from

her childhood when a *Tokoloshe* saved her from a deadly snake attack). Lun is also playful and good with children (pg. 256-258) [This is one feature that is characteristic of traditional representations of the *Tokoloshe*, cf. 3.3.5]. Lun is sensitive and compassionate (Lun collects flowers and spreads them over Sindiwe's body when they are about to bury her, pg. 298). He is also vulnerable (cf. pg. 234-235 & 251), respectful (demonstrated when Lun meets the ancient *Tokoloshe*, pg. 316), and affectionate (pg. 253, 304, 332). Salomon reinforces the idea that *Tokoloshes* are not monsters in the way Lun is placated in the novel: not with violence or the intervention of dark magic spells, *muti*, talismans and healers (according to the practices of traditional belief, cf. 3.9 & note in 3.5.2), but rather, and quite unexpectedly, with simple, gentle, childlike (or even childish) singing (cf. pg. 15). This is reinforced further in the parallel universe of Salomon's South Africa where *Tokoloshes* are studied by academics and written about in 'The Sub-Saharan Journal of *Tokoloshe* Studies' (pg. 13), and discussed by academics in public lectures at universities. Salomon uses this particular device to 'debunk' traditional perceptions and understandings of *Tokoloshes* within the world of his novel; the fictional academic, Dr Willard Greene, presents a lecture at the University of Cape Town, and his paper is entitled '*The Tokoloshe as the Other: Engaging and Disengaging Postmodern Values*'. In the lecture, Greene presents *Tokoloshes* as misunderstood 'sentient members of the natural world, surviving in small groups that inhabit rock shelters and caves, subsisting mostly on roots and insects' and not as the one-buttocked, toe-biting mischievous domestic spirits or golems of popular belief (pg. 39-42). Salomon deliberately debunks myth and misperception, albeit in a fictional setting. He is at pains to point out that these beings have been misjudged and mis-valued, and that misperception and misunderstanding is rooted predominantly in those who are prejudiced or motivated negatively by fear, by hatred, by greed. Salomon uses the *Tokoloshe*, and Lun in particular, as an embodiment of the 'objectification' and 'vilification' of the 'other' in South African society, within South Africa's remote and recent past, as well as in South Africa's present. Those who defend the 'other' in the novel – those running the shelter, the midwives, the museum curator and her family - are portrayed as a minority. Their actions are not popular and their methods are not always moral (even though their motivations are sound and defensible).

The character Mamron is one of the two principal villains in the piece. In the novel, Mamron is described as a thin/skeletal, hairless demon-like creature with

leathery/reptilian skin, scarred lips, a mangled nose and taloned fingers, adorned in robes and consuming red-hot coal (cf. pg. 44-46, 53, 55, 121). Mamron appears to have a great deal of wealth, living in a palatial ‘mock-Tuscan villa fronted by a marble fountain and rows of angular topiary’ protected by tall wrought-iron gates and armed guards; within the building there is a large stone-columned hall with ‘elaborate frescoes on the ceiling’; Mamron also pays a substantial amount of money to secure Richard’s help (pg. 43, 59, 156). Mamron is obsessed with opening a box containing a powerful, magic pebble, and the box can only be opened by a *Tokoloshe* (pg. 54-56; cf. 43-47). When Richard agrees to help Mamron locate a *Tokoloshe*, he feels like he ‘had just made a deal with the devil’ (pg. 60). When the assassin, Doorway, incapacitates Mamron he is unable to kill the monster, as he does not have the correct equipment to do so, as referred to in the ‘grimoire’ (an ancient book of spells, conjurations, secrets and wisdom). Doorway later succeeds in killing Mamron according to the directions in the grimoire, by removing each of his talons at the root (using a pair of heavy-duty pliers, pg. 310). Mamron is, in effect, Salomon’s own take on the Biblical figure ‘Mammon’, identified in Luke 16:9-13 (and again in Matthew 6: 19-21, 24) as a personification of material wealth and greed. Mammon appears as a character in Book II, Canto VII, of Spenser’s 1590 epic poem *The Faerie Queene* (where the knight, Guyon, meets Mammon), and in Milton’s 1667 epic poem, *Paradise Lost* (here Mammon is one of the fallen angels in Book I & II who guides the devils to construct ‘Pandemonium’ (the ‘place of all devils’) and who counsels the other devils to live according to their own desires and rules) (Zeng, 2008). In Salomon’s work, Mamron’s appearance draws on features from Spenser’s portrayal, particularly Mammon’s ‘covetous desire’ for wealth, his ‘griesly hue, and foul ill-favour’d sight’ and his ‘nails like claws’ (cf. Spenser, 1590). When Mamron belches (after consuming his lump of red-hot coal, pg. 55), he fills the room with ‘the smell of brimstone’. Brimstone is an archaic name for sulfur and is associated with numerous Biblical references, including in the Book of Revelation (specifically chapters 19-21) in which ‘the beast’, ‘the false prophet’, ‘the devil’ and the ungodly are cast by God into a lake of ‘fire and brimstone’ in an act of divine wrath (cf. Revelations 19:20, 20:10 & 21:8). Mamron smells of the world from which he comes. Typically, the *Tokoloshe* is viewed as the personification of evil in traditional belief in South Africa, and in reality the word is frequently used as a synonym for ‘devil’ or Satan (cf. 3.5.2; Khumalo, 1999). Salomon contrasts Lun (in the novel portrayed as a helpless victim)

with the malevolent characters in the novel: Kras, Mamron, the twins. Not only does Salomon demonstrate that the *Tokoloshe* is not the evil being he is assumed to be, but Salomon provides a vivid alternative in Mamron, drawing on Biblical and (Western) epic, poetic imagery to do so. Prime evil in Salomon's parallel South Africa arrives then not from the spiritual realms of southern Africa, but from the very depths of Judeo-Christian hell. In the alternate reality that Salomon has created, that which is perceived by the inhabitants of that world as 'evil' is, in fact, simply a misunderstood and much maligned sentient being; real evil is rooted to traditions that originate beyond Africa, and are aligned to wealth, power and greed.

Kras is the second villain in the novel. In the first portion of the novel, Kras is seeking to obtain an old book containing drawings and indecipherable letters that provide the instructions for opening the box that Mamron has in his possession (pg. 33, 56, 141-142). However, Kras is later blackmailed by Mamron into collaborating with him, as they jointly seek out Richard and Lun with the intention of reclaiming the box and liberating the magic pebble from its impenetrable stronghold (pg. 238-239). Kras is a sociopath, the product of a traumatic childhood. As a nine-year-old, while accompanying his parents on a field trip in Mozambique, he witnesses their deaths when they are killed by a landmine; he is subsequently rescued by a Portuguese family but treated as their slave, tortured by them and finally abandoned by them (pg. 66-69). Kras is a criminal, and generates the bulk of his income from abalone (sea snails) poaching and the illegal trade of gemstones and drugs (cf. pg. 238, 167, 92). The money generated by his smuggling operations is then laundered through a restaurant he owns (pg. 167). By rooting his villain's criminal activities in the dark realities of contemporary South Africa, Salomon achieves a certain air of authenticity and realism in his speculative novel.⁴¹ Kras is violent, vindictive, wasteful and exploitative (cf. pg. 69, 95, 170). While Kras treats others significantly poorly, Salomon's inclusion of Kras's backstory provides a context that enables the reader to apply a modicum of sympathy towards the character. Kras's childhood experiences are so extreme and unfortunate that it provides a clarity or degree of understanding to his subsequent adult behaviour. Perhaps, in this case, Salomon is suggesting villains are made, and not born. More significantly, Salomon

⁴¹ Between 2004 and 2014, an estimated 20, 500 tons of abalone was poached and illegally traded, with operations managed predominantly by international criminal groups based in East Asia, and executed largely by disenfranchised unemployed or working class South Africans (de Greef & Raemaekers, 2014: 1, 10-11, 18).

acknowledges the crime-infested context of his setting, and, by including it in his parallel universe, elevates the reality to a heightened state, forcing the reader to confront the inescapability of social disorder and the problematic disobedience to law in post-Apartheid South Africa. This theme is explored further in this chapter. Salomon's choice of name for his second primary 'baddie' is Dickensian in its appropriateness. Kras's name is a homophone of the English word 'crass' meaning 'stupid, insensitive, blundering, dense, thick, vacuous, mindless, witless, doltish, oafish, boorish, asinine, bovine, coarse, gross' ('Crass', 2016). 'Kras' can also be taken as an Afrikaans word meaning: (as an adjective) strong or tough, and extreme or violent; (as an adverb) strongly, drastically or crudely; and (as a verb) to grate, or (as bird sounds) to screech, croak or caw (Jordaan & Labuschagne, 2011: 202). Kras is a blunt object. His failure to find the information he needs to open the box drives him to rip a string of books apart (pg. 123) and subsequently to poison the man who loaned him the books (pg. 170). He shows no care for any of those around him, and engages in violent acts of retribution without any consideration of the consequences. The name for Salomon's second villain is well-chosen.

5.4.2 The South African setting

In *Tokoloshe Song*, Salomon regularly draws on the rural and urban environment of South Africa's Western and Eastern Cape (cf. Hunter, 2014; Kahimbaara, 2014). The opening portions of the novel are set in a cold, grey, weather-beaten, mist-covered Cape Town, in the ever-present shadow of Table Mountain, Devil's Peak and Lion's Head, and with the action zig-zagging from squat, grey windowless industrial buildings, across cobblestone streets, down cracked steps to derelict buildings (cf. pg. 7, 9, 17, 22, 90). Salomon predominantly portrays the Mother City as bleak and unattractive (pg. 23, 81). Mamron's luxurious, palatial home is also portrayed in dark, cold tones (cf. pg. 43, 156-157). Salomon's depiction of the Cape is not that of tourist brochures. There are no sunny beaches, no fun trips under sunny skies to fertile vineyards for wine-tasting, no tributes to the Mother City's wealth of art and culture. Instead, Salomon locates the urban portions of his story in claustrophobic streets, decaying industrial buildings, or amidst cold and lifeless opulence. Similarly, the city is beaten by storms and the skies are grey. Here, Salomon toys more broadly with perception and stereotypes. He provides a setting for his novel that is predominantly cold, grimy, inhospitable, and does not mirror the notion that Cape Town is a popular tourist spot of great natural and urban beauty.

Instead, it is home to child killers, child abusers, corrupt lawyers, bank robbers, smugglers, criminal masterminds and the Devil himself; and those who strive to do good are located in windowless warehouses or rooms, or hidden safely behind the walls of plain and inaccessible institutions like the Lyceum. The tones in which Salomon paints his urban landscape reflect the nature of the citizens with whom he peoples that landscape. South Africa's Mother City is simply not quite what one may expect it to be; Salomon exposes his audience rather to the city's grit and artifice. Salomon's Cape Town is far from idyllic.

A large portion of the novel takes place across the Karoo. In the novel, the rural Karoo setting is frequently portrayed as harsh and intimidating – a sunburnt, dry, dusty brown landscape, with cloudless skies and meagre shade, and with towns towered over by immense mountains (pg. 139, 207, cf. pg. 217-218, 234-235, 274). The Karoo landscape is one that the novel's characters have to endure and struggle through. It dictates their pace, consumes their energies and shapes their outcomes, and only when the landscape is thus negotiated does it offer up any sense of reward. For Lun, it is a sense of familiarity and safety. For Richard and Emily, it is first finding Lun and then later finding the honey for the ancient *Tokoloshe*. For Doorway, it is his untimely reunion with Sindiwe. Ultimately, the encounter at the Uniondale shelter is violent and devastating (pg. 287-289). Shenk is disarmed and sent tumbling down the hillside, ending up bloodied and with a broken nose. Richard is severely beaten. The evil twins are killed by Doorway (one stabbed, the other strangled). Sindiwe is shot and killed by Shenk. The final sequence located in the waters off Mossel Bay is equally disturbing, with a monstrous great white shark putting a (satisfying) end to Kras's malicious endeavors (pg. 322-329). The bleak and unforgiving landscape provides a suitable backdrop against which the desperate and violent action of the novel is played out. The characters of Salomon's novel inhabit a world that is framed by the harshness of the elements in locations that are undesirable, and that are perverse constructs of inaccessibility, immorality and despair. Salomon's alternate South African setting is neither welcoming nor attractive.

A brief portion of the narrative occurs in and around the Karoo village of Nieu Bethesda. In Nieu Bethesda, Richard and Emily solicit help from Jacqui, a curator at the Owl House in the village (pg. 226-233). Lun has returned to a cave where he was born, located outside the town, and it is there, with help from Jacqui and Emily, that Richard is reunited with Lun. Hunter (2014) states:

Nieu Bethesda, with its isolation and the air of weirdness imparted by Helen Martins's Owl House, is an appropriate site for Lun's birth and for him to seek shelter.

Nieu Bethesda is situated on a dirt road off the N9 (a national route) at the foot of the *Sneeuberge* ('Snow Mountains') in the Eastern Cape, located between 50km and 90km from the nearby towns of Graaff-Reinet, Richmond and Middelburg; it was established as a church town in 1875 by the Dutch Reformed Church, and currently has a population of approximately 1000 residents ('Nieu Bethesda', n.d.). The village is a popular tourists' spot due almost entirely to the location of Helen Martins' Owl House (today run as a museum by the Owl House Foundation and the local council). The Owl House is a work of 'outsider art' and was created by Nieu Bethesda resident Martins (1897-1976) between 1945 and 1976. Martins, following a failed marriage and the death of her parents, began, at the age of about 42, to transform her home (within and without) into a unique work of art, converting cement, glass, mirrors and wires into a magical world of light and colour. Working with a local labourer, Koos Malgas, her garden became The Camel Yard surrounded by cement owls with glass bottle eyes, and 'filled with its many sculptures of bottle-skirted hostesses, mermaids, camels and pilgrims, all journeying to a mystical east'. The interior walls of her home were painted in bright colours 'which were then overlaid with a layer of crushed glass', and the house 'came alive at night, when candle and lamp light reflected off the many mirrors that she had cut specifically for her home' ('The Owl House', n.d.; 'Helen Martins', n.d.). In 'The Owl House' (n.d.) it states:

Miss Helen's imagination transformed humble materials ... into a secret, magical world that she shared with few, drawing upon Bible stories, the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, the Orient, and everyday objects – all of which blended to create a personal cosmology.

By age 78, Martins had become crippled by arthritis and was suffering from an increased loss of vision, and so, rather than be forced to move from her beloved Owl House, she committed suicide by drinking a mixture containing caustic soda ('Helen Martins', n.d.).⁴² As a plot device, this particular setting denotes sanctuary – it is Lun's birthplace and he feels compelled to travel there to be safe, and it is also the home to a family who for generations have cared for *Tokoloshes* (Jacqui's mother

⁴² A portion of Martins' life story was immortalized in South African playwright (and erstwhile Nieu Bethesda resident) Athol Fugard's play, *The Road to Mecca* (1984, later filmed in 1991).

helped deliver Lun when he was born, cf. pg. 204). Salomon (quoted in De Vos, 2016) states:

I had been to Nieu Bethseda on two previous occasions and the town, and especially the Owl House, had made a deep impression on me. I found the Owl House and the lonely legacy that artist Helen Martins left behind both deeply inspiring and profoundly sad. The whole town, with its lack of tarred roads and no cellular reception (at least not when I visited), and the incredible view you get of the Milky Way at night, has a sense of magical seclusion, of a place that exists in its own time, so it seemed like a natural setting for some of the novel.

Salomon's choice of Nieu Bethesda, and of the Owl House, in particular for sanctuary is significant. Helen Martins' world was quite unlike that of her immediate Apartheid surroundings. She boldly defied Afrikaans and Apartheid conservative prejudices with little regard for consequences or for what others might think: the way she transformed her home and garden into a gallery of seemingly bizarre and inexplicable artwork; her close, intimate association as a co-worker with a coloured man; her explicit exploration and celebration of other/non-conformist ideas (art, religion, independence). She wasn't an activist, but she was an innovative, free-thinking visionary. In the novel, it is those who maintain Martins' vision in the present who are also caregivers to the *Tokoloshe*, offering help and a place of refuge. The physical appearance of the place, with its distinct and inimitable uniqueness, is the flag for those within: a small group of free-thinking individuals who challenge the norms and conventions of society, and dedicate their lives to protecting a group who is misunderstood, hated, feared and abused. In Salomon's world the combatants against prejudice are mostly isolated female, fringe-based covert operatives; Salomon points out at several points in the novel that their work is uncommon, and it struggles against the traditions of mainstream thinking. As a comment on post-Apartheid South Africa, Salomon is suggesting that those who combat prejudice within contemporary South African society do so as a minority and against the stream of popular behavior. The first paperback edition of Salomon's novel features on its front cover an illustration by Alex Latimer of several rows of bottle-eyed owls (acknowledging the Owl House connection in the novel) amongst which sits a *Tokoloshe* (most presumably Lun) clutching his ankles. It appears as if Lun is hiding/attempting not to be noticed, but his unique appearance makes him stand out. This illustration emphasises the point that the *Tokoloshe*/the 'other' is alienated within the wider populace and simply cannot fit or blend in.

Richard, Lun, Emily and Sindiwe move on from Nieu Bethesda to the Little Karoo town of Uniondale, located near the Langkloof Valley in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. As Lun is unable to open the metal box, they seek out help from an ancient *Tokoloshe* who resides in a cave near Pinnacle Point in Mossell Bay. However, in order to win favour with the ancient *Tokoloshe*, they need to locate a portion of honey from a particular ‘rock shelter in the hills outside of Uniondale’ and then offer it up to her (pg. 267-269, 276-277). Salomon’s choice of Uniondale is significant on two levels. First, it is the setting of one of South Africa’s most famous urban ghost stories, ‘The Lady in White’ or the ‘Uniondale Ghost’⁴³. Second, it is also the site of the Uniondale shelter, a location first excavated by archaeologist John Hewitt of the Albany Museum in the first half of the 20th century (and at which site were discovered non-lithic artefacts including pottery, worked shell and worked bone, and San rock paintings) (Brooker, 1989: 17, 26-29).

The final events of the novel take place in and around Pinnacle Point near Mossel Bay, particularly in the vast cave (and archeological site) in which the ancient *Tokoloshe* resides (pg. 118-119). Pinnacle Point has been identified as a location in which some of the earliest evidence of human behavior has been found, with remains discovered at the caves dating back some 162,000 years. (‘Pinnacle Point’, 2016). In ‘Pinnacle Point’ (cf. ‘Point of Human Origins’; 2016), it states:

...this is probably where the small, core population that gave rise to all humans alive today first began to exhibit significantly modern behaviour: the systematic harvesting of food from the sea, the use of complex bladelet technology, and the use of ochres for symboling.

In the novel, Salomon allows the paths of *Tokoloshes* and South Africa’s earliest peoples to cross. The ancient *Tokoloshe* knows of these people:

“She could tell that the others ... had lived here a long time ago. Back then, there were a lot fewer of them and a lot more of her own people. She came across the traces of their existence every now and then: stones they had heated

⁴³ The Uniondale ghost refers to Maria Charlotte Roux, who was killed in a road accident whilst travelling with her fiancé near Uniondale in the early hours of Easter morning, 12 April 1968; the first recorded sighting of her ghost was on the Willowmore-Uniondale road at around midnight Easter Friday 1973, with several sightings noted since then. In the many versions of the legend, the ghost appears at the side of the road at night (or in the early hours of the morning), usually dressed in white, and asks for a lift. She climbs into the vehicle or onto the back of the motor bike, and then, several kilometres later, she simply disappears (Goldstuck, 2006: 78-84, 89-93). In the novel, Richard tells his own version of the story to Sindiwe (pg. 271-274), and then Doorway, travelling on his bike at some distance behind them on the self-same road, briefly spots ‘a young woman standing by the side of the road’ who then disappears in the dust behind him (pg. 274-275).

up and flaked to make tools, worn-down stubs of red ochre, countless pieces of shell and fragments of bones from seals and even whales. She knew how to use the tools they had left behind to cut and chop with.” (pg. 118).

The honey that is used by Richard to gain the trust of the ancient *Tokoloshe* (pg. 316) is collected from a specific rock shelter near Uniondale (pg. 282-283). Inside the rock shelter, Richard discovers rock paintings (pg. 282). The shelter in the novel is a reference to an actual archeological site at Uniondale that was inhabited during the Holocene (the last 11,700 years of the Earth’s history); the occupation by the San at this site began shortly before 10,000 years ago and ended after about 2,000 years ago. This site has provided invaluable data regarding the understanding of the Later Stone Age in the Eastern Cape (Brooker, 1989: 17-18). Artefacts found at this site included scrapers, planes and chisels (adzes and Kasouga flakes), piercing tools (borers and awls), projectile points (segments, backed points and segmented bladelets), and various non-lithic artefacts, including pottery, worked shell and worked bone, tortoise remains and shells, as well as the rock paintings (Brooker, 1989: 22-29). The references in the novel to these two archaeological sites reflect Salomon’s own work as an archaeologist in South Africa, Mozambique and Zambia (cf. Salomon, n.d.). Another reference in the novel that links the *Tokoloshes* to the ancient people of southern Africa is in the steel box containing the magic pebble. Richard suggests it was made by Iron Age people (pg. 262; cf. pg. 174). The connection of *Tokoloshes* with the San people has already been documented by anthropologists (cf. 3.4 and note in 3.2.2). Salomon’s suggestion that this connectivity exists within his parallel South Africa is deliberate and appropriate. The San people are the earliest hunter-gather inhabitants of South Africa, the forefathers of whom resided in southern Africa for at least 150,000 years (‘A history of San Peoples of South Africa’, 2016). They have survived a much-abused existence across southern Africa for at least the last two millennia. First, when the Khoikhoi herders migrated southward into the western half of South Africa 2500-2000 years ago. Then when the Nguni and Sotho people settled in the north and east of South Africa 1800 years ago, and again when the European colonists arrived in the 17th century bringing with them ‘colonisation, armed conflict, land seizures, new diseases’, including smallpox (‘People of South Africa – The San’, 2016; cf. ‘A history of San Peoples of South Africa’, 2016) and genocide (cf. Adhikari, 2015; Thompsell, 2015: 43). Throughout the twentieth century, large areas of San hunting lands were appropriated from the San to be used as animal and nature

reserves, and the San were variously and significantly displaced ('People of South Africa – The San', 2016; 'A history of San Peoples of South Africa', 2016; cf. Isaacson, 2002.). In 'A history of San Peoples of South Africa' (2016), it states:

Today there are about 100,000 San people, speaking 35 Khoë-San languages across southern Africa including the non-San Hadzabe hunter-gatherers in Tanzania. Very few San people are able to live by hunting and gathering these days. Most work as farm labourers, live unemployed in marginal settlements, work in their own income generation projects, several groups run nature conservancies, some still hunt and gatherers [sic], others have no income source other than small pensions from the state.

In the past two decades, attempts have been made to reclaim San territory. In 'A history of San Peoples of South Africa' (2016), it states:

A land claim was launched with the help of the South African San Institute (SASI) that was successful in 1999. 40,000 hectares of land outside the National Park has been given to the San. A further 25,000 hectares inside the Park was returned to the ≠Khomani San in 2002. The amalgam of different people of San ancestry adopted the name ≠Khomani to represent the identity of their newly re-united community.

In an attempt to acknowledge politically South Africa's San heritage, an image from the Linton Panel (an important example of South African San rock art) and South Africa's motto (a /Xam phrase: !ke e: /xarra //ke, literally meaning 'diverse people unite') are used in South Africa's new Coat of Arms ('People of South Africa – The San', 2016). It is necessary to acknowledge this San/*Tokoloshe* connection. It is an historic one. According to anthropologists, the *Tokoloshe* is a Xhosa derivative/borrowing of the San god *Kaggen*, which would suggest that the association is one that goes back several thousand years. Salomon reflects this in the internal monologue of the ancient *Tokoloshe*. The historic treatment of the San in reality mirrors in part the fictional treatment of Lun (and *Tokoloshes* in general) in the novel. Salomon crystallises and exploits the connection of ancient traditional belief with the ancient peoples of southern Africa to drive his allegory home. South Africans typically fail to preserve or respect effectively their heritage (be it natural or cultural), and prejudice (and its application in society) continues in the post-Apartheid milieu. In the novel, Salomon demonstrates the inability of mainstream society to respect or co-exist with the *Tokoloshes*. Instead, they are exploited, abused and their value is ignored, reflecting not only the historic treatment of the San, but also of others throughout South Africa's turbulent history.

5.4.3 Traditional belief and speculative fiction

Salomon's novel deftly weaves elements of traditional belief, fantasy and horror into his homespun opus. Kahimbaara (2014) states:

The Tokoloshe Song is unlike any book that has come out of South Africa and will probably stay that way for years to come. In his first adult novel, Andrew Salomon weaves age old South African folklore to tell the story of these misunderstood creatures in a surprisingly funny and genuine way. The book's triumph is its use of local legend in a fantasy novel, a genre that can easily fall flat.

Salomon (n.d.) himself states:

A short story I had written... featured a tokoloshe – a knee-high, much-maligned creature from southern African folklore... I decided to use a tokoloshe in the novel since his [sic] would allow me to further mine the rich vein of African mythology... And I wanted to write a rollicking story, a thriller that happened to have fantasy – homegrown African fantasy – in it.

Salomon extracts from traditional belief one of South Africa's most significant, popular and enigmatic figures, and spins a South African flavoured action fantasy yarn in which that figure plays a pivotal role. As already mentioned, that depiction deliberately flips the customary view of the *Tokoloshe*, with the distinct purpose of calling into question prejudice (and by extension racism and xenophobia) in post-Apartheid South Africa. In traditional belief, the *Tokoloshe* is regularly associated with its magic pebble of invisibility: a pebble which when held or placed in the mouth renders the holder invisible (cf. 3.3.1). The capacity to become invisible is one of the *Tokoloshe*'s key devices, in that it allows the *Tokoloshe* to commit its various acts of mischief or malice on unsuspecting victims (cf. pg. 205-206, 262). Salomon incorporates this one specific element into his primary plot point. Two villainous individuals are desperately seeking possession of that magic pebble, but the pebble lies within the confines of an inaccessible steel box, and it is only the intervention of a *Tokoloshe* (and in the novel, of the ancient *Tokoloshe* alone) that permits the box to be opened. The villains, Mamron and Kras, motivated by greed, desire the pebble so that they, too, may perform nefarious deeds undetected (cf. pg. 216-217, 45-46).

Another element in the novel lifted from traditional belief is the *Tokoloshe*'s fondness for milk (cf. 3.3.3). In historical ethnographic records, rural villagers tell of gourds of milk in their homesteads being drained mysteriously or inexplicably overnight, or of discovering cattle in their kraals drained of milk with scratch marks on their udders. All of this traditionally is ascribed to the mischievous nocturnal

behaviour of the *Tokoloshe*. Salomon incorporates this notion into his story, and it creates the context for Lun's near fatal encounter with the farmer (pg. 208-209).

The novel also mirrors the playful relationship *Tokoloshes* are said to have with children in traditional belief (cf. pg. 256-258; cf. 3.3.5). The inclusion of these elements into Salomon's novel provide a particular South African-ness to the work, helping the narrative stand out as something that is accessible locally and universally. While the settings, characters and mythologies within the narrative are distinctly local, the themes are broad and universal. Salomon's inclusion of the ancient *Tokoloshe* into his narrative is a device of his own making: the idea of a sage, mystical patriarchal or matriarchal *Tokoloshe* figure is not part of traditional belief. Salomon embodies his ancient *Tokoloshe* with a deep sense of solitude, history, knowing and understanding (pg. 119, 146). It is the ancient *Tokoloshe* who finally thwarts Kras's plans, skilfully out-manoeuvring him and taking pleasure from his failure (pg. 319). Having finally played out her role in the action, and having satisfied whatever predestined plans she believed to have existed, the ancient *Tokoloshe* patiently awaits her inevitable and now impending demise (pg. 321). This depiction is mystical and reverential, demonstrating that *Tokoloshes* have history – some sort of inexplicable connection to time and mankind - they have feelings, and they have value. They are beings who have made, and continue to make, contributions to the world; in this case, it is the wily old *Tokoloshe* who halts Kras's wicked intentions. Also, the 'saviour' in the novel is not a monstrous, devilish, well-endowed and sexually aggressive male *Tokoloshe*, but a gentle, seemingly-passive female one. Salomon claims and re-invents a significant representation from traditional belief to provide an alternative expression: one that brings with it the possibility of hope. Another of Salomon's inventions is Kras's insect-like pet monster, Arthur, an 'arthropod the size of a Rottweiler' (pg. 30). Kras delivers his solitary monologues at the multi-eyed, mandibular creature (cf. pg. 65-70), and draws on its intimidating appearance and meat/man-eating habits to intimidate and dispose of his enemies (cf. pg. 34, 143-144). This invention is an entertaining, if not macabre, addition to his universe, and allows Salomon to play again with perception. In the novel, Kras considers the arthropod to be male and Shenk misunderstands the creature's ill-temperedness; Doorway recognises that the moodiness is the result of the creature shedding its carapace, and that it is, in fact, female (pg. 311-312, cf. pg. 122-125). Even though the creature is directly before them, Kras and Shenk are unable to

recognise it for what it really is and for the transformational process it is undergoing; ignorance, like prejudice, is commonplace in the novel.

The novel also gives a nod to at least two other pieces of South African folklore: the urban legend of the Uniondale ghost (already mentioned above) and the reference to the Cape Town tale of ‘the Devil and Van Hunks’ (pg. 107-109). This particular fable is often recounted to explain the origins of the frequent appearance of low-hanging clouds across Table Mountain, referred to colloquially as the ‘tablecloth’. The legend suggests a Dutch captain named Van Hunks entered into a smoking competition with the Devil whilst sitting on the slopes of the mountain. In their attempt to out-smoke each other, the pair produced a voluminous amount of smoke that covered much of the mountain, so much so that the Devil could no longer proceed and Van Hunks was declared the winner. Whenever the tablecloth is seen over Table Mountain, it is attributed to the ongoing competition between Van Hunks and the Devil. Melting oral mythology, belief, urban legend and new contemporary narrative together allows Salomon to carve out cross-cultural links between the past, present and the future, generating fusions that have the potential to stand as powerful expressions of credible, albeit unpalatable, alternatives to ways of thinking about South Africa.

5.4.4 Abuse/Torture and retribution

Violent abuse and/or torture, and violent retribution, feature as recurring themes in the novel. In Kras’s childhood story (pg. 66-68) he is rescued by a family who subsequently force him into servitude, torture him (the older brother rubs chorizo into his eyes) and later abandon him. Kras, as a young adult, meets up with his torturer and enacts a gruesome vengeance on the man and his sister, killing them both with his bare hands before burning the house down (pg. 69). Several of Kras’s violent acts of vengeance are recounted in the novel. Theron, a young smuggler who has stolen (and swallowed) four precious stones is violently killed by Kras who slices him open ‘from his breastbone to his navel’ and removes the contraband from his stomach (pg. 94-95). Toby, who is bullied into stealing for Kras the notes on how to open the metal box (pg. 29-34), later ‘threatens’ Kras, and is subsequently sedated, covered in syrup and fed alive to the arthropod while Kras gleefully observes (pg. 142-144). Kras plots and enacts a punishment on an unsuspecting Professor Garuba whose only affront to Kras is his inability to provide detailed information on how to open the metal box (pg. 115-116 & 124). The Professor and his colleagues are later invited to a

celebration at Kras's restaurant, but Kras poisons Garuba during the dinner and takes great pleasure in doing so (pg. 170-171). Kras desires the magic pebble so that he can commit his acts of vengeance undetected (pg. 216). Kras's plans to obtain the pebble are thwarted by Richard and Lun, but in doing so Richard is taken prisoner by Kras. Kras attempts to punish Richard for his success in the most elaborate and dastardly of ways. He ties Richard, spread-eagled, to an inflatable pool toy (a plastic crocodile) which he then attaches by rope to the stern of a boat; the inflatable toy (with Richard tied to it) is thrown into the sea as a lure to entice an attack by a great white shark. When a shark finally 'takes the bait' (albeit unsuccessfully), Kras again demonstrates his perverse, sadistic pleasure in his anticipation of Richard's demise (pg. 323-328). The two midwives, Sindiwe and Emily, are also 'angels' of vengeance, taking responsibility to enact righteous retribution on those who have taken advantage of or abused the children they have delivered as midwives. In the first instance, they track down a man who has 'stolen the life of a child': the man is knocked down (with a knuckle-duster), incapacitated, sedated and then branded 'thief' in a well-executed and aggressive assault (pg. 23-27); later, they release from bondage, by force and threat, a young man who has been enslaved by his taxidermist captor (pg. 83-86).

Hunter (2014) states:

When the midwives brand the child murderer the incident comes as a shock, but is also satisfyingly cathartic, given the high level of child abuse in the country.

It is revealed later that Sindiwe was the midwife when Lun was born under difficult circumstances (pg. 204), which also qualifies her determination to see him rescued and protected. It also transpires that the assassin, Doorway, is a former lover of Sindiwe, and he is present when she is shot by Kras's henchman, Shenk and when she later dies (pg. 287 & 292-294; cf. pg. 178, 220-225 & 240-244). Doorway then enacts his own violent vengeance on Mamron (whom he kills by ripping out 'each of its talons at the root', pg. 310) and Shenk (whom he kills using Mamron's talons as weapons, pg. 312-313). The prevailing violent atmosphere of the novel is also evident in Mamron's treatment of the *Tokoloshes* (pg. 46-47) and in the sequence in which he tortures Richard (pg. 171-177). In Mamron's futile attempts to force the *Tokoloshes* to open the metal box, the *Tokoloshes*, who are kept shackled in cages, are given electric shocks, whipped, and ultimately dismembered. Similarly, Richard is held by Mamron in a rat-infested, dank dungeon, strapped to a mortuary trolley, drugged and tortured

by having high decibel levels of sound forced through his ears, causing Richard to gasp for breath, scream and spasm.

The recurring violence in Salomon's novel reflects the current state of affairs in post-Apartheid South Africa. According to the U.S. Department of State/Overseas Security Advisory Council's 'South Africa 2015 Crime and Safety Report', South Africa's crime rating is 'critical', highlighting violent, confrontational crime, home invasion robberies and rape or sexual assault as major concerns ('South Africa 2015 Crime and Safety Report', N.d). In the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Global Peace Index for 2015, according to South Africa's societal safety and security score, South Africa ranked as the 15th worst country in the world ('South Africa is one of the most violent and unsafe countries in the world', 2015). From April 2014 to March 2015, a total of 17,805 murders were committed in South Africa, at a rate of almost 49 people killed every day; official statistics suggest that the murder rate has increased year-on-year since 2012, and in 2013 was almost five times higher than the 2013 global average of 6 murders per 100,000 ('South Africa 'a country at war' as murder rate soars to nearly 49 a day', 2015; 'Factsheet: South Africa's official crime statistics for 2013/14', 2014; cf. '2015 crime stats for South Africa: everything you need to know', 2015). The Western Cape, which provides the urban setting for the novel, has the highest murder rate of South Africa's provinces, and is 8 times higher than the global average ('SA's murder statistics in 7 charts', 2015). In 2012, South Africa had the 9th highest murder rate in the world, and has been in the world top 10 for its high homicide rate for 21 years since 1992 (Alfred, 2014; 'SA's murder statistics in 7 charts', 2015). There are also high incidents in post-Apartheid South Africa of violent property crimes and aggravated robbery (when perpetrators use a weapon), including street or public robberies, house robberies (when people are confronted by armed gangs while they are in their homes), business robberies, vehicle hijacking (in 2013/14, approximately 31 motor vehicles were hijacked every day on average), and truck hijacking ('Factsheet: South Africa's official crime statistics for 2013/14', 2014). The novel also focuses on two incidents of violence against children. In 2015, the SAPS reported 45,230 cases of crimes against children for 2013/2014, with over half of all reported crimes against children involving sexual offences ('SAPS' Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Investigations Unit doubles capacity to deal with crimes against children', 2015.). South Africa is ranked as one of the top 5 countries with the highest rates of child sexual abuse (Iaccino,

2014).

The novel also features several incidents of gruesome torture: beatings, brandings, being submitted to electric shocks, exposure to high levels of sound, dismemberment, and being eaten alive. South Africa's Apartheid past is littered with accounts of discriminatory use of harassment, torture and extreme, harsh and regularly-exercised forms of violence, psychological abuse and isolation as standard practice by the police, particularly to those arrested, confined and interrogated under security law detention (Foster, 1987: 156-157). The most notable account of the use of torture and violence is that concerning Dirk Coetzee, Eugene de Kock and their 'death squad'. In 1979, Security Police commander, Dirk Coetzee, established a base for a 15-member 'death squad' group of elite assassins at Vlakplaas, a farm 20-kilometres west of Pretoria where he was in command until 1982, when he was replaced by Eugene de Kock, nicknamed 'Prime Evil' (Bauer, 2014; cf. Parker, 2010: 51-54). The primary function of this group was to kidnap anti-Apartheid activists, and relocate them to Vlakplaas where they were subjected to gruesome acts of torture for information. Several of the prisoners died at Vlakplaas, and their remains were subsequently 'buried, burnt or even blown up' to eliminate any evidence. The 'death squad' headquarters was formally shut down in the early 1990s (Bauer, 2014).

In 1979, de Kock had co-founded for the South African Police the 'Koevoet' unit whose principal role was to assassinate South West Africa People's Organisation's (Swapo) freedom fighters; De Kock was transferred by the South African Police in 1983 to lead the counter-insurgency unit based at Vlakplaas whose main function was to quell anti-Apartheid leaders, including several representing the ANC (Nkosi, 2015). In 1990, following the release from prison of Nelson Mandela and the lifting of bans on the ANC, South African Communist Party (SACP) and the PAC, de Kock was covertly instructed to facilitate 'third force' action in South Africa. This was done by orchestrating what appeared to be 'black-on-black violence', often using Russian weapons to do so, thus implicating and discrediting MK, the military wing of the ANC, and by capturing, torturing and then turning (into assassins) liberation soldiers who had been captured, leading to an increase in black fatalities (Krog, 2015; cf. Popham, 2014). De Kock was arrested in 1994. At the hearings of the TRC, de Kock famously admitted to having committed numerous acts of murder, torture and fraud (including the bombing of the ANC's London offices in 1982), to 'crimes against humanity', and revealed the manner in which the Apartheid

government attempted to maintain power. De Kock was granted amnesty for most of his offences but was imprisoned in 1996 for six murders that were found to have lacked direct political motivation; he was sentenced to 212 years and two life terms (Nkosi, 2015; cf. Smith, 2015a). During his incarceration, De Kock played an active role in assisting victims find the remains of their loved ones, and showed remorse for his crimes (Krog, 2015; Popham, 2014).

In April 1996, at the initial sitting of the TRC, the (former) Archbishop Desmond Tutu set out the Commission's charter: 'to expose the truth about South Africa's dark past, and lay to rest the ghosts of that era so they could never return to haunt the nation' (Barrow, 1998). Tutu (quoted in Barrow, 1998) states:

We are looking to maintain not retribution but reparation; we are seeking room for humanity rather than revenge.

Krog (2015) states:

This commission was set up as an example of restorative justice — granting amnesty to perpetrators of violence after they confessed in public. By telling the truth and proving that a crime was committed for political reasons, a perpetrator could receive relief from civil and criminal prosecution. Witnesses and victims of gross human rights violations also testified before the commission, and some received reparations.

In Barrow's words, the TRC was about 'reconciliation' and not 'justice'; in this light it is possible to consider Tutu as the personification of post-Apartheid forgiveness and de Kock as the personification of Apartheid's worst sins. However, Barrow identifies as one of the flaws of the Commission its failure to recognise the role of colonial intervention in South Africa's traumatic and problematic history; furthermore, the granting of amnesty to wrong-doers does not bring about justice, nor are senior Apartheid ministers held responsible (Barrow, 1998).⁴⁴ Barrow states:

Some South Africans have found it within themselves to follow the example

⁴⁴ Several commentators have highlighted the flaws and failings of the TRC. Bystrom & Nuttall (2013: 322) highlight the impermanence of the TRC, and cite Wilson and Samuelson as critics of the methods and products of the TRC, particularly with regard to the commission producing 'incomplete and sometimes harmful reconciliation' (Bystrom & Nuttall, 2013: 327). Krog, an award-winning journalist who reported on the TRC daily for two years for the SABC, details several issues that impacted on the TRC's work, including personnel challenges, the TRC's problematic relationship with the ANC, inadequate interim, final and symbolic reparation and redress for victims' trauma, and the over-judicialisation of the TRC resulting in expensive and time-consuming amnesty hearings (Krog, 2013: 25-33). Liebenberg & Zegeye (2001) identify divided public opinion on the success of the TRC, particularly concerning its (lack of) focus on retribution and human rights abuses, as well as its political compromise and lack of resources (Liebenberg & Zegeye, 2001: 325-328).

of Tutu and Mandela - but human frailty and the desire for revenge has left many others frustrated that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission may have stolen their right to punish the perpetrators of the crimes of apartheid.

In January 2015, de Kock once again made news headlines when he was granted parole after serving 20 years of his prison sentence, and the ANC government's decision to grant his release prompted a significant response from within and without South Africa (cf. Krog, 2015).

Several characters in the novel are unable to forget the wrongs done to them; consequently, they demand justice and enact violent retribution to achieve it. Salomon's work goes some way to reflect the unsettling and prevalent violent environment in which South Africans find themselves. Although there have been, and are, attempts to manage the high level of political and criminal bloodshed and abuse (through mediums such as the TRC, or via the workings of South African law enforcement), the country continues to be dominated by high levels of shocking brutality and violence. In Salomon's world, resolution by peaceful means is not an option.

5.4.5 Prejudice and xenophobia

In the novel, *Tokoloshes* are portrayed as beings who are persecuted, misunderstood and ill-treated. Lun was rescued from captivity where he was being kept by a rich couple, imprisoned in a cage in the basement of a mansion in one of the exclusive suburbs of Cape Town. Lun was exploited by the couple as 'an excellent after-dinner party trick' (pg. 11). Shenk, one of the henchmen, calls Lun 'an unfriendly monkey' (pg. 286-287). De Groot, Richard's former employer, refers to *Tokoloshes* as 'pests' (pg. 57). Sindiwe says *Tokoloshes* don't have much of a life as they are 'persecuted wherever they go' (pg. 205). Mamron's treatment of the *Tokoloshes* is violent and cruel, and this attitude to *Tokoloshes* is seen to be commonplace (pg. 58, 152-153, 231). Whilst making his way to his birthplace outside of Nieu Bethesda, Lun takes shelter on a farm. Here he is attacked by the farmer wielding a pitchfork and by his sheepdog (pg. 209-210). Lun is visibly upset by the attack. The trust and confidence in his human companions, as established and maintained by Richard, is undone by the encounter:

"He stared at the man and the pitchfork that had buried itself into the earth in front of the fence and tears welled up in his eyes. He had almost begun to believe that things could be different" (pg. 211).

When Richard and Emily interview the farmer from whom Lun has subsequently escaped, the farmer is armed with a shotgun, cursing the experience and preparing to kill the *Tokoloshe* should it return (pg. 213-214).

These references to enslavement, derogatory name-calling, violent and cruel treatment, hatred and fear all call up not only the racism and hatred of South Africa's colonial and Apartheid past, but also the intense and violent acts of racism and xenophobia in South Africa's post-Apartheid present (cf. Durrheim, Mtose, & Brown, 2011: 32, 35-36). Lun (and the other *Tokoloshes* that inhabit Salomon's alternate South Africa) is a smartly-devised metaphor for South Africa's abused and disenfranchised people: whether they be 'Bushmen' (hunted for sport by the colonists and subsequently displaced over centuries by governments across southern Africa); 'blacks' (victimised by the constructs of imperialism and Apartheid); or even desperate economic migrants from Nigeria, Malawi or Zimbabwe and elsewhere, seeking out a piece of prosperity from the pot at the end of South Africa's rainbow. Smith (2015b) states:

South Africa is to many Africans what America represents to many around the world: an escape, a fresh start, a land of opportunity. When gold was discovered in Johannesburg in 1886, it was soon being mined by men from a dozen African nations. Today the country is a magnet for Congolese, Ethiopians, Malawians, Mozambicans, Nigerians, Somalis, Zimbabweans and others fleeing conflict or seeking to improve their lot. Estimates of immigrant numbers vary from 2 million to 5 million, out of a population of 51 million.

Since 2005, there have been regular episodes of xenophobic violence against foreign African nationals in South Africa (called 'Afrophobia' by police minister Nathi Nhleko). In 2006, xenophobic violence broke out for several months in Cape Town. In 2008, 62 people (mostly Zimbabweans but also including 21 South Africans) were killed and more than 150,000 displaced in several anti-immigrant attacks in Johannesburg and Cape Town. In 2009, approximately 3000 Zimbabweans living in the Western Cape were targeted and unsettled in acts of xenophobic violence (Smith, 2105b; Karimi, 2015; 'Xenophobic violence in democratic South Africa', 2016; cf. Hickel, 2014). The cross-country pogroms of 2008 were particularly problematic, with the mass xenophobic eviction actions of mostly young male vigilantes immortalised in the media by the image of the 'necklacing' (being burnt alive with a tyre filled with petrol around the neck/upper torso) of Ernesto Nhamuave, an immigrant from Mozambique (Hickel, 2014). At least 350 foreign nationals have

been killed in xenophobic violence since 2008 ('Blood at the end of the rainbow', 2015). These acts of violence are attributed to 'South Africa's status as one the most unequal societies in the world, the violent legacy of racial apartheid and an unemployment rate recorded officially as one in four' (Smith, 2015b), as well as to poor border controls, increasing crime rates, poverty and corruption (Karimi, 2015). Hickel (2014) acknowledges the body of analytical work that has been produced in response to these attacks, and identifies globalisation as the commonly identified primary causative factor of these 'pogroms'. Xenophobic sentiment was exacerbated in 2015 when the Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelithini, called for foreigners to 'pack their bags and leave' (Smith, 2015b) and by a labour dispute between local and foreign workers (Karimi, 2015). In targeted acts of aggression in Durban, shops were looted and burnt, immigrants were attacked and at least six people were killed, and foreigners had to seek protection in police stations and in refugee camps created in specially guarded stadiums (Karimi, 2015). In response to the 2015 violence, Bishop Paul Verryn of the Methodist Church (quoted in Smith, 2015b) states:

The profound shame that xenophobia brings on this nation is the same kind of shame that apartheid brought on the people of this land. What is so shaming is it alienates us from our neighbours and calls into question the integrity of our entire constitution. It exposes the systemic violation of injustice: today it is foreign nationals and tomorrow it will be Indians and after that it will be whites. There is anger and hatred growing among us.

Following the 2015 attacks, an increased response from South Africa's neighbors also became evident. In 'Blood at the end of the rainbow' (2015), it states:

Across Africa, there have been boycotts of South African musicians, and demonstrations at South African embassies. South African lorries were stoned at a border crossing and Sasol, a petrochemicals firm, suspended some of its operations in central Mozambique and repatriated South African staff for fear of retaliatory attacks. Desmond Tutu, a former archbishop of Cape Town and an anti-apartheid stalwart, captured the mood of many: "Our rainbow nation that so filled the world with hope is being reduced to a grubby shadow of itself. The fabric of the nation is splitting."

Tokoloshe Song reflects South Africa's shocking history of violence and persecution, but also facilitates an inventive consideration of current issues, such as ongoing discrimination and xenophobia (cf. Steenkamp, 2011: 148-149). In the novel, Lun is the persecuted 'other', a misunderstood victim; and the novel addresses the need to reclaim or redefine identity by challenging and rewriting traditional misperceptions of identity. Lun and his kin are presented by Salomon not as monsters, but as something

quite different. This parallels the efforts of academics, activists and philanthropists during the Apartheid era who identified the misrepresentations and victimisation of black (and other) South Africans by the political machineries of the Apartheid government and South Africa's state-manipulated media. The fictional academic (Willard Greene), the three activists (Richard, Phakama and Barb), the two midwives (Sindiwe and Emily) and Jacqui and her family all assume those roles in the novel, acting as voices of enlightenment. The character of Lun serves, then, as a vehicle for Salomon to explore shifts in cultural and racial perceptions in post-Apartheid South Africa in which Lun embodies the disenfranchised 'other' that continues to occupy prominent space in South Africa. Hunter (2014) states:

The moral dilemma confronted by Richard – if he protects tokoloshes from harm he will risk his own life – resonates in South Africa, where the decision as to what to do when we confront the Other has resonated and continues to do so. Tokoloshes, the tale tells us, have survived in small numbers in caves, and so, too, did the San people in the past, who were also outcasts and were hunted like vermin; so, too, in the present, baboons and other despised animal species are forced to evade human depredations. There is a scene in which Lun is reduced to tears when his efforts to get along with humans are once more defeated by their fear and hatred.

Salomon (n.d.) states:

I wanted to portray tokoloshes as intelligent, emotional creatures that, instead of being inherently evil, are misunderstood and act out against the prejudice directed at them.

Lun's relationship with Richard is important. It is through Richard's intervention that Lun is placated, and the resulting connection between the human and non-human characters is a lasting 'communal bond' through which their worlds are re-invented as they are forced creatively and sympathetically to engage together (cf. Steenkamp, 2011: 39 & 153; Caraivan, 2014: 103). In Salomon's world, that relationship is crystallised through a great deal of hardship and at tremendous cost. Resolution and understanding are finally achieved (and demonstrated in the final pages of the novel), but they come at a very high price, to a very few, and after excessive amounts of bloodshed, violence and abuse; and while peaceful integration is achieved for this small group of characters in an isolated setting (they take refuge on a farm), it is unclear as to how they may survive when they are faced again with the continued prejudices of the wider South African society to which they must inevitably return. Respite, in this context, is likely to be brief. Although the novel concludes in an

atmosphere of positivity, Salomon's vision of an alternate world does not offer up great volumes of hope; instead it suggests that the path to meaningful integration, understanding and mutual respect is a tremendously difficult one, attempted by a few, and met with much hostility and carnage. Peaceful existence is possible, but it is costly and its future is not guaranteed.

5.4.6 *Tokoloshe Song* as post-Apartheid South African speculative fiction

Salomon's novel considers the issue of inequality as its primary concern (particularly racism/xenophobia). Inequality needs to be considered alongside the complicated development of identity in post-Apartheid South Africa, influenced in this regard significantly by the legacy of Apartheid, particularly with regard to violence, oppression and racism. Salomon plays with the loosely-defined limits between 'self' (as embodied by Richard) and 'other' (as embodied by Lun) to question understandings of difference, 'displacement/dislocation' (Lun's rescue from enslavement) and especially 'cultural denigration' (specifically the oppression of *Tokoloshes* in the novel), all obliquely rooted in the realities of the novel's post-colonial/post-Apartheid context. Furthermore, the narrative plays out against the backdrop of South Africa's inhospitable Karoo wilderness and hostile urban settings. The meaningful recovery of Richard and Lun (of 'self' and 'other') is deliberately impeded by the character of the environment. It is also worth noting that while Richard and the midwives are driven to assume responsibility or accountability for Lun (to care for him, rescue him, protect him), the novel clearly articulates the significant risks and high cost associated with those actions. Ultimately, Salomon's entertaining *Tokoloshe Song* is a critical and allegorical examination of inequality, prejudice and violence in post-Apartheid South Africa, highlighting the significant and ongoing problem of perception of South Africans regarding identity: their own and of others. As Knaus & Brown (2016: 185-186) explain, South Africa has a cruelly racist past, and, largely in response to that, the government of the new South Africa opted for a constitution that is said to be one of the most progressive and inclusive constitutions on the planet. Building on Tutu and Mandela's ideas of a rainbow nation, the new South African constitution sets out a basis for recognising the self-respect and pride of all South Africans, which embodies Mandela's dream for a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society. However, with more than two decades having passed since that vision was enshrined in constitutional law,

Mandela's vision of a non-racist South Africa has yet to be achieved. It is only by acknowledging just how deep racism is entrenched in South Africa, not only in the South African psyche but also in South Africa's societal structures, and by breaking away from South Africa's deeply entrenched colonial, imperial and Apartheid roots, that non-racialism can work (cf. Durrheim, Mtose & Brown, 2011: 45-48, 50-52). Durrheim, Mtose & Brown (2011: 55-56) state:

What is apparent is that all who have been privileged or disadvantaged by racism are today united by the persistent struggle, uncertainty and contradictions of race. Our engagement with each other and our world are complicated because race is always both present and absent.

In *Tokoloshe Song*, Salomon suggests that South Africans have yet to shed completely their racist identities. In essence, Mandela's vision for a non-racial society has yet to be realised.

5.5 *Apocalypse Now Now*

As with Awerbuck's short story and much of Salomon's *Tokoloshe Song*, Charlie Human's humorous fantasy, *Apocalypse Now Now*, unfolds in and around an almost unrecognizable contemporary Cape Town. The novel has at its centre a 16-year-old boy named Baxter Zevcenko, and follows his attempts to find his missing girlfriend, Esme, aided by a battle-scarred war veteran and supernatural specialist named Ronin. This singular plotline is overlapped with a great deal of complexity and complication. Baxter is the leader of a schoolyard pornography distribution racket (called The Spider) and is attempting to negotiate a treatise between two powerful gangs at his school. He is plagued by bizarre and unsettling visions (that link him inexplicably to the niece of Boer-war prophet, Niklaas van Rensburg), and Baxter may, or may not, be schizophrenic. Baxter's brother, Rafe, is severely autistic, and his grandfather Zev believes giant crows are out to get him. Baxter is a lead suspect in a case of serial killings around Cape Town, including possibly that of Esme. Along the way, Baxter and Ronin meet a host of mythical, magical characters that include an electricity-generating elemental 'township tick'⁴⁵, a shapeshifting transvestite African Valkyrie named Katinka, a zombie-controlling spider queen, a satyr, and Rumpelforeskin (a *Tokoloshe* porn star) plus a string of other inventive oddities, all encountered across the Cape Peninsula's dark and seedy underbelly. Baxter and

⁴⁵ The thirteen-page sequence from Chapter 6 (pp. 97-110) in which Baxter and Ronin encounter the elemental has been filmed as an 8-minute short film (see *Apocalypse Now Now - Full Proof of Concept Short Film*, 2017).

Ronin become embroiled in the workings of a sinister organisation called Octogram and an evil genetic experiment. Ultimately, Baxter discovers he is the key to resolving the impending cross-dimensional catastrophic apocalypse that has arisen between the Mantis god and the Octopus demon!

The novel is a striking example of post-Apartheid speculative fiction, and the inclusion of *Tokoloshes* in its narrative, albeit in a peripheral fashion, suggests the novel is worth some consideration in this study, particularly as Human's work is an explicit discourse focused on the protagonist's identity crisis. In Human's parallel world, the *Tokoloshe* is an evolved survivor, exploiting its distinct and crude sexual prowess for profit. Human's embellishment/appropriation suggests not only shifts in the moral and societal frameworks of the new South Africa, but also the hybrid/Pan African/trans global potential realities of the post-Apartheid world.

For the purposes of analysis, the following will be explored: the novel's title and genre; its Cape Town setting; the appearance and role of *Tokoloshes* in the novel; the integration of South African (and other) mythology and traditional belief into the novel; the novel's South African (Apartheid and post-Apartheid) context; and several of the novel's themes, including the novel as a coming-of-age story, racism and xenophobia in South Africa, and the novel as apocalyptic writing.

5.5.1 Title and genre

The book's title is a nod to mainstream popular culture and to South African colloquial culture. The title directly references Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 Oscar-award winning film, *Apocalypse Now* (itself a somewhat free adaptation of Joseph Conrad's novella, *Heart of Darkness*). The film explores an army captain's voyage into the jungles of Cambodia during the Vietnam War and his mission to assassinate a rogue colonel 'who has set himself up as a god among a local tribe' and has descended into madness ('Apocalypse Now', 2016). The phrase 'now now' is a South Africanism, that does not imply 'immediately', but rather 'soon' or 'later' (cf. Smith, 2015). In a brief, untitled preface to the novel, Human (2013) writes:

"Now now (adv.) A common South Africanism relating to the amount of time to elapse before an event occurs. In the near future; not happening presently but to happen shortly."

'Apocalypse Now Now' is also the title of the penultimate chapter, in which the phrase is used for the first and only time. Baxter describes the devastation he has

caused in his inter-dimensional battle with Mirth, the principal villain, as follows (pg. 281):

“The city is aflame. Buildings collapse into themselves. The water of the bay is alight which sends massive plumes of steam into the air. It’s the South African Armageddon, Apocalypse Now Now. And I caused it.”

The concept ‘apocalypse’ is Biblical, referring initially to a vision or a ‘revelation’/an ‘unveiling of knowledge’ (literally, ‘an uncovering’ or ‘disclosure’, from Greek *apokalyptein*; Harper, 2017), as described in the Old Testament Book of Daniel (Daniel 7-12, particularly 10: 2ff) in which Daniel writes allegorically (in several dreams or visions he has) about the fall of the Medo-Persian Empire, and of the ancient rivalry between Egypt and Syria; and in the New Testament Book of Revelation (Revelation 1: 9ff) in which John describes, allegorically, a series of images, symbols and events that herald the end of the world. Other Apocalyptic writing includes works found in the Apocrypha (2 Esdras) and the Pseudepigrapha (Ethiopic Enoch and the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) (Ferguson, 1987: 377). Apocalyptic literature is characterised by strange visions and symbolism, and supernatural occurrences, and is often written in times of persecution (Anderson, 1990: 619, cf. 626-627). In Apocalyptic writing, the events described progress towards a determined universal end, but it is the actions of the individual that determine their own fate in the final cataclysm (Ferguson, 1987: 379). In medieval times, the word was used as a synonym for ‘insight, vision or hallucination’, but the word ‘apocalypse’ has subsequently come to mean ‘the complete final destruction of the world’ or a cataclysmic event ‘involving destruction or damage on a catastrophic scale’ (Harper, 2017; ‘Apocalypse’, 2016). Baxter’s experience is authentically apocalyptic, in that it is both visionary and catastrophic, and while the ‘apocalypse’ of the title denotes the impending destruction, the South Africanism ‘now now’ suggests that there is just a small amount of time for recovery or re-organisation (cf. Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 88).

Classifying the novel under any one particular sub-genre of speculative fiction is a difficult task, predominantly because *Apocalypse Now Now* is part horror, part supernatural fantasy and part science fiction (with its elements of astral projection and cross-dimensional/cross-time travel) (cf. Saunderson-Meyer, 2013). The novel is also part ‘steampunk’, particularly with reference to the incorporation of late 19th century/early 20th century technology and design, and also its anachronistic

technologies or retro-futuristic inventions. This is evident in the Mantis and Octopus machines that feature at several points in the novel, particularly in the novel's climax (cf. pg. 272-273). The novel explains that the power of the ancient monster (the Octopus) was captured by humans and magical creatures, and trapped within 'living cages'.

Human's novel could equally be called 'an imminent catastrophe', and while the novel's characters and locations are not quite South Africa as we know it, the comparison is not hard to unravel, much of which will be done in this analysis. Essentially, the novel portrays a post-Apartheid South Africa in which criminal activity thrives, the wealthy echelons are exploitative and exploited, and the impoverished find desperate solutions in desperate circumstances. Furthermore, it is a world where the legacy of Apartheid, particularly the covert operations of the security police and armed forces, along with the engrained racist and xenophobic attitudes of South Africans, linger in the present. Violence, exploitation and a fundamental lack of respect for those who are different sits at the heart of Human's society, underscored by an ongoing greater conflict between two powerful forces. Those elements jointly provide the context for the discontent that threatens to consume and destroy Human's world. Perhaps Human is suggesting that given the high levels of violence, crime and inequity in South Africa, stability is tenuous, and without the intervention of sacrificial heroes like Baxter, impending destruction is at hand. Stylistically, *Apocalypse Now Now* is a hybrid: it draws on the rhetoric and imagery of the several genres Human incorporates in his novel (horror, fantasy, supernatural, dystopian, science fiction and steampunk) to articulate this allegory, free from the constraints, traditions and prejudices of mainstream popular fiction and socio-political commentary.

5.5.2 Cape Town setting

Baxter's misadventures play out across a re-imagined modern-day dystopian Cape Town. Traditionally, Cape Town is viewed as one of the most popular and most beautiful cities on the planet, and the city has a string of accolades to acknowledge that. In 2016 and 2013, Cape Town was identified as one of the top ten cities in the world in *Travel and Leisure* magazine's annual "World's Best Awards" and in 2013 was ranked the world's top city in the Africa and Middle East category ('Cape Town Accolades and Awards', 2016; Hetter, 2016; 'Cape Town on world's top 10 cities list', 2013). The 2015/2016 *Telegraph* Travel Awards selected Cape Town as the Best

City in the World for the fourth year running (Lombard, 2016). The *New York Times* listed Cape Town as 2014's premier destination ('52 Places to Go in 2014', 2014), and the city was voted as number three in the *Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2014* Top Cities and number sixteen in their Top 25 Travelers' Choice World Destinations Awards ('Cape Town Accolades and Awards', 2016). In 2012, *Telegraph* readers voted Cape Town as one of the top ten locations to live abroad (Middleton, 2012), and in 2009, *Lonely Planet* listed Cape Town as one of the world's top ten party cities in its new guide, the *1000 Ultimate Experiences* ('The world's top 10 party towns', 2009). In the parallel world of Human's novel, the author uses Baxter to present a Cape Town that contrasts strongly with the city's famous image; instead it is a bleak and grimy wasteland, an apt location for an impending apocalypse (cf. Alexander, 2013; Khaw, 2014; Evans, 2014). As Baxter fumbles his way through the action, so Human allows the character to paint vivid descriptions of his surroundings; and while these descriptions are filtered through the sardonic wit of a somewhat disaffected teenager, the illustrations of Cape Town are bold, crude and unglamorous. On his way to school, Baxter stops off to meet up with his girlfriend, Esme:

"The sky is almost the exact grey of the diseased lung of a two-packs-a-day smoker. It makes me want a cigarette. I turn off the busy main road and make my way into the subway next to the train station, the skanky sacred secret grotto where my girlfriend Esme and I meet to exchange smoke and saliva before school starts. The subway curves beneath the train line like a dirty catacomb, the chaotic graffiti like the multi-hued bones of dragons buried in the walls..." (pg. 6)

Human effectively juxtaposes the affluence of Cape Town's suburbs with the invisible or ignored poverty that enmeshes the city. Baxter, sneaking out of his house to meet up with Esme, bikes his way through the suburbs:

"I skirt the edge of the dirty canal which leads behind my house toward the railway tracks. It smells like wet dog and puke. One thing I love about the canal is its honesty; like a sick, swollen artery beneath the Botox of suburbs. The homeless wash here listening to the sounds of rich people frolicking in their garden jacuzzis. Through the windows you can see lawyers watching TV or bankers furtively looking at PornTube, while drunks have sex in the long grass that borders the canal. I pull my grey hoodie over my head and pedal faster." (pg. 41)

He later journeys by train into Cape Town to secure the services of 'Herbalist and Supernatural Bounty Hunter', Jackie Ronin, and locates Ronin in a run-down building in the city. Several of the letters in the building's sign have fallen off, and a group of

drug-pedlars hovers about on the street outside the building. The revolving door that accesses the building off the street sticks, the elevator doesn't work, and the interior is dull, grey and smells of ammonia. The only life-forms inside are a motionless (dead?) black cat and a 'shifty-eyed cleaning lady playing solitaire' (pg. 84). Whilst attempting to elude the police, Ronin drives into an alleyway between two buildings:

"There is a mountain of refuse in the middle of the alley, fed by two battered and over-flowing dumpsters. Wind caught in the alley whips the refuse into little junk devils that leap and spin through the air. We climb out of the car and are immediately assailed by the stench of grime and dead animals." (pg. 100)

The city is deteriorating and faulty, and is inhabited by low-life criminals and oddballs (cf. pg. 121-122). As Baxter and Ronin travel through Cape Town and its surroundings, Human dishes up consistently a relentless portrait of a soiled urban landscape (pg. 101, 182).

The novel's central sequence involves Baxter and Ronin seeking out a magical creature called an Obambo at a debauched nightclub called the Flesh Palace. The club is located in the dingy heart of Cape Town's industrial zone, surrounded by unattractive warehouses, abandoned by all save a lone drunk vagrant (pg. 133); the club is run by a terrifying zombie-controlling spider Queen. In his descriptive writing, Human first establishes a suitable dark atmosphere for his protagonists before plunging them (and the reader) into a graphic and macabre encounter. The club is a bizarre den of depravity and perversion, which is policed by zombie/golems controlled by spiders embedded into the backs of their necks, and in which wealthy cannibalistic human patrons exploit, and are exploited by, a cast of outlandish, supernatural beings, that include dwarves, an African Valkyrie, and a large caged Crow-monster (cf. pg. 136, 143, 145). The club also houses a studio that produces 'monster' porn films that feature werewolves, goblins, vampires and *tokoloshes* in titles such as *Tokoloshe Money Shot*, *Anansi Zombie Chamber* and *Dwarven Ass Patrol* (cf. pg. 144, 51-52). Baxter distributes these films, but he assumes they are simply human actors in costume (pg. 22). He realises his assumptions are wrong when he visits the Flesh Palace and sees first-hand the studio and one of its stars (pg. 144). The imagery of the Flesh Palace is evocative of Hieronymus Bosch's famous late 15th century/early 16th century triptychs, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* and *The Last Judgement*. In *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Bosch pictorialises the progression of sin as a warning against the perils of lust in his portrayal of the Garden

of Eden (the left panel), the Garden of Earthly Delights (the central panel) and Hell (the right panel) (cf. ‘The Garden of Earthly Delights by Jheronimus Bosch’, 2016; ‘Garden of Earthly Delights (1500-05)’, 2016). It is the central and right panels that are relevant here, particularly the central piece with its surreal and erotic depiction of young naked cavorting men and women amidst a menagerie of bizarre, fantastic figures (including oversized strawberries and grapes and exotic mineral structures) and surreal creatures (marine animals, camels, unicorns, giant birds and other imaginary beasts), all engaged in a range of depraved, sinful/sexual activities in a hedonistic/godless playground of abandonment and corruption (cf. ‘Garden of Earthly Delights (1500-05)’, 2016). Bosch’s *The Last Judgement* also depicts scenes of human depravity and divine judgement in a hell that is populated by monsters: demons, ‘tormentors’ and other ‘malefactors’ (these are often depicted with animal parts, such as the heads of birds or the bodies of fish, or with misplaced human limbs), and squat reptilians that appear to have ‘an unlimited appetite for human flesh’ (McDermon, 2016). The events and characters of Human’s Flesh Palace would not be out of place in Bosch’s Garden and his Hell. As with Bosch’s creations, Human’s work blends the fantastical with the real. The representation of the bizarre, incredible and imaginary inhabitants of Human’s parallel world is done in a realistic manner, so the characters exist with a high degree of probability or authenticity. Although they are not real, they appear to be real. Similarly, Human also constructs hybrid creatures that are part-human, part-animal: the golems, zombies and Gogs. In essence, the fantastical constructs of Human’s universe exist as liminal entities: they are real but not real, human but not human (cf. 4.8.3).

Moreillon & Muller (2016: 82) suggest the Flesh Palace can be seen as a place of ‘economic’ entanglement’ (see 1.3.3), particularly because of its multi-functionality (it is a strip/sex club, porn film studio, monster’s lair and Octogram’s site for organ harvesting. Whilst attempting to flee the club, Baxter and Ronin stumble in on its facility for the harvesting of human organs (pg. 156): “A group of women are sitting next to a conveyor belt, chatting and smoking as they dissect human corpses and shove internal organs into packets”. The organs harvested here are subsequently used by Octogram at a converted military base on Table Mountain to genetically engineer chimpanzee-like monsters called Gogs (cf. pg. 204-205). The Flesh Palace is also an environment in which the magical and non-magical worlds are entangled, and itself is an underground, magical world below the non-magical world

of Cape Town's streets. Moreillon & Muller suggest further that these entangled worlds mirror the 'racial and/or socio-economic (vertical) stratifications of (post-) apartheid realities' (Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 83).

Cape Town, as seen through Baxter's eyes, is contaminated, dirty, dismal, foul-smelling, decaying/dilapidated, a place of weeds, peopled by vagrants, smugglers, drug dealers, prostitutes and pornographers. Human's portrayal of this dystopian South Africa is deliberate: it actively challenges perception. Quite simply, the Cape Town inhabited by Human's characters has little, if any, resemblance to the glossy-brochure Cape Town of tourist touts, romantic novels, action movies and FIFA World Cup promos. Instead, Human focuses on, and amplifies, the lesser or unseen elements of Cape Town/South African society to emphasise its moral, social and physical decay. This is the place where refuse and waste lies uncollected on the streets for weeks; where citizens dwelling in tin-shanties on the urban periphery carelessly hook up their homemade power cables like mavericks directly into power grids so they can have electricity; where people trade in body parts; where the wealthy regularly exploit and 'cannibalise' the unsuspecting impoverished. The recurring theme of exploitation is emphasised in the novel in the many references to the production and consumption of pornography. Paradise this isn't. The depravity of the Flesh Palace, in particular, is a surreal and extreme crystallisation of a degenerated society. Human's references to the debauched, immoral and irresponsible behaviour of celebrities, sports stars and politicians in the Flesh Palace are a pointed jibe. He, rather heavy-handedly, pulls into focus the problematic morality inherent in post-Apartheid society. Society's leaders and heroes are flawed and corrupt, motivated by their own self-serving/hedonistic perversions. Baxter says: "We're in Hell", from which, traditionally, there is no escape. The indifference shown by the women preparing body parts for human organ trafficking further demonstrates a disaffected soullessness within society: the women are more concerned with their gossiping, their soap-opera viewing and their Christmas party treats than the base, dehumanising industry they engage in. Even at the lowest levels of society, Cape Town's subjects are motivated by their own personal/financial gain.

5.5.3 The *Tokoloshe* in *Apocalypse Now Now*

Baxter encounters two *tokoloshes* in the novel, although *tokoloshes* are also referred to at various points throughout the story. In Awerbuck's short story, the *Tokoloshe*'s portrayal is ambiguous, in that Joanna does not realise the Leatherman is,

in fact, a *Tokoloshe*. In Salomon's novel, Lun is the very antithesis of the *Tokoloshes* of traditional belief. In Human's world, however, Rumpelforeskin is a traditional portrayal of the quintessential *Tokoloshe* – base, ugly and sexual.⁴⁶ At the outset, *Tokoloshes* in Baxter's world are seen as mythical, magical creatures of fiction. As mentioned previously, the *Tokoloshes* seen in the porn movies that Baxter sells are, to his mind, merely actors in costume. As the novel unfolds, and through Baxter's several bizarre encounters, the incredible notion that such creatures may actually exist becomes more credible, particularly after his visit to the Haven (a rescue home for magical critters run by an affable Dr Pat, pg. 110-119) and subsequently to the Flesh Palace. Baxter's first encounter with a live *Tokoloshe* is at the Haven:

“Pat takes my hand in hers and leads me over to a cage where a little goat-like creature paces behind bars. It is small, stands upright on two legs, is covered in coarse brown hair and is very, very ugly. It has slitted pig eyes, horns that rise like two jagged spirals from its head and a huge grey penis which it drags around on the floor like some kind of deformed python... I make another sound. The creature in the cage snarls and makes lewd gestures and grotesque pelvic thrusts in her direction. ‘Fukfukfukfukfuk,’ it chants.” (pg. 113)

The second time is when he catches a glimpse of the ‘manky, grey-haired tokoloshe with the big belly and an even bigger [penis]’ ‘monster’ porn star, Rumpelforeskin, at the Flesh Palace (pg. 144, cf. pg. 136):

“A dressing-room door left slightly ajar gives me the opportunity to glimpse a celebrity. Through the slit I see the Flesh Palace’s most successful tokoloshe lounging in a chair, chewing on a fat cigar and watching us uninterestingly with his cruel pink piggy eyes. He’s wearing a red velvet gown and a fat gold medallion hangs among his matted green chest hair. A naked zombie kneels at his feet scratching his large grey belly and feeding him something that looks suspiciously like a rodent. Rumpelforeskin grins smugly and then raises his hand to give us the middle finger.”

When Baxter and Ronin return to the Haven, they discover it has been destroyed and the creatures attacked:

“The tokoloshe runs from underneath the table and latches onto my leg. It begins to hump it manically. ‘Fukfukfuk,’ it shouts, pumping its hips into my jeans. I shake my leg but that only seems to make it grip onto me harder. I have to resort to kicking the little horned maniac across the room. It hits a wall hard and then gets up and begins to hump a chair leg.” (pg. 188)

Human opts to represent the *Tokoloshe* according to convention and traditional belief, emphasising the creature’s unattractive, hairy animal-like appearance, its unusually

⁴⁶ The name is a play on ‘Rumpelstiltskin’, the titular character in a fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm.

large penis, its vulgarity and its uncontrollable sexual insatiability. Rumpelforeskin, in this context, is portrayed further as a crude Hugh Hefner/Ron Jeremy parody, adorned in an iconic red gown, smoking a cigar and being fed treats by a naked attendant.⁴⁷ However, Human subverts the conventions of sexual fantasy as portrayed in the popular media by substituting the players with grim representations from his parallel world. The lothario is replaced by a hideously ugly monster; the fawning beauty by a re-animated corpse; and the sophisticated delicacies by a rat. Human's resultant image is turpid and base, re-iterating the level of depravity in which Baxter has become entwined. Such things are the stuff of nightmares. Human deliberately conjures up strong, dark images to emphasise the bleakness and terror of the world in which his protagonist must survive, and he does so tapping into the wealth of material inherent in the belief systems of southern Africa. Human (quoted in Freeman, 2013) states:

The tokoloshe is such a South African mythological institution that I had to include him. He's got various iterations and some are [sic] lot darker than the way I've presented him in *Apocalypse Now Now*. Cape Town is interesting because it's a place of extremes. It's really urban and cosmopolitan but then there's still a place that I used to walk past on my way to work that sells banishing spells for people with tokoloshe problems. Southern Africa as a whole is such a fusion of myths that have rarely been used in fiction. *Apocalypse Now Now* has San, Afrikaans, Xhosa and European myths all blended together. I think more local writers, musicians, filmmakers and artists are drawing on these mythologies as a way of exploring our world.

Human's portrayal of the *Tokoloshe* in *Apocalypse Now Now* highlights the erosion of moral and societal stability in South Africa: he uses the *Tokoloshe*, which is a personification of evil and sexual depravity in traditional belief, to embody moral decay and anti-social behaviour, most notably by celebrating and elevating the status of the creature as a porn star. Not only does Rumpelforeskin embrace a pragmatic use of his attributes, but his 'star' status is also a bold comment on the corrosion of traditional values (the *Tokoloshe* is used here in much the same way *Die Antwoord* use the icon in 'Evil Boy', cf. 4.8.2). In Human's South Africa, sexual depravity is celebrated and revered. The inclusion of the *Tokoloshe* (and the myriad of other magical creatures) in Human's novel is also a demonstration of cultural appropriation. As I have discussed previously, the traditional representation of the *Tokoloshe* in

⁴⁷ Hugh Hefner is the late multi-millionaire founder of *Playboy* magazine; Ron Jeremy is an American celebrity porn-star and film-maker.

white South Africa is different to that of Black South Africa: historically, white depictions have not typically included expressions of the *Tokoloshe*'s sexual prowess (cf. 3.3.1); Human deliberately borrows/claims the unmissable sexuality of the *Tokoloshe* into his universe, challenging perceptions of cultural ownership and cultural prejudice (in much the same way as the Zef culture artists do, cf. 4.8.1 & 4.8.2). Also, Human's inclusion of the *Tokoloshe* in his bestiary is a comment on the shifting perceptions of cultural identity in South Africa: while the *Tokoloshe* is a distinct feature of southern African belief, in Human's parallel universe, the *Tokoloshe* stands alongside a wide mix of trans-global creatures. This challenges common perceptions of exceptionalism in South Africa: Human is suggesting that South Africa, and all its quirks, is not as unique as many may think. Finally, Human's depiction of the *Tokoloshe* in his work emphasises the transitional/evolutionary nature of South African society; the *Tokoloshe* is a creature embedded in centuries of history across southern Africa, aligned variously with the San, the Xhosa, the Zulu, the Afrikaners and finally the English-speaking South Africans; representations of the *Tokoloshe* have varied across the past two centuries, and yet the phenomenon still occupies a place in the broader cultural vocabulary. Although political paradigms have shifted significantly over the past few centuries, the *Tokoloshe* has remained as a cheeky/trickster figure across peripheral and mainstream popular belief; in this case he has simply donned a red velvet gown and found practical employment with his unique skill set! In effect, he's simply moved with the times. For continued survival, transition/evolution is essential. After all, it's kept the *Tokoloshe* going for at least two hundred years.

5.5.4 South African and Pan African mythology in *Apocalypse Now Now*

Human includes a panoply of supernatural beings in his novel, with creatures representing southern Africa, central Africa, Haiti and more. Taking his inspiration from tabloid newspapers like the Daily Voice that run 'dark, obscene and completely bizarre' stories that integrate news, 'soap opera' and folklore 'monsters and magic' in pieces with headlines like "Tokoloshe stole my baby", "Priest fights fire demon" and "The Snake Men of the Cape Flats" - many of which headlines Human claims to have witnessed whilst travelling to work - Human concocts a story in which those headlines reflect a parallel reality: where *Tokoloshes*, Voortrekkers, kung-fu fighting dwarves and zombies co-exist (cf. Freeman, 2013; Human, 2015b; 'Cover reveal and interview', 2013). Human (2015b; cf. Human 2011: 2-3) states:

Our tabloid headlines are full of magic, mostly lurid and sensational accounts of things that *sangomas*, traditional healers or shamans, have inflicted upon ordinary people. In *Apocalypse Now Now* the magic is a weird blend of African traditions and ideas; Xhosa, Zulu and Khoisan magical ideas added to concepts from Voudou and then sprinkled with an entirely made up Afrikaans magical tradition that I syncretised from Pennsylvania Dutch Powwow (Afrikaners being descended from Dutch settlers), mystic Christianity and, to be honest, just some really twisted creative licence. The resultant magic is dark, dirty and unpleasant; the kind of streetfighting magic that, if those headlines were real, would be needed to make it in South Africa's magical underground.

The world that emerges from Human's imagination is one in which the sensational, the politically incorrect and the traditional marry, producing an environment that is an allegorical compost heap: rich, fertile and teeming with potential. Human (2015a) states:

The strange, the bizarre and the fantastical have always been here but perhaps we haven't always given them the respect they deserve. We have such rich ground to explore and I'm glad that people are taking our weird heritage and turning it into even weirder stories.

In much the same way that Human allows himself to channel the rich material of his South African context, so he has Baxter acknowledge (a tad profoundly and precociously) his own context:

"I've been bathed in the warm glow of supernatural fantasies ever since I can remember. The fairy tales my parents read me as a kid, TV, video games, it all kinda feels like they've been preparing me for this moment. It feels somehow natural and the other world, the one with taxes, life insurance, twenty leave days a year, cancer, and the realisation that you're never, ever going to be a celebrity, is the shadow, the fantasy and the delusion. The world is as I always intuited it to be; weird, fractured and full of monsters." (pg. 116)

In *Apocalypse Now Now*, Human cherry picks a selection of ideas and notions from the cornucopia of southern African traditional belief. One such example is his use of elements (borrowed somewhat liberally) from the San Mantis myth. The 'Mantis' is a common English translation for */Kaggen*, the southern San trickster-deity. As I have mentioned previously (in 3.4 above), the *Tokoloshe* can be considered a derivative of */Kaggen*; essentially the *Tokoloshe* is the product of cultural borrowing following the interactions of the San with the amaXhosa. Human demonstrates no knowledge of this connection in his novel. In the parallel universe that Baxter inhabits, the young protagonist finds himself at the heart of a cosmological battle between 'the great Mantis God of Africa' and the Octopus – a

‘creature from the primordial depths’ (pg. 1). Portentously, Baxter’s autistic brother, Rafe, is obsessed with San mythology (cf. pg. 5), and Baxter has inexplicable visions of the Mantis (pg. 7). Human presents the Mantis as the originator of magical creatures (the ‘Hidden Ones’) and who, together with his brother, the Octopus, created humans (‘the ‘Strange Ones’); but the Octopus was jealous of his brother’s creation so he created an evil species (the ‘Feared Ones’ or the Crows) who hunted and slaughtered the magical creatures. The Mantis was furious with his brother and thus began a great cosmic battle between them. In order to protect the Earth from imminent destruction, the magical creatures and humans teamed up to ‘trap their own Creators in living cages to stop them destroying the Earth’, while the Feared Ones, who longed for their maker, sought ways to find his release (pg. 65-66). In the world of the novel, this myth is shown to be historically and universally acknowledged (cf. pg. 95, 142). Baxter discovers that the magical vehicles in which the warring deities have been trapped (essentially their exoskeletons made from ‘burnished brass, copper and glass’) actually exist (cf. pg. 271-272). Mirth, Baxter’s great-great grandfather (cf. 191-193, 206, 223), who is a half Crow, has been able to use the Octopus exoskeleton to time-travel, fuelling it with the blood of the girls he, the actual serial killer, has killed, while Baxter – as the great-great-grandson of Ester van Rensburg (niece of famous Boer-war seer/prophet, Niklaas van Rensburg) – aided by the telepathic powers of his brother, Rafe, discovers he has the ability to control the Mantis ‘machine’ (pg. 272-275). As Baxter carries the bloodline of Crow and Seer, he is thus key to ending the battle between the two forces. He does so by transporting Mirth, the Octopus and the Mantis machines into a Cape Town of an alternate dimension, and the two engage in a terrific assault on each other, devastating Cape Town as they do so (pg. 277-280). By triggering a nuclear explosion, Baxter defeats Mirth and decimates Cape Town before relinquishing his new-found powers and returning himself to his home dimension (pg. 283).

In Human’s Cape Town, the Flesh Palace is serviced by zombies and golems. These creatures do the bidding of their evil mistress, the Anansi Queen, as porn stars (pg. 22, 51), sex slaves (pg. 143-144, 155) and guards/soldiers (pg. 135-136, 140, 144-154). The zombies are controlled by spiders, embedded in their necks (pg. 140). In traditional belief in South Africa, witches use zombies as familiars (cf. 3.5.1). The witch is said to ‘raise the corpse to life, cut out the tongue and drive wooden pegs into the brain to make it stupid’. These creatures may be tall and black, and have power to

hypnotise people so that they are drawn to them. People who see them go mad (Hammond-Tooke, 1962: 287-288; cf. Hammond-Tooke, 1974a: 130; Hammond-Tooke, 1981: 99). A Zulu zombie-familiar is *umkhovu*. These are small, generally male, and especially fond of women: they cannot see a woman without desiring her. *Umkhovu* may also be exhumed children who are fed on kinsmen's flesh and sexual organs, or the cross-bred offspring of a baboon that has been caught and tamed by the witch (Berglund, 1989: 279; cf. Kohler, 1941: 7, 35-36, Krige, 1936: 326-327).

While Baxter is at the Haven, one of the magical characters, Klipspringer, hands him a talisman: a brass pendant shaped like a mantis with 'shards of blue semi-precious stones for eyes' (pg. 119). The pendant contains a powerful *muti* that allows Baxter and Ronin to shape-shift (pg. 198-202), helping them enter Mirth's mountain lair undetected. The self-same pendant was originally handed to Baxter's great-great-grandmother by Luamita, an Obambo (pg. 206), and subsequently passed on by Esme to Klipspringer with instructions for him to help Baxter should they ever meet (pg. 227). Talismans and other protective charms are regularly used in traditional medicine in South Africa (cf. 3.9.1). They can be purchased from street traders, traditional/indigenous healers, shop traders (*amayeza* or *muti* shops) or even from wholesale/mail order companies, and, once obtained, are placed in certain locations or worn for their protective powers (Mander, 1998: 31, 74-81).

The inclusion of */Kaggen*, zombies and *muti* into the novel allows Human to imprint his South African accent on the narrative. */Kaggen* is of the most ancient of southern Africa's religious figures and by borrowing and adapting the mythology, Human gives weight to his own fabricated mythology. While the concept of zombies is hardly uniquely southern African, the inclusion of the creatures in Human's world simultaneously acknowledges both the traditional worldview and the popular culture in which the author is operating. Likewise, the inclusion of elements of witchcraft and divination in the novel lends an air of South African authenticity.

Two distinctly Afrikaans elements are included in the novel: the story of Niklaas van Rensburg, Boer war seer and prophet; and the Cape legend of Van Hunks and the Devil. Van Rensburg (named the Seer) rode with General De la Ray during the war against the British during the Anglo-Boer War and the Boer rebellion of 1914, and his visions aided the general in his decision-making (Nöthling, 2012: 185; cf. Orford, 1971). In the novel, Human presents several italicised episodes that feature Dawid and Ester van Rensburg – the fictional brother and niece of the seer (cf. pg.

141-142) [Van Rensburg's genealogy does not include 'Dawid' as a sibling (cf. 'Nicolaas (Siener) van Rensburg', 2015)]. In the first episode (pg. 35-37) it is clear that Ester is also a seer; and that she has had a vision of Baxter and of the impending battle in which the Octopus (the 'Beast') will play a part; that the Van Rensburgs are directly involved in the greater cosmic battle that is to come; and she is given a small medicine bottle of Obambo blood. In the second episode (pg. 79-81), the Van Rensburg wagon train has been discovered by the English, and in the battle that ensues Ester takes refuge beneath a wagon while her family is brutally slaughtered by the English. Before they are separated, she promises her father she will seek out 'the chariot of Ezekiel' (which is a reference to the Mantis machine). In the third episode (pg. 161-164), Ester unknowingly makes Mirth's acquaintance, and also meets up with Luamita. In the fourth episode (pg. 191-193), it is established that Ester has been impregnated by Mirth. She is also shown the Octopus 'machine' by Mirth. Mirth explains the significance of her unborn child:

"In your body you carry one who is part Siener and part Feared One. A creature destined for greatness." (pg. 193)

In the fifth episode (pg. 206-207), Luamita helps Ester (and her unborn child, Klara) escape, and the bond between Ester and Baxter is emphasised. In the sixth episode (pg. 226-227) she meets Klipspringer and presents him with the Mantis pendant. In the final episode (a diary extract) (pg. 292), Ester announces the birth of Klara and her flight to Poland.

Human forges an unbreakable link between Baxter and Ester: she has visions of him, and he of her; she reaches out from the past to the present, while he looks back into the past. They are trapped in an arrangement of temporal dissonance: she can't escape the future; he cannot relinquish the past; and it is only when the two share their understandings that Baxter is able to confront the problems of the present. Human's allegory can be seen thus: South Africans cannot escape or relinquish their colonial and Apartheid heritage; in order to forge a plausible and meaningful existence in the present South Africans, like Baxter, need to battle with their inherited 'monsters', part of which is innate. It is only by acknowledging his past and by drawing on it that Baxter is finally able to tackle the task with which he has been charged.

Like Awerbuck's story and Salomon's novel, the legend of Van Hunks and the Devil makes its appearance in Human's novel. However, unlike the first two

works, the legend is integrated directly into the narrative in Human's tale, with Van Hunks playing the role of a spiritual guardian protecting the 'gateways of space and time'; he is 'both the spirit of a place and a manifestation of its mythology' (pg. 138); he is known by many names:

"I am Van Hunks who still smokes with the Devil. I am Hoerikwaggo, the mountain in the sea. I am Adamastor and I am the spirit of the Mother City. I am the Singer of Souls."⁴⁸ (pg. 226)

As the Singer of Souls, Van Hunks lays to rest the souls of the dead, ensuring their memories remain alive. It is from Van Hunks, in the guise of a mysterious half-blind vagrant, that Baxter first learns the story of the Mantis and the Octopus (pg. 64-67). When Mirth injects Baxter with a syringe of Obambo blood, Baxter astral projects and comes face to face with Van Hunks (pg. 224-225). Van Hunks, who is the 'gateway between worlds', magically enables Baxter to speak with Ester across space and time, and Baxter promises Ester he will destroy the Mantis and Octopus 'machines' (pg. 229). Moreillon & Muller (2016: 91) suggest Human also draws on Greek mythology to create his Van Hunks character, comparing the vagrant (of pg. 64ff) to Tiresias from *Oedipus Rex*, and the Singer of Souls (pg. 226) to Charon, the ferryman who carries souls across the river Styx.

In the novel, Human also makes reference to supernatural creatures from other parts of Africa, (though he largely appropriates them for his own meaning and purposes). These include the Obambo (a 'ghost' in Central Africa), the Chemirocha (a half-human-half-animal creature from Kenya) and Anansi (the spider trickster from Ghana, the Ivory Coast and more) (Spence, 1920: 5; Human, 2015b; Kailath, 2015). In Human's world, Obambos are a near-extinct supernatural species that radiate a neon glow, giving them a ghostly appearance (pg. 174; cf. pg. 91-92). The Obambo are much abused: they have been hunted to near-extinction by the Crows, and Baxter becomes acquainted with one who has suffered at the violent hands of Mirth to a degree that parallels the treatment of *Tokoloshes* in *Tokoloshe Song* (pg. 176-177). Baxter's great-great-grandmother is protected and rescued by an Obambo named

⁴⁸ Hoerikwaggo is the Khoisan name for Table Mountain, meaning 'Mountains in the Sea' ('Khoisan', 2016). Adamastor refers to the Greek-type mythological figure first appearing in the 1512 poem, *The Lusiads*, by Portuguese poet Luis de Camões; in Camões poem, Adamastor is a giant, banished to the Cape by the sea nymph, Doris for falling in love with her daughter, Tethis, and transformed into the mountain of the Cape peninsula – i.e. the Cape of Storms (Coetzee, 2000). As with much of Human's novel, the Van Hunks character becomes a cultural amalgam of Dutch, Khoisan, Portuguese and even classical Greek invention (cf. Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 91).

Luamita.

The character Klipspringer is essentially Human's own creation: he is 'a kind of African faun or centaur', a half-springbok, half-human hybrid inspired by the satyr-figure of Greek mythology together with the story of the Chemirocha (Human, 2015b; cf. Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 90). Human (2015b; cf. Kailath, 2015) states:

In the 1950s South African ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey went to the Kipsigi people in Kenya and recorded a song called the Chemirocha sung by young girls. It turns out that the Kipsigis had heard old records of the country singer Jimmy Rodgers brought by the British and decided that the wailing mournful tone could only belong to a half-human, half-antelope hybrid called Chemi (Jimmy) Rocha (Rodgers).

Human also riffs rather liberally on the West African Anansi legend, transforming the antics (and gender) of this 'folktale-trickster-hero' (cf. Aldred, 2016) into the cruel villainy of a terrifying monster: the Queen of the Anansi's lair is 'decorated with naked people trapped in rancid black spider-webs that drip viscous fluid'; she sits on a throne on a dais in the centre of the dungeon surrounded by zombie guards; the spider-queen is attached to a decaying woman's corpse ("A huge distended red body bulges from the back of her neck and it seems to pulsate slightly as she moves"); she holds and spins a parasol made from human skin stretched over bone; she is carried on a throne into the arena atop 'a phalanx of humans in bondage gear' (pg. 145-149); the scene in which she is finally killed by Ronin is the stuff of nightmares! (pg. 153-154).

Human adds a Pan-African flavour to his imagined world by integrating reconceived elements of African folklore into his narrative, and the effort is not inappropriate. According to the 2011 census figures, post-Apartheid South Africa is home to more than one-and-a-half million African immigrants representing 53 African nations (Wilkinson, 2015; Molathwa, 2012). For at least the past century, Africans (particularly from Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) have migrated to South Africa to secure work; and more recently political and economic refugees from countries such as Angola, Eritrea, Mozambique, Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, the Sudan, and Zimbabwe have been received by South Africa (Wotela & Letsiri, 2015: 105-107). Post-Apartheid South Africa, particularly under the leadership of former president, Thabo Mbeki, has also at times been a key player in the dissemination of Pan-

Africanism.⁴⁹ Human embeds African identity in his re-imagined South Africa: the mythology of Africa belongs as much to South Africa as does South Africa to the continent.

Human's borrowings are not limited to the African continent, however, and he appears to sample a global 'occultopedia' for his inspiration, drawing on characters from Nordic, Japanese and Haitian folklore and religion. At the Flesh Palace, Baxter meets a shapeshifting 'transvestite' African Valkyrie named Katinka (pg. 137-140). These Osiraii are 'tasked with fetching the souls of fallen warriors' (pg. 138), and it transpires that Katinka has been keeping Baxter under her watch, albeit under different guises: as Sergeant Schoeman, the policeman investigating Esme's disappearance, and as Baxter's sweet and fragile Maths teacher, Miss Hunter (pg. 235-236; cf. pg. 21-22, 60-62, 99-101, 171-172). The shape-shifting abilities and beautiful appearance of the Valkyries are borrowed from Anglo-Danish mythology (cf. Walker, 1817: 190).

Throughout the novel, the Crows are portrayed as malevolent shape-shifting creatures (cf. pg. 4, 45-46, 49-50, 167, 205). When Baxter first meets a Crow at the Flesh Palace it is in human form, though Human's description draws on the traditional representation of Ghede, the Haitian Voodoo god of death (commonly called Baron Semedi) (pg. 148-149; cf. Cotterell, 1986: 209). The Crow subsequently transforms into its giant bird-like appearance, with black feathers sprouting from its face, a long beak, large leathery wings, a scorpion's tail, two claws and a single, Cyclops eye (pg. 150). In the novel, the Crows are linked to 'the Tengu, the mythical Crow demon that is associated with the Japanese ninja' (pg. 96), and for Human's portrayal of the monsters in the novel he appears to take his inspiration from the bird-man demon of Japanese folk religion, a godlike creature linked to combat/warfare (cf. de Visser, 1908: 47-48, 61, 67, 107-109). [In Anglo-Danish mythology, the witch named Krake (meaning Crow) was the daughter of the Valkyrie Brunhillde, and was also said to be a shape-shifter, taking on the appearance of a crow (Walker 1817: 190), and thus are linked two of Human's magical beasts.]

In the novel, the Octopus is the 'yin' to the 'yang' of the Mantis: it is a negative entity wrapped in perpetual struggle with its brother-god. The Octopus is

⁴⁹ Mbeki re-introduced and popularized the idea of an African Renaissance, is the principal author of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), was founder and first chair of the new African Union, and former chair of the Non-Aligned Movement (Olivier, 2003: 815).

referred to as a ‘many-armed demon’ (pg. 95) and as a ‘creature from the primordial depths’ (pg. 1). These descriptions suggest classic images of ancient sea monsters from the canon of speculative fiction: Lovecraft’s ‘Call of Cthulhu’ (1928); Verne’s *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870); Alfred Tennyson’s poem ‘*The Kraken*’ (1830), and of course, the legendary sea monster or ‘Kraken’ said to inhabit the seas off Norway and Greenland, first written about by Danish author, Pontoppidan, in the mid 18th century. The ‘great Octopus’ is also a figure from Hawaiian mythology, called ‘Kanaloa, god of the squid’ (Beckwith, 1940: 60-64). In *Apocalypse Now Now*, the power of this ancient monster is trapped in the living cage of the Octopus ‘machine’ by humans working together with magical creatures, and Baxter subsequently discovers the time-travelling machine in the possession of Mirth.

The image of the all-knowing ‘Eye’ recurs in the novel. In the novel’s context it is associated with the ability to ‘see’ or ‘prophecy’ (cf. pg. 2-3 & 15), and the ‘Eye’ is possessed by several characters: by Baxter, his brother Rafe (pg. 3), by his grandfather (pg. 47). The ‘Eye’ is also used as a sign to terrorise or warn Baxter; he discovers it painted on the wall of the subway on his way to school (pg. 7). The symbol of the eye is also used as a ‘calling card’ by the Mountain Killer, carved into the foreheads of the twelve people killed by him (pg. 15). When it is discovered that Esme has gone missing, a large jagged eye is found carved into the wallpaper of her bedroom (pg. 61). In Baxter’s vision of the Mantis it, too, appears to look at him with its ‘all-knowing eye’ (pg. 7) and he has a vision of Esme with her throat cut and with an eye carved onto her forehead (pg. 43). Baxter also notices the Masonic eye, carved into the wall above the door of the rooms used by the NTK gang as their base of operations in what used to be a Freemason Lodge (pg. 28). The image of a red eye on a flag is also used as the symbol of the *sieners* [seers] (pg. 35, cf. pg. 108). The image of the all-seeing eye is found in the belief systems of several cultures and religions across the world, including that of the ancient Egyptians (‘the Eye of Horus’), the ancient Greeks (‘the Evil Eye’), in Islam and Judaism, in India (‘Drishti’), in Renaissance Europe (‘the Eye of Divine Providence’), the Freemasons (‘the Eye of Providence’) and even in popular culture (Tolkien’s ‘Eye of Sauron’ in *Lord of the Rings*) (Hill, 2016; Apostolides & Dreyer, 2008; Humble, n.d.; Jacobs, 1995: 155-156; Dundes, 1981: 57, 124, 143, 170, 213, 287; Macoy, 1870: 505; Tolkien, 2012: 441-442, 611).

Human samples a selection of fantastic beasts and magic from the globe's mythological cornucopia in much the same way as he does from across the African continent, though the significance is different: for many years, and particularly during the final decades of Apartheid, South Africa was economically, culturally and politically isolated. As the pillars of Apartheid fell, so access to the rest of the world became possible, with greater opportunities for cultural exchange and travel. South Africa's re-entry to the global arena also coincided with increased globalisation of markets, cultural products, media and political trends: South Africa was no longer isolated, and the forging of a new South African identity was not only in the context of an internal identity struggle, but also against the indeterminate shifts and trends of a globalised world. The supernatural universe that Human imagines reflects this globalised world: where cultural autonomy is no longer absolute or even viable, where alien influence is no longer perceived as wrong, and where shared/borrowed/appropriated cultural property is fair and common practice. In the transition from the conservative and narrow confines of an isolated Apartheid South Africa to the (seemingly) unfettered and progressive trans-global milieu of post-Apartheid South Africa, the world, quite simply, opened up, facilitating a complex and problematic paradigm shift for South Africans. The framework within which South Africans had defined themselves was no longer valid, and the new framework was, and still is, overwhelming, complicated and beyond control. South Africans are no longer obliged to define their identities according to the set, constructed menu of colonial and Apartheid racism, but rather can tease their taste buds with samples from an unfiltered, never-ending and ever growing smorgasbord of socio-cultural philosophies and identities. Human demonstrates the possibilities and incomprehensibilities of a globalised world in which identity is convoluted, disparate and ambiguous, or (as Nuttall might suggest) 'entangled' (cf. 1.3.3 and Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 82-83).

5.5.5 Ronin and the Apartheid connection

Baxter is partnered in his adventure by traditional healer and bounty hunter, Jackson 'Jackie' Ronin. Human's choice of name for Baxter's sidekick is appropriate: the word 'Ronin' refers to the Japanese samurai warriors who were master-less, and who were often 'vagrant', 'disruptive' and 'actively rebellious' ('Ronin – Japanese Warrior', 2016). This is also certainly true for the character of Ronin in the novel. He is a disorderly, disheveled, gun-toting nonconformist with little respect for those in

authority; Ronin works out of an apartment that is chaotic and filthy, and a car that ‘is as messy as his office and smells of alcohol and cigarettes’ (pg. 96). Ronin demonstrates he does not follow the conventions of traditional healers (in fact, the one character in the novel who does appear as a healer according to the conventions of traditional belief is shown to be a fraud, pg. 106-107): Ronin has his own unique rites (cf. pg. 100-101), his own methods (pg. 102-108, 267-268), and his own potions (pg. 243-244). Ronin is affiliated to a group of operatives working for a clandestine government organisation called MK6 (suggesting parallels with the real-life ORCU, cf. 3.10), run, as it turns out, by Mirth (Ronin formerly worked as a ‘battle shaman’ for MK6 under the codename ‘Blackblood’).⁵⁰ The operatives in Human’s MK6 are a group of heavily armed, athletic *sangomas* (traditional healers) who monitor South Africa’s magical creatures (cf. note in 1.6), and are led by a *sangoma* named Tone. MK6 is fronted by ‘The South African Sceptics Alliance’, a media group that deliberately debunks any leaked information about the magical creatures. Tone’s team are also investigating Esme’s disappearance and its link to Octogram and the Flesh Palace (pg. 99, 127-128; cf. 178-179). Human establishes a backstory for Ronin that embeds the character in South Africa’s dark and violent Apartheid history. Ronin worked as a member of an experimental Apartheid security forces biological weapons unit (pg. 165). Whilst a member of the unit fighting in the Border War [in the then South West Africa (now Namibia) and Angola], Ronin was part of an experiment in which soldiers were given ‘experimental drugs to increase strength and endurance’ (pg. 166). Once Apartheid ended, an Occult Truth Commission was held, but Mirth was exonerated and made the head of MK6. Ronin was recruited by Mirth to join MK6, but after one of his colleagues was killed, he had a falling out with Mirth and resigned (pg. 167). Baxter later discovers from Tone that Ronin and Dr Pat have been working covertly for MK6 ‘as part of a shadow team to prove that Mirth had gone rogue’, and that Ronin, Tone and Mirth have been aware of Baxter’s unique skills and lineage for several years (pg. 232). Baxter also discovers that Mirth has been posing as his psychiatrist, Dr Basson (pg. 220-223). Human (2011: 2-3) states:

⁵⁰ MK in reality is the acronym for *uMkhonto weSizwe* [‘Spear of the Nation’], the military wing of the ANC established by Nelson Mandela in 1961, shifting the ANC’s opposition to Apartheid from one of ‘passive resistance’ to an ‘armed struggle’ (cf. note in 3.4); the armed struggle was officially suspended following the release from prison of Mandela and others in 1990, and in 1994 members of all armed forces, including MK, were integrated into the newly formed South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

Jackie Ronin's character is an attempt to transplant the hard-boiled noir detective into a South African context. Although I've especially tried not to reference South Africa's political history in my writing, some elements do appear, particularly in Ronin's character. Ronin's struggle is to come to terms with the monster created on the Border and references to the Occult Truth Commission and the treatment of the Qawa by humans have obvious parallels in history.

The novel's South African context cannot be ignored, and while Human says his intention is not to reference South Africa's political history, the novel certainly does just that (cf. pg. 16). Moreillon & Muller (2016: 78) suggest that Baxter's psychiatrist, Dr Basson (who turns out to be the villainous weapons chemist, Mirth, cf. pg. 165-166, 202-205) is a reference to real-life Apartheid-era secret chemical and biological warfare ('Project Coast') leader, Dr Wouter Basson. Basson, nicknamed 'Dr Death' in the media, led a covert team of researchers in the 1980s and early 1990s, producing and developing chemical agents and pathogens for use by the military.⁵¹ South Africa's Apartheid context is also evident in Human's various references to the Border War,⁵² in reference to the boys wearing the masks of former Apartheid statesmen when they kidnap Russian mobster, Yuri Belkin (pg. 78); the (Occult) Truth Commission (pg. 165); and even in reference to the Apartheid era censorship-style of skin magazines in the 1980s (pg. 118). Evans (2014) states:

What makes *[Apocalypse Now Now]* most compelling is probably the uniqueness and appropriateness of its setting, in addition to Human's interest in including South Africa's shadowy history into the history of the characters and of the supernatural world as well.

Furthermore, Human demonstrates in his novel how the (fictional) military mechanisms of Apartheid have been continued in his parallel post-Apartheid world. Saunderson-Meyer (2013) states:

⁵¹ For further detail on Wouter Basson and Project Coast, see Gould & Folb's fascinating and terrifying account (2002) and Parker's irreverent entry to 'Wouter Basson' (2010: 19-21).

⁵² It is worth noting a parallel between Coppola's film and Human's novel: *Apocalypse Now* explores the theme of insanity in war alongside the insanity of war; in the novel, several similar references are made, particularly regarding the South African Border War, fought in Angola and South West Africa from 1966-1989: white South Africans were conscripted to support Angola's *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA) rebels (backed by the USA) against the then-Marxist *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) government and its Cuban allies (cf. Redvers, 2012). Ronin, who fought in the Border war, says:

"I took four microdots of acid to help me pretend I was mad to get out of fighting on the Border... Turns out after four microdots you don't really have to pretend. But I was drafted anyway. Apparently psychosis is a desirable trait in a bush war." (pg. 121, cf. 165-166, 220, 222)

In *Apocalypse Now Now...* it quickly becomes apparent that the apartheid regime's depravity was never exorcised; it merely transferred ownership to a new management.

The legacy of Apartheid is a distinct presence in the novel. On several occasions Ronin's past as a covert operative in the South African military and his role in the Border war is emphasised. While he appears to have shed that role (it is only revealed later his 'bounty hunter' role is a cover for his continued investigation of Mirth) his experiences are lasting. In reality, during the Border War more than half a million young white men were called up to join the South African Defense Force (SADF), and the psychological effect of the war on these conscripts has been little studied. During the war, many soldiers were exposed to fighting, many of whom would have experienced, observed or even taken part in the execution of certain brutal acts, and several would have had contact with war casualties. It is probable that large numbers of ex-soldiers were left with emotional/psychological scars (Connell et al, 2013). In their study, Connell et al identify a high prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as well as lifetime drug usage (particularly cannabis) in and by South Africans called into military service who observed or participated in war combat. Those war veterans are now in their forties and fifties, and living in a society that is very different to the one they were obliged to defend. The novel also refers to the TRC (as well as a fictional 'Occult' one). While the work of the TRC aimed to provide opportunities for healing in post-Apartheid South Africa, it necessitated a revisiting of some of Apartheid's darkest hours. The monsters of the past are omnipresent. Human plays with this notion, by having the boys wear masks of former Apartheid statesmen when they abduct the Russian mobster.

5.5.6 A coming-of-age story

At its heart, *Apocalypse Now Now* is a coming-of-age story (a *bildungsroman*), chronicling Baxter's moral education (particularly at the hands of Ronin, Dr Pat and others) and his psychological growth, marking his change/development from 'youth' to 'adulthood'. This aptly echoes South Africa's own 'coming of age'. If one considers the democratisation of South Africa as the nation's rebirth, then it is possible to think of the not-so-new-anymore South Africa in its third decade post-Apartheid as akin to the volatile and defining years of adolescence, the transformative and often antagonistic process whereby adult identity is shaped. Baxter's identity struggles stand as parallels for the complex and unsettling

transformations taking place across the individual, ethnic and national identities in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Baxter experiences several instances and types of conflict in the novel – with his parents (especially his mother), with his brother, with his school peers, with Dr Basson, with Sergeant Schoeman, with Mirth, and with himself – all acting as catalysts in the formation of Baxter's character. Human: (2011:2-3) states:

Baxter's is a coming-of-age story that sees him leaving his stable existence as a porn peddler and embarking on a journey into being someone that actually cares. Baxter's character was inspired by an article about the staggeringly high usage of porn by high-school students. The article cast teenagers as passive victims of an increasingly connected society but I wanted Baxter to be an instigator and a manipulator, someone who while not initially being a very nice guy, is far from a victim.

Human (2015b) identifies 'moral panic' in the press about what teenagers get up to as an initial inspiration for his novel. As such, Baxter is a personification of that moral panic, 'capturing something of the raw intensity of the teenage experience', represented as:

...a brash asshole, the ultimate unreliable narrator, Holden Caulfield meets Gordon Gekko by way of Ninja from Die Antwoord. He deals in monster porn. He's manipulative. He thinks he's fucking awesome.

Human (says he) does so by deliberately avoiding what he considers to be common misrepresentations of the teenage experience ('moody staring' and 'public school formality') in Young Adult fiction, and by incorporating the influence of memes and the Internet (and other 'intertextual references') in the novel to demonstrate how the 'contemporary urban teenager', as embodied by Baxter, thinks (Human, 2015b; Freeman, 2013). As with other examples of Young Adult fiction (including Rowling's Harry Potter series, to which similarities in Human's work have been identified – most notably in Human's second book, *Kill Baxter*), the novel includes key features of the genre. Baxter is an enterprising teen running a successful business (albeit the distribution of pornography), attempting to branch out and secure the market in other schools, and trying to secure a truce between three rival gangs at his school. He is faced with meeting his 'impossible' destiny, which exceeds his wildest imaginations: he must end an ancient cosmic battle between two powerful forces. He is joined and supported by a 'cabal of supporting adults' (Ronin, Dr Pat, Tone, Katinka, Basson/Mirth), and he faces a 'handful of adolescent problems': popularity at school, his relationship with his brother (cf. pg. 4) and with his parents, dealing with his

emotional relationship with Esme (cf. pg. 8, 44), and figuring out his own identity (cf. Khaw, 2014). Saunderson-Meyer (2013) states:

Baxter is the fizz in Human's magic concoction. He is part urban hooligan, part wistful romantic. There is something of JD Salinger's antihero Holden Caulfield in Baxter, if Caulfield was inclined to having paranoid musings, popping ecstasy and slaying zombie warriors.

The conflict Baxter has with himself, as he attempts to figure out who he is, is noteworthy. Much of the novel concerns Baxter's multiple identity struggles: is he sane or insane?; is he a serial killer or is he innocent?; is he BizBax or MetroBax?; is he CrowBax or SienerBax? These are the questions Baxter attempts to answer. At several points throughout the novel, Baxter's encounters with the supernatural are explained away as delusional episodes, hypnagogic visions, mental illness or possibly even the results of a brain tumour, and both he and the reader are left uncertain as to whether or not they have actually occurred (cf. pg. 13, 18-19, 67-70, 124-125, 159, 213-219). It is only when Mirth, masquerading as Baxter's psychiatrist, lets slip Ronin's MK6 code name that Baxter realises his supernatural delusions are, in fact, his reality (pg. 222-223). These sequences, coupled with Baxter being hounded by Sergeant Schoeman (a shape-shifted Katinka), also raise doubts about his innocence. Again, both he and the reader begin to suspect that perhaps Baxter really is the Mountain Killer. Human crafts a series of dialogues in which Baxter's different selves (BizBax and MetroBax, and later CrowBax and SienerBax) debate against each other (pg. 55). These two contrasting components of Baxter's personality argue at several key points in the novel: what to do about Esme's disappearance (pg. 56-58); avoiding possible death at the hands of the elemental 'tick' (pg. 105); about his own sanity (pg. 126, 217, 220-221); and about how he takes advantage of others (pg. 189). His Biz-self is manipulative and psychopathic, arguing for self-preservation, while his Metro-self is caring, arguing for selflessness and for others; his Biz-self is certain he is crazy, while his Metro-self manifests doubts about the psychiatrist's diagnosis. Later, his Crow-self argues for keeping the Mantis machine, while his Siener-self challenges the idea; ultimately, the two agree and Baxter destroys it (pg. 282-283).

Human demonstrates Baxter's transition from angst-ridden teenager to mature, considerate, self-knowing adult in the final sequences of the novel. First, Baxter shuts down his gang, the Spider, and turns over his porn distribution to Anwar and the Nice Time Kids for the sake of arming Ronin and safe-guarding his friends (pg. 247-249);

next Baxter, recognising his own flaws, rejects/relinquishes his potential as a cosmic superpower (pg. 283). Next, Baxter admits to running the porn distribution business at school and takes the fall for it alone, exonerating his gang mates. He also takes the blame for stabbing Anwar, leader of the Nice Time Kids (NTK) gang, when, in fact, Baxter did not - he actually goes to Anwar's aid (pg. 285-286). The consequences of this are that he is expelled from school and he has criminal charges for attempted murder laid against him (pg. 288-289); however, these charges are dropped when Baxter agrees to go to an MK6 sponsored reformatory school that is run by *sangomas* called *Hexpoort* (literally 'Witch gateway', a parody of J.K. Rowling's Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the Harry Potter series). Baxter takes the fall because:

“Maybe it’ll make me feel better about the shit I’ve done. Maybe it’ll stop you guys from having totally fucked-up lives. Maybe I’ll feel like the kind of guy that Esme deserves and not some fucking science-fictional time-travel-spawned half Crow bastard child. Shit, maybe it’ll make me feel that Tomas’s death wasn’t totally and utterly meaningless.” (pg. 287)

His relationship with Esme is resuscitated (pg. 289-290), and he finally acknowledges and demonstrates sincere appreciation of his brother:

“...and then [I] pull him into an awkward hug. I think it’s the first time I’ve ever willingly hugged my brother and the experience is actually not that bad.” (pg. 293)

Ultimately, Human shows Baxter’s transition from egocentric fantasist to mature, self-aware realist (pg. 290). The articulation of Baxter’s self-awareness is best illustrated in the sequence in which he calls his mother and explains his disappearance:

“Mom...listen to me. Over the past few days I’ve become aware that I haven’t exactly been the best person in the world. You’re right; I haven’t been a good brother to Rafe. I haven’t really been much of a good anything to anyone. I’m not going to lie to you anymore...I can’t tell you what I am doing, except to say that it’s important. So you’re going to have to trust me. You’re going to have to realise that I’m almost an adult and that sometimes I need to make my own decisions... I’ll be back soon, Mom... Oh, and I love you.” (pg. 240)

Apocalypse Now Now charts Baxter’s attempts to figure out who he is, and as such the novel presents a detailed exploration of identity formation in a post-Apartheid context. Baxter is an Anglo-Afrikaner; his bloodline connects him to the Boers and to

the English.⁵³ However, Baxter makes it clear that the only way he can continue is to relinquish both. At the conclusion of the Apocalypse he dissipates his connection with the past into dust. Human is suggesting that, while the identities of young South Africans are largely influenced by the spectres of the country's violent past, a meaningful understanding of who they are in the world in the present can only be achieved when the past is defeated and abandoned. Furthermore, it is Baxter's generation – the 'born-frees' (young South Africans born during or after 1994) – who are key to South Africa's success. The adults in the novel are instrumental, but peripheral. They provide the context and the conflict, but Baxter provides the resolution. One of the objectives of my fieldwork was to establish the extent to which young, post-Apartheid South Africans continue to embrace the traditional beliefs of previous generations, and it was evident that while many acknowledge certain traditional features in their modern lives, those elements exist exclusively at the periphery of their lives and world views – as with the *Tokoloshe* itself, it is something they acknowledge but in its essence it lacks any real substance (cf. 1.6). Like Baxter, young South Africans are the lifeblood of the country's future, and their attempts to forge a contemporary individual and/or national South African identity are critical to the country's survival. Human suggests it'll come at a price; the cataclysmic catastrophe of an apocalypse is inevitable after all, but there is a glimmer of hope as Baxter is given the opportunity to 'reset' his reality. It is not the end. So, too is the opportunity to re-define South Africa's future not only a possibility but also necessity, particularly in light of the perceived flaws and failings of the TRC, the unravelling of the Rainbow Nation, and the controversial and current inadequacies of the ANC-led government to steer South Africa effectively to prosperity and peace. As Human suggests in his novel, that prosperity and peace is not unattainable, but achieving it will require a significant, unpleasant and violent transformation.

5.5.7 Racism and xenophobia in South Africa

As with Salomon's novel, Human uses *Apocalypse Now Now* to explore themes of torture/abuse, racism and xenophobia. This is particularly evident in his depiction of attitudes to the magical creatures (the 'Hidden Ones') and in the several

⁵³ Moreillon & Muller explore further this cultural hybridity, drawing on Human's use of cross-culture names for the characters Anwar Davis and Denton de Jaager: Anwar is of Arabic origin, while Davis is a surname of Welsh origin; Denton is of British origin, while De Jaager is an Afrikaans name of Dutch origin (Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 85).

references to conflict between the English and Afrikaners in South Africa and to the Anglo-Boer war (Baxter also mentions at the start of the novel his grandmother divorced his grandfather and joined a ‘racist commune in the Northern Cape’ - pg. 3-4). In much the same way Lun is portrayed as a misunderstood victim in Salomon’s version of South Africa, so too are the Obambo (and several other magical species) portrayed as abused victims in Human’s parallel post-Apartheid South Africa. Tomas, the Obambo, whom Baxter and Ronin seek out at the Flesh Palace, is found by them hiding at the Haven having been given shelter there by Dr Pat (here, the Haven mirrors Salomon’s shelter for abused *Tokoloshes*). Tomas is a sad, defeated refugee who has given up all hope, having been exploited by the Queen and then having suffered violently at the hands of Mirth and the Crows. He was forced to watch his wife and son while they were bled, butchered and killed by Mirth’s scientists (pg. 174-177). When Baxter first arrives at the Haven, Dr Pat explains that it is a place catering specifically for the needs of magical and unusual creatures, such as the exhausted and hungry sprites Baxter and Ronin rescue in the township (pg. 110-113).

When Baxter receives a hostile welcome from a flying lynx, Dr Pat says:

“He’s a bit shy... Our city has been cruel to its unusual inhabitants, and they’re wary of humans.” (pg. 113)

She explains further that *Tokoloshes* have been reduced from ninety-four different species down to fewer than seven, the result of exploitation and abuse. She says:

“The Hidden Ones... Broadly speaking the term refers to all of the magical races that exist on the fringes of human society. It includes the so-called intelligent Hidden races, as well as our animal friends here. Both have been subjected to torture and genocide at the hands of humans... (pg. 114)

Ronin echoes this, later:

“The Hidden are a bunch of fucking problem children that the government wants nothing to do with unless it’s to exploit them. We’re like Nazi concentration camp guards overseeing the genocide.” (pg. 252)

As is the case in Salomon’s novel, *Apocalypse Now Now* presents an original exploration of the continuing discrimination and xenophobia in South Africa. In Human’s novel, it is the magical ‘Hidden Ones’ who are the misunderstood, persecuted ‘other’, and like *Tokoloshe Song*, Human’s work focuses in on the responsibility to address not only misperceptions of identity, but also to deal with the violence that accompanies prejudice.

Although Baxter is an English-speaking South African, his family line is linked directly to the Boers (the early Afrikaners who trekked across South Africa, fleeing and fighting the British, Xhosa and Zulu and others along the way). The novel explores the conflict between the English and the Boers, not only in the sequences about Ester, but also in references to Baxter's visions and escapades in modern-day Cape Town. In Baxter's visions he sees the slaughter of Boers by the English, and Boer women and children being imprisoned in British concentration camps (cf. pg. 7, 24):

“They take our land, they rape our women, they kill our children. *Fokken Engelse duiwels! Ek is n siener.* [Fucking English devils! I am a seer.] (pg. 24)

When Baxter attempts to negotiate a pornography distribution deal with Dirkie Venter, a gangster in Cape Town's predominantly Afrikaans northern suburbs (pg. 31-33, cf. pg. 25), he says of Dirkie:

“[Dirkie's] hatred of English speakers has destroyed any previous attempts to pursue this avenue but he is slowly coming round. He has the greed hook in his mouth and all I need to do is reel him in.” (pg. 25)

Human depicts the encounter between Baxter and Dirkie in bold and pregnant tones, conveying a deep and uncompromising antagonism between English-speaking Baxter and Afrikaans-speaking Dirkie. Baxter describes Dirkie's thick Afrikaans accent as something that ‘makes him sound like he's speaking with a mouthful of cacti’ (pg. 31), and Dirkie says:

“You Englishmen are so full of shit. The South African English are a rootless, bastard race. The Afrikaans have a culture, a tradition; what do the South African English have?” (pg. 32)

And again: “Just like the English, always thinking [Afrikaners are] backward, inbred farmers.” (pg. 32); and Dirkie addresses Baxter simply as ‘*Engelsman*’ ['Englishman']. The animosity between the English and Afrikaners is further politicised by Human in the novel in the struggle between the Crows and the Sieners: the Crows support the British/English, while the Sieners support the Boers (cf. pg. 173). In Ester's interludes, the English enemies are aligned with the ‘Beast’ and ‘the Devil himself’ (pg. 36), and in a fictitious Military Journal report, the Octopus is suggested as ‘a metaphor for the many ‘tentacles’ of the spreading imperialism of the British Empire...’ (pg. 142); the sequence in which her family and friends are massacred by the English is brutally violent (pg. 80-81), and later Ester refers to the

Magistrate (who is Mirth) as ‘an English dog’ (pg. 162). Animosity between English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans is embedded in South Africa’s colonial history, and while the Union of South Africa in 1910 went some way to allay that enmity, antagonism lingered across Apartheid-era South Africa, fuelled by the Afrikaans minority governing the even smaller English-speaking population from 1948 to 1994. Human’s work conveys a strong sense of that rancour, highlighting the tenuous and hostile relationship between the two groups of European immigrants. What is notable here, is that the animosity is present in Human’s post-Apartheid society; the discontent continues. Human alludes to the unease and sense of acrimony that continues to permeate South African society, though in this regard he relates it directly to people of European descent. Prejudice and conflict are deeply embedded in the (white) South African psyche (cf. Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 90). As mentioned above, it is only in Baxter, who embodies a unification of the two cultural groups, that some sense of resolution is possible, and that is only achieved through significant, violent struggle.

5.5.8 The apocalyptic in *Apocalypse Now Now*.

Human’s novel draws on key features of apocalyptic literature and apocalyptic fiction. Apocalyptic literature is associated with Judeo-Christianity, and features the foretelling of ‘supernaturally inspired cataclysmic events that will transpire at the end of the world’ (Lerner, 2016). In the novel, this is depicted in Baxter’s visions (pg. 7, 24, 43, particularly pg. 108, 229, 244). The novel also takes a first-person narrative form, and describes the impending catastrophe in esoteric language (though this is debunked or paraphrased in the case file notes and doctor’s letter (pg. 18-19, 159, 209-212) and several magazine articles (pg. 51-52, 94-96, 141-142, 178-179) that are included as distinctly independent pieces of writing at various points in the novel. The present is depicted pessimistically (particularly the physical and moral well-being of Cape Town, as already discussed above), and the end-of-times is imminent. Furthermore, as is customary in apocalyptic fiction, the novel concerns a particular apocalyptic event. In the climax of the novel, Baxter attempts to prevent that event by relocating it to a parallel dimension. The eventual apocalypse that occurs (albeit in a parallel dimension) is the consequence of both supernatural and man-made intervention; while the battle that is waged is between the two powerful supernatural entities, the actual apocalypse (the destruction of Cape Town by a nuclear explosion) is triggered by Baxter (pg. 277-283).

Apocalyptic literature is by its very nature allegorical, loaded with symbols and signifiers. Human engages with a host of representations in his novel, most of which toy with notions of identity, but some of which unashamedly confront South Africa's colonial and Apartheid past. In his novel, he anchors that past to two primordial powers. The resolution of their conflict is the context required for Baxter's own identity struggle to be resolved. The one is reliant on the other. When the two 'machines' come face to face, Baxter is able to decide which way to act, and only when that is done is he able to be who he needs to be. For all South Africans, the legacy of Apartheid cannot be avoided, and Human suggests it is only when that past is confronted - and battled - and won - that a satisfactory existence can be achieved. Identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa is a complicated matter. Human's allegory argues that only when the inescapable monsters of the past are slain can South Africans figure out who they are and where they are going. However, in Human's world it takes a nuclear apocalypse to achieve that. The processes required for meaningful identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa are devastating, destructive and all-consuming but totally necessary.

5.5.9 *Apocalypse Now Now* as post-Apartheid speculative fiction

Charlie Human's *Apocalypse Now Now* is a striking example of post-Apartheid speculative fiction: with its near-recognizable contemporary South Africa; its cast of *Tokoloshes*, shape-shifting Valkyries, zombies, Crows, Obambos and other magical creatures; its supernatural bounty hunters and battle shamans; its time-travelling and dimension-crossing machines; its astral projecting, prognosticating hero; and with its inexplicable parallel-dimensional apocalypse. Human sculpts an alternate, dystopian Cape Town in which he reflects on the political and social contexts of South Africa, particularly on the lingering racist legacy of Apartheid in a post-Apartheid world (cf. Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 78-79). He does so through the interactions of his principal characters (Baxter, Ronin, Ester and Mirth), crafting a narrative through which the protagonist, Baxter, is able to explore and re-think his own identity. Baxter and Ronin are both typical examples of the speculative fiction hero. They are unconventional, they exist on the fringes of society and they exhibit anti-authoritarian/anti-establishment behaviour. Human's work also embraces its African setting, incorporating African mythologies, beliefs, locations and realities (such as the impoverished desperate responses to the 'township tick' and the reference to human organ harvesting) into its narrative, and Human's work uses the themes of

racial tension, xenophobia, violence and identity formation to magnify and explore in detail, subversively, the links between South Africa's racist colonial/remote and Apartheid/recent past with its imperfect/inconstant post-Apartheid present and its yet-to-be-determined future.

Apocalypse Now Now is significantly shaped and informed by its post-Apartheid context. The novel was written and published in post-Apartheid South Africa and, as demonstrated in this analysis, it reflects upon some of the key issues in post-Apartheid South Africa. The novel effectively re-engages in the critical debate about what is happening in South Africa; by acknowledging the problematic past and by considering directly, conceptually and mercilessly the complex processes of identity formation in current post-Apartheid society. In his allegory, Human questions the nature of a globalised, Pan-African post-Apartheid South Africa, particularly its cultural processes and the formation of civil society. Furthermore, he tackles issues of prejudice and xenophobia within the context of South Africa's complicated colonial and Apartheid past. Human's portrayal of the *Tokoloshe* in *Apocalypse Now Now* is an effective medium to do so. He uses the *Tokoloshe* to highlight the erosion of moral and societal stability. He challenges perceptions about cultural borrowing and ownership: in Human's world, the supernatural are local, pan-African and global all at once. He manipulates cultural prejudices, and he emphasises the transitional nature of current South African society. Also, as is the case with Awerbuck's work, Human demonstrates, quite literally in this novel, South Africa's inability to escape its encompassing historical dissonance: the characters in the novel not only actively look into the future and into the past to secure a meaningful/safe present, but actually travel through time in an attempt to secure a feasible existence. For South Africans, their colonial and Apartheid heritage is inescapable, and the forging of a meaningful reality in the present demands a committed struggle with the monsters of the past (cf. Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 94).⁵⁴ Baxter embodies this; the novel captures the process of his identity struggle as the several fractured units of his identity wrestle with each other, amidst significant self-doubt and external manipulation. In the rhetoric of

⁵⁴ Consider the fall from grace by former leader of the DA, Helen Zille. Zille (Premier of the Western Cape since May 2009) came under fire from opposition politicians and in the press in March 2017 for tweeting a statement in defence of colonialism. In June, Zille was subsequently officially suspended from the party by the DA's Federal Executive (cf. Zondo, 2017; 'DA charges Helen Zille over colonialism tweets', 2017; 'DA Federal Executive takes decision to charge Helen Zille', 2017; Pather, 2017).

Nuttall, Baxter's identity is tangled up in the complications of history, of the present, of the myriad of personal relationships and artefacts in which he finds himself engaged, and tangled up in the complications of his own DNA and ethnic hybridity (cf. Moreillon & Muller, 2016: 81). It is only through the trauma of his apocalyptic experience that Baxter can come to terms with who he is: Human suggests that for South Africans, the struggle towards figuring out identity in post-Apartheid South Africa (be it national or individual) is an incredibly difficult one, and requires some pretty scary monsters to be slain before any hope is possible; it is possible, but it'll take an apocalypse!

5.6 Conclusion

The three works of literature that have been explored in this chapter are each colourful, allegorical commentaries on society and identity in post-Apartheid South Africa. They access the tropes of survival, dystopia and identity (re)formation that are common to works of speculative fiction in popular culture. Each one locates its narrative in a parallel South Africa in which the magical co-exists with the natural. The relationships that play out between the two are used as a vehicle for the authors to illustrate key concerns that are current and prevalent in contemporary South Africa, such as racism/xenophobia, violence, the inescapability of South Africa's problematic past and the challenging processes of identity formation in the new dispensation. Cape Town features as a setting for each of the three works, and its common portrayal as corroded, depraved and nightmare-ish stands in stark contrast to the city's popular and historic representation as South Africa's beautiful, first/Mother city. It is not only South African society that is being re-defined, but also the concrete and historic pillars that house that society.

Each work incorporates at least one *Tokoloshe* into its narrative, the presence of which makes it possible to explore further issues of identity and cultural ownership (as well as questions about issues of sexuality and morality in South African society). Historically, the *Tokoloshe* has emerged in new settings repeatedly following on from fresh interactions between unfamiliar groups across southern Africa. South Africa's transition from Apartheid to democracy is one such instance, triggering new interactions between groups largely ignorant of the cultural makeup of each other. The desegregation of schools across South Africa as an initiator of new socio-cultural interactions is possibly the most significant indicator of that transition. These three works emerge as responses to that transition, and it is fitting that the self-same

Tokoloshe occupies an often dominant role in these works. As I have written previously, the *Tokoloshe* acts as a marker of cultural transition, in that the *Tokoloshe* is the very *thing* being appropriated during that transition. While the several *Tokoloshes* in these stories may be instilled with individual values, each demonstrates the potential of new ownership as a medium for self-redefinition.

South Africa's problematic colonial and Apartheid histories linger into the present in these works, particularly in 'Leatherman' and *Apocalypse Now Now*, and the future is almost always difficult. While customarily speculative fiction facilitates a 'fundamental optimism' in its alternate realities, providing an opportunity for social/political change, this is not necessarily true for, or explicit in, the works explored in this study. In Awerbuck's work, the future presents no hope, while in Salomon's and Human's works, the future does offer a glimmer of hope, but in both cases it comes at a very high price. Salomon and Human depict a South Africa that simply cannot escape its legacy of violence, abuse and prejudice. Cultural misperception and misunderstanding are rooted in South African society, and despite the efforts of philanthropists, government policy and great elder statesmen, the authors suggest that racism/xenophobia are embedded in South African consciousness. Identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa is complicated: Joanna, in 'Leatherman' is desperate to change who she is, but her efforts are thwarted by powers beyond her control; in the character of Baxter, identity confusion is amplified as he attempts to navigate multiple identity crises, and he is only able to resolve those through his participation in a significant cataclysm. The two authors suggest that the processes involved in shaping identity are powerful and (almost) beyond the control of the individual. For Joanna, her struggle is for nought, and, for Baxter, it comes at tremendous sacrifice. For some South Africans, the clarity of a renegotiated identity may never be possible, and for others the required struggle is simply too enormous.

The TRC was an important feature of the first years of democracy in South Africa. It served as a means to diffuse the almost overwhelming bloodlust for vengeance as retribution for the atrocities committed in the name of Apartheid, and also provided a clinically safe avenue to remorse for those guilty of orchestrating or enacting injustice during Apartheid. Coupled with Mandela and Tutu's vision of a 'Rainbow Nation', the TRC helped dissipate the civil violence that was such a distinct feature of the last years, months and days of Apartheid, facilitating a peaceful and

sometimes euphoric transition into democracy. However, more than two decades on, critics (including several of whom, such as Antjie Krog, who were actively involved in the TRC processes) are ambiguous about the overall success of the TRC, with some going on record to call it a ‘failure’. In Salomon’s world, the characters demonstrate no desire for reconciliation. Instead, they demand justice and do whatever it takes to achieve retribution, often through very violent means. In Human’s world, the Occult Truth Commission (Human’s own take on the TRC) is shown to be ineffective, exonerating perpetrators and allowing them to continue in the industries for which they were called into account in the first place; the idea of granting amnesty to those who committed atrocities during Apartheid is not portrayed favourably. A key function of the TRC was to aid South Africa’s transition from an unjust society to one in which South Africans of all races, creeds and colours could live alongside each other peacefully; these two speculative authors suggest that not only did the process of truth and reconciliation fail, but that reconciliation was not what was wanted in the first place. It was justice. In Awerbuck’s world, no matter how strong the desire is for change it is simply unachievable. These notions, albeit they are the notions of speculative writers, are not promising or uplifting prospects for South Africa’s future; they offer up transformation that is extremely difficult and painful to achieve.

Conclusions

The primary intention of this study is to explore shifts in white cultural identity that have occurred via the socio-cultural transactions of South Africans following the dismantling of Apartheid and the democratisation of South Africa. These transactions have been facilitated by the various processes of racial integration, the post-Apartheid programme of nation-building, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as the ubiquity of readily accessible new media within an increasingly globalized world. As such, this work considers what it means to be white or Afrikaans, to be female and sexual, to come of age, or to be free from persecution; all within a post-Apartheid context. To do so I have analysed several post-Apartheid representations/appropriations of the *Tokoloshe* as they are portrayed by white/predominantly English-speaking artists in contemporary works of literature and music from within two genres of South African popular culture: Zef culture (in music and video) and speculative fiction (in the short story and novel formats). My contextual analysis considers what the representations of the *Tokoloshe* in each of these pieces suggests about shifts in white cultural identity in democratised South Africa, by referring to the socio-historic contexts of the works, characterisations, representation of landscape and environment, and commentaries on social issues such as violence, prejudice, morality and tradition.

Die Antwoord's song (and music video) 'Evil Boy' is a fascinating commentary on identity in post-Apartheid South Africa. The song is an in-your-face, aggressive challenge to traditional portrayals of Afrikaans and Xhosa identity, through the characteristically 'Zef' imagery, rhetoric and attitudes of the artists and the rejection of certain features of traditional Xhosa belief. The rite of circumcision (which is a fundamental and significant transition in Xhosa culture to manhood) is rejected outright and those who perform the rite are accused of homosexuality. The song contains lyrical and visual imagery that is vulgar and sexually explicit, and portrays an environment that is sinister or evil; all of which are distinctly atypical, non-traditional features of Afrikaans, Calvinist culture. The artists draw on antithetical representations of Apartheid-era Afrikaans culture to demarcate the zone of their own identity crises in the post-Apartheid era. As such, the artists can be seen as a representation of South Africans (and Afrikaners in particular) who are trying to redefine who they are, hooked as they are to the inescapable past and desperate to

occupy a meaningful place in the present and future. What is particularly interesting in this regard, is that the artists do this using artificially engineered personae that belie their own privileged backgrounds. Jack Parow's song 'Hosh Tokolosh' is similar to 'Evil Boy' in that it also uses the constructed personae and vulgarity of Zef culture as expressions of cultural identity and as a rejection of traditional Afrikaans values. What stands out principally from this piece of work is its trivialisation of traditional belief and its usage of racist tropes. In both instances, these sets of artists give voice – in a very uncharacteristic way – to the generation of Afrikaners (and other South Africans) desperate to figure out who they are supposed to be, and how they are supposed to behave, in this new dispensation. Their rejection of traditional Afrikaans Christian values (the foundations of Afrikaans culture during Apartheid) provides the avenue they need to experiment with forging new identities. However, that process is problematised by their Apartheid roots, their privileged upbringings and the insincerity of their artificial alternate public personae: they are commercial artists, after all, so perhaps their record sales and public profiles outweigh their social commentaries and philosophical musings on the future of Afrikaans culture. The *Tokoloshe* is an effective medium or tool for these artists in this regard: it is a strong visual and phenomenological representation of everything unchristian, unorthodox and unfamiliar to and for white South Africans. *Die Antwoord* access and exploit, in a graphic manner, a version of the *Tokoloshe* that is traditionally not seen publicly in white/Afrikaans culture. By drawing on the indigenous and highly sexualised version of the phenomenon, they pull focus to the cultural reinvention taking place in South Africa, especially for white South Africans.

In Diane Awerbuck's short story, 'Leatherman', the author explores shifts in female sexual identity in contemporary South Africa, by sculpting a character whose views and behaviours challenge female sexuality and identity as defined by the Apartheid-era. In the story, the protagonist not only demonstrates a consciousness that is unorthodox, but is strongly attracted to a creature that is the antithesis of the Apartheid male; Hili is misshapen and filthy, a perversion. Furthermore, the story plays out against the backdrop of Cape Town's Castle, itself an ever-present reminder of South Africa's white, colonial past. Joanna demonstrates an overwhelming urge to engage sexually with the *Tokoloshe*, but is unable to do so as her desires are thwarted by the rules of traditional magic. As a commentary on identity in South Africa, the story stands as an allegory of sorts in which the desire to shed the identities of the past

is overcome by the inexplicable realities of the present. Transformation is simply not possible, regardless of the desire. The use of the *Tokoloshe* in this story is most appropriate, in that the *Tokoloshe* is a powerful representation of suppressed or illicit female sexual desire. In this instance, (as with its usage by the Zef artists) it is a signifier of the unchristian, the unorthodox and the unknown.

The novel, *Tokoloshe Song*, plays out across a southern African urban and rural landscape that is bleak and unattractive. Salomon's work suggests a parallel universe in which the key, problematic features of present-day South Africa are evident. As such the novel touches on South Africa's culture of torture/abuse, retribution/revenge and prejudice/xenophobia, all anchored to the inescapable legacy of South Africa's Apartheid past. Salomon cleverly subverts traditional views of the *Tokoloshe*, portraying the creature rather as a misunderstood and much-maligned sentient being. Salomon then transfers Apartheid-based racist attitudes in reality to the treatment of *Tokoloshes* in his alternate South Africa. He suggests such attitudes and prejudices are deeply entrenched in the consciousness of the majority, and that the capacity to change is extremely difficult. Charlie Human's *Apocalypse Now Now* also unfolds in an alternate reality, characterised by social, moral and physical decay (in fact, the *Tokoloshe* in Human's novel is portrayed as the embodiment of that moral decay). As with Salomon's novel, Human explores the lingering racist and xenophobic sentiments of contemporary South Africa in a society in which the legacy of Apartheid is ever-present, though in this case he explores the mistreatment of the fictional Obambo creatures. Of chief interest for this study is Human's creation of a world in which indigenous, pan-African and global cultural products are all equally appropriated and shared, crafting new and innovative takes on cultural property (this mirrors what the Zef artists do with the *Tokoloshe* in their work). *Apocalypse Now Now* is a coming-of-age story in which a young man battles overwhelming odds in a process of self-discovery and understanding. Human's allegory fits smartly with South Africa's own period of 'adolescence', its transition from the childhood of its early days of democracy to its yet-to-be-reached 'adult' status as a free and just society. In the same way that Baxter undergoes tremendous and extraordinary experiences to shape his identity, so, too, must South Africa undergo significant and often painful experiences to forge its own self-standing identity in the 21st century. For Baxter (as much as for South Africa) that identity formation process is complicated, rooted as it is in multiple, incompatible heritages, acted upon by

powerful and violent forces and characterised by trauma and self-denial/self-sacrifice/selflessness.

In each of the works explored, South Africa's past is omnipresent: it simply cannot be escaped or avoided; and it seems the process of identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa requires South Africans to wrestle with and come to terms with their collective pasts. The artists also all emphasise in some way moral, social and physical decay in their versions of South Africa, where violence (including sexual violence) and racism/xenophobia thrive. A common ingredient with each of these works is their celebration of cultural hybridity (exercised to varying degrees), indicative of significant cultural shifts from Apartheid-era understandings of race, ethnicity and culture. The post-Apartheid milieu is not characterised by Apartheid-esque cultural purity, but rather by heterogeneity, cultural and linguistic mixing and unrestrained cultural borrowing.

In this study, I also set out to provide and demonstrate a comprehensive description and understanding of the *Tokoloshe*. By capturing an understanding of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon across several groups and fields/disciplines through time in southern Africa, I have attempted to exercise that understanding as a vehicle to explore the shifts in culture and identity in post-Apartheid South Africa.

To facilitate a detailed analysis, it has been necessary to form a clear understanding of what exactly the *Tokoloshe* is, by considering its origins, manifestations and social implications. It has also been necessary to read widely across several disciplines to paint a clearer composite image of the phenomenon. This has been aided significantly by fieldwork interviews with specialist practitioners and young 21st century South Africans. My fieldwork experience was rewarding, and provided an opportunity to explore current views of the *Tokoloshe* from practising healers, but also from a representative group of young, 21st century South Africans. In my meeting with the healers, it was clear that the *Tokoloshe* is an intrinsic feature of their faith, while in my interviews with the students it was clear that the *Tokoloshe* exists only at the periphery of their lives, if at all. And while several of the students wished to acknowledge the *Tokoloshe* as a phenomenon in deference to their grandparents, most did not give it a significant value or feel the need to disseminate the phenomenon to future generations. The marked difference between the young South Africans who believe in the *Tokoloshe* and the young non-believers was their rural or urban upbringing, with those growing up or now living in the city less

inclined to believe in the phenomenon. It was also clear during my fieldwork just how prevalent contemporary representations of the *Tokoloshe* are in popular culture: particularly on television, in film, in literature and in music. The product of this investigation is an extensive and detailed documentation of the *Tokoloshe* phenomenon.

At its core, the *Tokoloshe* is a negative entity that is made manifest in a variety of ways through the belief systems, social interactions and media of communities across southern Africa. It is an evolving, multivalent and ubiquitous phenomenon that inhabits the several particular and common cultures and languages of southern Africa. It is the product of cultural borrowing and acculturation over several hundred years. The value attributed to the *Tokoloshe* within each cultural group reflects the socio-historic diversity of South Africans themselves. In light of this, the *Tokoloshe* occupies a place in both traditional belief and contemporary, popular culture. The *Tokoloshe* is variously the personification or representation of evil, a representation of threat/fear (sexual, violent or transitional), an expression of sexuality, sexual desire or sexual identity, a medium for the exercising of power (prompted by jealousy or greed), a source of amusement or entertainment, a device for the attribution of accountability or culpability (social, behavioural or medical), or a literary and political device.

There are three principal issues that stand out following on from my investigation of the *Tokoloshe*. The first - and most significant - concerns the evolutionary nature of the *Tokoloshe*. It appears this phenomenon has existed in southern Africa for several centuries, but its features, characteristics and behaviour have shifted across time, morphing to accommodate the specifics of each cultural group by whom it has been appropriated, and taking on several of the characteristic features of other symbols of belief in southern Africa as it has done so to emerge as a kind of overarching, all-embracing/composite, singular phenomenon. Secondly, as the features of the *Tokoloshe* are so outstanding, it is possible to map out the progress of the *Tokoloshe* across southern Africa, observing points of cultural exchange. The third key issue is the prominence the phenomenon has in the lives of everyday citizens across southern Africa. While belief in the *Tokoloshe* varies across several demographics (age, ethnicity, geographic or urban/rural location), the phenomenon is undeniably ‘present’ in contemporary life: in the print and news media, on television and in film, on the music charts, in court rooms, in church, on the streets and in the

school playgrounds, in the flexible rhetoric of politicians and satirists. The *Tokoloshe* is also the source of a great deal of economic industry, particularly with reference to traditional healing and traditional medicines. The provision of agricultural, manufacturing, marketing and distribution resources devoted to managing the *Tokoloshe* makes a very real impact on the formal and informal economy of South Africa and across its borders.

It is the mysterious and shape-shifting form and behaviour of the multivalent and adaptable *Tokoloshe* that make it a feasible instrument for an exploration of identity (re)formation in post-Apartheid South Africa. The *Tokoloshe* has been appropriated, re-invented and re-defined by the people of southern Africa over several hundred years. This thesis explores such appropriation by white artists exploring the identity (re)formation processes of white South Africans in the 21st century. In the works of the Zef musicians/song-writers, identity (re)formation is expressed as a deliberate, contradictory agenda; in Awerbuck's short story it concerns unsuccessful attempts to escape Apartheid-era female identity; in *Tokoloshe Song*, it is the misadventures of the disenfranchised 'other'; and in *Apocalypse Now Now* it is the evolutionary/transitional nature of 'pubescent' democratic/post-Apartheid South African society.

This investigation argues that the formation of, and shifts in, white cultural identity in the post-Apartheid present are significantly and inescapably influenced by South Africa's Apartheid past, framed as it was by colonialism and policies of racism. In the case of the Zef artists, they reject explicitly the past frameworks and signifiers, and thus their identity is characterised by antithesis (this may not be true for all Afrikaans artists, but it certainly appears to be true for the ones in this study). Awerbuck tackles head-on Apartheid interpretations of female sexuality and in her work explores a contemporary identity that is similarly antithetical in its nature.

Furthermore, the transformation and identity (re)formation processes for white South Africans are particularly traumatic, demanding self-denial, self-deprivation and ultimately selflessness. The early years of South Africa's transformation were accompanied by the ideology of a 'Rainbow Nation' and the underlying principles of reconciliation and forgiveness. Today, critics bemoan the unravelling of the rainbow and argue the TRC failed; violence and xenophobia are prevalent, current, indicative and physical reminders of the ongoing traumas of that transformational process. Human demonstrates the difficulties of the transformation and identity (re)formation

process, dragging his protagonist through a harrowing and devastating set of experiences in order for him to emerge transformed. Those catastrophic experiences are unpleasant but essential elements in the process of transformation.

This thesis also argues that the formation of white South Africans' evolving hybrid cultural identities is informed by their national, Pan African and global contexts. South African cultural identity in the 20th century was determined by the colour of one's skin and characterised by a debilitating attitude of exceptionalism ('We are not the same as the rest of Africa'): in the 21st century, skin tone (and its cultural connotations) is but one ingredient in the pantry of identity formation in contemporary South Africa. Migration, globalisation and the advent of new media have all helped create an environment in which the sampling of identities and the appropriation of culture from across southern Africa, Africa and, indeed, from every corner of the globe, is within the grasp of almost every citizen, not least of whom are those white South Africans for whom the structures and symbols of the past are no longer valid. The deconstruction of Apartheid and the simultaneous advent of a globalised world has further complicated the formation of cultural identity in South Africa, in that South Africans have shifted from being defined by one core element only i.e. race, to a world in which you can define yourself according to anything (as supported in law by South Africa's liberal constitution). The cultural hybridisation and appropriation in each of these five products demonstrates this shift most clearly: from the American-inspired coloured 'gangsta' parlance of *Die Antwoord* and Jack Parow to the Pan-African and trans-global menagerie of supernatural critters in Human's parallel Cape Town. To paraphrase Ninja: 21st century white South Africans are like all these different people, paradoxically transfigured into one.

Postscript

As I write this, it is only three days since South Africa's new president gave his State of the Nation address to South Africa's parliament and to the world. In that address, Ramaphosa refers to Nelson Mandela seven times, including notably at the start and conclusion of his speech. Ramaphosa (quoted in 'SONA2018', 2018) begins thus:

In just over 150 days from now, the peoples of the world will unite in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. It is a day on which we, as South Africans, will remember the life of one of the most remarkable leaders this country and this continent – and indeed, the world – has known. We will recount Madiba's long walk to freedom, his

wisdom, his unfailing humility, his abiding compassion and his essential integrity. We have dedicated this year to his memory and we will devote our every action, every effort, every utterance to the realisation of his vision of a democratic, just and equitable society. Guided by his example, we will use this year to reinforce our commitment to ethical behaviour and ethical leadership. In celebrating the centenary of Nelson Mandela we are not merely honouring the past, we are building the future. We are continuing the long walk he began, to build a society in which all may be free, in which all may be equal before the law and in which all may share in the wealth of our land and have a better life. We are building a country where a person's prospects are determined by their own initiative and hard work, and not by the colour of their skin, place of birth, gender, language or income of their parents.

And concludes thus:

Now is the time for all of us to work together, in honour of Nelson Mandela, to build a new, better South Africa for all.

It is, no doubt, a deliberate political construct that this address was given in the present company of former presidents F.W. de Klerk and Thabo Mbeki, seated together, and both of whom served together as Mandela's deputies during the first years of his presidency (until de Klerk's resignation in 1996). Given the political turbulence of the past decade (including instability within the ANC), the calculated drama of this event (both in terms of its actors and its speeches) suggests that the South African nation may find itself entering an era of renewed Mandela-ism. It will be fascinating to see how this plays out, and what it will mean for South Africa's citizens.

Appendices

Appendix A – List of products

The following is a resource list of media in which the *Tokoloshe* is featured as a character, theme or symbol. It is by no means an exhaustive list, but it does consider a broad range of representations of the *Tokoloshe* in a variety of media, including literature (biography, children's literature, novels, poems, and short stories); theatre; film; television; music; advertising; and cartoons.

1. In Pre-Apartheid era (prior to 1948)

Writing in Afrikaans

Smith, T. 1946. *Ons Springbok-rugbyspelers en Tokkelossie*. Afrikaanse Pers.

Poems in Afrikaans

Van den Heever, C. 1932. 'Die wagtertjie stap' in *Die nuwe boord*. Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Short stories

Scully, W.C. 1895. *Kafir Stories: Seven Short Stories*. London, T. Fisher Unwin, [online], available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/20491/20491.txt>, last accessed on 16 October 2013.

2. Apartheid era (1948-1994)

Children's literature

Heale, J. 1986. *The Tokoloshe Stone*. Tafelberg.

Parker, C. 1987. *Witch Woman on the Hogsback*. Pretoria: De Jager-Haum.

Pitcher, D. & Rutherford, M. 1994. *Tokoloshi: African Folk Tales Retold*. Ten Speed Press.

Segal, R. 1960. *The Tokolosh*. Sheed and Ward.

Stewart, I. 1986. *Zeeb and the Tokoloshe King*. Merlin.

Film

Tokoloshe. 1965. Dir. Peter Prowse. Perf. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Sid James, Saul Pelle. DVD.

Music

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Appendix B – Lyrics

1. ‘Tokkelos’ (Karin Ferreira)

Text redacted for copyright purposes.

2. 'Evil Boy' (Die Antwoord)

Text redacted for copyright purposes.

Text redacted for copyright purposes.

3. ‘Hosh Tokolosh’ (Jack Parow)

Text redacted for copyright purposes.

Text redacted for copyright purposes.

4. **‘Gimme Hope, Jo’anna’ (Eddy Grant)**

Text redacted for copyright purposes.

Text redacted for copyright purposes.

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