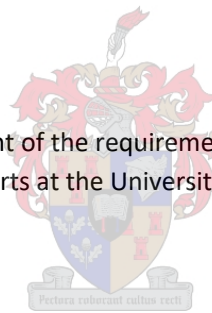**WHITE ON THE SILVER SCREEN: THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN IDENTITY IN INTERNATIONAL FILM**

By

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Dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Masters in Visual Art Education in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Stellenbosch

Supervisor: Prof. Elmarie Costandius

December 2021

DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: December 2021

ABSTRACT

In the context of 'identity', much attention has been given to academic considerations of diversity, or the lack thereof, in the international film industry. While this is positive, there is much opportunity in this field for researchers to consider the iterations of identity which do exist and are emphasised through this global medium. This study takes advantage of this opportunity, critically unpacking and discussing the nature of the representation of white South African identity in international popular and visual culture, namely film, in order to better understand how such representations can influence identity construction and perception in a post-apartheid context on a global scale. Therefore, a consideration of texts (films) which communicate a white South African identity was conducted in this study. The unpacking of these texts, their inherent identities and the theorisation of their roles in the construction of an overarching white South African identity through this medium, was informed by a theoretical framework of identity, representation, gender theories, visual culture, media psychology and the narratology of Roland Barthes. Social identity formation involves the definition of one's self in relationship to the defined identities of others, informed by a consumption of the world around you. Academically, pedagogically or otherwise, this indicates an importance in considering the signs and symbols which constantly communicate and construct identity through the visual narratives which we consume, like that which this thesis dissects. This study is an explorative study which aims to unpack patterns of representation in popular and visual culture in order to define the nature of a white South African identity being perpetuated internationally. Therefore, a qualitative research approach was used in this study when analysing the texts explored, unpacking the nature, characteristics and behaviours of applicable characters in order to define overarching patterns of identity. This study focusses specifically on white South African identity communicated through narratives in film, as this identity is contextually relevant to me as a white South African academic in a contemporary, and globally interconnected, world. However, what is explored here is not only relevant to those who share this identity. This research is applicable to anyone who consumes internationally tailored media which communicate identities to its audience. This study shows that the majority of the most proliferated and popular texts including this identity aid in constructing an identity which is overarchingly male and evil. Female examples tend to oppose such a characterisation of this identity but are dwarfed in amount and popularity by the male examples which control the formation and communication of this identity. Such a theorisation was based on extensive discussion of texts which present this identity to a South African and international audience.

OPSOMMING

In die konteks van 'identiteit' word aansienlike aandag gegee aan akademiese ontledings van diversiteit, of die gebrek daaraan, in die internasionale rolprentbedryf. Alhoewel dit bemoedigend is, is daar talle geleenthede op hierdie gebied vir navorsers om ondersoek in te stel na die bestaande voorstellings van identiteit wat deur hierdie globale medium beklemtoon word. Hierdie studie het van hierdie geleentheid gebruik gemaak aan die hand van 'n kritiese ondersoek na en bespreking van die aard van die voorstelling van wit Suid-Afrikaanse identiteit in internasionale populêre en visuele kultuur, naamlik rolprente, ten einde beter begrip te verkry van die manier waarop hierdie voorstelling identiteitskonstruksie en -persepsie in 'n postapartheidkonteks op globale skaal kan beïnvloed. Tekste (rolprente) wat 'n wit Suid-Afrikaanse identiteit kommunikeer, is dus in hierdie studie ondersoek. Die ontleding van hierdie tekste, hul inherente identiteite en die teoretisering van hul rolle in die konstruksie van 'n algehele wit Suid-Afrikaanse identiteit deur hierdie medium is gerig deur 'n teoretiese raamwerk van identiteit, voorstelling, genderteorieë, visuele kultuur, mediasielkunde en die narratologie van Roland Barthes. Die vorming van sosiale identiteit behels die definiëring van jouself in verhouding tot die gedefinieerde identiteite van ander, gerig deur verbruik van die omliggende wêreld. Hetsy op akademiese, pedagogiese of ander wyse, dui dit op die belang van inagneming van die tekens en simbole wat deurlopend identiteit deur die visuele narratiewe wat ons verbruik kommunikeer en saamstel, soos in hierdie tesis ontleed. Hierdie studie het ten doel gehad om patrone van voorstelling in populêre en visuele kultuur te identifiseer ten einde die aard van 'n internasionaal bestendigde wit Suid-Afrikaanse identiteit te definieer. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingbenadering is dus gebruik in die ontleding van die tekste asook die aard, kenmerke en gedrag van toepaslike karakters ter definiëring van oorkoepelende patrone van identiteit. Die studie het spesifiek gefokus op wit Suid-Afrikaanse identiteit wat deur narratiewe in rolprente gekommunikeer word, aangesien hierdie identiteit kontekstueel toepaslik is vir my as 'n wit Suid-Afrikaanse akademikus in 'n moderne, internasionaal verbonde wêreld. Die studie is egter nie net toepaslik op diegene met 'n ooreenstemmende identiteit nie; die navorsing is ook van toepassing op enige verbruiker van internasionale pasgemaakte media wat identiteite aan hul gehore kommunikeer. Die studie toon dat die meerderheid populêre tekste wat hierdie identiteit insluit, bydra tot die konstruksie van 'n identiteit wat oorheersend manlik en boos is. Vrouevoorbeelde is in die algemeen die teenoorgestelde van hierdie karakterisering, maar word met betrekking tot hoeveelheid en popalariteit deur die mansvoorbeelde, wat die vorming en kommunikasie van hierdie identiteit beheer, oorskadu. Sodanige teoretisering is gegrond op 'n omvattende bespreking van tekste wat hierdie identiteit aan 'n Suid-Afrikaanse en 'n internasionale gehoor voorhou.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I wish to thank everyone at the University of Stellenbosch, not only for allowing me admission to this academic programme but also for the support and understanding provided during the course of this research. The last two years have been some of the most difficult and tumultuous years in recent memory, for both South Africa and the world. During a time where pressures and stresses are heightened by the covid-19 pandemic and all it brings in tow, endeavouring to complete academic research can become difficult. The university has dealt with these past years, and its students, with incredible care and understanding. Being treated as a human, one who is dealing with more than just their academic responsibilities, is something that does not go unnoticed in this pressurised world.

This research has not only aided in my own academic amelioration but has also worked to improve my capacity to critically engage with the globalised society which envelopes me each day. Such effects would not have been possible without the guidance provided by my supervisor Prof. Elmarie Costandius. Her input into this academic research has provided constant direction, from inception of research topic to the completion of study.

I would also like to give thanks to those in my life who have had to put up with me during my research. Your personal and emotional support during an undertaking of this nature has been what has made its completion possible.

Lastly, I would like to thank Netflix, Amazon-Prime, DStv and the affordability of DVDs for everything they have contributed to this thesis.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to two incredible women: Emilie du Trevou and Heather Pearse.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Rationale

I consider myself as a 'film fanatic'. A 'TV buff'. Someone who loves to sit through films and television series with friends and loved ones, while constantly interrupting their internationally tailored entertainment to remind them of the actors and actresses names, their previous projects and character similarities to other characters in popular and visual culture. Historically, being a 'film buff', in both the loose or strict sense of the word, was more niche than it is today. It was reserved for those who had excess time, money and perhaps access to technology which would allow them to experience and collect texts from the small or silver screen. People like Roger Ebert[1] and Barry Rouge[2]. It was these privileged few who became critics and informed us about films, the good and the bad, because we didn't have sufficient experience and exposure to inform ourselves to the same degree. But as we move into the 21st century this is no longer the case[3]. Technological advances, which have come with this new age of communication, have led to increased ease of access to any and all forms of popular and visual culture entertainment. This has resulted in an international society where the majority of the world population has almost any film or television series sitting neatly at the ends of their fingertips[4]. As I am typing these words, I know that this very computer at which I sit has the capacity to provide me a private viewing of anything from Nosferatu to Interstellar[5], from The Gods Must be Crazy to Avengers: Endgame[6]. My cell phone on the desk next to me has that same capability, as does the smart TV in my house, and the PlayStation attached. Anyone and everyone with fair economic means can now be a 'film fanatic'.

This increased access has led to an increase in the power of such media. Not only regarding the financial clout of the large corporations and conglomerates which mould and produce such media, but also the social power of these texts to influence the society which consumes them. This started to become a more palpable reality after my time in the United States. In 2013 I worked in New York City, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the United States and the world[7]. As such, I met a variety of people from around the globe. An inordinate number of these people, upon finding out I was South African, would compare me to their only point of reference for South Africans: film and television. I would often hear: "Oh, like those gangsters from Chappie[8]," or "Hey, like that guy in Blood diamond[9]", quoting lines from films which informed their ideologies and perceptions of identity. A giggle and a "If you're from Africa, then why are you white?" was a common response I received, as it is a popular and well recalled line from the film Mean Girls[10].

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[1] Roger Ebert is an American film critic*
[2] Barry Rouge is a South African film critic*
[3] Contemporary film critics are no longer house hold names. No longer are there shows like Maltin on Movies or Siskel and Ebert.
[4] Almost 4.54 billion people were active internet users as of January 2020, which is 59 percent of the global population. China, India and the United States are the top countries in terms of internet users. Worldwide; DataReportal; January 2020.
[5] Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror, commonly referred to as Nosferatu, is a 1922 silent German horror film directed by F. W. Murnau, and Interstellar is a mind-bending science fiction film, with a large CGI budget, directed by Christopher Nolan.
[6] The Gods Must be Crazy is a 1980 South African independent comedy film written and directed by Jamie Uys, and Marvel's Avengers: Endgame is a 2019 American superhero film directed by Anthony and Joe Russo.
[7] New York City, NY, is listed as the 2nd most cosmopolitan city in the United States, and the 6th most cosmopolitan city in the world, with 37% of its population born outside of the country. (Periona, 2018)
[8] Chappie (2015), Directed by Neil Blomkamp, stars Watkin Tudor Jones (Ninja) and Anri du Toit (Yolandi Visser) as South African gangsters.
[9] Blood Diamond (2006), directed by Edward Zwick, starring Leonardo DiCaprio as a South African arms dealer.
[10] Mean Girls (2003), starring Lindsay Lohan as a white female who moved back to the United States from southern Africa.

This inspired thoughts about the way in which international identity creation occurs in a contemporary society that is obsessed with the consumption of film, television and popular and visual culture. I believe it's safe to say that the perception of identity, especially on a larger international level, is informed by the representations of identity we consume, often through popular and visual culture.

Media Psychology theorist David Giles notes how, within society, what we consume in terms of culture and the ideologies inherent in such media, have a large impact and influence on the formation of our own ideologies (Giles, 2003. p.7).

This study shall critically unpack and discuss the nature of the representation of white South African identity in international popular and visual culture, namely film, in order to better understand how such representations can influence identity perception in a post-apartheid context on a global scale.

1.2 Background of study

In contemporary times there has been a surge of representations of white South African characters in international mainstream popular and visual culture such as films, television series and even video games. The South African blog, Safro, runs a database that collects information on how South Africa, along with its cities and people, are mentioned in international movies and television. According to Safro's findings, South Africa ranks 29th in the top 30 countries referenced in international movies and television, specifically in English-speaking international content and content not focused on or set in or produced by South Africa. Of the African countries on this list, South Africa ranks second to Egypt, which comes in at 17th. If this is any indication of the realities in mainstream popular and visual culture, then this means that there is a plethora of examples to explore. These include but are definitely not limited to:

In Film:
- Andy Serkis as Ulysses Klaue in Black Panther (2018) and Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015)
- Die Antwoord as Gangter's in Chappie (2015)
- Lindsay Lohan as Cady Heron in Mean Girls (2004)
- Tom Sturridge as Jon Dondon in Velvet Buzzsaw (2019)
- Nicole Kidman as Silvia Broome in The Interpreter (2005)
- Sharlto Copley as Agent Kruger in Elysium (2013), and Vernon in Free Fire (2016)
- Embeth Davidtz as Dr Samantha Unger in Europa Report (2013)
- Colm Feore as Derek Olson in The Sum of All Fears (2002)
- Ian Roberts as Captain Smit in Tsotsi (2005)

. . . to mention but a few.

In Television:
- Harry Peacock as Preet in Bad Education
- Arnold Vosloo as Jakob Vries in Crisis
- Arnold Vosloo as Armand Smit in Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
- Arnold Vosloo as Jost Van Der Byl in Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan
- Harry Enfield as Pik in Harry and Paul
- Broden Kelly and Zachary Ruane as South African Treasure Hunters in Aunty Donna's Big Ol' House of Fun
- and the very poorly named character Sanele Chetty in NCIS

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. . . to mention but a few.

In Video Games:
- Hoyt Volker in Far Cry 3
- Kuben Blisk in Titanfall 2
- Vernon Locke in Payday 2
- Afrikaans Mercenaries in Far Cry 2
- Afrikaans Mercenaries in Metal Gear V
- Evil South African Mercenaries in Unchartered 4: A Thief's End
- Dr Malan in Stasis

The sheer number of examples available indicates the necessity to explore such a reality further, and to unpack the nature of the identity being created on this world stage, as well as how this could affect the identity perceptions and ideologies of those who consume such images. As such, the theoretical framework, by which the research in this thesis will be conducted, will include representations of identity and visual culture.

As reflective and cognitive members of society, we need to be aware of how our perceptions and ideologies are being moulded and encoded by aspects and narratives found within the powerhouse of international popular and visual culture. An ability to critically understand the world around us requires an ability to have a critical dialogue with your perceptions of that world. This is why I see this topic not only important and interesting to me as a White South African but also as an academic within the realm of Visual Art and Education.

So why is this important? Globalisation and the improvement of information technology has allowed for more global assimilation with regard to entertainment and the consumption of media. This means that the population of most countries have access to a similar proliferation of mainstream films and television – an example of this international propagation is the fact that the film Frozen[11] was dubbed in 41 languages. An example which may be important to what this study would explore is the Film Black Panther. This film is perhaps the most pertinent of examples to explore due to the character of Ulysses Klaue. Klaue is a supervillain who has appeared in two films as part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe and the Avengers franchise. The two films that Klaue, portrayed by British actor Andy Serkis, appears in are Avengers Age of Ultron and Black Panther. On the list of highest grossing films of all time, those two films sit at No. 10 and No. 11 respectively. In the United States, around 54% of population, aged 18 to 34, have seen one or more of the films from Marvel's 'The Avengers' series[12]. This viewership is not surprising given that all of the films currently released as part of the Avengers franchise rank among the top ten movies of all time in terms of box office revenue. The Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) encompasses the Avengers movies, 18 other superhero films, multiple television series and short films. The MCU is the highest grossing film franchise of all time, with its box office revenues towering over franchises like Lord of the Ring, Harry Potter and Star Wars. Marvel Entertainment is a subsidiary of massive entertainment industry conglomerate The Walt Disney Company. Disney, well-known for its appeal to younger audiences, ranks among the most valuable brands in the world, and its other subsidiary companies include major film studios such as Pixar, Lucasfilm and 20th Century Fox, as well as television networks like the Disney Channel, ESPN and FX.

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[11] Frozen (2013), directed by Jennifer Lee and Chris Buck, produced by The Disney Company, who also own and produce films in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU).
[12] According to Statista article researched and written by Watson, A for Statista (2020).

The sheer reach of films like this internationally, and the immense global viewership that comes with such reach, renown and revenue, is an indication of the ability of these films to proliferate the consumption of the identities formed and portrayed. This creates an opportunity for the assimilation of such identities into the ideologies and identity perceptions of viewers the world over.

1.3 Problem Statement and Focus

As critical citizens in an era characterised by intense globalisation and an increased availability of technology (and therefore access to popular and visual culture and global entertainment) it is important to understand the nature of certain narratives that are proliferated within popular visual art forms. This study will aim to provide such a critical understanding with regard to white South African identity.

Currently there is a lack of critical understanding regarding identity proliferation in popular and visual culture and the entertainment industry. The entertainment industry is an ever-growing contemporary global power-house and in order to understand what informs the perceptions of our own identity as well as others within society it is important to critically understand the types of identities which shape the perceptions of those who consume such media.

As a response to this, this study proposes to provide an in-depth analysis and critical understanding of the nature of white South African identity propagated in mainstream international film. This will provide an understanding of how identity perceptions are encoded on a larger global level regarding white South African identity.

The focus here will be on white South African identities in globally accessible film. Upon initial inspection is it clear to see most examples of white South Africans in popular and visual culture possess two common characteristics: They are male and they are the bad guys. This construction of identity is not a surprising one, in society or in the films that mirror society, because of South Africa's colonial and apartheid past, where most prominent figures were male. This is, off course, not true for all SA males which indicates the importance and relevance of this research. This notion will be looked at with reference to relevant case study examples as well as comparing the nature of female examples to those of male, in the construction of this white South African identity. This therefore creates sub questions within this study's main research question. These questions were: How is a gendered identity created within representations of white South Africans in mainstream popular and visual culture as well as an exploration of the morality of the characters that are represented. These will help unpack certain patterns which emerge in mainstream popular and visual culture regarding white South African identity, aiding in deciphering how a global society, which consumes these representations, construct perceptions of white South Africans.

This was done with a focus on those representations within mainstream international popular and visual culture specifically in international films. The selection of media to explore in this study is due not only to its quantifiable reach and therefore revenue, but also because they contain more complex, layered and complete representations of identity due to their narrative structures.

This thesis looks at "Tinsel town as Teacher"[13], unpacking what is being taught regarding identity through this global powerhouse of a visual art form.

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[13] A phrase I derive from the compelling title of Alan S. Marcus and Jeremy D. Stoddard's writing which explores the role of Hollywood film in high school classroom teaching. (Marcus & Stoddard, 2007)

The focus of this research is to explore and define the nature of white South African identity as created, portrayed and proliferated through mainstream popular and visual culture, namely film, and therefore how white South African identity is created and portrayed in post-apartheid popular and visual culture. The theoretical perspectives used in regards to this will be visual culture, identity and representation.

1.4 Research Questions

Within the efforts of this study, the research question is: How is white South African identity created and portrayed and in Post-Apartheid Popular and Visual Culture internationally? This will not focus on the reasoning or inspiration for the creation of these figures, for example what informed or inspired the writers to create the character that way, but will instead unpack the representations themselves – unpacking the nature of the characters being consumed internationally and therefore the creation of international white South African identity. The sub-research questions which would inform such an explorative research question relate to further unpacking the role of gender and ethics in the perpetuation of these characters. There is an overarching disparity between the behaviour of male and female characters, ethically speaking, and therefore a sub research question within this thesis is: How does the representation of male white South African characters created and portrayed in post-apartheid popular and visual culture differ from the representation of female white South African characters created and portrayed in post-apartheid popular and visual culture regarding the creation of a white South African identity internationally through such media? The second sub-research question brings into question the ethics of these white South African characters who aid in influencing the identity perceptions of an international audience. In narrative, especially contemporary mainstream narrative products, there exists the common trope of bad guy vs good guy[14]. Heroes vs villains. It appears that, within this trope, white South African characters fulfil the role of villain. Therefore, a research sub-question is created: what kind of ethical character is constructed and perpetuated through the portrayal of white South African characters in international popular and visual culture.

1.5 Aims and Objectives

The aims of this explorative study is to unpack, with the aid of the specific case studies explored, an overarching construction of white South African Identity which is perpetuated by a variety of entertainment media and mediums internationally.

As such, the objectives of this study are to:

- Determine the characteristics and behaviours conveyed in the creation and portrayal of white South African characters in international popular and visual culture entertainment.
- Determine the ethical nature of the identity expressed and created by the portrayal of white South African characters in international popular and visual culture entertainment.
- Explore the influence of gender on the portrayal of South African characters in international entertainment media.

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[14] As Burke writes, in the opening of Heroes and Villains in American Film (1990), "Entertainment films continue the progress of hero characters and provide a rich elaboration of more villainous protagonists, as specific genres and characters evolve to meet the personal and cultural demands of a changing society."

1.6 Overview of Research Methodology

A qualitative research approach is the most appropriate for a study of this nature as qualitative research is not only necessary for unpacking something descriptively without numerically quantifying the results, but is also more useful when analysing a smaller sample size (Marshall, 1996). A relatively small sample size of selected case studies will be discussed and unpacked in the endeavours of this explorative study – a necessity because if this study was to explore every example in popular and visual culture, it would only finish being written when Hollywood 'run out of the need for bad guys' in action movies.

This study is an explorative study which aims to unpack patterns of representation in popular and visual culture in order to define the nature of a white South African identity being perpetuated internationally. As such, no ultimate and wholly true construction of white South African identity representation in entertainment media will be identified. The patterns explored in this study cannot be applied to all examples of the vast expanse of contemporary visual entertainment, and rather represent an over-arching pattern of the presentation of such an identity.

1.7 Boundaries and Limitations of study

In 1994 South Africa, after countless years of turmoil, finally wrestled itself out of the tightly clenched grasp of the senseless, iniquitous and racially divided reign of apartheid and became a democratic nation. The clenched fist of apartheid was a white one, and this backwards regime which was oblivious to the human rights of the majority of its people, served whites.

As a white South African myself, it makes sense to me that white South Africans would be the bad guys in movies, especially movies post 1994, because historically they are, in the generalised sense, the bad guys. Therefore the root of this representation is reasonably apparent. This also makes the endeavour to look into the creative genesis of these characters a frankly unnecessary and unappealing one. This leads me to the first limitation of this study – a lack of understanding regarding the development of these characters. There would have been a variety of influences which would have impacted the writers and producers of any of the characters discussed in this study, and those which aren't, and cataloguing and curating those varying influences into this study would require access that I do not currently hold, and would also, with regards to the aims of this study, stray away from the point. But the absence of this genetic information on the formation of these characters and representations does retract from this study in that it removes a layer of understanding from beneath the visual representations of these identities. Take visual art as a metaphor for this: a visual art scholar can look at an artwork of reasonable renown and be moved and impacted by what they see, without any knowledge of what pigment was used in each stroke of the paintbrush, or even without knowing who painted it. But that knowledge may be useful in being able to better read or understand the work. That is the limitation within this study – a lack of knowledge regarding the genesis of the characters – but is a limitation which is made up for through full knowledge of the characters themselves which are being presented.

Other limitations include those which are characteristic of qualitative, case study based, research. These limitations include that the data collected will not be able to provide true statistical representation of all data in the field but rather data collected from specific examples from a specific timeframe within that field and from the perspective of the researcher. These limitations also include the fact that the case study

research method requires a relatively small sample size in order to be effective and to produce an applicable amount of data to be analysed in this study. This reality therefore makes this study an exploratory study into the overarching patterns of representation and identity production in this field, especially considering the lack of study into such a field.

1.8 Structure of Thesis

This thesis will be structured accordingly:

Chapter 1 includes the introduction and background to the study – describing the catalyst and importance of research, research methods, research problems, aims, questions and objectives.

Chapter 2 is comprised of the main theoretical perspectives where the role of visual culture, identity and representation theories is considered regarding this study.

Chapter 3 explores visual methodology within the study.

Chapter 4 is where the considerations of White South African international film identity production are presented. Here is where the discussion of case study research is presented, as well its link with theoretical perspectives.

Chapter 5 concludes the study conducted in this thesis, remarking on the importance of the qualitative data presented in the thesis and the implications of study.

1.9 Synthesis to Introduction

There are a variety of existing studies which explore questions of a similar nature. The majority of those look at the importance and lack of representation, usually of a specific race, within mainstream popular and visual culture[15] [16]. Other's look at the ability of media to teach and encode[17], while other's look at certain different identity proliferation in popular and visual culture[18]. Although some of these exist as parallels to this study, none explore the identity that is proliferated regarding white South African identity, an identity which seems to constantly raise its intriguing head thought film, television and video game narrative.

This study will fill that gap in the existing theoretical research of such a space by specifically dealing with and unpacking the overriding white South African identity constructed and portrayed in visual entertainment.

This study shall therefore work to improve one's understanding of white South Africans' identity and how it is created and perceived on a global level, informed by the immense strength of global film and popular and visual culture. This will in turn allow one to better understand the perceptions of one's own identity

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[15] An example which I find particularly interesting is A Content Analysis of Gender Representations in Independent Video Games (Nicholl, 2017) by Grace Anne Nicholl, which explores how the way in which characters perform their gender within media can serve as an indicator of expected gender roles in society.

[16] An example of this is Race, Gender, Hollywood: Representation in Cultural Production and Digital Media's Potential for Change (Erigha, 2015), which explores the importance of race representation and the effect of the lack thereof.

[17] Media Psychology (Giles, 2003)

[18] Constructing Islamophobia: Hollywood (Veldhausz, 2016)

when perceived by those who inhabit a geographically distant yet culturally close space at a time characterised by such global interconnectivity of media. And furthermore, white South African's can better recognise the influences on the creation and perception of their own identity within the 21st century.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives

The theoretical perspectives used within this thesis will help with the dissection of these representations in popular and visual culture. As such, Identity, Representation and gender theories will be used in order to unpack the proliferated representations and their influence on the perceptions of those who consume such proliferation. Alongside this, the theoretical perspective of Visual Culture, the narratology of Roland Barthes and Media psychology theory will be used to structure this study when addressing the medium through which these identities are communicated to an audience, and the inherent influence of such media regarding on the behaviour and mindsets of that medium's audience.

2.2 Identity

The self and identity are social products (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012). The social construction of self and identity can be seen in three different ways. Firstly, one does not manifest their identity based upon nothing but instead based upon their social context - from what matters to others. "This means that people are likely to define themselves in terms of what is relevant in their time and place: Group memberships (e.g., religion, race, or gender), family roles, looks, school attainment, or athletic prowess should matter more or less depending on what is valued in one's culture and in one's place within social hierarchy" (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.76). Secondly, one's identity needs to be reinforced by exterior forces, those around us. Therefore, people tend to feel more confident in their selves and identities, and are more capable of attaining the goals which link to that identity, in social contexts which support one's identity than in social contexts which do not (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012). Thirdly, one adapts what is important to one's identity depending on one's social environment. "The aspects of one's self and identity that matter in the moment are determined by what is relevant in the moment" (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.76). The notions, emphasised and expressed in the writing of Oyserman, Elmore and Smith (2012), indicate the level of intricacy and the intense relevance of identity theory in a contemporary consideration of ourselves and the world around us. The complexity of this theoretical perspective shall be unpacked with regards to identity theory's application to the aims of the study in this study.

There are a variety of ways in which identity theory can be applied to a study or topic depending on the academic or practical realm to which it is being applied. The majority of theorisation around identity looks at the way in which the world around us builds with world within us – how society makes the self, and the processes inherent in that construction of self. A large portion of that construction of self identity comes about through the awareness and definition of others[19]. This emphasises the necessity for a study of this nature to refer to such notions in its unpacking of social processes of the construction of identity, regarding the other and the self (in the context of larger social representations to which this study refers).

As there are many branches of psychology, even within the perhaps more niche concept of identity, it is important to hone into one specifically, to aid in sharpening the tools used to dissect the texts within this

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[19] This occurs from a very young age, as explored by American phycologist Andrew Meltzof, who conducted a study with infants, between 12 and 21 days old, showing how they related to others through imitation, forming their own self identity by imitating (conforming to) others, which indicates input into the creation of self and others from infancy (Meltzoff, 1977).

study. In such a context social identity theory is that branch. Social identity theory relates to the notion of identity in the context of intergroup behaviour[20], and comprises itself of a variety of social layers which act together to construct our identities and behaviours, as well as the definition of the identities and behaviours of others.

Within this branch of psychology of self identity it is pertinent to unpack the idea of self concept. Self concept is how someone perceives, thinks about and evaluates themselves. It is a self awareness. The popularised idea of "I think therefore I am"[21] comes to mind. This notion of self-concept is constructed by two aspects of the self, the existential self and the categorical self[22]. The existential self is the awareness of being distinct and separate from others (Lewis, 1990), and therefore depicts a the importance of defining the other in relation to the self, in the construction of identity. This existential self emphasises the self as constant, in other words, I am always me, temporary states of hunger, happiness of the like may always affect me but that self is always constant. Such awareness comes from the relationship we have with the world – defining one's self in the space they exist and in context to others. Once we have formed an existential self it allows us to form a categorical self. A categorical self is the knowledge that even though we are distinct separate entities or beings, we exist in a world with other entities, entities with properties. From that, the categorical self is the realisation of one's own properties (in conjunction with the properties of entities/beings in the world around us) and the categorisation of ourselves in that context according to such traits or properties (Lewis, 1990). The majority of these notions are unpacked with reference to the example of the development of children, mainly because childhood is where one begins to develop the notion of self and the evidence of these aspects is clearer. For example, children will constantly refer to how old they are, or what grade they are in or say things like 'I'm the tallest in my class" or 'I'm the only boy who won a prize at assembly today'. These are clear indications of the formation of a categorical self, which when we are young is painted by larger brushstrokes like age, size and gender. But when we get older, into adulthood that categorical self is influenced by more nuance, and we begin to include psychological traits in categorisation. We start to compare ourselves and make evaluations on other people.

An important psychologist from the humanistic branch of psychology, Carl Rogers, defines a different construction to self concept, referring to three components which aid in its formation: self-image, self esteem and the ideal self (Rogers, C. 1959). Self image would be defined as the view we have of ourselves, what and who we believe we are. Self esteem simply, in this context, is one's self worth, how much value we may place on ourselves. And the ideal self is what we wish to aspire to be.

Rogers works more with a focus on the notions of drive and self actualisation than identity, but considers identity in his theorisation of such. It is for this reason that I don't believe a Rogers-esque conception of self-concept and a Lewis-esque conception of self-concept contradict each other but rather define the same notion from different sides of the coin, and can therefore both be applied to texts, deepening the level to which they can be unpacked.

These notions of self-concept are an integral part of social identity theory. Social identity theory has two parts. Personal identity (the things which make each person unique, your own combination of personality traits) and Social identity (the groups to which you identify and in which you are categorised) (Turner, J

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[20] As unpacked in the 1980's by John Turner and Henri Tajfel (Tajfel, H.; Turner, J. C. (1986). pp. 7–24.), the social psychologists who originally defined this notion of social identity theory as more than the general theorisation of the social self. (Haslam, S. A.; Ellemers, N.; Reicher, S. D.; Reynolds, K. J.; Schmitt, M. T. (2010). p. 341–356.)

[21] A philosophical statement by 17th Century French philosopher René Descarte.

[22] As defined by Lewis Lewis in Self-knowledge and social development in early life from 1990. (Lewis, M. (1990) p. 277-300)

(1992) p 3-10). Therefore, an understanding of how categorisation of the self personally and socially shows the need to see the mental processes of such, and within that there are 3 steps (Turner, J, 1992). First is categorisation. All humans, whether consciously or not, categorise themselves and others in the process of the forming of identity, its human nature. As such, we categorise people into groups to which we belong and one's that we don't, creating social categories. When this occurs, that categorisation tells us things about a person, it defines them (a form of prejudgement or prejudice). The second step as part of this mental process is that once we categorise we identify (Turner, 1992). This is when we adopt the identities of the groups we have been categorised to belong to or have categorised ourselves to belong to. Once categorisation has occurred the chances are that you will begin to behave like those in the same social category. For example, once one becomes a teacher it's often that they begin to focus on the respect that role should garner from pupils, and there is a common social behaviour within that group to behave a certain way to garner that respect, and a certain way to behave when that respect isn't given. This role begins to feel like a norm, and there is an emotional significance to such identification as our self-esteem (referring back to what Rogers (1990) unpacked in self concept) begins to become tied to this group identification creating a sense of belonging. The last step of this mental process is social comparison (Turner, 1992). Comparison is a constant in society and always has been. But now with social media and the level to which we are bombarded with representations of others, social comparison is even more important in the construction of personal and social self. In this context, once we categorise and identify we compare ourselves to other groups, and compare other groups with other groups. The reason for this social comparison is to maintain our self esteem. We want to compare ourselves to other groups in a complimentary way. This is where the negatives of the process of identity construction can be seen as once two groups identify themselves as separate and therefore rivals, they begin to compete in order to maintain self esteem (Turner, 1992).

These notions unpacked by Turner (1992) show how one may categorise themselves or be categorised to be a part of a certain societal social group, and the processes inherent in that. With that in mind it is important to look at how that specifically creates social norms and patterns of behaviour in those who are categorised. Social influence in social psychology looks at how an individual's thoughts, actions and feelings are influenced by these social groups. Our interaction with society is based on the social role which we are enacting at a certain time. For example, you will behave a certain way in the position as a brother and differently in the position of a colleague and differently in the position of a lover and differently in the position of a friend. These social roles define what we do. Each social role requires us to behave differently based on the expectations of a social role, defining how we behave. This is what makes social norms, the accepted standards of behaviours in specific social groups, while enacting certain social roles. Norms are important socially as they create order and it is these norms which are used to guide our behaviour and defines what behaviour is appropriate in conforming to the expectations of others. Therefore, it is these others whose presence make a difference in setting up these expectations within identity. These expectations are intensified when the role or identity which we adopt are strongly stereotyped. This can be seen in the infamous Phillip Zimbardo, Stanford Prison Experiment.

This experiment was a social psychology experiment that investigated the effects of the perceived power of a social role on behaviour, and focussed on the relationship between prisoners and prison guards (both roles which have strong stereotypes through their proliferation in film and television media). It was conducted at Stanford University in 1971, by a research group led by Philip Zimbardo (Zimbardo, 1971). The study randomly assigned volunteers to enact the role of "guard" or "prisoner" in a mock prison. The study showed that volunteers embraced their given roles, resulting in severe measures by some volunteers assigned as guards administering and ultimately subjecting prisoners to psychological torture. In opposition to this, many volunteers assigned as prisoners behaved passively and accepted psychological abuse and

even tried to curry favour with guards by "snitching" on fellow "inmates"[23]. Because prison guards and prison inmates have intensely clear, socially defined and constantly proliferated stereotypical identities, the guards acted like guards and the prisoners acted like inmates. After the experiment both groups (now released from their social norms) disagreed strongly with their behaviour in their roles they played but played them out due to the social norms of that role and the pressure of such on the person occupying that role.

This is where a clear correlation between these considerations of identity and social roles and the intentions of this study can be seen. Through the proliferation of a certain social identity a clearly defined social role is created, which can negatively and severely interfere with ones own social and personal identity and the behaviour inherent in such identities.

A pattern I see within these theorisations of identity is that is easier to conform to the group in which you have been placed or have placed yourself, than to break away from such norms to find or attach yourself to another categorisation – even if you in some way are aware of your own disagreements with certain notions within your categorisation. It is easier to conform and defend yourself more starkly within that identification than to shake it. In contemporary times, moulded by such divisive categorisation, such a pattern entrenches people in their categorisation resulting in extremists on both oppositions to an issue instead of a middle ground accessible by both. In the context of what this study explores, it shows the danger in overarching proliferations of a certain group's identity in visual media, as that representation may either alter or more deeply entrench certain aspects of that group's identity. In terms of identity, there is power in what we show and there is power in what we consume. That is the realisation that this study aims to convey in the context of White South African Identity.

To provide further understanding of the importance of social identity theory to this study one can look at the writing of Stuts and Burke (2000) who note that "In social identity theory, the self is reflexive in that it can take itself as an object and can categorize, classify, or name itself in particular ways in relation to other social categories or classifications" (J E Stuts, P J Burke, 2000, p1). This shows that in defining oneself one defines the identities of others. In this notion is relevant to this study as an audience naturally defines identities of others based on an opposition to their own identity. Stuts and Burke go on to say that "persons acting in the context of social structure name one another and themselves in the sense of recognising one another as occupants of positions (roles) [within the society]. (J E Stuts, P J Burke, 2000, p2). This naming of such roles provides expectations with regards to the behaviours of other's and one's self (McCall and Simmons 1978; Stryker 1980).

The production and consumption of representations of identity, alongside the definition and emphasis of roles and behaviours, also creates an opposition or an identification with roles. For example, Turner states that "much of social identity theory deals with intergroup relations – that is, how people come to see themselves as members of one group/category (the in-group) in comparison with another (the out-group), and the consequences of this categorisation, such as ethnocentrism" (Turner et al. 1987). With this in mind, groups don't necessarily need to be defined by an identification of something specific and empirical like race and religion but can also be defined by looser ideas of good/decent and bad. When one hears the story of a criminal being locked up for life for something aberrant, one positions themselves in opposition to such a character and identity. When it comes to film and television representations of identity which

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[23] It is important to note when discussing Zimbardo's experiment that the study was riddled with ethical problems. Full information regarding the specifics of what participants were consenting to was not given, as this unpredictable experiment was unpredictable even to Zimbardo (McLeod, S. A, 2020).

influence this, this is important to consider, as the majority of representations are coupled with narratives emphasising certain roles and identities as moral or immoral – good guys and bad guys.

As previously mentioned, the identity theory which has been unpacked thus far is for the most part centred on the self and identity formation from the perspective of the person being identified. There is little elaboration on how such social forces influence how one identifies others. This lack of other-centric theorisation and consideration is where Media psychology theory fill such gaps. But, according to social identity theory, one can logically extrapolate that the social forces which influence one to identify the self must be similar to how one identifies the other. This can be seen in how the social psychological and sociological identity literatures seem to contrast personal and social identities, also termed collective identities (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.74). Social identities, defined by Tajfel (1981), "involve the knowledge that one is a member of a group, one's feelings about group membership, and knowledge of the group's rank or status compared to other groups" (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.74). This conception of group identity based in opposition to other groups implies the identification of other group identities in order to define one's self group identity. This shows the importance in identifying, categorising and grouping others through signs and symbols when forming one's own self-identity. Such signs and symbols are easily conveyed through visual mediums, like the texts which this study aims to dissect.

While looking at such texts in visual mediums like television and film, one would note the importance of the visual in identity theory. Although influenced by other senses identity theory poses that is a mental construct (Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1979). Lewis poses that that is "something represented in memory" (Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1979). Lewis continues this point noting that "when shown their faces in a mirror, many children age 18 months and nearly all children age 24 months touch their foreheads to remove a smudge unobtrusively produced by smearing some paint on their foreheads" (Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1979). Such a response indicates that children of such an age know what they look like and therefore can identify when something should not be there, therefore showing how children seem to have a visual identity stored in their memory. So, if personal identity formation is somewhat visual, as denoted by such considerations of identity theory, then it implies that the same would be true when identifying others. Therefore, when presented with visual narratives in media which depict certain identities, the representations of that character (physical and behavioural) act to inform and construct the identity of that specific other. This, when combined with notions of the formation of group identities which identity theory proposes, one can see the importance of what we consume visually, regarding the identity of self and the identity of others.

Self and identity are based upon the social context in which one finds that self or identity (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.75). This means that there is contextual influence on the formation and perception of identity. This would therefore obviously occur on smaller and larger scales. Micro-contextual effects on the self could be the interaction with school environments, parents, the culture, the era in which one finds themselves and the in which country/city/town one lives, the experiences one has directly in life (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.75). Visual media and the consumption of popular and visual cultural texts would be considered a macro-level contextual influence (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.75).

A perspective which feeds into this study's scope regarding identity theory is the work of early American sociologist Charles Cooley. Cooley describes his conception of the looking glass self. Cooley's description of the looking glass self shows that how others see the self matters (Cooley, 1902). This suggests that "reflected appraisals", whether one's self images are strengthened or weakened by such appraisals, are pertinent in the construction of the self. "People do generally incorporate what they think others think of

them in the self, though self-views are typically more positive than others' views" (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.75). Applying such a field of study to the research aims of this study would denote that not only does the identities' portrayed in media influence identity of self by defining other but also through the notion of the looking glass self, show that those whose identity group is being presented would mould their own identity based on the influences of such presentations of acted identity.

With regards to identity construction, of self or other, it is the relevance of social information that decides what influences identity formation (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.85). Therefore, the social texts (media, and popular and visual culture in the case of this study) need to be contextually relevant in order for them to influence the consumer of such texts. "The identity-based motivation model proposes that people are motivated to interpret situations and act in ways that feel congruent with their identities" (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.76). Therefore, people who consume texts which constantly convey a certain identity of behaving a certain way, are motivated to agree with this emphasised identity being conveyed as it becomes a reoccurring salient social norm to their group identity (as a group who consumes such text).

In conclusion to this overview of identity theory as a theoretical framework for the purposes of this study, it is perhaps important to emphasise that regarding identity, in this context social representations provide the 'scaffolding' for our ability to construct a social identity in the contemporary world (Howarth, 2002).

2.3 Representation and Visual Culture

Representation as an academic endeavour of study has increased in popularity over recent years, in the wake of socio-political awareness, driven by movements on social media platforms and the ability to wage war on inequity by connecting our global sense of morality through the phones in our pockets. To indicate its importance, it is noted by Hall in his writing "The Work of Representation" (1997) that, "the concept of representation has come to occupy a new and important place in the study of culture. Representation connects meaning and language to culture" (Hall, 1997, p.1). Hall's considerations of representation configure the considerations of representation which this study will use as theoretical framework.

To reiterate, "representation connects meaning and language to culture" (Hall, 1997, p.1). For the purposes of this study, that line alone is very powerful in indicating the relevance of representation, not only to the aims of this academic study but to contemporary society. We live in a world so interconnected that the boundaries of language and culture seem to be able to meld together, yet in that reality we still manage to goad division within that interconnectivity.

In the context of this study representation is the presentation of certain identities within international popular and visual culture. Of course, representation academically speaking isn't as narrow and specific, relating to larger pools of examples which exist in social contexts, but it is important to remember that when unpacking the notion of representation here, it is an explicit form of representation to which I refer.

The most common understanding of representation is, as Hall notes: "using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people" (Hall, 1997. p25). With this in mind there is a strong yet shallow connection between the concept of representation and the notion of language. This is because representation is a crucial component of the means by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of culture (Hall, 1997). This language is not necessarily language in the shallow comprehension of the word, for example a language, like English or Afrikaans or isiZulu. Language, if you are considering its connection to representation in this context, can be any

language, the language of images and signs which stand for or represent things, which communicate meanings and carry messages and connotations (Hall, 1997). Therefore, when language is referred to here it refers to these larger definitions of language.

The process of representation is the "production of meaning through language" (Hall, 1997. p.28). In the context of the text to which this study refers, this therefore shows how representations of identities within popular and visual culture carry and communicate meanings to those who consume such representations. Hall defines such a process by citing two of The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary's relevant meanings for the word (Hall, 1997. p.16):

- 'To represent something is to describe or depict it, to call it up in the mind by description or portrayal or imagination; to place a likeness of it before us in our mind or in the senses; as, for example, in the sentence, "This picture represents the murder of Abel by Cain."'

- 'To represent also means to symbolize, stand for, to be a specimen of, or to substitute for; as in the sentence, 'In Christianity, the cross represents the suffering and crucifixion of Christ.''

Here Hall, by illuminating these definitions of representation, is noting a reliance of representation on the fact that those who consume representation can apply intertextual knowledge or memory to that representation. He notes that within these definitions "the figures in the painting stand in the place of, and at the same time, stand for the story of Cain and Abel" while also, "the cross simply consists of two wooden planks nailed together; but in the context of Christian belief and teaching, it takes on, symbolises or comes to stand for a wider set of meanings about the crucifixion of the Son of God" (Hall, 1997. p.16). It is here that we see that a representation communicates a larger notion whether that takes conscious unpacking or unconscious communication.

Representation is when meaning is produced through language of any kind, connecting concepts in our minds. "It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the 'real' world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events" (Hall, 1997). This is where intertextual knowledge or memory, to which I refer in the previous paragraph comes in. Hall uses an anecdote of a glass to illustrate this point: "If you put down a glass and walk out of the room, you can still think about the glass, even though it is no longer physically there. Actually, you can't think with a glass. You can only think with the concept of the glass. You can't speak with the actual glass, either. You can only speak with the word for glass – G L A S S – which is the linguistic sign which we use in English to refer to objects which you drink water out of" (Hall, 1997. p.17). This is what illustrates what representation does. This therefore indicates two separate processes, two systems of representation. The first is the 'system' whereby a variety of objects, events and people are connected by concepts which we keep in our minds (intertextual knowledge or memory). This interconnection between this system of concepts and images/representations which we have learned in the world, enable us to "refer to things both inside and outside our heads" (Hall, 1997. p.17). Although the examples referred to here are somewhat simplistic, simple nouns like objects for which we can remember the concepts, we also form the concepts of more vague, enigmatic and ethereal things, things which do not have simple physical forms. Notions like identity, evil, joy and the like. But this conceptual mapping in the mind is not the only ingredient required. The second 'system' is the language of the representation, the medium through which a concept is represented (Hall, 1997). Within popular and visual culture texts this "language" is exemplified through aspects like character, behaviours, the narratives and physical representations, to name a few[24].

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[24] This breakdown of representation is similar to semiotics/semiology which is unpacked further on in this study.

This understanding of the processes inherent in representation are not referred to as concepts of representation but as a 'system of representation' as it is a process made up of varying ways of collating, curating, connecting and arranging a variety of concepts and in doing so organising intricate relations between such concepts and representations. It is in relation to this that Hall states that "we use the principles of similarity and difference to establish relationships between concepts or to distinguish them from one another" (Hall, 1997. p.27). This relates closely to the considerations of other that are made in construction of the self in social identity theory (J E Stuts, P J Burke, 2000, p1). Just as identification depends on the relationship between things in the world, so does meaning in regards to representation (Hall, 1997). Events, objects, characters and stories (whether real or fictional) work within the system of representation.

In order for this conceptual communication to be effective it seems necessary for the majority to share the same language (in the context of representation) and similar conceptual maps, so that representation can be interpreted in parallel ways (Hall, 1997). Occasionally this isn't the case, which is what allows for some artworks to be interpreted in varying ways, but in the larger scheme of things (especially in the incredibly well interconnected world which we occupy today) those similarities exist. Hall notes that this is what it means when we say we "belong to the same culture" (Hall, 1997. p.18). Due do this similarity in interpretation, we are able to create "a shared culture of meanings" which aids in the construction of the social world we share (Hall, 1997. p.18). Hence the understanding of culture as shared meanings or shared conceptual maps (du Gay, Hall et al., 1997). In the context of the visual culture text on which this study focuses it is easy to find this common language required in the aim of correctly correlating our conceptualisation of representations. This ease comes in a variety of ways. Firstly, international media is tailored specifically for that, an international audience[25]. Therefore, the visual language employed by these films is often one that can be extensively understood. Secondly when looking at language, in the sense of the spoken word in a text, it is easy to create media which quite literally has can be understood by all – through the use of language dubs, voice overs and subtitles[26]. These languages within representation, which act as a vehicle for the signs which stand to represent various concepts and relationships between concepts, aids in allowing signs to successfully make up the "meaning-systems of our culture" (Hall, 1997. p.18).

Within these signs described to have such an important role in representation, visual signs are referred to as iconic signs (Hall, 1997). This type of sign is referred to as such because they look like, in their physical/visual form, the concept, event or person being referred to. Therefore, in the context of the texts on which this study focusses the majority of the signs represented are iconic signs – signs that specifically represent white South Africans therefore aid in constructing communicating their identities to an audience. These types of signs, of representations, reproduce a few of the actual conditions of our visual perception in the visual sign (Hall, 1997). Written, spoken and less physically empirical signs are referred to as indexical signs – as they are indicative of concepts rather than icons for those concepts. As stated, the majority of the signs which shall be unpacked in this thesis, regarding the selected relevant visual texts, are iconic signs but this does not mean that indexical signs do not have a role to play in such representations and will be unpacked where applicable.

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[25] An example of this is the fact that high grossing films make more money overseas than in their country of origin which, let's face it, is usually the USA. This can be seen in the example of Marvel's Avengers: Endgame, which made $857.672 million in North America and around $1.937 billion overseas. This means that the film has earned 69.3% of its money outside of North America (according to Forbes Magazine).

[26] Often these translations which exist in the form of language dubs and subtitles don't translate exactly what the original text was saying. This is in consideration of the audience that would consume this media is such a fashion, taking into consideration their slight cultural differences in order to successfully communicate the concepts to said audience. If you understand both the original language and the subtitles, one can sometimes pick up these subtle differences.

With the role of signs within representation clear, another layer of this needs to be explained regarding how the representation of meaning happens through "language" works. Within this there are generally three different ways to approach explaining how the representation of meaning works through "language" (Hall, 1997). These approaches are the reflective, the intentional and the constructionist approaches, which Hall notes each aim to answer the questions, 'where do meanings come from?' and 'how can we tell the "true" meaning of a word or image?' (Hall, 1997. p.24).

The reflective approach, as indicated by the name, is when the language of the representation acts like a mirror, where the meaning is found in the character, object, idea or narrative being presented (Hall, 1997). In this instance the language reflects the true meaning as it already exists in the world (Hall, 1997). This is mimetic[27] in nature, where the language reflects or imitates the truth that is already empirically evident in the world.

The second of these approaches makes somewhat opposing points in the communication of meaning. What is referred to as the intentional approach, argues that the language and signs used by the author, writer, director or curator of the representation, quite simply, communicate the intention of that creator (Hall, 1997).

The last approach in this regard is perhaps the most nuanced, and therefore one could argue the most accurate and common approach in the passage of meaning. The constructionist approach takes the public, social character of language into account, realising that "neither things in themselves nor the individual users of language can fix meaning in language" (Hall, 1997. p.25). Within this approach the idea is that things/objects/people/events themselves don't mean anything, it is us (the viewer or consumer of those representations that constructs that meaning.

In this conception there is a clear separation between the physical signs in the material world and the symbolic practices and processes involved in the aspects of representation (Hall, 1997). The constructionist approach does not negate the material but notes that it is not this which conveys meaning, but instead is "it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts" (Hall, 1997. p.25). Meaning is created in and by *social actors*, people, who employ their own conceptual systems informed by their culture to construct meaning (Hall, 1997).

With this unpacking of representation as a part of the theoretical framework of this study it is perhaps necessary to discuss the more popularised definition of representation in a contemporary context. In the contemporary zeitgeist, representation is not simply the unpacking of how meaning and concept is conveyed through signs. Rather it specifically focusses on representation of certain social or racial groups. Here representation is a groups voice, platform, place or presence in a certain context. In this context it is the larger body of media created for visual and cultural consumption internationally – film and television content. It is concerning that Hollywood, and the powers that be in the mainstream media powerhouse, are too focussed on creating content that is too white, focussing on actors and stories of a certain race, one which audiences have become accustomed to over years of proliferation[28]. This definition and the importance of what it defines is necessary to consider in this study but this academic study focusses its

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[27] Again, there is a link between the communication and creation of meaning through representation and the communication and creation of identity in social identity theory. This mimetic nature in language of representation is similar to notion of imitation in the creation of identity (Meltzoff, 1977).

[28] In an article for Variety, entitled The Reckoning Over Representation: Black Hollywood Speaks Out, But Is the Industry Listening?, Elaine Low and Angelique Jackson write, "Internally, studios and networks have made attempts to break down barriers to entry for Black people and other people of colour through executive incubators and pipeline programs. But those efforts are not as fast-moving as many would like. Look no further than a snapshot of any major entertainment company's board of directors or executive team to see mostly white men looking back." (Low & Jackson, 2020)

theoretical framework of representation on the nature and processes of representation itself, not what is being specifically represented. That comes in when the specific texts including certain representations are dealt with and discussed.

Concepts and signs produce the meaning in language and it is that process which combines these three that we define as representation (Hall, 1997). To summarise the considerations of representation that have been made, I refer again to Hall's statement which indicates the importance of representation in this context: "Representation connects meaning and language to culture" (Hall, 1997. p.15). In this study, films tailored for an international audience are the "cultural texts". These "cultural texts" are the backbone of this study, and therefore require a critical consideration of representation in order to be effectively and successfully understood in this context.

2.4 Gender

Gender expectations are comparable to gender roles which aid in the creation of social roles, from which stereotypes are built[29] (Eisenchlas, 2013), linking closely to the considerations of social identity theory regarding the creation of social roles (Stuts & Burke, 2000). These constructed expectations (here specifically regarding gender), pedagogically, influence and mould the ideologies, perceptions and behaviours of those who are presented with such[30].

This study will be faced with the necessity to unpack representations of White South Africans. This 'category' of character can be, at face value, separated into two 'sub-categories': men and women. This binary 'sub-categorisation' obviously negates a consideration of identities which do not fit in either of these genders. This is not to marginalise or ignore such identities, but is rather due to the fact that films which present white South African characters very rarely depict such identities, and as such do not offer an opportunity for such identities to be explored. This lack of representation is an issue in contemporary film, especially regarding South African representation, but is not the issue on which this study focusses. Therefore, this study needed to consider the genders which are presented in this context. When dissecting such examples academically it is therefore important to apply academic considerations of gender in a similar context to the study. It is here where the theories of gender and feminist critique aid in forming part of this study's theoretical framework.

The character, behaviours and representations of male and female white South Africans will need to be compared within this study to truly unpack the nature and effect of such representations in mainstream visual culture. In this respect, feminist critique and gender politics, focusing mainly the writings of Julia T Wood, will be referred to in order to aid in such comparisons. When conducting these comparisons in endeavouring to achieve the aims of this study, reference will be made to the concepts and theories in Wood's Gendered Lives, Communication and Culture (1993) and Gendered Media: The Influence of Media on Views of Gender (1994). Wood[31] focusses her theories on feminist critique of media and the representations of gender proliferated within them, as well as inherent patterns and concepts regarding gender[32] on which such focus sheds light.

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[29] An example of this construct: "In western society, men are portrayed as a strong, dominant male while women seeks for a man's approval" (Eisenchlas, 2013), which creates norms, and in turn roles and expectations.
[30] Which creates/enforces socially defined gender roles.
[31] Wood is an honorary scholar, professor, author and editor, having written and edited over 20 books and over 70 articles on the topic of communication and gender.
[32] Similar to the focus on representations in media on which this study focusses.

Wood notes how perceptions of gender are, in a contemporary context, informed by media and its persuasive narrative representations (Wood, 1993). Within this consideration one can see the importance of referring to gender when discussing, academically or otherwise, representations of identity in media. This shows the need to not only unpack white South African identities and representations in popular and visual culture but to also fully consider the separate categories of male and female[33] therein, and what is communicated to viewers through such representations.

Wood, in Gendered Media: The Influence of Media on Views of Gender (1994) notes a patriarchal norm which she finds apparent within representations of gender in popular and visual culture (Wood, 1994). In such, the construction of a patriarchal society, and the media which emerges from that society, highlights the way patriarchal society represents and views women. Within this she argues that "women are underrepresented, which falsely implies that men are the cultural standard and women are unimportant or invisible" (Wood, 1993). Such a notion implies that there will be fewer female representations which it will be possible for this study to unpack. This means that the depiction of white South African identities/characters in media will most likely create a predominantly masculine representation. This, as Wood notes, is not unique to the depiction of white South Africans, and therefore the lack of female characters in itself should not be data which influences the focus/outcome of this study, but rather – when referring to gender – this study should focus on the presented disparities or similarities between male and female white South African representation and what that communicates to a viewer. This disparity is often uncovered in films through the application of the Bechdel-Wallace test[34].

Figure 1: Part of Bechdel's comic strip Dykes to Watch Out for entitled "The Rule" (1985).

The considerations of gender theorists in regards to media and its influence on how we see ourselves and see others ties closely into what this study has already unpacked regarding identity theory and the creation

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[33] In this study the considerations of gender will be regarding male and female characters, and not transgender and non-binary characters. The lack of representation of these genders when it comes to white South African identities is an issue within itself, but is not one upon which this thesis focusses.

[34] The Bechdel-Wallace test, named for American cartoonist Alison Bechdel and her friend Liz Wallace, is a test used to measure the level of representation of females in works of fiction. The test is based on a conversation shown in Bechdel's comic strip Dykes to Watch Out for entitled "The Rule" (1985). The test checks to see if 1- There are at least 2 named female characters, 2- these characters have a conversation, and 3- that this conversation is not about a man. The website bechdeltest.com stated the statistics (as of April 2015), based on 6500 examples, that 53% of these pass the test, 10% pass only 2 points, 22% pass only 1 point, and 10% pass none of these points. With this in mind, as well as the considerations of Wood (1994), it shows that there is a shortage of examples of woman to unpack – which would seemingly be true for the representations of white South Africans. This test will be considered when looking at examples in media when discussing gender. There are limitations to this test as it doesn't necessarily show that there are no examples of sexism in the texts, but the Bechdel-Wallace test is a good barometer for measuring gender representation.

of self and other identity. The considerations of gender theorists in this regard, shine an arguably more focussed spotlight on the patterns of identity creation which emerge from specific identity representations in media[35]. Media[36] has become the main source of influence in the creation of gender expectations (and therefore identity roles) in a contemporary world, basing the majority of its representations on stereotypes of social groups (Newsom, 2011). Wood defines these stereotypes, specifically regarding gender, more precisely by noting that "typically, men are portrayed as active, adventurous, powerful, sexually aggressive and largely uninvolved in human relationships. Just as consistent with cultural views of gender are depictions of women as sex objects who are usually young, thin, beautiful, passive, dependent, and often incompetent and dumb" (Wood, 1994). Media has now, in its prolificity, become the teacher[37], influencing it's viewers more than direct/real life interactions with examples of these people of these genders and identities (Newsom, 2011) (Götz & Lemish, 2008). This is an incredibly garish statement within identity creation which shows that we, as consumers of media, are more influenced by that media than our real-life interactions with people on which the narratives in media are based.

It is noted within this theoretical context that males allow representations in media (cognisant of this or otherwise) to influence their mindsets and personal notions on a more wholesale level than to that of females (Götz & Lemish, 2008). Götz and Lemish note this pattern regarding males and the representations they consume through media as a process of "taking it in, assimilating it, and then taking the story further." If this notion is to be combined with the consideration that the majority of examples of the characters to study in the context of this study are male, then it shows the relevance of studying those examples in the creation and influence of identity and identity perception[38]. This reliance on stereotype in media, based on historical narratives of gender which are repeated in culture, is not restricted to gender alone and occurs also in regards to more specific social groups.

2.5 Narratology

Narratology considers the pervasive narratives found in cultural texts as having shared structural features. This, according to Roland Barthes, means that when unpacked in detail, each narrative combines common structural features differently, creating a story wherein every utterance is crammed full of a variety of meanings which function simultaneously in the process of consuming texts (Felluga, 2002). Such patterns of commonality inherent in narrative structures, and therefore their communicated meanings, shows how considering narratology when unpacking multiple texts is a necessary endeavour. When this is considered, a better comparison of differing texts can be conducted by comparing these similar structural features, as described by Barthes, and how that specific text implements them.

In this study the theoretical framework of narratology which shall be applied to the texts is influenced in the majority by the writings of Roland Barthes on the subject (Barthes and Duisit, 1975). In Barthes' considerations, there are 5 common codes on which to focus when inspecting narrative. These 5 "codes" are the hermeneutic code, the proairetic code, the semantic code, the symbolic code and the cultural code.

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[35] This is albeit focussed on gendered identities, the performance of gender and what that communicates – but the theoretical approach used to unpacking that can be extrapolated to indicate how more specific categories of identity (like white South African identities) are created for those who consume media which present these identities.

[36] Media in this theoretical context includes, but is not limited to: video games, television, film, social media, radio, news media and advertisement.

[37] Here gender theorists have focussed studies more on media as teacher to youth especially, but such influence permeates through boundaries of age.

[38] Again, this is not a trait unique to white South African representations, and is a notion that (unfortunately due to the lack of availability of females in media) can be applied to the majority of representations when dissected in this manner.

Within narrative these "codes" act and are combined in varying ways to achieve the goal of communicating the narrative as well as the messages within. The hermeneutic code refers to an aspect of a narrative that is (at first) unexplained, and exists as a mystery to the viewer/reader/listener – thereby creating questions in their minds. The proairetic code refers to an aspect of the narrative which builds upon and implies further narrative action in that story. For example, if a character was to enter a room with another and pull a condom from his pocket – we would infer from such that there will be a resolution to this action, either that the characters are going to engage in sexual intercourse, or that they are going to be making balloon animals[39]. The 3rd code is the semantic code. This code indicates any aspect of a narrative which suggest a particular or additional level of meaning often through connotation, and is therefore also referred to as the connotative code[40]. This code is the unit of the signifier which proposes and generates connotation. The symbolic code, is somewhat similar in construction to the semantic code. Simply described, the symbolic code imbues the narrative with deeper meaning and thematic organisation of semantic codes. Finally, and perhaps most importantly in regards to this study, is the cultural code. The cultural code defines elements of a narrative which refer to our own knowledge of the world around us. For example, if a character is introduced (whether physically present in the narrative yet or not) as being from Moscow, our knowledge of the world we live in the characters from Russia or Moscow that we have been previously exposed to will inform our expectations and understanding of that character[41]. This element of narratology is the most applicable to compare in the texts which this study shall investigate[42]. These five codes/aspects show common patterns of communication within texts and will be unpacked and compared when discussing and relating texts as well as their inherent messages, and presentations of identity.

The narratives, stories and fables depicted through contemporary media are the vessels through which meaning and messages are communicated to the society which consume that media. In regards to this Barthes notes that, "There can be fables without characters, according to Aristotle, but there cannot be characters without fables" (Barthes and Duisit, 1975. p.2). If this is the case, then no depiction of character can exist without an attached "fable". These fables contain the signs and messages which communicate identity and inform society's creation of identity construction and perception.

2.6 Media Psychology

Media psychology, as an academic and practical venture, is the most applicable and closely tied theoretical consideration to the endeavours of this study. Therefore, to conclude in defining the theoretical framework of this study, it is perhaps the most pertinent to mention. Psychology theorists have, for the large part, avoided focussing on the effects of media on society until recently. Media, in our contemporary considerations of the word, is a somewhat new element of society, compared to the bounding history of psychology as theory and practice (Giles, 2003), which results in the comparable lack of focus on the topic. This is also perhaps due to the stigma attached to mass media as being trivial and un-academic (Giles, 2003). Media psychology theorist David Giles recounts, in his work on the subject, an anecdote which illustrates this point. He notes how he overheard two of his students speaking, hearing the phrase, "Surely you can't be studying reality TV for your final year project?" (Giles, 2003. p.9). This characteristic of

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[39] I jest somewhat, but the illustration of the point still stands. This indicates the proairetic as the code of actions and behaviour.
[40] The Semantic code is, as is indicated through its name, that which refers to meaning through connotation.
[41] I used the example of Russia/Moscow here as it is an easily stereotyped country/city of origin – its cold, harsh environment and strict ex-communist state has imbued its people with similar characteristics. But such an example could easily be swapped with Johannesburg or South Africa.
[42] This is a specific example of the cultural code, but this code refers to any intertextual knowledge from our own world.

liminality attached to media in this context is perhaps in part due to its comparable youth as there is a focus on "cultural durability" (Giles, 2003). This is that in the selection of worthy academic ventures there is a notion that "culture" is not truly "culture" unless it is ingrained over several centuries. Giles critiques this pattern in psychology noting that, "Any contemporary theory of the role of culture in psychology ought to take media culture into consideration" (Giles, 2003. p.11). That is what this study aims to do, and therefore it is here where the importance of unpacking and applying media psychology in this context becomes apparent.

It would be ignorant to negate the effect of media on a contemporary world. Even in 1999 Harris stipulated that 98% of homes in the United States had a television (Harris, 1999)[43], a statistic which is a powerful illustration of how the majority of society has access to the media that this study unpacks – even in the most socially/financially inequitable of times[44]. This reach of media and therefore its effects have increased exponentially since Harris' claims in 1999, due to technological advancements and increased ease of access to entertainment media platforms. With this proliferation of media in mind media psychology stipulates that within society, what we consume in terms of culture and the ideologies inherent within such media, have a large impact and influence on the formation of our own ideologies (Giles, 2003, p.7). Media psychology focusses within this on specific examples of this effect on our own ideologies, regarding race, gender and social groups. The smaller, or less present in one's own life, the social group the larger the influence on their identity perception (Giles, 2003). This means that the more specific the group (let's say White South African Males, for example) a character represents, the more impactful the influence of that representation on how a viewer will define or understand people from that group. In the context of this study that means that an international audience's perceptions of such a group, whose personal examples of White South Africans in their lives may be few, is almost entirely made up of what they consume in media. This pattern in the construction of identity is constituted in the majority by a reliance on stereotypes (Giles, 2003). A stereotype constructed through media. It is therefore the aim of this study to define the stereotype constructed in international media regarding White South Africans, in order to shed a light on how their identity is constituted in this context. The problem with stereotypes is not necessarily the stereotypes themselves but the fact that they result in the creation of prejudice (Giles, 2003). The problem is when stereotypes are relied on due to a lack of other information about a certain social group, and resulting in applying the prejudice which often occurs with such strict pre-definition of an individual's identity. This can aid in the further separation of social groups (Giles, 2003) a process which the world does not need more of in a time so divisive.

The examples which this study accesses are visual. What this visual medium brings to the table that perhaps other non-visual examples of media, culture and narratives do not are clear and memorable images of identity (Giles, 2003). Not only do the narratives and representations in visual media mould identity perception based on action and behaviour, but there is also a visibly tangible manifestation of these identities which viewers can link such notions of identity to. It is therefore not a issue of recalling the varying characteristics and behaviours of a specific social group, but instead is a process of recalling a memorable character to mind and applying all of what that representation communicates to the perception and understanding of a certain groups identity[45]. Now this would be a reasonably harmless

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[43] The majority of statistics regarding media in this context are based on studies conducted in the U.S., but these statistics illustrate patterns and points which are applicable to contemporary westernised world.

[44] Perhaps an out of date statistic but one that still illustrates the point adequately is that Bushman (1995) It is even claimed that it is estimated that there are more television sets in the U.S. than there are toilets (Bushman, 1995).

[45] For example, Giles brings up the example of the 1970's prison television sitcom Porridge, which he argues aided to define British ideas of prison and prisoners (2003). I too can relate to this example because as a child would watch Porridge and think, "wow, if I ever commit a crime, I should commit it in England. This looks awesome". I thought British prisoners were

process of using intertextual knowledge to inform how understands the world, but it becomes dangerous when such representations are unrealistic (Giles, 2003). The issue here is that no representation can be wholly realistic, as no one group of people include members who are all empirically the same, and therefore this process described cannot be one which could ever be characterised as harmless.

A reason why representations of varying identities in media are so easily digested into our world views is that there is an underlying reasonable assumption that what we are fed through media is a fair and accurate representation of the world and the social groups which exist in that world. This is a subliminal notion that, although understandable in the context of non-fiction or world news, is false (Giles, 2003). In the realm of fiction[46] the distortion of realistic identities often occurs in process of making the narrative most appetising to an audience.

In concluding this look at media psychology in this context I wish to quote Giles's consideration of the complexity and impact of media on contemporary audiences:

"The concept of media representations is, for a start, predicated on the assumption that there is a pre-existing social reality, entirely independent of the media, that is capable of being misrepresented by them. However, media penetrate so far into our psychological life that their content irrevocably shapes our understanding of the phenomena they communicate. Men may understand themselves through the representations of masculinity in the media; media representations of men are then based on previous media representations of men, and so on" (Giles, 2003. p.183)

Media psychology in this context is a creature of many eyes, each eye focussing on a different impact media has on society and its ideologies. In this thesis it is used to support and explain the pertinence of this study, to show how unpacking the way White South African's are portrayed on the silver screen is an important endeavour in understanding how the world sees white South Africans based on this. Giles notes that it is problematically symptomatic of psychological research to be driven by problems rather than to be driven by curiosity (Giles, 2003). This study, with the aid of media psychology as part of its theoretical perspective, aims to be driven by both.

2.7 Synthesis of Theoretical Framework

The theories and notions discussed in this chapter aid in constructing a theoretical framework used in this study. These theorisations of Visual Culture, Identity, Representation, narratology and media psychology structure the approach this study adopts when addressing its selected texts, and the identities such texts communicate to a contemporary audience. These notions define patterns which construct identity, self and other, which are referred to when unpacking patterns of representation in films presenting white South African characters. This provides the study with a foundation upon which it can build and present its findings regarding the formation of a contemporary white South African identity proliferated in this context.

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jolly scallywags who cracked jokes and played cards. This anecdotally illustrates not only the proliferation of western media internationally, but also that medias effect on an audience.

[46] As well as in the case of some non-fiction examples, like biopics which are based on the life of a real person, but may be distorted in order to create a narrative which suits a film format and the audience which shall consume such a film.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction to Research Methodology

The nature of this research topic brings in tow specific research methodologies which are required in an academic endeavour of this nature. Therefore, the classification of research methodology here is simplified. This study focusses on the theorisation of a white South African identity created through the presentation of white South African characters in international film. In this context, this study will be required to unpack specific texts (films) which present this identity. As such, a case study research design is one which is appropriate for research of this nature. As a theoretical consideration of identity is not based on research with any quantifiable products, a quantitative study is not an option for this thesis. Therefore, a qualitative theoretical approach will be taken when discussing the texts explored by this study.

3.2 Research Approach and Paradigm

An inductive approach to this research will be taken. This is because this study does not begin its research with a hypothesis and work to test this hypothesis or prove a theory. Instead, this thesis aims to develop a theory based on the unpacking of the applicable texts which contain white South African characters. This inductive approach will inform this study's aims to find existing tropes which run through examples of this identity as portrayed in international film. The discussion of the texts in this study is structured by sub-categories. These sub-categories are based on patterns which reveal themselves upon initial inspection and are not pre-described theories which this study aims to prove are correct. Instead these sub categories are presented and delineated in this way as a means of structuring the research in this study into a hierarchy, a hierarchy which was developed after the research was conducted in its entirety. Subsequently, an inductive approach to the study can be seen to be most relevant and applicable in a study of this nature.

3.3 Research Design and Data Analysis

I used a case study research design (Denscombe 2007, Creswell 2003) that was aimed at unpacking the identities presented in international film. Stake (1995. p.1) describes it as "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances". Stake (1995) argues that a case study could have commonalities with others but also has be unique in many ways, depending on the context. Case studies offer a methodical system of examining events, collecting and analysing data and reporting results. A case study allows researchers to work out why phenomena occur the way they do, so that patterns based on past instances, experiences and examples can be made. To enable this, a detailed investigation is necessary to understand the particulars of the cases within the context of this study. If the research aimed to look at *why* white South African characters were presented the way they are then a different research design would be possible, where interviews or action research could be conducted. This study unpacks how these characters construct an overarching, generalised identity for white South Africans which is proliferated through films on a global scale. As such the theorisation and consideration of the representations of this identity in specific texts suits a case study design as information external to these texts are not applicable in a consideration of the communication of identity to the viewers of a specific text.

This theoretical study will dissect the examples of white South African characters presented in film, and in doing so will act as a qualitative theoretical discussion on the creation of a white South African identity constructed by characters in international film which perform this identity. This will be based on, and informed by, prominent characteristics which exist in multiple/the majority of these examples.

3.4 Sample selection

The sample selection is based on qualitative information regarding the texts (films). Extensive research has been conducted in order to find examples of film which include South African characters and identities[47]. Therefore, any films which have not been discussed or discovered are assumed by the researcher to not be part of the contemporary film zeitgeist and therefore could not be seen to have an impact on the formation of a white South African identity in international film. There is a hierarchy into which this study places its considerations of these texts. This hierarchy is informed by a need for brevity, as a focus on less popular/successful film examples would superfluously occupy the space needed to discuss more applicable and influential examples. Therefore, the most successful international film examples are given an increased level of focus. The quantifiable statistic of international financial gross is information which is used to define this hierarchy. Alongside this, more qualitative information is considered, for example cultural influence and popularity is taken into account where applicable. Regarding this, in today's technologically advanced society there is an incredible ease of access to films. Therefore, the technique for data collection in this research study is made very easy, as access to all texts discussed here are available on online streaming platforms. The public accessibility of all texts and the theoretical approach adopted by this study means that there is little to consider with regards to ethical considerations of this research.

The selection of case studies will correlate with the quantifiable sphere of influence of each text. In the context of this study there is an exclusion of television and video game examples of texts. This is for the sake of brevity, but also as the medium of film is considered the most powerful medium of the three. By this I mean that the medium with the largest reach has been chosen to be addressed over those mediums with less reach. This quantifiable reach is based upon the gross international revenue of each medium, with film grossing the highest, then television, then video games[48]. These case studies will be a selection of texts produced globally from after 1994, as those texts therefore exist and were created in the post-apartheid context in which we currently find ourselves, and in which this study is conducted, and therefore finds pertinent to examine.

These selected texts chosen as cases in this study did not include those which represent or portray a narrative set during apartheid. Although, we are in a post-apartheid context the realities of apartheid is still very real for many South Africans that were disadvantaged in the past. For the younger generation it could be that there is a disconnect between historical events such as the apartheid past when confronted with historical content in visual media. In their book *Small Cinemas in Global Markets: Genre's, Identities,*

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[47] This included going through the international films listed on *IMDb* (Internet Movie Database) and *Rotten Tomatoes*, which depict white South African characters, focussing on international revenue, availability and notoriety.

[48] Higher revenue requires larger international reach in order to generate such revenue, so that revenue is not capped at domestic patronage. The highest grossing film of 2019 (and of all time) was Avengers: Endgame, making $2.8 billion at the box office. In that same year, Game of Thrones (the highest grossing television series of 2019) made $2.28 billion overall after its final season – for all 8 of its seasons. This means it took 9 years for the highest grossing television series of 2019 to make less than what it took Marvel to make in under a year with one film. In line with that: the highest grossing video game (Nintendo's Mario, as of 2019) took 39 years to make its total revenue of $17.011 billion, meaning (on average) it made annually less than a quarter of what the highest grossing film made in less than 12 months. If you logically correlate revenue with global reach, one can see the reason for the hierarchy in which this study places these entertainment mediums.

Narratives (2014) where identity in cinema is discussed, Catherine Douillet and Jos Castanheira note that "there is an unavoidable sense of disconnect between historical events, their narratives, and the passing of time" (Douillet and Castanheira, 2014. p.52). As such, historically set narratives are more difficult for a younger audience to assimilate into their contemporary realities and perceptions, due to the internally constructed chasm between the then and the now. In order to better unpack a constructed identity, the specific time of post-apartheid is used as it would give a more realistic picture of the contemporary global audience's perceptions of identity[49].

These case studies that I have chosen from post 1994 until recently will be discussed with regards to their presentation of white South African characters, and therefore each presentation of such will be observed and unpacked with reference to identity, representation and visual culture.

3.5 Validity and trustworthiness

The nature of the research conducted in this study means that the credibility of the discussion is somewhat ambiguous. As is true for all theoretical considerations of a topic, the findings could be skewed by the bias and inclinations of the researcher. That being said, this is an academic research paper and is therefore dealt with in an academic manner. All findings are based on the presentations of white South African identities in international film, and are informed by theoretical perspectives which act as guy-ropes in this research. This research and its findings are transferable to other contexts. This transferability can be seen in how similar considerations can be made in regards to different entertainment media and the consumption of narratives in general. Providing an awareness of what one consumes and how it influences those who consume it, is this study's focus, and that awareness is one which is empirically applicable in multiple contexts and with regards to multiple identities. The fact that each text unpacked by this thesis is in the public sphere of entertainment gives the research conducted in this study a level of dependability. The public accessibility of all these texts means that no manipulation of the texts can be made in this study. This means that there is no room for this research to skew the data on which it is based. Therefore, there is a confident degree of dependability regarding the data discussed, and with this comes a level of confirmability as each text needs to be dealt with in a way that considers that the reader may or may not have seen the film being discussed. This means that a study of this nature allows for a unique relationship between reader as researcher, as the reader may have viewed the texts discussed in this thesis before the researcher even presents that discussion.

3.6 Contextualising the research

Even though this thesis is focused on the representation of white characters in mainstream film, I am aware of the fact that black characters are far more stereotyped and represented as the 'bad guys' in films especially in mainstream American films. This has been researched in studies such as *The Underrepresentation of African Americans and the Role of Casting Directors* (Suhling, 2017) and *Acting Black: An Analysis of Blackness and Criminality in Film* (Edwards, 2019). I focused on white identity because I am a white male and what is projected in film also affects my own identity. This research indicates the malleable nature of contemporary identity, and the need for an awareness of how people's futures are

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[49] This is not to suggest that apartheid and its inherent realities do not influence the creation of these characters or the global perception of south African's, but this thesis' aims are not to unpack the root of white south African identity but instead unpack a layer of the product of this in global media, as well as the impact of such.

affected by film and its inherent characters and narratives. Such notions shape the importance of this type of study in the context of my own white South African identity.

South Africa has a colonial and apartheid past and the results of that economic disadvantage are still evident and prominent for the majority of South Africans. There are constant reminders of white colonial iniquitous atrocities in contemporary South Africa. This can be seen in the economic divides which remain in the country. South Africans are working to heal these wounds in a post-apartheid context, and reclaim and redefine contemporary identities based on this new context. Film exists as a medium which can proliferate constructions of identity nationally and globally in this time. This positions film, and the narratives and characters it peddles, as a manipulative force in the creation of this contemporary identity. As such, film exists as the core case focus of this research, research which explores such patterns in an applicable post-colonial, post-apartheid context.

3.7 Synthesis of Research Methodology

In a study of this nature, the research methodology is already prescribed by its content. This study is limited to a theoretical, qualitative research approach to a case study format of academic research. Although the design of this study is restrictive as there is little room to approach it differently with regards to methodology, there is a reason that this is the most effective way to approach a study of this kind. It allows access to a larger number of texts upon which to reflect and discuss in the context of what this study unpacks. Because of this, a larger trend in the presentation of a white South African identity can be described instead of smaller influences on identity created by singular examples. This allows for a more consolidated and all-encompassing study into this topic.

CHAPTER 4

WHITE ON THE SILVER SCREEN – DISCUSSION OF TEXTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN IDENTITY IN FILM

4.1 Introduction

How is white South African Identity created and portrayed in post-apartheid popular and visual culture internationally? This is the main question which this study aims to answer. But that "how" is not how is it created, where the answer is that someone writes a script, a large corporation pays for it to be acted out and filmed with the curated result appearing on a screen near you, via modern technology. The question here is much more nuanced – and therefore so is the answer. Here the "how" is, how are the representations behaving, how are these representations defining the identity of white South Africans, and therefore how are viewers being taught to understand white South African identity as an effect of such. In order to answer these questions a multitude of case studies from international entertainment media will be discussed, with each film example containing a representation of a white South African, one who's character aids in the construction of a white South African identity both around the world and in South Africa.

When embarking on the enigmatic journey of dissecting the myriad of applicable examples in this study, it is necessary to delineate the separate categories on which this study will focus. Firstly, a focus on the most proliferated singular contemporary example will be dissected and discussed. Secondly, other examples which aid in creating the scaffolding around a white South African identity will be unpacked, focussing on the overarching characteristics which inform their make-up – i.e. fulfilling the role of the bad guy. This will also include consideration of morally neutral or benevolent representations and how they fit into the creation of white South African identity through visual culture. Due to their prolificity in comparison to female examples of this identity, as described, male examples will be discussed first with the comparison of female examples to follow. Therefore thirdly, a comparison of the gendered identities conveyed through white South African characters will be conducted, describing the binaries which are constructed in this specific social group's identity. These distinct pieces of what make up the identity conveyed to an audience through film are important to understand individually in order to fully understand the white South African identity created in this context as a whole.

4.2 White South African Prolificity: Ulysses Klaue

It is becoming more and more difficult for films to achieve 'cult' status, to become a stand out work which stays in the minds of those who watch it and is even known by those who haven't. In the past, specifically the second half of the 20th century, this was much more attainable. In contemporary times there are hundreds of production companies and streaming services which each seem to produce the majority of what reaches the executives desks. We gorge ourselves on the media we are constantly fed, binge watching and movie marathon-ing until postprandially stated. This oversaturation can be, in part, due to the increased contemporary accessibility of filming-making technology and equipment, making it easier to produce films on smaller budgets and weaker ideas. In this reality it becomes difficult to hero the gems amongst the sea of chaff. Historically, in the context of film, it was far easier to find stand-alone and influential greats like Gone With The Wind (1939), The Wizard of Oz (1939), Casablanca (1942), It's a Wonderful Life (1946), 12 Angry Men (1957), Bridge Over The River Kwai (1957), Psycho (1960), Sound of Music (1965), Barbarella (1968), 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968), The Godfather (1972), Towering Inferno

(1974), Jaws (1975), Rocky (1976), Taxi Driver (1976), Grease (1978), Escape From Alcatraz (1979), Alien (1979), E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial (1982), Ghostbusters (1984), The Breakfast Club (1985), Back to the Future (1985), Dirty Dancing (1987), Coming to America (1988), Die Hard (1988), Silence of the Lambs (1991), Jurassic Park (1993), Forrest Gump (1994), Shawshank Redemption (1994), Pulp Fiction (1994), Titanic (1997) and Fight Club (1999). The main components used to construct films has not changed drastically in the contemporary creation of films, we simply appear to be so overfed as an audience that we do not fully appreciate it.

We are desensitised to creative and narrative greatness, but this is not to say that such renown and cultural effect can not be achieved by contemporary films. This simply indicates that when a film manages to attain this status, when it manages to raise its head above the surfeit of entertainment produced today, it truly has an impact on those who watch it and the surrounding culture[50]. A film for which this is undeniably the case is Black Panther (2018).[51] [52]

Black Panther creates an instance in popular and visual culture where black representation is not side-lined in any way, an instance that the world (specifically a black audience) craved. This meant that a group of people, one which had become accustomed to seeing those of their group reprising auxiliary roles in the Hollywood hierarchy, found a place of overwhelming and positive representation. This revolutionary film positioned black characters as the linchpin in a narrative which ran parallel to some of the most watched and renowned films of the 21st century[53]. It was revered by audiences and critics alike. Less than three weeks after its initial release, on Rottentomatoes.com, the film was the highest rated live-action film in the superhero genre, overtaking greats like Iron Man and The Dark Knight, both from 2008 (McClintock, 2018). Similarly, on Metacritic.com, critics noted its universal acclaim[54]. Psychology professor Erlanger Turner from Pepperdine University California noted the nature of Black Panther as a cultural phenomenon and explained the reasons for this characteristic of the film:

"Many have wondered why Black Panther means so much to the black community and why schools, churches and organisations have come to the theatres with so much excitement. The answer is that the movie brings a moment of positivity to a group of people often not the centrepiece of Hollywood movies... [Racial and ethnic socialisation] helps to strengthen identity and helps reduce the likelihood on internalising negative stereotypes about one's ethnic group." (Turner, 2018)

The way in which Black Panther was received meant that its representations of identity strongly influenced the identity perceptions for those who viewed the film. It is notable within the film's narrative there are only two notable white characters[55], one of which is the white South African character Ulysses Klaue.

The character of Klaue was not introduced in the Black Panther film where he came the fore, but in another film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015). The film shares similar renown to Black Panther, which is evident in that it is one of the four films in the highest-grossing film

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[50] Films like The Lord of the Rings trilogy (2001-2003), The Passion of the Christ (2004), Borat (2007), Slumdog Millionaire (2008), Avatar (2009), The Social Network (2010), Get Out (2017), Black Panther (2018), Parasite (2019) and Joker (2019).
[51] As well as the Marvel film franchise as a cultural phenomenon, culminating in the Avengers film franchise.
[52] Refer to elaboration of the film's reach in Chapter 1.
[53] As it fits into the larger Marvel Cinematic Universe, whose films make up the majority of the top ten highest-grossing films of all time.
[54] Metacritic.com utilises weighted averages to produce scores out of 100. Black Panther (2018) received 88/100, based on the reviews of 55 critics.
[55] An American CIA agent Everett K. Ross, played by English actor Martin Freeman, and South African black-market arms dealer, smuggler and gangster Ulysses Klaue, played by English actor Andy Serkis.

franchise of all time, the Avengers film franchise[56]. This film, at its peak, was the fifth highest grossing film of all time, and is now ranked at eleven on that prestigious list[57]. The fact that a white South African character has a significant role in two of the most influential films of the 21st century, in terms of reach, revenue, renown and cultural influence, positions Ulysses Klaue as the cornerstone of white South African representation internationally in this context. It is therefore relevant to unpack Klaue as the most prolific example in the creation of white South African identity in film.

Before I delve into the examples to follow, first a small caveat: out of respect for the films which are unpacked in this study I should warn, axiomatic as it may be, that the following discussions include a variety of "spoilers". If you are so inclined, I encourage you to watch these films before reading further.

4.2.1 The Rise of Klaue: Discussion of the most prolific white South African in film

Ulysses Klaue (pronounced "claw"), played by character actor Andy Serkis[58], holds dual citizenship in Belgium and South Africa and boasts a thick South African accent, almost Afrikaans. As an English actor portraying a South African character, Serkis presents an all too convincing and realistic representation of a white South African, I would even suspect this to be true for a white South African audience. He captures a South African accent perfectly, which is rare for an actor from outside SA.[59]. He also seems to include mannerisms in his characterisation which are uniquely South African – presenting a convincing representation of a white South African to viewers.

Klaue is introduced to an international audience in the 2015 film Avengers: Age of Ultron. To give a brief synopsis, in the interest of understanding the context of what is to be discussed here, Avengers: Age of Ultron follows the story of a group of superheroes, the Avengers[60]. In the narrative Tony Stark attempts to create a sentient Artificial Intelligence (AI) Program named Ultron to help protect Earth from danger. The project goes awry when Ultron awakes believing he needs to destroy humanity in order to save earth. The film then follows the Avengers and their attempts to stop the rouge program and its many robotic forms.

When we are first introduced to Klaue in this film, it is in the form of a paper dossier, while the heroes of the film, the Avengers, are looking for information on known associates of recently-deceased bad guy, Wolfgang van Strucker, or simply "Strucker". The scene goes as follows:

> Steve Rogers: Known associates. Well, Strucker had a lot of friends.
>
> Bruce Banner: Well, these people are all horrible.
>
> Tony Stark: Wait. I know that guy. [He points to the manila folder in Banner's hands. Banner passes him the document] From back in the day. He operates off the African coast, black market arms. [Rodgers gives him an accusing look] There are conventions, alright? You meet people, I didn't sell

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[56] Including The Avengers (2012), Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015), Avengers: Infinity War (2018) and Avengers: Endgame (2019).

[57] Although the correlation is made in this thesis, it's important to note that I am not stipulating that the financial income of a film and the ethereal notions of reach and influence are one in the same. Here the correlation is made as financial generation is the closest quantifiable information which can indicate the nature of a film's influence and reach.

[58] Known for eccentric and celebrated roles like the ape Caesar in The Planet of the Apes trilogy (2011-2017) and Gollum in the Lord of the Rings Trilogy (2001-2003) and The Hobbit (2012).

[59] The examples of Leonardo DiCaprio in Blood Diamond (2006) and Matt Damon in Invictus (2009) come to mind, where both actors struggled with the accent comparatively.

[60] The team includes Tony Stark (Ironman), Steve Rodgers (Captain America), Thor, Dr Bruce Banner (The Hulk), Natasha Romanoff (Black Widow) and Clint Barton (Hawkeye).

him anything. [We see the photo is of a man named Ulysses Klaue] He was talking about finding something new, a game changer, it was all very "Ahab".

Figure 2: Still from Avengers: Age of Ultron (Whedon, J., et al. (2015). Avengers, age of Ultron).

In the document there are three photos of the tattoo-clad Klaue. He seems to be donning a rugged unkempt version of a shirt which would suit a colonial explorer[61], accompanied by dark cargo pants, aviator sunglasses and a deep scowl. The text alongside the images provides the following information: "Ulysses Klaue was an assassin hired to take down T'Challa at the Bilderberg Conference in the case that he refused to negotiate Wakanda's resources[62] including Vibranium. But, Klaue was also there personally, as the Panther killed his great-grandfather in the 19th Century while this one was trying to annex Wakanda. He was paid ten million dollars for the kill." The scene continues in response to this information:

Thor: [Pointing to the scar on the back of Klaue's neck] What's this?

Tony Stark: Uh, it's a tattoo. I don't think he had it...

Thor: No, those are tattoos [pointing at the many tribal tattoos on Klaue's neck, arms and chest], this… [pointing back at the large, fleshy scar once again] is a brand.

Bruce Banner: [Identifying the brand on a computer] Oh, yeah. It's a word in an African dialect meaning thief, in a much less friendly way.

Steve Rogers: What dialect?

Bruce Banner: Wakanada...? Wa...Wa...Wakanda.

[Stark and Rodgers exchange a concerned look]

Tony Stark: If this guy got out of Wakanda with some of their trade goods...

Steve Rogers: I thought your father said he got the last of it?

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[61] Similar to the two-tone khaki clothing worn by South African/Afrikaans farmers.

[62] This spelling mistake in this study is not due to oversight on my part. The misspelling of the word "resources" is in the document in the film. This is surprising of a film which such global prowess, but the document is shown very briefly, and therefore spoken conversation regarding Klaue is paramount in the scene.

Bruce Banner: I don't follow. What comes out of Wakanda?

Tony Stark: [looking at Captain America's shield] The strongest metal on earth.

Virbranium. Without getting distracted by the lore of the MCU, Vibranium is a strong and versatile metal, of which the African country of Wakanda,[63] is rich. Before unpacking this introductory scene in the context of this study, it is first applicable to unpack the scene which follows – where we are introduced to the character of Klaue in person.

Figure 3: Still showing Andy Serkis as Ulysses Klaue (Whedon, J., et al. (2015). Avengers, age of Ultron).

The scene begins by showing a ship salvage yard on the South African coast. The camera moves towards a ship in which Klaue bases his sordid operations. The name on the back of the once abandoned ship reads: "Churchill – Great Britain". We are then shown the inside of the ship with endless men scurrying, sorting weapons large and small, around the hold of the ship. In a dimly lit glass office overlooking the hold stands Klaue. The scene continues as follows:

[Klaue is talking on the phone in his office]

Klaue: Don't tell me your man swindled you. I sent you six short range heat seekers and got a boat full of rusted parts. Now, you will make it right, or the next missile I send you will come very much faster. [he ends the call and returns to another] Now, minister, where were we?

[The electricity suddenly cuts out, causing commotion in the ship. Klaue slowly picks up a pistol from his desk, a desk adorned with weapons, framed photographs of scantily clad women with guns, and a bowl of candy. He raises his gun towards the darkness and shoots. A flash of blue passes him and he turns to find his gun has been removed from him and the bullets have been lined neatly on the desk. A man, Pietro Maximoff (with the power of superspeed), now stands behind him. Maximoff's twin sister, Wanda Maximoff (gifted with telepathic and telekinetic abilities) enters the office.]

Klaue: Ja… the enhanced. Strucker's prize pupils. [Klaue sits back on a stool and picks up a dish of candies from his desk] Want a candy? I was, sorry to hear about Strucker. But then, he knew what kind of world he was helping create. Human life, not a growth market. [Klaue is referring to the

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[63] The African country from where the hero Black Panther hails and is king of. It is also where the film of the same name is set.

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death of Strucker, whom aided the twins in achieving their powers. The twins look at each other] You...you didn't know? Is this your first time intimidating someone? I'm afraid that I'm not that afraid.

Wanda Maximoff: Everybody's afraid of something.

Klaue: Cuttlefish. [Klaue leans forward with a crazed look in his eye] Deep sea fish. They make lights. Disco lights. Whohm, whohm, whohm, to hypnotize their prey, then whoom! [Klaue cluches angrily at the air] I saw a documentary, terrifying. [Pietro speeds over to pick up a candy from Klaue's desk, and Klaue jerks at the sudden movement. Klaue looks over to Wanda] So if you're going to fiddle with my brain, and make me see a giant cuttlefish, then I know you don't do business, and I know you're not in charge, and I only deal with the man in charge. [Klaue stands as he ends his sentence]

[At that moment Ultron breaks through the dirty glass wall of the office and kicks Klaue to the floor]

Ultron: There is no "man" in charge. [Ultron steps towards Klaue who is now laying on his back, leaning in] Let's talk business.

[Klaue shows Ultron to a concealed storeroom gives him some vibranium from his stockpile] "Upon this rock I will build my church". Vibranium.

Klaue: You know, it came at great… personal cost [he rubs the scar on the back of his neck]. It's worth billions.

[Ultron chuckles and instantaneously/electronically puts money in Klaue's bank account]

Ultron: Now, so are you. It's all under your dummy holdings? Finance is so weird. But I always say, "Keep your friends rich and your enemies rich, and wait to find out which is which."

Ulysses Klaue: Stark... [Klaue has a strange expression on his face, one of déjà vu]

Ultron: What?

Klaue: Tony Stark used to say that...to me. You're one of his.

Ultron: What?! I'm not...! [he grabs Klaue] I'm not. You think I'm one of Stark's puppets? His hollow men? I mean look at me, do I look like Iron Man? Stark is . . . [he cuts off Klaue's arm with a single swing of his own] I'm sorry. I am sor-- Ooh, I'm sure that's going to be okay. I'm sorry, it's just I don't understand. Don't compare me with Stark! It's a thing with me. Stark is… he's a sickness!

[As Ultron finishes his rant, the Avengers team appear behind him]

This ends his appearance in the film[64]. Although this is just an introduction to the character of Klaue, who comes to the fore in Black Panther released three years later, there are many interesting aspects of this white South African character which are conveyed to the global audience through this introduction.

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[64] From the beginning of the shipyard scene to the end of the following scene, the actions which the film follows are all set in South Africa.

Firstly, there are three primary antagonists in Avengers: Age of Ultron. Three main bad guys[65]. They are Ultron – an AI system hellbent on bringing an end to humanity as we know it, Wolfgang von Strucker – German scientist who conducts unnatural experiments on humans, and Ulysses Klaue – a Belgian/South African black-market arms dealer. Two out of the three villains in this film have some sort of affiliation to a historical artocity – Nazi's for Strucker[66] and apartheid for Klaue. Whether that connection is explicit or implicit in the writing of the character, this fact remains true. This correlation with groups of people connected to historical oppression and violence, emphasises the reliance on 'fables' in the creation and representation of such character (Barthes and Duisit, 1975). As Barthes mentions, "There can be fables without characters, according to Aristotle, but there cannot be characters without fables" (Barthes and Duisit, 1975). This means that there can be no characters that do not have an attached 'fable', one which communicates aspects of the character to a viewer. The 'fable' here is the historical position of white South Africans: a role of constructing and upholding the oppressive apartheid regime.

This "evilness", connected to and communicated through these characters and attached 'fables' of this nature, accesses the viewer's knowledge of these historical evils, whether that connection is made consciously or subconsciously. However, prior knowledge of these historical truths is not necessary in order to absorb the connotations of those 'fables' if such a character is prolificated. For example, if a child with no knowledge of the holocaust and the Nazi party watches enough films, and consumes enough narratives, ones which position a German character as the "bad guy", that child will begin to connect Germans to the same connotations that are communicated by the 'fable' of early 20th century Germany. This is a common troupe used in the writing of narrative ever since humanity created allies and enemies. Regarding representation, in the case of Ulysses Klaue, the language (the representation of his character in film) connects the viewer with the concept of a world "event" (Hall, 1997), namely apartheid. The connection between concept and language which occurs here imbues the character of Klaue with the characteristics of a binary understanding of apartheid – with black South Africans as the oppressed and white South Africans as the oppressor. This is emphasised in the narrative by the actions and background information given regarding the character of Klaue. If a representation is connected to a "fable", like apartheid, the actions and descriptions of such a representation defines which side of that "fable" the character would fall, and the connected associations come in tow.

An aspect of this initial presentation of Klaue which is interesting in the construction and representation of a white South African identity, is the role he has in the film's plot. The main reason for his inclusion as a character is to provide stolen vibranium, looted from the fictional African nation of Wakanda, to the primary antagonist. This creates an interesting correlation between the character being depicted and colonialism. There is already a tentative link to colonialism through the race of the character[67], but here the actions of the character directly access the nature of a coloniser. A coloniser is one who, often through control, exploits a people or area with the goal of gaining economic dominance (Rodney, 2018). If such a definition is to be understood and applied to the character of Klaue, clear parallels between the two exist and are emphasised.

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[65] Note that I use this phrase bad guys not as a gendered notion. Although the majority of examples, to which this moniker applies, are male.

[66] This is not only emphasised by Strucker's German heritage but also by the fact that, in Marvel lore, Strucker is a former Nazi officer and one of the leaders of Hydra terrorist organisation.

[67] Lewis emphasises that in the creation of identity, there is an importance placed on defining the self from the other (Lewis, 1990). This creates binary conceptions of identity and, when this is combined with historical group connotations, in certain narratives white has a diffident link to colonialism – whether emphasised through narrative or not.

As indicated in the film[68] Ulysses Klaue, for his own financial gain, spent time in the African country of Wakanda where he enslaved groups of her citizens in order to mine vibranium. He managed to steal vast amounts of this resource, escaping only with the symbol for 'thief' branded on his neck as a reminder of his malevolence. He then sold his stockpile to Ultron, for which he was compensated billions of dollars[69]. This information can be broken down into five aspects which reflect Klaue's colonial nature. Firstly, Klaue did not simply sneak into a country and steal a natural resource, he enslaved it's people in order to do so. The sheer amount of control and oppression which is required to conduct such abominable activity, reflects the connection between the portrayed character and colonialism. Secondly, it was not a European or western nation which Klaue infiltrated and syphoned natural resources from, but an African nation. Africa has a past saturated with colonialism[70] and so when placed in a relationship with a white character who has enslaved its people and appropriated its resources, this colonial element of the character's representation is emphasised. This characteristic of white South African characters will be unpacked further regarding the appearance of such in Black Panther. Thirdly Klaue profited incredibly from this transaction of stolen resources. Ultron, a super intelligent AI with no remorse for humanity, paid Klaue for the vibranium which he could have easily taken with force or by killing Klaue. In this transaction, with a character he was powerless to resist, Klaue manages to make a vast amount of money off the backs of those he exploited. This was therefore not a necessary step in the progress of the narrative and so the fact that Klaue profits in this way can be understood as required to emphasise the nature of the character to the viewer. This nature is therefore emphasised as being linked closely to that of colonialism. Another aspect of this character is the control Klaue imposes on those around him. This control links closely to that which is required in patterns of colonialism. "I only speak to the man in charge," says Klaue, while in his office overlooking his large entourage of men sorting his stolen goods and black-market weapons. This takes us to the final point, for now, regarding the links to colonialism. The majority of the people who work below Klaue are black. If this is combined in the mind of viewers with the fact that Klaue sports a South African accent, correlation with the colonial past of South Africa is raised. South Africa, and its native people, were colonised by the Dutch and eventually fell to British rule before contemporary freedom. This colonial history, and the relationship between Klaue and those around him, emphasises this colonial nature. The majority of these aspects which connect Klaue with colonialism also show the role and importance of fables linked to characters as discussed by Barthes (Barthes and Duisit, 1975).

The aspects of Klaue's character which are presented to viewers of Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) are further proliferated by the same character's representation in Black Panther (2018). Black Panther, the profound cultural effect of which has been discussed earlier in this thesis, also includes the character of Ulysses Klaue, where he is promoted to secondary antagonist in the film, with a much larger role than that of that of the Marvel film which introduced him to the world.

The beginning of Black Panther opens to the sound of a boy speaking to his father.

Boy: Baba?[71]

Father: Yes, my son?

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[68] And echoed by the lore of the MCU.

[69] When this transaction takes place, the audience is shown three wire transfer notifications that Klaue receives on his cell phone, which add up to (at least) 2.6 billion dollars.

[70] In comparison with European/western countries which would be defined more as colonisers throughout history.

[71] The people of Wakanda speak what the film presents as Wakandan. Wakandan is actually the South African language of Xhosa. This, as well as when English is spoken by Wakandan characters, is spoken with a thick African accent which sounds like an amalgamation of a variety of North, central and Southern African accents.

> Boy: Tell me a story.

The voice of the father goes on to tell the story of Wakanda. The black screen is lit up by stars and a meteorite enters the frame moving towards Earth in the dark distance.

> Father: Millions of years ago, a meteorite made of vibranium, the strongest substance in the universe, struck the continent of Africa affecting the plant life around it. And when the time of man came, five tribes settled on it and called it Wakanda. The tribes lived in constant war with each other until a warrior shaman received a vision from the panther goddess Bast who led him to the Heart Shaped Herb, a plant that granted him super-human strength, speed, and instincts. The warrior became king and the first Black Panther, the protector of Wakanda. Four tribes agreed to live under the king's rule, but the Jabari tribe isolated themselves in the mountains. The Wakandans used vibranium to develop technology more advanced than any other nation, but as Wakanda thrived, the world around it descended further into chaos.

This story helps contextualise, for the viewer, the reality in which the film is based. In this reality Wakanda exists as a country untouched by colonialism and as such has been able to thrive technologically and socially unhindered by oppression. But this meant that Wakanda could never share their resources and provide aide to those groups of people around the world who needed their help – their African brothers and sisters. After this contextualisation we are shown the exterior of an apartment building which we are informed is in Oakland, California in 1992. In one of the apartments, two black American men talk in hushed tones hunched over a table covered with maps and automatic weapons. They seem to be planning a heist of sorts, but this planning is halted when one of the men stops talking, lifting his head as if he heard something. He gives an instruction to hide the weapons, as they both scramble to put away what was splayed across the table. One of the men moves over to the window and sees children playing basketball in the adjacent lot. There is a knock on the door and two women holding spears and donning red leather outfits adorned with African beadwork necklaces are let in. In Wakandan one woman asks one of the men who he is. He says he is Prince N'Jobu. Once they are sure of this they bang their spears on the ground in unison and the dim lights of the apartment turn off. Another bang is heard as the lights come on revealing the Black Panther, King of Wakanda standing between the warrior women. King T'Chaka removes his helmet and greets N'Jobu as his brother. The King informs his brother, who has been in America away from their African home for some time, that there has been an attack in Wakanda. He lifts his wrist from which shines a dim light, the holographic light shows the image of Ulysses Klaue.

> T'Chaka: This man, Ulysses Klaue, stole a quarter ton of vibraniurn from us and triggered a bomb at the border to escape. Many lives were lost. He knew where we hid the vibranium, and how to strike.

T'Chaka then accuses his brother of aiding Klaue in being able to successfully pull off this robbery, revealing the other man with N'Jobu was a Wakandan spy feeding information about N'Jobu's actions to the king. Although the majority of what was described here is may seem like excess information only important to the plot and not necessarily to the unpacking of Klaue, there are aspects of this initial holographic appearance in the film which are interesting in the construction of a white South African identity.

Figure 4: Still from an initial scene in Black Panther (Coogler, R., et al. (2018). Black Panther).

In Black Panther, Ulysses Klaue is the first white character presented to viewers in the first acted scene of the film. This immediately emphasises Klaue as binary opposition to the primary character demographic – benevolent black characters. Klaue fulfils the opposite role – a malevolent white character. This is clever script-writing because if introduced later in the film after other neutral or 'good' white characters are introduced, this emphasis on him as opposition through binary juxtaposition would not be as sharply pointed a tool. This does, however, mean that in the context of what this study explores, the most prolific white South African character is pigeonholed early in its representation to an international audience and, therefore, so is the international conception of white South African identity influenced by the depiction (Giles, 2003). Identity is not defined by a decision of the self or of others but is defined by social context (D. Oyserman, K. Elmore, G. Smith, 2012, p.76). This indicates the role of this initial presentation of Klaue, as it socially contextualises the character and its attached identity before we even see Klaue himself. The juxtaposition and its inherent role in socially contextualising the character are not single-ply. It is significant to consider which character is communicating this material regarding Klaue to the audience - the Black Panther. The titular protagonist himself. The benevolent king. This benevolence and position as a protagonist in the narrative contrast directly with the malevolence and position of antagonist which adorns the South African – on top of the more apparent and visually obvious juxtaposition of race.

The film's primary antagonist, to whom we have not yet been properly introduced, is a black character. It is clear in the construction of the narrative that it would not be effective to introduce his character before the secondary antagonist of Klaue as more character development was required for his role. The fact that we are introduced to Klaue before the primary protagonist, Killmonger, is interesting in the considerations of this study. In the film, it creates a notion of the other. Remember, Wakanda is untouched by colonialism and does not accept international aid, so the representation of Wakandan characters stand for true opposition to western whiteness. Not even their technology is influenced by the outside world and therefore is not colonially influenced, but instead is genuinely African. So, in a room full of Wakandans we are presented with Klaue, a white South African with all the attached fables. This creates an 'othering' of Klaue, again a useful device to the plot and the positioning of characters in the film, and a powerful influence on creating a South African white identity in the minds of an international audience. In representation, one uses similarity and difference to define relationships and distinguish one concept from another (Hall, 1997). Regarding representation, this cleverly curated initial presentation of Klaue creates the othering required to distinguish these concepts.

The most fascinating aspect of the opening presentation of this character here is the pattern it illuminates. In both Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) and Black Panther (2018) Ulysses Klaue was first presented to the audience through a dossier of information and images. Both outline the characters seedy and evil behavioural history. This pattern of focussing on providing more information on Klaue's story to viewers, shows how this representation of white South Africans relies so much on Barthes notions of fable (Barthes and Duisit, 1975). As discussed earlier regarding his depiction in Avengers: Age of Ultron, in the representation of this character, there is a strong reliance on the historical fable/story of apartheid[72]. Apartheid and its connected notions of colonialism and oppression are emphasised by both sets of information given on Klaue in these introductory presentations. The stealing of resources from an African nation and the senseless killing of her people. By comparison, the introduction of the primary protagonist does not have a fable or story immediately attached. In line with this difference, the goals of the primary protagonist, once revealed, are far less morally repugnant[73]. Through the pattern of introduction shown in these films, the fable immediately delineates Klaue's ambitions as a character. In doing so the historical fable of apartheid is brought to the fore, consciously or subconsciously, in the minds of those who consume this white South African representation.

The next scene where we are presented with Klaue himself, is set in the United Kingdom. A black man in his early thirties, Erik Stevens, also known as Killmonger, the primary antagonist in the film, is walking around the Museum of Great Britain in London. He identifies a relic collected by the museum originally from Wakanda, one made of vibranium. He speaks to the museum's expert on the artefacts. She describes the object that Killmonger has identified.

> Museum Expert: Also from Benin. 7th Century. Fula tribe I believe.

> Killmonger: Nah.

> Museum Expert: I beg your pardon?

> Killmonger: It was taken by British soldiers in Benin but it's from Wakanda and it's made out of vibranium. Don't trip, I'mma take it off your hands for you.

> Museum Expert: These items aren't for sale.

> Killmonger: How do you think your ancestors got these? You think they paid a fair price? Or did they take it like they took everything else.

> Museum Expert: Sir, I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

> Killmonger: You got all this security watching me ever since I walked in. But, you ain't checking for what you put in your body. [He looks at the coffee cup in her hand]

The museum expert falls to the ground as the surrounding security guards rush to her aid. Killmonger steps back exclaiming that someone needs to call her a doctor. Soon two paramedics run in with a gurney. Their voices instruct the public to move aside, in thick South African accents. As they reach the woman, Ulysses Klaue's grinning face comes into focus. The South African's masquerading as paramedics shoot the two

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[72] I must reiterate that I am in no way positioning the atrocities and reality of apartheid as a fable in that it is fictitious. This archaic sense of the word is not being used here.

[73] He believes he is the heir to the prince of Wakanda and is therefore within his right to challenge the king for the throne. He also wishes to use Wakanda's resources to arm those around the world who continue to live in oppression so that they may fight back.

closest security guards and the museum expert. One unarmed museum security guard remains standing. Klaue beckons him over.

Klaue: Hey come here. Come here! It's ok. You can go, but just don't tell anyone, alright? [Klaue winks at the guard]

[The guard nervously runs toward the exit. Klaue shoots him in the back and then sniffs casually]

Killmonger: Bro, why you ain't just shoot him right here?

Klaue: Because it's better to leave the crime scene more spread out... makes us look like amateurs. Now... let's see if you know what you're talking about ...

[Klaue removes a blue medical glove. He steps toward a glass display case and places his prosthetic hand on the glass. It splits down the middle and separates slightly. An invisible charge emitted from his hand shatters the glass]

Klaue: That's just a taste. [Klaue picks up the artefact. He vibrates his bionic arm to remove years of dust and grime from the artefact, revealing a silver shine of vibranium. Klaue sniffs it and smiles, turning to Killmonger] You're gonna be rich, boy.

Killmonger: You better sell that quick.

Klaue: [Klaue laughs] It's already sold [He breaks the vibranium piece off the artefact].

Killmonger: Whatever you try, the Wakandans will probably show up.

Klaue: That'll make my day. I can kill two birds with one stone.

[Killmonger looks closely at another African artefact, a mask]

Klaue: You're not telling me that's vibranium too, huh?

Killmonger: Nah, I'm just feeling it.

[The three escape the museum, with Killmonger on the gurney they brought in. They get in an ambulance where a black female accomplice waits. She embraces Killmonger with a kiss.]

Figure 5: Still from Black Panther (Coogler, R., et al. (2018). Black Panther).

This scene presents multiple correlations with Klaue's representation in Avengers: Age of Ultron, some of which are subtler than others. The first and perhaps most subtle, is not so much to do with Klaue himself, but with where we meet Klaue. In Avengers: Age of Ultron we meet him (in person) in a shipyard where he runs his operations out of a ship on the back of which is plastered the words "Churchill - Great Britain" large letters. In Black Panther, we first meet Klaue (in person) in a museum space with a large arch at its entrance which says "Museum of Great Britain". Although simple to understand why both sets of words would appear where they did, even though in quite separate contexts, the pattern it reveals is interesting. Both signs emphasise Great Britain, not England or the UK. The words "Great Britain" are a sign which connects the viewer with an accompanied concept (Hall, 1997), especially when repeated in both films, and at the same point in the viewers experience of Klaue. The specific nature of the language used, Great Britain and not a more contemporary rendition of the same language, connects the viewer with older conceptions of Great Britain. Great Britain as a colonial power, as a global power, as one that travels the world to take for their own. This concept is attached to the sign of the words "Great Britain", and to the object on which the words sit (Hall 1997). In Avengers: Age of Ultron it is a carrier ship. Connotations or signified concepts linked to this sign emulate that which is connected to "Great Britain", a vessel for travelling the world and couriering goods and resources. In Black Panther, the place where these words appear make the connected concept even more apparent as they are found at the entrance to a museum in London, a museum where an array of African artefacts taken by the colonial power are showcased. These objects combined with the words Great Britain, and the fact that this has become a repeated pattern of representation, emphasise the attached notion of colonialism (and its connotations) regarding the white South African character. This is an indirect and nuanced conceptual influence on viewers, most of whom may not even pick it up. Nevertheless, in the presenting a notable white South African character, every element of that character's representation has a role in defining such an identity. The connotations of this subtle element in the portrayal of Klaue are echoed in other elements of this scene.

The theme of appropriation and colonialism are palpable in this section of the film's narrative. Not only is it addressed verbally by characters in the scene, but it is also emphasised by the environment in which the entire scene takes place. Killmonger confronts the museum expert on the subject, referencing how her ancestors simply took what they wanted. The artefacts held by this British museum were all of African origin, echoing the sentiments expressed by Killmonger. When Klaue joins the scene he is masquerading as a British paramedic. Although this is necessary for the plot and for the successful completion of their caper, it highlights an appropriation of resources and identity. This ties Klaue with appropriation directly through his actions to enter the building. When such appropriation is executed in a space littered with

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examples of colonial appropriation, its difficult to ignore the correlation between the two. It positions him as a person comfortable with such appropriation and therefore the colonial nature of the environment which exudes such thematically. In both Age of Ultron and Black Panther there is a comfort and control that the character of Klaue expresses in both spaces where the audience meet him in person. Both evoke seedy connotations. Here the notion of a categorical identity is evident, where one realises the properties of oneself or others based on the properties of entities or beings which surround us, and that the categorisation of identity is made according to those properties (Lewis, 1990).

Although never referred to by name in this scene, we are introduced to a second white South African character. The man accompanying Klaue is Limbani[74], played by the South African actor David S Lee. His character, much like his leader Klaue, boasts an authentic South African accent, a pleasingly simple feat for a South African actor. His presence highlights all that is emphasised in the character of Klaue. Working under Klaue means he agrees with his goals and approves of his character. This supporting role, one with a parallel South African identity, boosts the nature of a white South African identity already being communicated to viewers through Klaue. In the narrative, Klaue and a 'mini-Klaue' both working to shape the perceived white South African identity in the same vain.

There is one aspect of this scene which I believe stands out as being the most jarring in the representation of this identity. An element of this scene's dialogue which holds a very strong and direct connection to the past and the racism which defined it, was how Klaue referred to Killmonger. Killmonger, essentially the only black character in this scene, is referred to by Klaue as "boy". This happens multiple times throughout the film. The term "boy" is a racially charged word when used in certain contexts. In South Africa the position of gardener was once referred to as the "garden boy", but such outrageous use of this condescending term would be met with outrage in contemporary times – and rightly so. It is also considered derogatory in the United States, due to their sordid history of slavery and racial inequality, resulting in multiple court cases on the subject in last 10 years[75]. The term emasculates and patronises the intended recipient, who is usually a grown man, positioning them as lesser than the speaker. It astounds me that such a word was not weeded out during the production of the film, either pre or post, especially considering the character from whose mouth the words came. Klaue as a character is already imbued with such divisiveness and linked to such negative historical fable that this seems to take that to a level which is almost too tangible. Having said this, it does achieve the goal of furthering the evil characteristics of one of the main "bad guys" in the film, which I assume was the goal of the writers. This directly connects Klaue with a slur drenched in racial discrimination, and in a film focussing on a black character driven story, this emphasises the moral feebleness of the character. This again highlights the malevolence in the creation of a white South African identity being presented to and assimilated by an international audience.

There is a maniacal way in which Klaue conducts himself. He appears to actively enjoy the hurt, loss and hardships he brings upon the people around him. It seems like a game to him; one he feels he has complete control over. He constantly wants more, asking Killmonger if the mask which he examines is also vibranium. This communicates the greed in the character, which connects not only to the appropriation linked to colonialism and the wealth and privilege provided to whites during apartheid, it also depicts his mania. This mania, often embodied by his crazed smile and hoarse laugh, is seen throughout his representation in the film.

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[74] Limbani's name is shown in the script and in the credits.
[75] The case of Ash v. Tyson Foods, 2010 WL 3244920 (11th Cir. No. 08-16135.) being an example of such. The case looked at white managers using the slur "boy" when addressing black staff.

The next time we are presented with Klaue, it is again through the medium of a hologram accompanied by information of his malevolent actions. In this scene, the information on Klaue is given by General Okoye to the present-day Black Panther, King T'Challa, and leaders from each Wakandan tribe.

> Okoye: A misidentified Wakandan artefact was stolen yesterday from a British museum. We have learned Ulysses Klaue plans to sell the vibraniurn to an American buyer in South Korea tomorrow night [people in the room murmur at the mention of Klaue].

> T'Challa: Klaue has escaped our pursuits for almost thirty years. Not capturing him was perhaps my father's greatest regret. I wish to bring Klaue back here to stand trial.

> Tribal Elder: Wakanda does not need a warrior right now. We need a King.

> W'Kabi: My parents were killed when he attacked. Not a day goes by when I do not think about what Klaue took from us, from me.

> Okoye: It's too great an opportunity to pass.

> W'Kabi: Take me with you. We'll take him down together side by side, eh?

> T'Challa: I need you here protecting the border.

> W'Kabi: Then I ask, you kill him where he stands, or you bring him back to us.

> T'Challa: You have my word I will bring him back. [He looks at W'Kabi, who nods]

The following scene outlines T'Challa, the Black Panther, preparing for the mission. He then heads to South Korea with Okoye[76] and Nakia[77], where they infiltrate an underground casino where they believe Klaue is going to complete the black-market transaction. While there they see American CIA agent Everett K. Ross[78], the intended buyer of the vibranium. Klaue soon enters the casino with an entourage of eight large white men, all of whom set off the metal detector with no consequence. He walks down into the casino to meet Ross, and six more of his men emerge on the mezzanine above. Ross comments on the number of men, but Klaue assures him not to worry and that he can do a deal with him all by himself. When Ross asks where the vibranium is Klaue unzips the fly of his pants and pulls out the piece of vibranium wrapped in brown paper with the word "fragile" ironically scrawled across it. One of Klaue's men spot Okoye and confronts her. She springs into action, decommissioning two men, one of whom she throws off the mezzanine onto the casino floor. This spooks Klaue who raises a pistol, firing at Ross who blocks the shots with a metal suitcase full of diamonds which he planned to use in the vibranium transaction. T'Challa secures Ross safely behind an overturned table as the casino falls into chaos. T'Challa, Okoye, Nakia and Ross fight against Klaues men in the ensuing mayhem. As Klaue attempts to exit the casino, T'Challa leaps onto the mezzanine to stop him.

> T'Challa: Imbulali! [Meaning "murderer" in Xhosa/Wakandan][79]

> Klaue: You know, you look just like your old man.

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[76] The General of the Dora Milaje, an elite group of female bodyguards and Wakandan special forces.
[77] A member of the War Dogs, the central intelligence agency of Wakanda.
[78] Played by British Actor Martin Freeman.
[79] This line is subtitled in the film so that it can be understood by all. The word is the same in Zulu and Xhosa.

Figure 6: Still from casino scene in Black Panther (Coogler, R., et al. (2018). Black Panther).

As Klaue says this he raises his hands as if to surrender, but his prosthetic arm opens up to reveal a vibranium "arm cannon". He uses this to shoot at T'Challa, who grabs a lock box to shield himself. The force blows open the lock box, knocking him back to the casino floor. The lock box money flitters through the air and onto the ground around T'Challa. Klaue turns to one of his men, with maniacal glee and exclaims, "I made it rain!", as he lets out a hoarse laugh. He exits the casino into the street exclaiming, "That was awesome! That was awesome!", with his men rushing past him to a row of black sport utility vehicles.

The ensuing car chase, where the team of protagonists hunt down Klaue in a montage of high-speed hijinks, showcases a variety of futuristic technology and daring acrobatic stunts. During the chase, Klaue has some notable lines like, "Put some music on! What do you think this is, a funeral?", and "Alright, let's have some fun!", as he leans out the car window to use his arm cannon. The chase ends with Klaue crawling out of his destroyed SUV in a crowded street market. T'Challa storms towards him aggressively calling his name.

> T'Challa: Did you think we would forget?
>
> [Klaue shoots him with his arm cannon which doesn't affect the Black Panther in his suit. Black Panther/T'Challa rips off his prosthetic arm and kicks him to the ground]
>
> T'Challa: Look at me murderer! Where did you get this weapon?
>
> Klaue: You savages didn't deserve it.
>
> [Klaue stands to meet T'Challa's eyeline. T'Challa grabs him by the neck and pushes him up against the wrecked vehicle, as he exposes his vibranium claws.]
>
> Klaue: Oh, mercy! King! Mercy! [He says in a patronising manner.]
>
> T'Challa: Every breath you take is mercy from me.

Figure 7: Still from when Klaue is caught in Black Panther (Coogler, R., et al. (2018). Black Panther).

T'Challa, although seething, is stopped from killing Klaue as the populated marketplace meant the world was watching the Wakandan king's actions. Klaue is taken by Ross and the Wakandans for interrogation. This interrogation begins in following scene, where the now one-armed Klaue is handcuffed, chained and taped to a chair in a room with a singular pane of one-way glass on the wall. He laughs like a mad man, looking into his reflection, repeating the words, "I can see you!" to the people on the other side. He makes kissing noises and smiles, somewhat undercutting the serious nature of his predicament. The first interrogator, Agent Ross, enters the room. As he enters, Klaue is singing.

> Klaue: What is love? Baby don't hurt me. Don't hurt me. No more. What is love? Baby don't hurt me. Don't hurt me. No more.

> [Agent Ross sits in front of him, unamused]

> Klaue: You know you really shouldn't trust these Wakandans. I'm much more your speed.

> Ross: I don't trust anybody, not in this job. But what I am interested in is that arm cannon out there. Where'd you get that?

> Klaue: It's an old mining tool that I made some adjustments to. But I can get you one if you'd like.

> Ross: Why don't you give me the name of your supplier and I'll ask them.

> Klaue: He's right outside, why don't you ask him yourself?

> Ross: T' Challa? You're telling me that weapon on your arm is from Wakanda?

> Klaue: Bingo. [He nods.] What do you actually know about Wakanda?

> Ross: Shepherds. Textiles. Cool outfits.

> Klaue: It's all a front. Explorers searched for it for centuries. El Dorado. The Golden City. They thought they could find it in South America, but it was in Africa the whole time. A technological marvel. All because it was built on a mound of the most valuable metal known to man. Isipho, they call it. The gift. Vibranium.

> Ross: Vibranium yeah. Strongest metal on Earth.

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Klaue: It's not just a metal. They sew it into their clothes, it powers their city, their tech, their weapons.

Ross: Weapons?

Klaue: Ja! Makes my arm cannon look like a leaf blower.

Ross: That's a nice fairy tale but Wakanda is a third world country and you stole all their vibranium.

Klaue: [Laughing] I stole . . .? All of it? [His mood suddenly shifts to one of contempt] I took a tiny piece of it. They have a mountain full of it. They've been thousands of years and still haven't scratched the surface. I'm the only outsider who's seen it, and got out of there alive. If you don't believe me you ask your friend what his suit is made of, what his claws are made of.

Figure 8: Still from interrogation scene in Black Panther (Coogler, R., et al. (2018). Black Panther).

Moments later, as the scene draws to an end, Klaue is broken out by Killmonger, Limbani and Linda. They load the Klaue, still adhered to his chair and laughing hoarsely, into a van. Two scenes later these four antagonists return. Their van pulls into an airfield lined with rows of small, decommissioned planes. They step out of the van.

Limbani: Let's get going, boss.

Killmonger: You always sell to the CIA?

Klaue: I sell to the highest bidder. Don't you worry when I get back to Joburg and lay low for a bit, I'll make sure both you guys get paid.

Killmonger: Oh, I ain't worried about the money, bro. I know you're good for it. On our way back, just drop us of in Wakanda.

Klaue: [Loading bags onto a small plane] You don't wanna go there, boy.

Killmonger: Yeah, I do.

Killmonger draws his pistol and shoots Limbani. Klaue shields himself with Linda, who Killmonger shoots in an attempt to kill Klaue. There is a small shoot-out and foot-chase ending with Klaue being shot in the chest. With Klaue lying against the scrap of a plane, the scene continues.

Klaue: [In pain] You really wanna go to Wakanda? They're savages. This is what they do to people like us. [He gestures to the band on his neck.]

Killmonger: I ain't worried about no brand. Check these out. [He lifts his sleeves to reveal a pattern of small scars covering his forearms.] Each one is for a kill.

Klaue: You can scar yourself as much as you like. To them, you'll just be an outsider. You're crazy to think that you could walk in there …

[Killmonger flips the inside of his bottom lip, revealing a Wakandan tattoo.]

Klaue: [Chuckling] And to think I saw you as some crazy American.

Klaue begins to laugh and Killmonger raises his pistol shooting Klaue point blank. This is the last we see of Klaue[80], and therefore so ends the data available regarding this example. It may seem, reading through such dialogue and plot description, that there is an overzealousness regarding retelling the film's narrative in this thesis. But what is described of this film was selected specifically as it contains pulpable content on the character of Ulysses Klaue. If the larger context and description for these scenes was not provided to the reader, such as yourself, the full nature of the character that is presented to a viewer of the film could not be understood. Hence, an accurate representation of such text needs to be a priority in this study. With that being said, the above scenes make up the majority of the film which includes Ulysses Klaue, and so there is a large amount of data on this white South African Character to dissect.

Figure 9: Still from the scene in which Ulysses Klaue dies in Black Panther (Coogler, R., et al. (2018). Black Panther).

Reiterations and reminders of this character's South African-ness are rife in this section of the film. These remind the viewer of the identity they are perceiving – a South African identity. When watching a film of this nature, where the character of Klaue is given such a large role, it can become secondary to be cognisant of the character's nationality, as their role in the plot becomes primary. With reminders such as "Ja!" in place of the American "yeah", which has become commonplace in international entertainment, we are given verbal signs which directly reference the identity already exuded by the character. The second most notable example of this is when Klaue says, "… when I get back to Joburg and lay low for a bit". The wording of this phase positions the characters nationality at the forefront of the viewers' understanding of Klaue. Not only is Johannesburg mentioned, keeping the concept of South Africa alive in the representation of the

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[80] Besides when Killmonger presents his lifeless body to the Wakandans later in the film.

character, but Klaue says "when I get back to Joburg". This emphasises that this is his home and integral to his identity. He uses the colloquial "Joburg" in place of the more internationally used "Johannesburg". This again positions him as familiar to the context of South Africa, more successfully assimilating the British actor's character with the identity it captures and communicates.

There are undertones of racism which also guide Klaue's portrayal in this section of the film. Racism, a notion already closely linked with whiteness[81] and conceptions of white South Africans[82], is vocalised directly by Klaue in these scenes. When caught by T'Challa, Klaue is aggressively asked where he got his weapon. Klaue responds with the words, "You savages didn't deserve it!". This phase, which is inherently racist by positioning African people as primitive and uncivilised with the offensive and dated word, emphasises the white South African identity he portrays as elitist. One who thinks highly of themselves and looks down upon others. In this section of the film we are again exposed to Klaue's use of "boy" when referring to Killmonger. The slur-like nature of this word and the social/racial hierarchy it communicates[83], further illustrates to the viewer the iniquitous nature of the character. The naming or referring to Killmonger as "boy" defines his social role and therefore position in their social context (J E Stuts, P J Burke, 2000, p2). This provides the viewer with expectations for the identities in that context, whether fulfilled through their character in the film or not (McCall and Simmons 1978; Stryker 1980). This reiterates the racist nature of the South African identity viewers consume through Klaue and the iniquitous oppression such an identity exerts on those around him, placing expectations on how that identity would behave in the real world (McCall and Simmons 1978; Stryker 1980).

The racially charged nature of the performance of Klaue and the issues of superiority connected to the character, are echoed in the relationship between Klaue and the men who work for him. It is commonplace for villains in contemporary film narrative to accrue an entourage of lackeys or henchmen, bolstering themselves as a threat to the protagonist and making it more impressive when that protagonist eventually comes out on top. Here the choice of lackey and their unique interaction with Klaue in the film both reiterate the character's self-perceived and conveyed social dominance. In the entirety of Black Panther (2018) the word "boss" is only ever used once. It is used by Klaue's lackey, Limbani, to address Klaue. To illustrate the relevance of this in its context, Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) used the word "boss" a total of seven times. In this film, never once was this word used in reference to the primary antagonist, instead it was only ever used to refer to protagonists[84]. This therefore stands out due to how it is used in Black Panther. The utterance of this moniker, and the actions/nature of Klaue's henchmen, appear to emphasise the level of control this identity holds over those around him. Klaue constantly laughs in the face of danger, radiating the power he perceives he has over any situation. This hoarse and voracious laughter is often accompanied by the fervent shuffling of some of Klaue's henchmen, who seem to be treating the current situation with less levity than their "boss". This group of men, the majority of whom are white[85], and are assumed, through accent and association, to be South African, reinforce the South African identity already portrayed through Klaue in the film. This also provides an enhanced perception of the power Klaue holds as a character and the control held by the white South African identity he communicates. This control reminds one of the nature of colonialism (Rodney, 2018) linked to this character.

This brings us to our final point on the presentation of white South African identity through the character of Klaue in this Black Panther. In order to adequately consider the identity conveyed to a viewer, it is

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[81] In contemporary times and based on historical racial relationships.
[82] Due to the attached fable of apartheid (Barthes and Duisit, 1975).
[83] With Klaue taking the position of "man" and giving Killmonger the position of "boy".
[84] Tony Stark (Ironman), Nick Fury (director of S.H.I.E.L.D.) and Steve Rogers (Captain America).
[85] Two men in the fourteen strong entourage during the casino scene are people of colour.

important not only to compare the character of Klaue to the black characters that dominate in this narrative but also to the white characters presented. The film's theatrical release poster contains a total of ten characters from its narrative. Two of these characters are white: Ulysses Klaue and CIA agent Everett K. Ross. The two represent the "bad guy" and the "good guy" shown in the film's white characters. In a film primarily concerned with a narrative which decolonises notions of Africanism, albeit through a fictional narrative, the white representations in the film represent that colonialism by contrast. This is even referenced verbally in the film's dialogue where Shuri, Princess of Wakanda and King T'Challa's sister, addresses Agent Ross saying, "Don't scare me like that colonizer"[86]. By the representations of white characters that act as signs of this concept vocalised by Shuri (Hall 1997), Agent Ross represents positive postcolonial white engagement, and by contrast, Klaue represents a negative and colonially adhered white identity. Each identity, and the enactment of these identities through the film, emphasises the other - the good versus the bad. Ross, a white American male, represents a benevolent white identity that would be close to home for the American writers and filmmakers. Positioning a South African as a malevolent white identity in the narrative would assumedly not be as difficult or divisive in their American social context – but it works to position white South Africans undesirably in the larger global social context. This pattern communicates to a viewer that it is not white identity which is morally corrupt, but white South African identity as constructed through the narrative. This aids in neatly terracing the social hierarchy of identities presented in the film.

Obviously, the nature of this character is evil. He is the bad guy. It stands to reason that the identity he communicates to viewers is one riddled with malevolence. It is not the purpose of this study to discuss the simple answer as to "why?". Why is this communicated identity so evil? Because he is the antagonist in a superhero film. The purpose of this study is to unpack how white south African identity is being formed by the products of the "why?". How is this identity defined as a result? It is undeniable that this character is instrumental in the formation of a white South African identity taught through popular visual culture internationally. Therefore, the nature of this identity emanating from Klaue required dissection to understand the identity that is being assimilated internationally. As a white South African, I believe it to be important to understand how my identity is perceived by those around me. As a global citizen, I believe it is important to closely look at what we consume in terms of media and truly unpack what it communicates to us about the world around us and those who live in it.

4.3 White South Africans as the Bad Guy

"It was all very Ahab". This line always stuck with me. It is the last line of the first description we are given of the most prolific white South African character which this study discusses. What is interesting is that most white South African characters presented in contemporary entertainment media can be painted with this same brush. Whether one's understanding of this line references the wicked biblical king of Israel or the monomaniacal captain from Herman Melville's Moby Dick[87], the nature of the identity which this phrase describes is the same.

Most examples of white South Africans in international entertainment media, specifically in film, which is the focus of this study, are very similar. Commonly these characters possess two evident characteristics: they are male and they are positioned in the role of antagonist. This is true for the most prolific role already discussed, but a singular example does not constitute a pattern. The nature of various examples of this

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[86] I use the American spelling here, as it is directly representative of the contents of the film's script.
[87] Most likely the latter as the literary character of Ahab had a limb ripped off, much like the character of Klaue discussed.

identity in film should be discussed to unpack the nuanced way this identity is repeated in media to a global audience. Therefore, the next section of this study will focus on such identities presented in varying internationally accessible texts.

I have been told by both international and South African colleagues, that there is a preconception of South Africans as being hard-working and that, due to this, international businesses regard job applications from South Africans positively. In business, this could be informed by previous South African employees, but in the greater social context, this must be influenced by a more extensive, widely-available influence. It is in the representations of White South Africans that are unpacked here that one can see an influence on the formation of this preconception. Most examples are authoritarian leaders and generals, although generally of a not so savoury group or pursuing unsavoury goals. These are people who get things done; people who have a following, a stern entourage of disciplined men (usually).

Regarding the scope and context of this study there are a variety of films that contain characters of this nature which can be addressed. These films are:

- Black Panther (2018) and Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) - Andy Serkis as Ulysses Klaue
- Elysium (2013) – Sharlto Copley as Agent Kruger
- The Interpreter (2005) – Nicole Kidman as Silvia Broome
- Chappie (2015) – the members of Die Antwoord as gangters
- Mean Girls (2004) – Lindsay Lohan as Cady Heron
- Velvet Buzzsaw (2019) – Tom Sturridge as Jon Dondon
- Free Fire (2016) – Sharlto Copley as Vernon
- Europa Report (2013) – Embeth Davidtz as Dr Samantha Unger
- The Sum of All Fears (2002) – Colm Feore as Derek Olson
- Tsotsi (2005) – Ian Roberts as Captain Smit

It is difficult to rank these films in order of influence, as this is an ethereal statistic to attempt to quantify. But the financial gross[88] and critical reception of films are the closest quantifiable statistic to reference in order to rank which examples have the most reach, and therefore influence, on a global audience. When ranked in this way, Elysium (2013) and The Sum of All Fears (2002) are the two films top this list[89]. Each film includes an example, and in the case of Elysium multiple examples, of a white South African character which exemplifies the prevailing norm in the representation of such a character: they are male, and they are antagonists.

Elysium presents a narrative set in the near future, where the Earth is overpopulated and impoverished, with all her resources squandered. The rich in society have escaped to Elysium, a technologically advanced space station/habitat which orbits the Earth. The protagonist, Max DeCosta (Matt Damon), works hard on Earth saving money to travel to Elysium. However, when an accident occurs at the factory in which he works, DeCosta falls terminally ill. To escape his fate, he attempts to enter Elysium illegally, where he can be healed. Ultimately, he agrees to a mission that could bring about equality in the sharply divided reality. In this narrative the primary antagonist, Agent Kruger (Sharlto Copley), works to stop DeCosta from entering Elysium and eventually aims to take control of the orbiting Eden. The South African character of Kruger works as part of a team with two other South African mercenaries, Drake and Crowe[90].

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[88] Referring to the overall international financial gross of a film.
[89] Excluding the films Black Panther (2018) and Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) which have already been discussed.
[90] Played by South African actors Brandon Auret and Josh Blacker, respectively.

Elysium is directed by a white South African director, Neil Blomkamp, esteemed creator of some of the most internationally renowned South African films. In his 2013 dystopian film Elysium, every South African character is played by a South African actor. This creates a unique example out of those accessed by this thesis of an American made international film directed by a South African director featuring multiple South African characters all portrayed by South Africans. A notable part of this is how every South African involved is white and male. Although this reality may depict the lack of opportunities for women and people of colour in Hollywood, this study's goal is not to address such inequity, but instead to study the identities conveyed in these examples. The massive role that South Africans had in the creation of Elysium, compared to other films depicting white South Africans, would seem to indicate the authentic nature of the identities communicated through the film. This, along with the film's international success, makes Elysium a perfect example to dissect in this context.

Figure 10: Scene from Elysium depicting white South African Character of Kruger having a braai surrounded by bottles of the South African beer Castle Lager (Blomkamp, N., et al. (2013). Elysium).

Actor, Sharlto Copley is a success story in the South African film industry, with a myriad of successful South African and international films under his belt[91]. His character in Elysium, Agent Kruger, echoes the characteristics of Ulysses Klaue. Kruger is a gaunt yet muscular mercenary who executes his orders to take down refugee ships heading to Elysium with joy and enthusiasm. He accomplishes his missions with flair, constantly cracking dry jokes and carrying around a samurai sword with him everywhere he goes (a somewhat outdated and eccentric weapon of choice in the futuristic reality). His enjoyment of taking human lives emphasises the malevolence of the character, and therefore the white South African identity constructed through it. This trait of evil is further realised through the character's actions. He repeatedly sexually harasses the female lead of the film and ultimately works to change the hierarchy of control at Elysium so that he is at the top. These aggressively heinous and power-hungry actions and his attempts to control what is essentially a "space colony", draws a connection to the already established colonial nature of white South Africans in film (Rodney, 2018). This film constructs this identity through multiple characters. Drake and Crowe both of act as conduits for the characteristics already emphasised through their leader, Kruger. These two characters work as an entourage for the primary white South African protagonist, which further emphasises the power and control over others that prominent South African identities in international film exude. Regarding the actions of these two supporting white South African characters, both execute civilians and sexually harass the female lead all in the pursuit of achieving control

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91 District 9 (2009), Hardcore Henry (2015), The A Team (2010), Maleficent (2014), Oldboy (2013), Gringo (2018), Free Fire (2016).

of Elysium. In the film, the nature of the primary antagonist's identity is emphasised by supporting characters. The three South African characters travel in a vehicle with a large South African flag plastered on the side that serves as a sign which conceptually connects the characters with identities they present, a pattern in representation identified Hall (Hall 1997).

Figure 11: Still from Elysium depicting Kruger entering his team's vehicle decorated with a South African Flag (Blomkamp, N., et al. (2013). Elysium).

In this example, these characters and the identities they construct, are communicated to an international audience visually and through dialogue. The character's actions and the visual signs accompanying them communicate the conceptual construction of a white South African identity, over simply the spoken script. This makes it simpler to tap into a more globally accessible culture, one of shared meanings and conceptual maps (du Gay, Hall et al., 1997). In this film, a viewer does not need to understand that the accent used by these characters is South African or that the name "Kruger" is a common South African name, as there are visual clues (like national flags) which emphasise this identity. It is through these correlations between signs and the actions of characters that a conceptual identity is constructed. This therefore shows the ease with which an international audience can assimilate the white South African characters into their own perceptions of that identity.

Figure 12: A still from Elysium depicting Kruger interacting aggressively with the female lead of the film (Blomkamp, N., et al. (2013). Elysium).

The Sum of All Fears (2002) is different in its representation of white South Africans regarding its intensity, but not in its conceptual construction of an identity. The film is based around the actions of Jack Ryan, a popular character written by Tom Clancy. The character of Jack Ryan is the primary protagonist in many narratives in the last thirty years of international entertainment media, including: The Hunt for Red October (1990), Patriot Games (1992), Clear and Present Danger (1994), The Sum of All Fears (2002) and Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (2014). The character has been played by Alec Baldwin, Harrison Ford, Ben Affleck and Chris Pine. The repetition and perpetuation of the character indicate the popularity of the films and indicates the importance of unpacking one as an example when a white South African character is included in the narrative.

The Sum of All Fears follows the story of Agent Ryan as he attempts to stop a terrorist group from detonating a nuclear bomb (which was sold to terrorists by the South African character Derek Olson) during an American football match in the United States. Although this simple synopsis already provides an interesting overview of the character's involvement in the plot, and therefore the basic characteristics of that character, a closer look at this white South African character is necessary. Although not as personally violent or maniacal as the previous two examples discussed, this character presents a calculated and composed version of the greed and evil emphasised in those examples. Olson is played by American-born Canadian actor Colm Feore, who manages to present a South African accent with reasonable but somewhat overdramatised success. His character is introduced to viewers in a makeshift tent in the Syrian desert, where he is inspecting a nuclear device found, buried in the desert, by locals. Knowing its great value, he tells the locals who found it that it is worthless and buys it from them for five hundred dollars. He is thanked by the locals while he smirks. In the next scene, while an episode of the British television show Antiques Roadshow plays in the background, Olson uses an encrypted message to sell the bomb to a terrorist group for fifty million dollars. Later in the films he secures the delivery of the bomb to this group, who detonate it in a heavily populated U.S. city. He exits the films narrative with no repercussions, having greatly profited from his wicked actions. Each scene in which he appears in ends with a shot of him with a gleeful smile on his face. This character is not as prominent in the films narrative as the previous examples discussed. In the hierarchy of white South African examples of characters in film as one looks further down the list, one will find this to be the case. There are, however, many aspects of this character which echo the overarching nature of the identities communicated through examples with a larger presence.

Figure 13: Colm Feore as the white South African character Derek Olson in The Sum of All Fears (Robinson, P. A., et al. (2002). The Sum of All Fears).

Olson's greed, shown through the way he swindles impoverished Syrians and profits greatly from this transaction, is emphasised through this depiction of a white South African. This greed, a characteristic

shared by Klaue and Kruger, aids in supporting the already constructed greedy nature of white South African identity on such an international platform. This again leads us to the colonial nature of the character. As greed and control are synonymous with the notion of colonialism, one can see the correlation between the white South African and colonialism, but this is also subtly conveyed through other signs connected to the character. The inclusion of an episode of Antiques Roadshow, a television show which looks at the value of antiques inherited, found or collected by the British public, is interesting in setting a scene which emphasises this colonial nature. Here a connection to Great Britain is made[92], a connection to a well-known colonial power. This connection could have been made by including any British television show, but Antiques Roadshow looks at wealth inherited from previous generations and in the scene a discussion of value in pounds sterling can be overheard. This sign therefore connects with the concept of wealth, power, control and privilege – connotations all linked to colonialism (Hall 1997). Therefore, in this scene the white South African character, through his actions and the clever curation of his environment by the filmmakers, is connected to colonialism, greed, power and wealth. This highlights the evil nature of this antagonist and the greed and joyful engagement with the harm of others – all aspects of an identity which connects with other prominent examples discussed in this study. This shows common threads which run through the most significant white South African identity communicated through international entertainment media.

The popularity and success of these films which have been unpacked is indicated by their star-studded casts[93] and international financial gross, but these are not the only examples which emphasise this identity. There is an array of examples of white South African characters in post-apartheid, non-historical, international entertainment media narratives who present similar symptoms of this same identity communicated through these more popular examples. There is the South African hit squad in Red (2010), the aggressive gangsters Yolandi and Ninja in Chappie (2015) and the gun toting career criminal Vernon is Free Fire (2016), to name a few. Each, as one can see by these brief descriptions, can be seen to fit into the mould already created by the more popular examples discussed. The discussion of the popular examples of Elysium (2013) and The Sum of All Fears (2002), conducted in this study, works to depict how the identity conveyed through the character of Klaue is not an isolated example and is supported by other prevalent texts in this context.

4.4 Neutral and Good white South African Identities

One can not truly understand the presentation of a white South African identity in international popular and visual culture if one does not seek examples which construct a different identity to the primary identity created by the most prolific and popular examples. If this primarily identity is a malevolent, greedy, bad guy, then one needs to also look at the other examples, thinly dispersed as they may be, of characters who are neutral or benevolent in their respective narratives.

Avoiding historically set narratives[94], this leaves very few examples in the scope of what this study explores. The scarcity of examples which depict an identity differing from the prevailing one shows, in this context, the overwhelming impact of the identities already discussed on the formation of an international white South African identity. This said, neutral and morally "good" examples of this identity, as rare as they are,

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[92] Much like the connection to Great Britain which is made through scenes introducing Klaue in Avengers: Age of Ultron and Black Panther.

[93] The films discussed included household names like Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Robert Downey Jr. and Martin Freeman.

[94] The exclusion of films set in a historical context (like Invictus (2011) set during apartheid, District 9 (2009) set in an alternate apartheid and Blood Diamond (2006) set during the Sierra-Leone civil war) is explained in this study's research methodology.

have a role in influencing an audience as part of the plethora of texts which are constructed in the dominant entertainment media. Usually this role is a supporting role, as more major white South African characters are inclined to exist controversially, outside of the comfort of neutrality, in the contexts of the texts which house them. There are two male characters which begin to bridge the divide between the prominent examples of "bad guys" and the others[95]. Each of these films is set in a very different context from the other, with the critically acclaimed Tsotsi (2005) set in South Africa in the early 2000's, and Netflix's Velvet Buzzsaw (2019) set in contemporary Los Angeles. These varying contexts allow for the communication of two very different white South African characters who do not fit the common role of "bad guy".

In 2006, Tsotsi won the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film, bringing South African cinema, and a conception of South Africa (post-apartheid), to international viewers. This critical acclaim, and the fact that it was one of the first feature films to hit an international stage which depicted South Africa after the first democratic elections in 1994, indicates the nature of Tsotsi as a breakthrough film regarding South African representation in general[96]. Tsotsi[97] follows the story of David (nicknamed Tsotsi), a young black South African man and petty criminal. After stealing a car one evening, he inadvertently becomes the guardian of an infant who was strapped into the back seat. Not knowing what to do, Tsotsi takes the baby to his township home. The rest of the film outlines the dramatic, and at times comical, hijinks of an underprivileged young thug attempting to juggle looking after a child, managing his criminal life and evading capture for his recent car-jacking/kidnapping. The police were given a description of Tsotsi by the woman he hi-jacked, which helps the investigation lead by Captain Smit and Sergeant Zuma. Captain Smit is the character from this text on which this study will focus.

Captain Smit is portrayed by white South African actor Ian Roberts. A veteran of the South African film industry, Roberts speaks English, Afrikaans and Xhosa fluently. In this film, his character exists as morally and ethically good, yet still in opposition to the protagonist. This creates an interesting position for the viewer. One should be able to differentiate between the "bad guy" from the "good guy", yet there is a level of sympathy given to the protagonist, Tsotsi. Therefore, Captain Smit is not presented as an antagonist but rather, in a way, a contextual plot device for the narrative. Not existing in contrasting opposition to Tsotsi, Captain Smit occupies a place in the film which aids viewers in contextualising a contemporary representation of South Africa regarding race. Here, international (and South African) viewers are presented with a positive representation of a white South African[98], working closely with a black South African counterpart. The interaction between Captain Smit and Sergeant Zuma, and the presentation of them as equals (to the point where it is often difficult to decipher who is higher ranked) is important to the film and its cultural impact. In the wake of apartheid, which one could argue South Africa is still in the midst of today, the reiteration of racial equality and cohesion in media is important in mending divides in the country[99] – providing positive representations which aid viewers in the construction of empathy for, and identification with, all people in a society, regardless of race and creed. In this film, Captain Smit and Sergeant Zuma create a moment in South African (and international) film where such a process is given the opportunity to ignite. In most examples discussed in this study, the scene in which we are introduced to a white South African (and how that introduction is presented) is often pertinent to the definition of that identity. In this film Captain Smit's introductory scene is entirely in isiZulu, including the characters Smit

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[95] Female examples and their differing, gendered communication of this identity makes up the discussion which follows this unpacking of neutral male "bridge" characters.

[96] To a global audience.

[97] The title, Tsotsi, is a term which means "gangster", "criminal" or "thief" in Tswana, Pedi and Sesotho.

[98] This is especially important for an international audience, whose conception of South Africa was influenced by the hot topic of apartheid, as world news focussed on such during the 1980s and early 90s.

[99] Divides caused and exaggerated by the divisive realities of apartheid.

and Zuma. This aspect of Captain Smit's representation alone expresses the unifying nature of this character. Simply put, even if only understood cosmetically, Smit's position as a positive and benevolent identity is made clear in his character, firstly through his position as a policeman and secondly though his sanguine interactions with those around him. But, if one looks in more depth at this character, the importance of this white South African's socially and ethically positive position in a largely black narrative can be seen, especially in the racially tumultuous context of early post-apartheid South Africa. Therefore, one can see this character's influence on the construction of a tolerant, benevolent and unprejudiced white South African identity in the mind of viewers.

Figure 14: Still from the film Tsotsi showing the characters of Sergeant Zuma and Captain Smit (Hood, G., et al. (2005). Tsotsi).

Velvet Buzzsaw's South African character is presented in a very different context to that presented in Tsotsi. Velvet Buzzsaw is a fantasy horror film following the lives of a group of people in control of the Los Angeles art scene. The film's narrative trails the discovery of a trove of paintings found in the apartment of an elderly recluse after his death. The paintings have an almost supernatural ability to pull the interest of viewers and, due to this intensity, immediately become hot commodities. Each of the characters who attempt to buy, sell and hoard these paintings succumb to untimely deaths by terrifying and paranormal means, due to the insidious and haunted nature of the paintings and their original artist. The film was well considered regarding the context it explored and displayed an outstanding knowledge, or at least study of, the contemporary art world. To a viewer with literacy in this context, the film can become a comment and critique on the commercialisation of art, and the objectification of experience and emotion through the process. But this broader consideration of the text aside, the white South African character in this film presents somewhat differently from the larger array of examples. Jon Dondon, portrayed by British actor Tom Sturridge, is a white South African gallery owner who is working to improve the range of artists he represents and displays. His accent and rhetorical mannerisms are particularly accurate, comparable to Andy Serkis' Ulysses Klaue, therefore presenting a clear and convincing South African, the nationality of whom is emphasised in juxtaposition to the American identities who dominate the narrative.

In the majority of major films, a category that this Netflix production can easily be lumped into[100], it is often easy to find a good guy and a bad guy, a protagonist and an antagonist. However, in this film all main characters are placed in the same neutral "pot", with the ethereal antagonist of the supernatural and

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[100] Evident in its star-studded cast (including Jake Gyllenhaal, John Malkovich and Toni Colette) and its powerful production company.

murderous force. As such, Jon Dondon is not positioned in an obvious moral/ethical position, like Captain Smit of Tsotsi and Ulysses Klaue of Black Panther. This neutrality is rare in film and especially rare in white South African characters, presenting a unique example of those which this study explores. Dondon is ultimately strung up by his necktie to the ceiling of his gallery by the mysterious force tormenting the film's stars, and is discovered by his young female assistant. His actions do not warrant much support or opposition from a viewer, but his death at the hands of the ethereal antagonist, places him in a position to receive a level of empathy from the audience. This positions the character in contrast to the majority of the mainstream, especially male, examples in popular and visual culture.

Figure 15: A still showing Tom Sturridge as the white South African character Jon Dondon, inspecting an artwork in Velvet Buzzsaw (Gilroy, D., et al. (2019). Velvet Buzzsaw).

This example, and the example of Captain Smit which foreran it, depict an opposition to the majority of primary examples available in international entertainment media, regarding the construction of a white South African identity through these texts. The scarcity of the examples available[101] which oppose the primary identity discussed in this study, only emphasises the prolific nature of said primary identity. These lesser spotted examples of good and neutral white South Africans, especially regarding male characters, exist as outliers in the consideration of films influence on the perception of white South African identity. As we know, outliers are sometimes excluded from the data set in statistics – and considering their scarcity, these examples do not avoid such a fate. These neutral and good white South African examples become eclipsed by the "bad boy" giants which surround them.

4.5 White South African Gender Disparities – Female Presentation

White, female, South African examples of characters in international film are the scarcest of all characters. This may be because there is an apparent tendency for the film industry to rely on the white South African identity as bad guys and antagonists and it is vastly easier to make men scary, threatening and evil.

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[101] I conceded that there are perhaps many more examples of the like, but the difficulty in finding these examples (recreationally or through research) depicts the weak impact of such texts.

Secondly, there is a lack of female stories created in this context, compared to that of men (Kunsey, 2018). This may be because films which tell female centred stories make less at the box office, and therefore present a financial risk to production companies (Kunsey, 2018). This lack of female representation would therefore limit representations of white female South Africans. As such, this introduces the white female South African sub-category of characters as subliminal at best in the large scope of what this study discusses. These examples, as few as there are, appear to present an identity which contrasts the identity presented by the majority of male examples.

When looking at the few examples, the origin and nationality of white South African female examples tend to be approached with more ambiguity than that of their male counterparts. Within the narrative of varying films which present white South African female characters, films often beat around the bush regarding the character's country of origin. These films achieve this by either creating a fictional country in the same region, with the same characteristics and accent attributed to South Africa – or by omitting this information entirely. The same trope occasionally appears when presenting male examples, but seldomly and only when regarding characters with very small roles. This distancing of white female characters from any reminder of their identity as South Africans, shows how these examples have little influence on the conception of a white South African identity. If this connection between sign and signifier (Hall 1997) is not made clear to a viewer (especially a non-South African viewer) characters' identities are harder to pinpoint and therefore less impactful on the perception of that identity. This is true for almost all white, female, South African characters. The most notable of which is Nicole Kidman's character, Silvia Broome, in The Interpreter (2005).

Nicole Kidman's Silvia Broome is the most well-known South African female character in an international film. The cast is famous, including big names like Kidman and Sean Penn, and the film was well received, making almost $163 million at the box office – positive for a female driven story. The story follows Broome, an interpreter for the United Nations, who overhears a plot to assassinate an African leader, becoming a target to the would-be assassins. Kidman's character dons a haphazard South African accent which she tends to stumble on, but employs some phrasing which clearly emphasises her identity. She is discussed by supporting characters as spending most of her life in Southern Africa and Europe, and having studied in Johannesburg. "British mother, white African father", is the phased used to describe her genesis. Although this description of origin is given, the films focus (regarding Africa) is on the fictional country of "Matabo". This focus on Matabo and its make-believe, socio-political drama distracts somewhat from the character's South-African-ness[102]. This not only separates the example from a South African identity, it also separates the example from male examples of white South African's in this context. Male examples tend to repeatedly include reminders of their South African roots. Another disparity between this text and those including male examples of this identity is the way Broome conducts herself. Throughout the film Broome conducts herself with confidence, courage and benevolence – fighting against the odds to do the just and right thing in the complicated situation in which she finds herself. The humanitarian nature of the character, emphasised by her position at the United Nations, is emblematic of this. "Interview couldn't have taken long. She's just what they are looking for. She is the UN", says the UN chief of security.

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[102] Although the inclusion of fictional countries is a trope utilised in films like Black Panther (2018), there is a comparative lack of signs which signify South Africa in films like The Interpreter (2005).

Figure 16: Nicole Kidman as Silvia Broome in The Interpreter (Pollack, S., et al. (2005). The Interpreter).

Being the most obvious and prevalent example of a female white South African character in international film, Kidman's Broome begins to outline the gendered nature of white South African identity in this context. This disparity between female and male examples of this identity is defined by an overwhelming presentation of evil in male characters and good in female characters. The character of Broome depicts this in The Interpreter but this is not an isolated incident.

Mean Girls (2004) is a film which has become one of the most popular coming of age, high school comedies of the 21st century[103]. On the surface, the film seems to be a teen comedy like any other, emphasising the divisive nature of westernised high school life. However, by including quotable lines, breaking traditional film architypes, and providing an exaggerated world with which the audience can identify, the film achieves a popularity that is shared by very few teen comedies of the 21st century. Although the film made less in the box office than The Interpreter, its cult status makes this example an important one to unpack. The interesting thing about this film, in the context of this study, is the subtlety of how the narrative deals with the main character's South African identity. The daughter of two American research zoologists, Cady Heron, played by Lindsay Lohan[104], grew up in Africa. Sporting a conveniently American accent, Heron and her family return to America when her mother is offered tenure at an American university. The film follows Cady Heron's navigation of the shallow and clique-based reality of an American high school, using her knowledge of how African animals live and survive in the wild to do so. She begins this experience with good intentions, positively engaging with those around her. As the film progresses, the shallow nature of those with popularity in the school begins to rub off on her. Ultimately, she finds her true and benevolent self, remaining a character with whom it is easy to identify throughout.

The ambiguous nature of the lead character's origins, as presented in the film, both distances and connects the character from a South African identity. Without clearly connecting the sign to the signified[105], as achieved by most male examples, Mean Girls can be seen to have little influence on the construction of a white South African identity. This said, the fact that the film is ambiguous about the exact country in which

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[103] A reality which is emphasised by the existence of a, fan created, National Mean Girls day on the 3rd of October each year – an honour that only a select few, popular films achieve.

[104] Lindsay Lohan was at the height of her popularity at the time she shot this movie in 2004. She was 18 and had just come off the release of her highest grossing film, Freaky Friday, the year before – while also releasing her debut album the same year as the release of mean girls – all contributing to her status as a teen idol. This, combined with the star power this film had (with a cast including: Rachel McAdams, Amanda Seyfried, Lacey Chabert, Lizzy Caplan, Tina Fey and Amy Poehler) makes this a film which achieved incredible popularity upon its release, and in the years which have followed.

[105] The sign being the South African character and the signified being the connected white South African identity.

Cady Heron develops the eccentricities which make it difficult for her to assimilate with contemporary American teen life, exactly what makes her come across more as a South African. If a specific African country had been described to the audience, Botswana, Zambia or Zimbabwe for example, then obviously this film would have no influence on the perception of any form of South African identity. But when this unnamed African country is dealt with so vaguely, it allows for the connection between the character and South Africa to be made. This is aided by a variety of elements in the film. The line, "But you love Ladysmith Black Mambazo", a well-known South African singing group, aids in doing so. Also, when Heron describes a crush she had as a child the film's subtitles[106] which translate the flashback to this moment include the words "[in Afrikaans]" when providing the translation[107]. This helps point viewers towards her identity as a South African. The African elements of this film's narrative, and in turn Heron's identity, is emphasised throughout Mean Girls. The constant comparison between the experiences of high school life and African wildlife aids in reminding the viewer of Heron's "African-ness". Memorable quotes like, "If you're from Africa, why are you white?", and, "Oh my God, Karen, you can't just ask people why they're white!", are exemplary lines which indicate the way this film raises a consideration of identity, comic as it may be.

Figure 17: Lindsay Lohan as Cady Heron in Mean Girls (Waters, M., et al. (2004). Mean Girls).

There are few examples remaining of white, female South African characters in the context of international film. The films Europa Report (2013) and Chappie (2015) are the two notable remaining texts which include this identity. Both texts include white, female South African characters played by white, female South African actors. In Europa Report, Dr Samantha Unger is played by South African actress Embeth Davidtz. In Chappie, Yolandi is played by South African singer and rapper Yolandi Visser.

Europa Report is a film, including a good cast with outstanding resumés, which performed quite poorly at the box office. However, the film was comparatively well received critically and is an enthralling tale of science fiction. Made to look like it was pieced together by found footage, the story follows a privately funded expedition of the world's best astronauts to Europa, one of Jupiter's moons. The intelligent and

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[106] Specifically, in the case of Netflix's streaming of the film.
[107] Although the subtitles claim the words being spoken are Afrikaans, it is completely unrecognisable as the South African language.

strong-willed character of Dr Unger is the CEO of the company running this expedition for scientific discovery. Her nationality is never mentioned, with her natural South African accent acting as the only signifier of her identity. Her role as narrator of this harrowing journey into space presents her a person of power, intellect and emotional fortitude. This positions her similarly to the other examples of female representations of white South African identities in this context. However, Chappie's example of this identity differs somewhat from those which construct this pattern. The character of Yolandi could be described as a gangster. In a futuristic Johannesburg setting, Yolandi lives a life of crime with Ninja. As part of this, Ninja and Yolandi come into possession of Chappie, a police robot with experimental artificial intelligence which emulates human emotion. In the rough and tumble world in which Chappie finds itself, Yolandi's gritty exterior seems to soften as she becomes somewhat of a mother-figure to Chappie. The protective and sweet way in which she deals with Chappie contrasts with her position as a gangster. The dichotomy presented in the character of Yolandi, describes her example as one which does not fit easily into the pattern created by other examples of her gender. Yolandi flutters between aggressive antagonist and protective mother, unlike her counterparts in this context who exist almost exclusively on the side of the viewer. Therefore, we find in Yolandi's case an example that both affirms and disrupts the pattern created by female characters of this kind. With this being said, the fact that she exhibits positive and relatable characteristics, combined with the sheer number of female examples which do the same, the reality of female iterations of this identity presenting as a benevolent, relatable identity remains strong.

Female examples of white South African identities clearly present an identity which juxtaposes that of male examples of this identity. Males are presented as evil, greedy and aggressive "bad guys", while female examples, as few as they be, are presented as relatable, good and kind characters. One ticks all the boxes traditionally required of antagonists, while the other ticks all the boxes traditionally required of protagonists. This creates binary understandings of white South Africans in the minds of consumers of these texts. Binary understandings when considering gender as well as the characteristics and traits of the identity.

Three of the four films[108] discussed in this study which depict female white South African identity pass the Bechdel-Wallace test[35]. Of the films discussed in this thesis which present male examples of this identity only one passes the Bechdel-Wallace test[109]. This indicates the inadequate level of female opportunity in this context. The limited female representation as well as the typecasting of the female characters in film allows for the creation of this binary pattern regarding this identity. Historically in film female characters are outnumbered 3 to 1 (Tuli, 2018), which offers little opportunity for female roles to be written on both sides of morality. This is combined with the typecasting of female roles as submissive, (not a characteristic which melds well with antagonism) makes it difficult for any female identity to present an identity which is characteristically similar to that of their male counterparts. Therefore, this binary gendered identity is not unique to white South African identity, in presentation, construction or perception.

These female examples do very little to upset the presiding identity reinforced by more popular male examples. In this context there is a common application of critical mass theory which refers to an irreversible turning point, stating that representation in film is dependent on numeric designation (Kunsey, 2018). Here, scholars suggest that for a minority to make an impact in a certain context, the film industry and the identities it communicates, that group needs to make up proportionally more than 30% of that context (Dahlerup, 2006). Subsequently, it is evident by the meagre number of examples, and the relative ambiguity of the films and their character's nationality, that these films have little impact of the reigning

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[108] Chappie (2015) only passes 1 of the 3 requirements needed to pass the Bechdel-Wallace test.
[109] Black Panther (2018) passes the test.

conception of white South African identity in this context – one informed by cinematic giants, which emphasise this nationality in their characters.

4.6 Conclusion to Discussion of Texts

Upon thorough inspection, it is clear that these examples of white South African characters in film construct and inform an identity which is heavily weighted towards presenting this identity as evil. The overwhelming number of examples, regardless of gender, present white South Africans as malicious, greedy "bad guys", based on character's behaviours and position in opposition to protagonists. Such presentations aid in constructing an international conception of this identity, as these films act as the primary example of white South Africans to an international audience. The dramatic and over-embellished nature of film narratives (characteristics which make films interesting to viewers) provide a problematic representation of any identity, and in such a context an overemphasised evil is shown by how white South Africans are presented.

In recent years there has been an increase of white South African examples in film. This may be due to the increased clout of South African cinema, or due to the fact that as each year passes we find ourselves further and further way from the horrible realities of apartheid, and therefore characters of this nature are less taboo. Either way, the increase of examples has created an increase in the power of film on the formation of a perception of this identity internationally, and internally in South Africa. As discussed, the majority of these examples are male and those male roles exist as unrelatable, horrid characters. The sheer amount of these examples eclipses female examples which present an identity that differs from males morally and ethically. This being the case, the most overwhelming and popular examples create an overall conception of this identity as malevolent. Therefore, those who consume these narratives will have a conception of this identity which exists in line with the characteristics of the most proliferated examples, when engaging with male or female examples, due to their proliferation. An inability to relate to the characters creates an othering regarding identity (Hall, 1997). When a character of differing nationality to a viewer presents characteristics and engages with situations in a manner which is relatable to a viewer, then there is a level of empathy between viewer and character regardless of the disparity between them[110]. When this relatability to character or behaviour is not present, then an othering occurs (Stuts & Burke, 2000). One then positions themselves in opposition to the character and in doing so identifies them to exist in a group which is perceived with distain. Considering this in regard to female characters, there is the presence of empathy and an ability to identify with female characters as they are protagonists who have been specifically tailored to exist as such in order to create a positive level of engagement between viewer and narrative. The opposite occurs regarding most male examples as they are presented as antagonists, existing in opposition to empathised protagonists, creating an othering in the construction of this white South African identity (Stuts & Burke, 2000). Unfortunately for the perception of white South Africans, male examples dominate in this context and so female examples tend to fall by the wayside regarding an influence on the creation of this identity.

This study has focussed, thematically, on the theoretical influence of these texts and their characters on an international audience. This is an important focus as it helps contemporary audiences understand how their perceptions of this identity are informed and, more explicitly, it can help white South Africans understand how their own identity is informed globally in this context. However, these powerful iterations

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[110] This allows for common groupings. For example, if a character engages positively with a sibling, then viewers who have a good relationship with a sibling will be able to relate to that interaction and relationship and so a common grouping occurs no matter what differences (ethnically, socially or culturally for instance) there are between viewer and character.

of this identity do not only inform an international, non-South African viewer. South Africans, specifically white South Africans can be influenced by these characters in terms of their own self-identity. While South Africans have many more examples of their own identity with which they can relate in their immediate context, films of such popularity can influence how they see and categorise themselves. With such divisive roles, often displaying violence or racism in a post-apartheid context, an internal process of defining one's own identity in opposition to others occurs. When roles for certain groups and identities are so well defined, it becomes easier to assimilate that identity than to oppose it (McCall and Simmons, 1978). Therefore, the study that this thesis conducts is also important regarding the understanding of how South Africans perceive and construct their personal identity conception based on the consumption of these texts. Awareness of how one is influenced and moulded by society and its many trappings is paramount when understanding oneself and others.

Global citizenship is important in a contemporary world which is so deeply interconnected. This citizenship requires an understanding of what we are consuming as part of our interconnected world and what informs how we engage with it. Being aware of what influences our perception of identity, both regarding the identity of the self and of the other, is an important part of this citizenship. This thesis does not aim to make any judgements of the texts which it unpacks, in terms of reprimanding how these characters are written or represented. Instead, this study inspects how these characters are written and represented with the aim of providing a better understanding of how these characters construct an identity which influences perceptions globally – and what that identity looks like and how it behaves. With regard to identity, there is a pattern of firstly categorising and then identifying according to that categorisation (Turner, 1992). These films pre-package characters into easily defined categories for viewers to consume. This makes the second step of identifying based on these identities one which is predetermined by such texts. Here one sees the global power that the international film industry wields, and therefore the global responsibility that it holds.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

5.1 Introduction to Conclusion of Research

As a white South African, and being aware of the global society of which I am a part, the study this thesis presents is one in which I felt has deep personal and global importance. In the context of a world in which an increasing amount of entertainment media is being produced to sate a global audience which finds itself consuming such media faster than it can be produced, the focus of this study is more relevant than ever. This study sought to discover the nature of a white South African identity, as constructed by the powerhouse that is the international film industry. This overwhelmingly evil and greedy identity is one which is consumed on a global level and so influences the considerations of self and other in South Africa and around the world. This study's research focussed on a theoretical qualitative study of a variety of post-apartheid texts which have been made readily available on the streaming platforms that our contemporary society have come to rely so heavily on for entertainment. Each text was unpacked with a focus on its white South African character to find how each character fits into the construction of a white South African identity built by these representations. The boundaries of this research were specified for the purposes of defining a specific focus in this academic context. These boundaries meant that this study focussed on post-apartheid examples[111] of film which presented white South African characters. This also meant that other forms of entertainment media[112] were not included in the focus of this study in order to home in on the most powerful[113] medium of international film. This study's focus on post-apartheid texts and narratives is in order to access the most contextually applicable examples, as we currently reside and consume in a post-colonial, post-apartheid context. The focus on film alone, neglecting other entertainment mediums, was chosen in order limit the length of the study in this academic context and to focus on a medium which has proven to be the most globally impactful of these entertainment mediums.

5.2 Conclusion and Implications of Research

This study has found and described the nature of a white South African identity created through international films which act as a vehicle for characters of this nationality to mould an audience's perceptions and consideration of that identity. This identity in this context, is constructed and presented by the majority of characters as being an emphatically male, greedy and evil antagonists who fit the description of the bad guy. It is notable that directors and scriptwriters are often presenting such extreme examples without giving a more balanced representation of South African males. This affects the perceptions of viewers so that an imbalanced representation of South African male identities in consumed. The most popular and prolific example of Ulysses Klaue, portrayed by Andy Serkis in the Marvel films Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) and Black Panther (2018), is the driving force which influences the creation of a white South African identity in this context. The overarching identity, which is characteristically evil, is not only created by Klaue but is also supported by the majority of examples of this identity in film. White South African characters whose characteristics oppose this prominent definition of identity are very few and far between, and are mostly female examples. The scarcity of these examples and the lack of focus on the South African-ness of the characters, means that they provide little distraction for viewers from the

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[111] Both in date of creation and in terms of the narrative represented in the texts which were unpacked.
[112] Television series and videogames for example.
[113] Regarding global reach and therefore financial intake. This power is therefore in the context of the aspects of such media which are quantifiable.

larger patterns of identity which are prevalent in this context. However, the existence of these contrary, mostly female, examples mean that the prominent conception of a white South African identity in international film is somewhat a generalisation. Unfortunately, when dealing with the perceptions of identity and the prejudice inherently attached, global considerations of identity – be it self or other – are informed by generalisations.

The implications of the findings in this thesis, and the definition of the overarching white South African identity which is presented to an audience by international film, are two-fold. This information has differing implications depending on whether one is South African, especially a white South African, or not. A white South African may consider this information to better understand and navigate their way in a global society where those around them may have a pre-described perception of their identity. It may also help them understand what external influences mould their own conception of self and any attached manipulation on their self esteem based on these influences (Rogers, 1959). For non-South Africans, those who compose a global audience of such texts, one may consider this information to better understand how their perceptions of those around them may be influenced by the social and cultural texts they consume. The considerations of this study may prepare members of a globally connected society to critically engage with texts which present identities, those that refer to our own identities and the identities of others. Therefore, this study and its unpacking of selected texts in this context, contributes to research into identity formation in a contemporary, interconnected and technologically advanced global world. This study, and the study it conducted, also provides a focussed topic of theoretical discussion which contributes to considerations made by media psychology theorists.

5.3 Further Research and Critique

There are a variety of limitations which exist as part of this study. These limitations are symptoms of an attempt to create a focussed and pinpointed topic academic paper. These limitations create opportunities for further study in this field. Every year more films are released which have the possibility of containing examples of white South African identities, and as such there is the opportunity for continued study as more texts, ones which may achieve more renown than those explored in this study. In line with this, there is an opportunity in this field to broaden or redirect the scope of what this study studies to include colonial and apartheid texts and narratives. Studies of this nature would be exploring very different contexts to the one on which this study focusses. Additionally, it is relevant to note that at this point in time there are only male and female examples of white South African characters in film. As such, this study is limited to discussing examples which are cis-gendered. As more examples are produced, opportunities to explore the construction and representation of non-cisgender examples of this identity may appear. With all of this in mind there is also the opportunity to refocus a study of this kind on other entertainment media and differing identities. The rather niche and specific scope on which this study focusses is in part influenced by my position as a white South African. Academics with a different identity may be similarly inspired by their own cultural or social position, which may initiate research of a similar nature in their own context. Specifically, in relation to what this study discusses, there exists an opportunity for a similar study into the formation of a black South African identity in this context. This is equally important research to conduct but is research which I feel I do not have the personal or academic right to unpack as a white person.

5.4 Concluding Remarks

Today, South Africa is still rife with racial conflict. The horrors of apartheid have left a divisive social and economic landscape. Symptoms of this are seen in the country daily and are emphasised by social media. Now, more than ever, it is important to understand what informs our perceptions of ourselves and others – important to understand what can have an influence on the creation and perpetuation of our prejudices as a society. Regarding the white South African identity constructed in film, I completely understand why this presentation of a malevolent identity exists. Historically, white South Africans were the bad guys and I do not feel it is unfair that they are portrayed as such. Therefore, through this study I am not attempting to condemn these portrayals of white South Africans, but instead I aim to conduct a critical consideration of this identity's construction on a large scale, and in doing so encourage the critical consideration of all influences on any perception of any identity. While reflecting on my own identity as a white male and how much the perceptions created in mainstream film also affect my identity, I can imagine how my fellow black South Africans would struggle to build a healthy self-identity with the misrepresentations of specifically black males in films. The injustices done in the film industry by stereotyping groups and using it to the benefit of making money, is far more impactful as one might imagine. In the context of the consumption of film, and their included identities, you are what you eat. So, we should all eat with care.

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